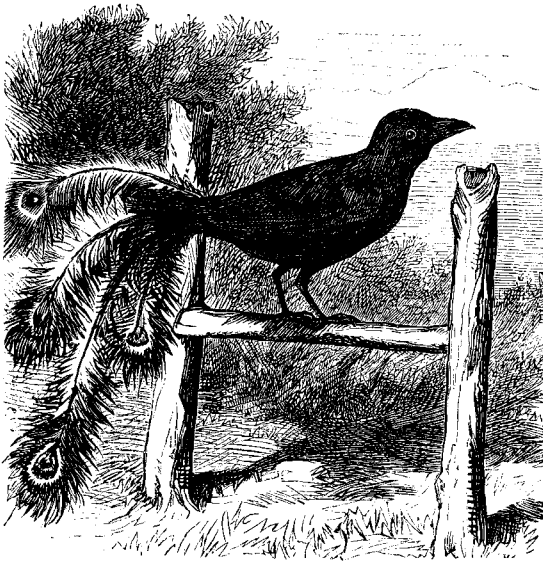


THE ADVENTURES OF PHILIP.

BY W. M. THACKERAY.



CHAPTER IV.

A GENTEEL FAMILY.

HAVE you made up your mind on the question of seeming and being in the world? I mean, suppose you *are* poor, is it right for you to *seem* to be well off? Have people an honest right to keep up appearances? Are you justified in starving your dinner-table in order to keep a carriage; to have such an expensive house that you can't by any possibility help a poor relation; to array your daughters in costly milliners' wares because they live with girls whose parents are twice as rich? Sometimes it is hard to say where honest pride ends and hypocrisy begins. To obtrude your poverty is mean and slavish; as it is odious for a beggar to ask compassion by showing his sores. But to simulate prosperity—to be wealthy and lavish thrice a year when you ask your friends, and for the rest of the time to munch a crust and sit by one candle—are the folks who practice this deceit worthy of applause or a whipping? Sometimes it is noble pride, sometimes shabby swindling. When I see Eugenia with her dear children exquisitely neat and cheerful; not showing the slightest semblance of poverty, or uttering the smallest complaint; persisting that Squanderfield, her husband, treats her well, and is good at heart; and denying that he leaves her and her young ones in want; I admire and reverence that noble falsehood—that beautiful constancy and endurance which disdains to ask compassion. When I sit at poor Jezabella's table, and am treated to her sham bounties and shabby splendor, I only feel anger for the hospi-

talities, and that dinner, and guest, and host, are humbugs together.

Talbot Twysden's dinner-table is large, and the guests most respectable. There is always a bigwig or two present, and a dining dowager who frequents the greatest houses. There is a butler who offers you wine; there's a *menu du diner* before Mrs. Twysden; and to read it you would fancy you were at a good dinner. It tastes of chopped straw. Oh, the dreary sparkle of that feeble Champagne; the audacity of that public-house sherry; the swindle of that acrid claret; the fiery twang of that clammy port! I have tried them all, I tell you! It is sham wine, a sham dinner, a sham welcome, a sham cheerfulness among the guests assembled. I feel that that woman eyes and counts the cutlets as they are carried off the tables; perhaps watches that one which you try to

swallow. She has counted and grudged each candle by which the cook prepares the meal. Does her big coachman fatten himself on purloined oats and beans, and Thorley's food for cattle? Of the rinsings of those wretched bottles the butler will have to give a reckoning in the morning. Unless you are of the very great *monde*, Twysden and his wife think themselves better than you are, and seriously patronize you. They consider it is a privilege to be invited to those horrible meals, to which they gravely ask the greatest folks in the country. I actually met Winton there—the famous Winton—the best dinner-giver in the world (ah, what a position for a man!). I watched him, and marked the sort of wonder which came over him as he tasted and sent away dish after dish, glass after glass. "Try that Château Margaux, Winton!" calls out the host. "It is some that Bottleby and I imported." Imported! I see Winton's face as he tastes the wine, and puts it down. He does not like to talk about that dinner. He has lost a day. Twysden will continue to ask him every year; will continue to expect to be asked in return, with Mrs. Twysden and one of his daughters; and will express his surprise loudly at the club, saying, "Hang Winton! Dence take the fellow! He has sent me no game this year!" When foreign dukes and princes arrive, Twysden straightway collars them, and invites them to his house. And sometimes they go once—and then ask, "*Qui donc est ce Monsieur Twysden, qui est si drôle?*" And he elbows his way up to them at the Minister's assemblies, and frankly gives them his hand. And calm Mrs. Twysden wriggles, and



WHAT NATHAN SAID UNTO DAVID (CHAP. III.).

works, and slides, and pushes, and tramples if need be, her girls following behind her, until she too has come up under the eyes of the great man, and bestowed on him a smile and a courtesy. Twysden grasps prosperity cordially by the hand. He says to success, "Bravo!" On the contrary, I never saw a man more resolute in not knowing unfortunate people, or more daringly forgetful of those whom he does not care to remember. If this Levite met a wayfarer,

going down from Jerusalem, who had fallen among thieves, do you think he would stop to rescue the fallen man? He would neither give wine, nor oil, nor money. He would pass on perfectly satisfied with his own virtue, and leave the other to go, as best he might, to Jericho.

What is this? Am I angry because Twysden has left off asking me to his vinegar and chopped hay? No. I think not. Am I hurt because Mrs. Twysden sometimes patronizes my

wife, and sometimes cuts her? Perhaps. Only women thoroughly know the insolence of women toward one another in the world. That is a very stale remark. They receive and deliver stabs, smiling politely. Tom Sayers could not take punishment more gayly than they do. If you could but see *under* the skin, you would find their little hearts scarred all over with little lancet digs. I protest I have seen my own wife enduring the impertinence of this woman, with a face as calm and placid as she wears when old Twysden himself is talking to her, and pouring out one of his maddening long stories. Oh no! I am not angry at all. I can see *that* by the way in which I am writing of these folks. By-the-way, while I am giving this candid opinion of the Twysdens, do I sometimes pause to consider what they think of *me*? What do I care? Think what you like. Meanwhile we bow to one another at parties. We smile at each other in a sickly way. And as for the dinners in Beaunash Street, I hope those who eat them enjoy their food.

Twysden is one of the chiefs now of the Powder and Pomatum Office (the Pigtail branch was finally abolished in 1833, after the Reform Bill, with a compensation to the retiring under-secretary), and his son is a clerk in the same office. When they came out the daughters were very pretty—even my wife allows that. One of them used to ride in the Park with her father or brother daily; and knowing what his salary and wife's fortune were, and what the rent of his house in Beaunash Street, every body wondered how the Twysdens could make both ends meet. They had horses, carriages, and a great house fit for at least five thousand a year; they had not half as much, as every body knew; and it was supposed that old Ringwood must make his niece an allowance. She certainly worked hard to get it. I spoke of stabs anon, and poor little breasts and sides scarred all over. No nuns, no monks, no fakeers take whippings more kindly than some devotees of the world; and, as the punishment is one for edification, let us hope the world lays smartly on to back and shoulders, and uses the thong well.

When old Ringwood, at the close of his lifetime, used to come to visit his dear niece and her husband and children, he always brought a cat-of-nine-tails in his pocket, and administered it to the whole household. He grinned at the poverty, the pretense, the meanness of the people, as they knelt before him and did him homage. The father and mother trembling brought the girls up for punishment, and, piteously smiling, received their own boxes on the ear in presence of their children. "Ah!" the little French governess used to say, grinding her white teeth, "I like milor to come. All day you vip me. When milor come he vip you, and you kneel down and kiss de rod."

They certainly knelt and took their whipping with the most exemplary fortitude. Sometimes the lash fell on papa's back, sometimes on mamma's! now it stung Agnes, and now it lighted

on Blanche's pretty shoulders. But I think it was on the heir of the house, young Ringwood Twysden, that my lord loved best to operate. Ring's vanity was very thin-skinned, his selfishness easily wounded, and his contortions under punishment amused the old tormentor.

As my lord's brougham drives up—the modest little brown brougham, with the noble horse, the lord chancellor of a coachman, and the ineffable footman—the ladies, who know the whirr of the wheels, and may be quarreling in the drawing-room, call a truce to the fight, and smooth down their ruffled tempers and raiment. Mamma is writing at her table, in that beautiful, clear hand which we all admire; Blanche is at her book; Agnes is rising from the piano quite naturally. A quarrel between those gentle, smiling, delicate creatures! Impossible! About your most common piece of hypocrisy how men will blush and bungle: how easily, how gracefully, how consummately, women will perform it!

"Well," growls my lord, "you are all in such pretty attitudes, I make no doubt you have been sparring. I suspect, Maria, the men must know what devilish bad tempers the girls have got. Who can have seen you fighting? You're quiet enough here, you little monkeys. I tell you what it is. Ladies'-maids get about and talk to the valets in the housekeeper's room, and the men tell their masters. Upon my word I believe it was that business last year at Whipham which frightened Greenwood off. Famous match. Good house in town and country. No mother alive. Agnes might have had it her own way, but for that—"

"We are not all angels in our family, uncle!" cries Miss Agnes, reddening.

"And your mother is too sharp. The men are afraid of you, Maria. I've heard several young men say so. At White's they talk about it quite freely. Pity for the girls. Great pity. Fellows come and tell me. Jack Hall, and fellows who go about every where."

"I'm sure I don't care what Captain Hall says about me—odious little wretch!" cries Blanche.

"There you go off in a tantrum! Hall never has any opinion of his own. He only fetches and carries what other people say. And he says, fellows say they are frightened of your mother. La bless you! Hall has no opinion. A fellow might commit murder, and Hall would wait at the door. Quite a discreet man. But I told him to ask about you. And that's what I hear. And he says that Agnes is making eyes at the doctor's boy."

"It's a shame," cries Agnes, shedding tears under her martyrdom.

"Older than he is; but that's no obstacle. Good-looking boy, I suppose you don't object to that? Has his poor mother's money, and his father's: must be well to do. A vulgar fellow, but a clever fellow, and a determined fellow, the doctor—and a fellow who, I suspect, is capable of any thing. Shouldn't wonder at that fellow

marrying some rich dowager. Those doctors get an immense influence over women; and unless I'm mistaken in my man, Maria, your poor sister got hold of a—"

"Uncle!" cries Mrs. Twysden, pointing to her daughters, "Before these—"

"Before those innocent lambs! Hem! Well, I think Firmin is of the wolf sort:" and the old noble laughed, and showed his own fierce fangs as he spoke.

"I grieve to say, my lord, I agree with you," remarks Mr. Twysden. "I don't think Firmin a man of high principle. A clever man? Yes. An accomplished man? Yes. A good physician? Yes. A prosperous man? Yes. But what's a man without principle?"

"You ought to have been a parson, Twysden."

"Others have said so, my lord. My poor mother often regretted that I didn't choose the Church. When I was at Cambridge I used to speak constantly at the Union. I practiced. I do not disguise from you that my aim was public life. I am free to confess I think the House of Commons would have been my sphere; and, had my means permitted, should certainly have come forward."

Lord Ringwood smiled, and winked to his niece—

"He means, my dear, that he would like to wag his jaws at my expense, and that I should put him in for Whipham."

"There are, I think, worse members of Parliament," remarked Mr. Twysden.

"If there was a box of 'em like you, what a cage it would be!" roared my lord. "By George, I'm sick of jaw. And I would like to see a king of spirit in this country, who would shut up the talking shops, and gag the whole chattering crew!"

"I am a partisan of order—but a lover of freedom," continues Twysden. "I hold that the balance of our constitution—"

I think my lord would have indulged in a few of those oaths with which his old-fashioned conversation was liberally garnished; but the servant, entering at this moment, announces Mr. Philip Firmin; and ever so faint a blush flutters up in Agnes's cheek, who feels that the old lord's eye is upon her.

"So, Sir, I saw you at the Opera last night," says Lord Ringwood.

"I saw you, too," says downright Phil.

The women looked terrified, and Twysden scared. The Twysdens had Lord Ringwood's box sometimes. But there were boxes in which the old man sate, and in which they never *could* see him.

"Why don't you look at the stage, Sir, when you go to the Opera, and not at me? When you go to church you ought to look at the parson, oughtn't you?" growled the old man. "I'm about as good to look at as the fellow who dances first in the ballet—and very nearly as old. But if I were you, I should think looking at the Ellsler better fun."

And now you may fancy of what old, old

times we are writing—times in which those horrible old male dancers yet existed—hideous old creatures, with low dresses and short sleeves, and wreaths of flowers, or hats and feathers round their absurd old wigs—who skipped at the head of the ballet. Let us be thankful that those old apes have almost vanished off the stage, and left it in possession of the beauteous bounders of the other sex. Ah, my dear young friends, time *will* be when these too will cease to appear more than mortally beautiful! To Philip, at his age, they yet looked as lovely as hours. At this time the simple young fellow, surveying the ballet from his stall at the Opera, mistook carmine for blushes, pearl-powder for native snows, and cotton-wool for natural symmetry; and I dare say when he went into the world was not more clear-sighted about its rouged innocence, its padded pretensions, and its painted candor.

Old Lord Ringwood had a humorous pleasure in petting and coaxing Philip Firmin before Philip's relatives of Beaunash Street. Even the girls felt a little plaintive envy at the partiality which Uncle Ringwood exhibited for Phil; but the elder Twysdens and Ringwood Twysden, their son, writhed with agony at the preference which the old man sometimes showed for the doctor's boy. Phil was much taller, much handsomer, much stronger, much better tempered, and much richer than young Twysden. He would be the sole inheritor of his father's fortune, and had his mother's thirty thousand pounds. Even when they told him his father would marry again, Phil laughed, and did not seem to care—"I wish him joy of his new wife," was all he could be got to say: "when he gets one, I suppose I shall go into chambers. Old Parr Street is not as gay as Pall Mall." I am not angry with Mrs. Twysden for having a little jealousy of her nephew. Her boy and girls were the fruit of a dutiful marriage; and Phil was the son of a disobedient child. Her children were always on their best behavior before their great-uncle; and Phil cared for him no more than for any other man; and he liked Phil the best. Her boy was as humble and eager to please as any of his lordship's humblest henchmen; and Lord Ringwood snapped at him, browbeat him, and trampled on the poor darling's tenderest feelings, and treated him scarcely better than a lackey. As for poor Mr. Twysden, my lord not only yawned unreservedly in his face—that could not be helped; poor Talbot's talk set many of his acquaintance asleep—but laughed at him, interrupted him, and told him to hold his tongue. On this day, as the family sat together, at the pleasant hour—the before dinner hour—the fireside and tea-table hour—Lord Ringwood said to Phil:

"Dine with me to-day, Sir?"

"Why does he not ask me, with my powers of conversation?" thought old Twysden to himself.

"Hang him, he always asks that beggar!" writhed young Twysden, in his corner.

"Very sorry, Sir, can't come. Have asked some fellows to dine at the Blue Posts," says Phil.

"Confound you, Sir, why don't you put 'em off?" cries the old lord. "You'd put 'em off, Twysden, wouldn't you?"

"Oh, Sir!" the heart of father and son both beat.

"You know you would; and you quarrel with this boy for not throwing his friends over. Good-night, Firmin, since you won't come."

And with this my lord was gone.

The two gentlemen of the house glumly looked from the window, and saw my lord's brougham drive swiftly away in the rain.

"I hate your dining at those horrid taverns," whispered a young lady to Philip.

"It is better fun than dining at home," Philip remarks.

"You smoke and drink too much. You come home late, and you don't live in a proper *monde*, Sir!" continues the young lady.

"What would you have me do?"

"Oh, nothing. You must dine with those horrible men," cries Agnes; "else you might have gone to Lady Pendleton's to-night."

"I can throw over the men easily enough, if you wish," answered the young man.

"I? I have no wish of the sort. Have you not already refused uncle Ringwood?"

"You are not Lord Ringwood," says Phil, with a tremor in his voice. "I don't know there is much I would refuse you."

"You silly boy! What do I ever ask you to do that you ought to refuse? I want you to live in our world, and not with your dreadful wild Oxford and Temple bachelors. I don't want you to smoke. I want you to go into the world of which you have the *entrée*—and you refuse your uncle on account of some horrid engagement at a tavern!"

"Shall I stop here? Aunt, will you give me some dinner—here?" asks the young man.

"We have dined: my husband and son dine out," said gentle Mrs. Twysden.

There was cold mutton and tea for the ladies; and Mrs. Twysden did not like to seat her nephew, who was accustomed to good fare and high living, to that meagre meal.

"You see I must console myself at the tavern," Philip said. "We shall have a pleasant party there."

"And pray who makes it?" asks the lady.

"There is Ridley the painter."

"My dear Philip! Do you know that his father was actually—"

"In the service of Lord Todmorden? He often tells us so. He is a queer character, the old man."

"Mr. Ridley is a man of genius, certainly. His pictures are delicious, and he goes every where—but—but you provoke me, Philip, by your carelessness; indeed you do. Why should you be dining with the sons of footmen, when the first houses in the country might be open to you? You pain me, you foolish boy."

"For dining in company of a man of genius? Come, Agnes!" And the young man's brow grew dark. "Besides," he added, with a tone of sarcasm in his voice, which Miss Agnes did not like at all—"besides, my dear, you know he dines at Lord Pendleton's."

"What is that you are talking of Lady Pendleton, children?" asked watchful mamma from her corner.

"Ridley dines there. He is going to dine with me at a tavern to-day. And Lord Halden is coming—and Mr. Winton is coming—having heard of the famous beef-steaks."

"Winton! Lord Halden! Beef-steaks! Where? By George! I have a mind to go, too! Where do you fellows dine? *au cabaret*? Hang me, I'll be one," shrieked little Twysden, to the terror of Philip, who knew his uncle's awful powers of conversation. But Twysden remembered himself in good time, and to the intense relief of young Firmin. "Hang me. I forgot! Your aunt and I dine with the Bladeses. Stupid old fellow, the admiral, and bad wine—which is unpardonable; but we must go—*on n'a que sa parole*, hey? Tell Winton that I had meditated joining him, and that I have still some of that Château Margaux he liked. Halden's father I know well. Tell him so. Bring him here. Maria, send a Thursday card to Lord Halden! You must bring him here to dinner, Philip. *That's* the best way to make acquaintance, my boy!" And the little man swaggers off, waving a bed-candle, as if he was going to quaff a bumper of sparkling sperm-aceti.

The mention of such great personages as Lord Halden and Mr. Winton silenced the reproofs of the pensive Agnes.

"You won't care for our quiet fireside while you live with those fine people, Philip," she sighed. There was no talk now of his throwing himself away on bad company.

So Philip did not dine with his relatives: but Talbot Twysden took good care to let Lord Ringwood know how young Firmin had offered to dine with his aunt that day after refusing his lordship. And every thing to Phil's discredit, and every act of extravagance or wildness which the young man committed, did Phil's uncle, and Phil's cousin Ringwood Twysden, convey to the old nobleman. Had not these been the informers, Lord Ringwood would have been angry; for he exacted obedience and servility from all round about him. But it was pleasanter to vex the Twysdens than to scold and brow-beat Philip, and so his lordship chose to laugh and be amused at Phil's insubordination. He saw, too, other things of which he did not speak. He was a wily old man, who could afford to be blind upon occasion.

What do you judge from the fact that Philip was ready to make or break engagements at a young lady's instigation? When you were twenty years old, had no young ladies an influence over you? Were they not commonly older than yourself? Did your youthful passion lead to

any thing, and are you very sorry now that it did not? Suppose you had had your soul's wish and married her, of what age would she be now? And now when you go into the world and see her, *do* you on your conscience very much regret that the little affair came to an end? Is it that (lean, or fat, or stumpy, or tall) woman with all those children whom you once chose to break your heart about; and do you still envy Jones? Philip was in love with his cousin, no doubt, but at the university had he not been previously in love with the Tomkinsian professor's daughter, Miss Budd; and had he not already written verses to Miss Flower, his neighbor's daughter in Old Parr Street? And don't young men always begin by falling in love with ladies older than themselves? Agnes certainly was Philip's senior, as her sister constantly took care to inform him.

And Agnes might have told stories about Blanche, if she chose—as you may about me, and I about you. Not quite true stories, but stories with enough alloy of lies to make them serviceable coin; stories such as we hear daily in the world; stories such as we read in the most learned and conscientious history-books, which are told by the most respectable persons, and perfectly authentic until contradicted. It is only *our* histories that can't be contradicted (unless, to be sure, novelists contradict themselves, as sometimes they will). What *we* say about people's virtues, failings, characters, you may be sure is all true. And I defy any man to assert that my opinion of the Twysden family is malicious, or unkind, or unfounded in any particular. Agnes wrote verses, and set her own and other writers' poems to music. Blanche was scientific, and attended the Albemarle Street lectures sedulously. They are both clever women as times go; well-educated and accomplished, and very well-mannered when they choose to be pleasant. If you were a bachelor, say, with a good fortune, or a widower who wanted consolation, or a lady giving very good parties and belonging to the *monde*, you would find them agreeable people. If you were a little Treasury clerk, or a young barrister with no practice, or a lady, old or young, *not* quite of the *monde*, your opinion of them would not be so favorable. I have seen them cut, and scorn, and avoid, and caress, and kneel down and worship the same person. When Mrs. Lovel first gave parties, don't I remember the shocked countenances of the Twysden family? Were ever shoulders colder, than yours, dear girls? Now they love her; they fondle her step-children; they praise her to her face and behind her handsome back; they take her hand in public; they call her by her Christian name; they fall into ecstasies over her toilets, and would fetch coals for her dressing-room fire if she but gave them the word. *She is not changed. She is the same lady who once was a governess, and no colder and no warmer since then.* But, you see, her prosperity has brought virtues into evidence, which people did not perceive when she was poor. Could

people see Cinderella's beauty when she was in rags by the fire, or until she stepped out of her fairy coach in her diamonds? How *are* you to recognize a diamond in a dust-hole? Only very clever eyes can do that. Whereas a lady, in a fairy coach and eight, naturally creates a sensation; and enraptured princes come and beg to have the honor of dancing with her.

In the character of infallible historian, then, I declare that if Miss Twysden at three-and-twenty feels ever so much or little attachment for her cousin who is not yet of age, there is no reason to be angry with her. A brave, handsome, blundering, downright young fellow, with broad shoulders, high spirits, and quite fresh blushes on his face, with very good talents (though he has been woefully idle, and requested to absent himself temporarily from his university), the possessor of a competent fortune and the heir of another, may naturally make some impression on a lady's heart with whom kinsmanship and circumstance bring him into daily communion. When had any sound so hearty as Phil's laugh been heard in Beaunash Street? His jolly frankness touched his aunt, a clever woman. She would smile and say, "My dear Philip, it is not only what you say, but what you are going to say next, which keeps me in such a perpetual tremor." There may have been a time once when she was frank and cordial herself: ever so long ago, when she and her sister were two blooming girls, lovingly clinging together, and just stepping forth into the world. But if you succeed in keeping a fine house on a small income; in showing a cheerful face to the world though oppressed with ever so much care; in bearing with dutiful reverence an intolerable old bore of a husband (and I vow it is this quality in Mrs. Twysden for which I most admire her); in submitting to defeats patiently; to humiliations with smiles, so as to hold your own in your darling *monde*; you may succeed, but you must give up being frank and cordial. The marriage of her sister to the doctor gave Maria Ringwood a great panic, for Lord Ringwood was furious when the news came. Then, perhaps, she sacrificed a little private passion of her own: then she set her cap at a noble young neighbor of my lord's who jilted *her*: then she took up with Talbot Twysden, Esquire, of the Powder and Pomatum Office, and made a very faithful wife to him, and was a very careful mother to his children. But as for frankness and cordiality, my good friend, accept from a lady what she can give you—good manners, pleasant talk, and decent attention. If you go to her breakfast-table, don't ask for a roc's egg, but eat that moderately fresh hen's egg which John brings you. When Mrs. Twysden is in her open carriage in the Park, how prosperous, handsome, and jolly she looks—the girls how smiling and young (that is, you know, *considering all things*); the horses look fat, the coachman and footman wealthy and sleek; they exchange bows with the tenants of other carriages—well-known aristocrats. Jones and Brown, leaning over the railings, and sec-

ing the Twysden equipage pass, have not the slightest doubt that it contains people of the highest wealth and fashion. "I say, Jones, my boy, what noble family has the motto, *Wel done Twys done?* and what clipping girls there were in that barouche!" B. remarks to J., "and what a handsome young swell that is riding the bay mare, and leaning over and talking to the yellow-haired girl!" And it is evident to one of those gentlemen, at least, that he has been looking at your regular first-rate tip-top people.

As for Phil Firmin on his bay mare with his geranium in his button-hole, there is no doubt that Philippus looks as handsome, and as rich, and as brave as any lord. And I think Jones must have felt a little pang when his friend told him, "That a lord! Bless you, it's only a swell doctor's son." But while J. and B. fancy all the little party very happy, they do not hear Phil whisper to his cousin, "I hope you liked your partner last night?" and they do not see how anxious Mrs. Twysden is under her smiles, how she perceives Colonel Shafto's cab coming up (the dancer in question), and how she would rather have Phil any where than by that particular wheel of her carriage; how Lady Braglands has just passed them by without noticing them—Lady Braglands, who has a ball, and is determined *not* to ask that woman and her two endless girls; and how, though Lady Braglands won't see Mrs. Twysden in her great staring equipage, and the three faces which have been beaming smiles at her, she instantly perceives Lady Lovel, who is passing enconcealed in her little brougham, and kisses her fingers twenty times over. How should poor J. and B., who are not, *vous comprenez, du monde*, understand these mysteries?

"That's young Firmin, is it, that handsome young fellow?" says Brown to Jones.

"Doctor married the Earl of Ringwood's niece—ran away with her, you know."

"Good practice?"

"Capital. First-rate. All the tip-top people. Great ladies' doctor. Can't do without him. Makes a fortune, besides what he had with his wife."

"We've seen his name—the old man's—on some very queer paper," says B. with a wink to J. By which I conclude they are city gentlemen. And they look very hard at friend Philip, as he comes to talk and shake hands with some pedestrians who are gazing over the railings at the busy and pleasant Park scene.

CHAPTER V.

THE NOBLE KINSMAN.

HAVING had occasion to mention a noble earl once or twice, I am sure no polite reader will consent that his lordship should push through this history along with the crowd of commoner characters, and without a special word regarding himself. If you are in the least familiar with Burke or Debrett, you know that the an-



cient family of Ringwood has long been famous for its great possessions, and its loyalty to the British crown.

In the troubles which unhappily agitated this kingdom after the deposition of the late reigning house, the Ringwoods were implicated with many other families; but on the accession of his Majesty George III. these differences happily ended, nor had the monarch any subject more loyal and devoted than Sir John Ringwood, Baronet, of Wingate and Whipham Market. Sir John's influence sent three members to Parliament; and during the dangerous and vexatious period of the American war this influence was exerted so cordially and consistently in the cause of order and the crown that his Majesty thought fit to advance Sir John to the dignity of Baron Ringwood. Sir John's brother, Sir Francis Ringwood, of Appleshaw, who followed the profession of the law, also was promoted to be a Baron of his Majesty's Court of Exchequer. The first baron, dying A.D. 1786, was succeeded by the eldest of his two sons—John, second Baron and first Earl of Ringwood. His lordship's brother, the Honorable Colonel Philip Ringwood, died gloriously, at the head of his regiment and in the defense of his country, in the battle of Busaco, 1810, leaving two daughters, Lonisa and Maria, who henceforth lived with the earl their uncle.

The Earl of Ringwood had but one son, Charles Viscount Cingbars, who, unhappily, died of a decline, in his twenty-second year. And thus the descendants of Sir Francis Ringwood became heirs to the earl's great estates of Wingate and Whipham Market, though not of the peerages

which had been conferred on the earl and his father.

Lord Ringwood had, living with him, two nieces, daughters of his late brother, Colonel Philip Ringwood, who fell in the Peninsular War. Of these ladies, the youngest, Louisa, was his lordship's favorite; and though both the ladies had considerable fortunes of their own, it was supposed their uncle would further provide for them, especially as he was on no very good terms with his cousin, Sir John of the Shaw, who took the Whig side in politics, while his lordship was a chief of the Tory party.

Of these two nieces, the eldest, Maria, never any great favorite with her uncle, married, 1824, Talbot Twysden, Esq., a Commissioner of Powder and Pomatum Tax; but the youngest, Louisa, incurred my lord's most serious anger by eloping with George Brant Firmin, Esq., M.D., a young gentleman of Cambridge University, who had been with Lord Cinquars when he died at Naples, and had brought home his body to Wingate Castle.

The quarrel with the youngest niece, and the indifference with which he generally regarded the elder (whom his lordship was in the habit of calling an old schemer), occasioned at first a little *rapprochement* between Lord Ringwood and his heir, Sir John of Appleshaw; but both gentlemen were very firm, not to say obstinate, in their natures. They had a quarrel with respect to the cutting off of a small entailed property, of which the earl wished to dispose; and they parted with much rancor and bad language on his lordship's part, who was an especially free-spoken nobleman, and apt to call a spade a spade, as the saying is.

After this difference, and to spite his heir, it was supposed that the Earl of Ringwood would marry. He was a little more than seventy years of age, and had once been of a very robust constitution. And though his temper was violent and his person not at all agreeable (for even in Sir Thomas Lawrence's picture his countenance is very ill-favored), there is little doubt he could have found a wife for the asking among the young beauties of his own county, or the fairest of May Fair.

But he was a cynical nobleman, and perhaps morbidly conscious of his own ungainly appearance. "Of course I can buy a wife" (his lordship would say). "Do you suppose people won't sell their daughters to a man of my rank and means? Now look at me, my good Sir, and say whether any woman alive could fall in love with me? I have been married, and once was enough. I hate ugly women, and your virtuous women, who tremble and cry in private, and preach at a man, bore me. Sir John Ringwood of Appleshaw is an ass, and I hate him; but I don't hate him enough to make myself miserable for the rest of my days, in order to spite him. When I drop, I drop. Do you suppose I care what comes after me?" And with much sardonical humor this old lord used to play off one good dowager after another who would bring her

girl in his way. He would send pearls to Emily, diamonds to Fanny, opera-boxes to lively Kate, books of devotion to pious Selinda, and, at the season's end, drive back to his lonely great castle in the west. They were all the same, such was his lordship's opinion. I fear, a wicked and corrupt old gentleman, my dears. But ah, would not a woman submit to some sacrifices to reclaim that unhappy man; to lead that gifted but lost being into the ways of right; to convert to a belief in woman's purity that erring soul? They tried him with high-church altarcloths for his chapel at Wingate; they tried him with low-church tracts; they danced before him; they jumped fences on horseback; they wore bandeaux or ringlets, according as his taste dictated; they were always at home when he called, and poor you and I were gruffly told they were engaged; they gushed in gratitude over his bouquets; they sang for him, and their mothers, concealing their sobs, murmured, "What an angel that Cecilia of mine is!" Every variety of delicious chaff they flung to that old bird. But he was uncaught at the end of the season: he winged his way back to his western hills. And if you dared to say that Mrs. Netley had tried to take him, or Lady Trapboys had set a snare for him, you know you were a wicked, gross calumniator, and notorious every where for your dull and vulgar abuse of women.

Now, in the year 1830, it happened that this great nobleman was seized with a fit of the gout, which had very nearly consigned his estates to his kinsman, the Baronet of Appleshaw. A revolution took place in a neighboring State. An illustrious reigning family was expelled from its country, and projects of reform (which would pretty certainly end in revolution) were rife in ours. The events in France, and those pending at home, so agitated Lord Ringwood's mind that he was attacked by one of the severest fits of gout under which he ever suffered. His shrieks, as he was brought out of his yacht at Ryde to a house taken for him in the town, were dreadful; his language to all persons about him was frightfully expressive, as Lady Quamley and her daughter, who had sailed with him several times, can vouch. An ill return that rude old man made for all their kindness and attention to him. They had danced on board his yacht; they had dined on board his yacht; they had been out sailing with him, and cheerfully braved the inconveniences of the deep in his company. And when they ran to the side of his chair—as what would they not do to soothe an old gentleman in illness and distress?—when they ran up to his chair as it was wheeled along the pier, he called mother and daughter by the most vulgar and opprobrious names, and roared out to them to go to a place which I certainly shall not more particularly mention.

Now it happened, at this period, that Dr. and Mrs. Firmin were at Ryde with their little boy, then some three years of age. The doctor was already taking his place as one of the most fashionable physicians then in London, and had be-

gun to be celebrated for the treatment of this especial malady. (Firmin on "Gout and Rheumatism" was, you remember, dedicated to his Majesty George IV.) Lord Ringwood's valet bethought him of calling the doctor in, and mentioned how he was present in the town. Now Lord Ringwood was a nobleman who never would allow his angry feelings to stand in the way of his present comforts or ease. He instantly desired Mr. Firmin's attendance, and submitted to his treatment; a part of which was a *hanteur* to the full as great as that which the sick man exhibited. Firmin's appearance was so tall and grand, that he looked vastly more noble than a great many noblemen. Six feet, a high manner, a polished forehead, a flashing eye, a snowy shirt-frill, a rolling velvet collar, a beautiful hand appearing under a velvet cuff—all these advantages he possessed and used. He did not make the slightest allusion to by-gones, but treated his patient with a perfect courtesy and an impenetrable self-possession.

This defiant and darkling politeness did not always displease the old man. He was so accustomed to slavish compliance and eager obedience from all people round about him, that he sometimes wearied of their servility, and relished a little independence. Was it from calculation, or because he was a man of high spirit, that Firmin determined to maintain an independent course with his lordship? From the first day of their meeting he never departed from it, and had the satisfaction of meeting with only civil behavior from his noble relative and patient, who was notorious for his rudeness and brutality to almost every person who came in his way.

From hints which his lordship gave in conversation, he showed the doctor that he was acquainted with some particulars of the latter's early career. It had been wild and stormy. Firmin had incurred debts; had quarreled with his father; had left the university and gone abroad; had lived in a wild society, which used dice and cards every night, and pistols sometimes in the morning; and had shown a fearful dexterity in the use of the latter instrument, which he employed against the person of a famous Italian adventurer, who fell under his hand at Naples. When this century was five-and-twenty years younger, the crack of the pistol-shot might still occasionally be heard in the suburbs of London in the very early morning; and the dice-box went round in many a haunt of pleasure. The knights of the Four Kings traveled from capital to capital, and engaged each other, or made prey of the unwary. Now, the times are changed. The cards are confined in their boxes. Only *sous-officiers*, brawling in their provincial cafés over their dominoes, fight duels. "Ah, dear me!" I heard a veteran punter sigh the other day, at Bays's, "isn't it a melancholy thing to think that if I wanted to amuse myself with a fifty-pound note, I don't know the place in London where I could go and lose it?" And he fondly recounted the names of twenty places

where he could have cheerfully staked and lost his money in his young time.

After a somewhat prolonged absence abroad, Mr. Firmin came back to this country, was permitted to return to the university, and left it with the degree of Bachelor of Medicine. We have told how he ran away with Lord Ringwood's niece, and incurred the anger of that nobleman. Beyond abuse and anger his lordship was powerless. The young lady was free to marry whom she liked, and her uncle to disown or receive him; and accordingly she was, as we have seen, disowned by his lordship, until he found it convenient to forgive her. What were Lord Ringwood's intentions regarding his property, what were his accumulations, and who his heirs would be, no one knew. Meanwhile, of course, there were those who felt a very great interest on the point. Mrs. Twysden and her husband and children were hungry and poor. If Uncle Ringwood had money to leave, it would be very welcome to those three darlings, whose father had not a great income like Dr. Firmin. Philip was a dear, good, frank, amiable, wild fellow, and they all loved him. But he had his faults—that could not be concealed—and so poor Phil's faults were pretty constantly canvassed before Uncle Ringwood, by dear relatives who knew them only too well. The dear relatives! How kind they are! I don't think Phil's aunt abused him to my lord. That quiet woman calmly and gently put forward the claims of her own darlings, and affectionately dilated on the young man's present prosperity and magnificent future prospects. The interest of thirty thousand pounds now, and the inheritance of his father's great accumulations! What young man could want for more? Perhaps he had too much already. Perhaps he was too rich to work. The sly old peer acquiesced in his niece's statements, and perfectly understood the point toward which they tended. "A thousand a year! What's a thousand a year?" growled the old lord. "Not enough to make a gentleman, more than enough to make a fellow idle."

"Ah, indeed, it was but a small income," sighed Mrs. Twysden. "With a large house, a good establishment, and Mr. Twysden's salary from his office—it was but a pittance."

"Pittance! Starvation," growls my lord, with his usual frankness. "Don't I know what housekeeping costs; and see how you screw? Butlers and footmen, carriages and job-horses, rent and dinners—though yours, Maria, are not famous."

"Very bad—I know they are very bad," says the contrite lady. "I wish we could afford any better."

"Afford any better? Of course you can't. You are the crockery pots, and you swim down stream with the brass pots. I saw Twysden the other day walking down St. James's Street with Rhodes—that tall fellow." (Here my lord laughed, and showed many fangs, the exhibition of which gave a peculiarly fierce air to his lordship when in good-humor.) "If Twysden walks with

a big fellow, he always tries to keep step with him. You know that." Poor Maria naturally knew her husband's peculiarities; but she did not say that she had no need to be reminded of them.

"He was so blown he could hardly speak," continued Uncle Ringwood; "but he would stretch his little legs, and try and keep up. He has a little body, *le cher mari*, but a good pluck. Those little fellows often have. I've seen him half dead out shooting, and plunging over the plowed fields after fellows with twice his stride. Why don't men sink in the world, I want to know? Instead of a fine house, and a parcel of idle servants, why don't you have a maid and a leg of mutton, Maria? You go half crazy in trying to make both ends meet. You know you do. It keeps you awake of nights; I know that very well. You've got a house fit for people with four times your money. I lend you my cook and so forth; but I can't come and dine with you unless I send the wine in. Why don't you have a pot of porter, and a joint, or some tripe?—tripe's a famous good thing. The miseries which people entail on themselves in trying to live beyond their means are perfectly ridiculous, by George! Look at that fellow who opened the door to me; he's as tall as one of my own men. Go and live in a quiet little street in Belgravia somewhere, and have a neat little maid. Nobody will think a penny the worse of you—and you will be just as well off as if you lived here with an extra couple of thousand a year. The advice I am giving you is worth half that, every shilling of it."

"It is very good advice; but I think, Sir, I should prefer the thousand pounds," said the lady.

"Of course you would. That is the consequence of your false position. One of the good points about that doctor is, that he is as proud as Lucifer, and so is his boy. They are not always hungering after money. They keep their independence; though he'll have his own too, the fellow will. Why, when I first called him in, I thought, as he was a relation, he'd doctor me for nothing; but he wouldn't. He would have his fee, by George! and wouldn't come without it. Confounded independent fellow Firmin is. And so is the young one."

But when Twysden and his son (perhaps inspirited by Mrs. Twysden) tried once or twice to be independent in the presence of this lion, he roared, and he rushed at them, and he rent them, so that they fled from him howling. And this reminds me of an old story I have heard—quite an old, old story, such as kind old fellows at clubs love to remember—of my lord, when he was only Lord Cinqbars, insulting a half-pay lieutenant, in his own country, who horsewhipped his lordship in the most private and ferocious manner. It was said Lord Cinqbars had had a *rencontre* with poachers; but it was my lord who was poaching and the lieutenant who was defending his own dove-cot. I do not say that this was a model nobleman; but that, when his own

passions or interests did not mislead him, he was a nobleman of very considerable acuteness, humor, and good sense; and could give quite good advice on occasion. If men would kneel down and kiss his boots, well and good. There was the blacking, and you were welcome to embrace toe and heel. But those who would not were free to leave the operation alone. The Pope himself does not demand the ceremony from Protestants; and if they object to the slipper, no one thinks of forcing it into their mouths. Phil and his father probably declined to tremble before the old man, not because they knew he was a bully who might be put down, but because they were men of spirit, who cared not whether a man was bully or no.

I have told you I like Philip Firmin, though it must be confessed that the young fellow had many faults, and that his career, especially his early career, was by no means exemplary. Have I ever excused his conduct to his father, or said a word in apology of his brief and inglorious university career? I acknowledge his shortcomings with that candor which my friends exhibit in speaking of mine. Who does not see a friend's weaknesses, and is so blind that he can not perceive that enormous beam in his neighbor's eye? Only a woman or two, from time to time. And even they are undeceived some day. A man of the world, I write about my friends as mundane fellow-creatures. Do you suppose there are many angels here? I say again, perhaps a woman or two. But as for you and me, my good Sir, are there any signs of wings sprouting from our shoulder-blades? Be quiet. Don't pursue your snarling, cynical remarks, but go on with your story.

As you go through life, stumbling, and slipping, and staggering to your feet again, ruefully aware of your own wretched weakness, and praying, with a contrite heart let us trust, that you may not be led into temptation, have you not often looked at other fellow-sinners, and speculated with an awful interest on their career? Some there are on whom, quite in their early lives, dark Ahrimanes has seemed to lay his dread mark: children, yet corrupt, and wicked of tongue; tender of age, yet cruel; who should be truth-telling and generous yet (they were at their mothers' bosoms yesterday), but are false and cold and greedy before their time. Infants almost, they practice the art and selfishness of old men. Behind their candid faces are wiles and wickedness, and a hideous precocity of artifice. I can recall such, and in the vista of far-off, unforgotten boyhood, can see marching that sad little procession of *enfants perdus*. May they be saved, pray Heaven! Then there is the doubtful class, those who are still on trial; those who fall and rise again; those who are often worsted in life's battle; beaten down, wounded, imprisoned; but escape and conquer sometimes. And then there is the happy class about whom there seems no doubt at all: the spotless and white-robed ones, to whom virtue is easy; in whose pure bosoms faith nestles, and cold doubt

finds no entrance; who are children, and good; young men, and good; husbands and fathers, and yet good. Why could the captain of our school write his Greek Iambics without an effort, and without an error? Others of us blistered the page with unavailing tears and blots, and might toil ever so and come in lag last at the bottom of the form. Our friend Philip belongs to the middle class, in which you and I probably are, my dear Sir—not yet, I hope, irredeemably consigned to that awful third class, whereof mention has been made.

But, being *homo*, and liable to err, there is no doubt Mr. Philip exercised his privilege, and there was even no little fear at one time that he should overdraw his account. He went from school to the university, and there distinguished himself certainly, but in a way in which very few parents would choose that their sons should excel. That he should hunt, that he should give parties, that he should pull a good oar in one of the best boats on the river, that he should speak at the Union—all these were very well. But why should he speak such awful radicalism and republicanism—he with noble blood in his veins, and the son of a parent whose interest at least it was to keep well with people of high station?

“Why, Pendennis,” said Dr. Firmin to me with tears in his eyes, and much genuine grief exhibited on his handsome pale face—“why should it be said that Philip Firmin—both of whose grandfathers fought nobly for their king—should be forgetting the principles of his family, and—and, I haven’t words to tell you how deeply he disappoints me. Why, I actually heard of him at that horrible Union advocating the death of Charles the First! I was wild enough myself when I was at the university, but I was a gentleman.”

“Boys, Sir, are boys,” I urged. “They will advocate any thing for an argument; and Philip would have taken the other side quite as readily.”

“Lord Axminster and Lord St. Dennis told me of it at the club. I can tell you it has made a most painful impression,” cried the father. “That my son should be a radical and a republican, is a cruel thought for a father; and I, who had hoped for Lord Ringwood’s borough for him—who had hoped—who had hoped very much better things for him and from him. He is not a comfort to me. You saw how he treated me one night? A man might live on different terms, I think, with his only son!” And with a breaking voice, a pallid cheek, and a real grief at his heart, the unhappy physician moved away.

How had the doctor bred his son, that the young man should be thus unruly? Was the revolt the boy’s fault, or the father’s? Dr. Firmin’s horror seemed to be because his noble friends were horrified by Phil’s radical doctrine. At that time of my life, being young and very green, I had a little mischievous pleasure in infuriating Squaretoes, and causing him to pro-

nounce that I was “a dangerous man.” Now, I am ready to say that Nero was a monarch with many elegant accomplishments, and considerable natural amiability of disposition. I praise and admire success wherever I meet it. I make allowance for faults and short-comings, especially in my superiors; and feel that, did we know all, we should judge them very differently. People don’t believe me, perhaps, quite so much as formerly. But I don’t offend: I trust I don’t offend. Have I said any thing painful? Plague on my blunders! I recall the expression. I regret it. I contradict it flat.

As I am ready to find excuses for every body, let poor Philip come in for the benefit of this mild amnesty; and if he vexed his father, as he certainly did, let us trust—let us be thankfully sure—he was not so black as the old gentleman depicted him. Nay, if I have painted the Old Gentleman himself as rather black, who knows but that this was an error, not of his complexion, but of my vision? Phil was unruly because he was bold, and wild, and young. His father was hurt, naturally hurt, because of the boy’s extravagances and follies. They will come together again, as father and son should. These little differences of temper will be smoothed and equalized anon. The boy *has* led a wild life. He has been obliged to leave college. He has given his father hours of anxiety and nights of painful watching. But stay, father, what of you? Have you shown to the boy the practice of confidence, the example of love and honor? Did you accustom him to virtue, and teach truth to the child at your knee? “Honor your father and mother.” Amen. May his days be long who fulfills the command: but implied, though unwritten on the table, is there not the order, “Honor your son and daughter?” Pray Heaven that we, whose days are already not few in the land, may keep this ordinance too.

What had made Philip wild, extravagant, and insubordinate? Cured of that illness in which we saw him, he rose up, and from school went his way to the university, and there entered on a life such as wild young men will lead. From that day of illness his manner toward his father changed, and regarding the change the elder Firmin seemed afraid to question his son. He used the house as if his own, came and absented himself at will, ruled the servants, and was spoiled by them; spent the income which was settled on his mother and her children, and gave of it liberally to poor acquaintances. To the remonstrances of old friends he replied that he had a right to do as he chose with his own; that other men who were poor might work, but that he had enough to live on without grinding over classics and mathematics. He was implicated in more rows than one; his tutors saw him not, but he and the proctors became a great deal too well acquainted. If I were to give you a history of Mr. Philip Firmin at the university, it would be the story of an Idle Apprentice, of whom his pastors and masters were justified in prophesying evil. He was seen on lawless London excursions,

when his father and tutor supposed him unwell in his rooms in college. He made acquaintance with jolly companions, with whom his father grieved that he should be intimate. He cut the astonished Uncle Twysden in London Street, and blandly told him that he must be mistaken—he one Frenchman, he no speak English. He stared the master of his own college out of countenance, dashed back to college with a Turpin-like celerity, and was in rooms with a ready proved alibi when inquiries were made. I am afraid there is no doubt that Phil screwed up his tutor's door; Mr. Okes discovered him in the fact. He had to go down, the young prodigal. I wish I could say he was repentant. But he appeared before his father with the utmost nonchalance; said that he was doing no good at the university, and should be much better away, and then went abroad on a dashing tour to France and Italy, whither it is by no means our business to follow him. Something had poisoned the generous blood. The once kindly, honest lad was wild and reckless. He had money in sufficiency, his own horses and equipage, and free quarters in his father's house. But father and son scarce met, and seldom took a meal together. "I know his haunts, but I don't know his friends, Pendennis," the elder man said. "I don't think they are vicious, so much as low. I do not charge him with vice, mind you; but with idleness, and a fatal love of low company, and a frantic, suicidal determination to fling his chances in life away. Ah, think where he might be, and where he is!"

Where he was? Do not be alarmed. Philip was only idling. Philip might have been much more industriously, more profitably, and a great deal more wickedly employed. What is now called Bohemia had no name in Philip's young days, though many of us knew the country very well. A pleasant land, not fenced with drab stucco, like Tyburnia or Belgravia; not guarded by a huge standing army of footmen; not echoing with noble chariots; not replete with polite chintz drawing-rooms and neat tea-tables; a land over which hangs an endless fog, occasioned by much tobacco; a land of chambers, billiard-rooms, supper-rooms, oysters; a land of song; a land where soda-water flows freely in the morning; a land of tin-dish covers from taverns, and frothing porter; a land of lotos-eating (with lots of cayenne-pepper), of pulls on the river, of delicious reading of novels, magazines, and saunterings in many studios; a land where men call each other by their Christian names; where most are poor, where almost all are young, and where if a few oldsters do enter, it is because they have preserved more tenderly and carefully than other folks their youthful spirits, and the delightful capacity to be idle. I have lost my way to Bohemia now, but it is certain that Prague is the most picturesque city in the world.

Having long lived there, and indeed only lately quitted the Bohemian land at the time whereof I am writing, I could not quite participate in Dr. Firmin's indignation at his son persisting in

his bad courses and wild associates. When Firmin had been wild himself, he had fought, intrigued, and gambled in good company. Phil chose his friends among a banditti never heard of in fashionable quarters. Perhaps he liked to play the prince in the midst of these associates, and was not averse to the flattery which a full purse brought him among men most of whose pockets had a meagre lining. He had not emigrated to Bohemia, and settled there altogether. At school and in his brief university career he had made some friends who lived in the world, and with whom he was still familiar. "These come and knock at my front door, my father's door," he would say, with one of his old laughs; "the Bandits, who have the signal, enter only by the dissecting-room. I know which are the most honest, and that it is not always the poor Freebooters who best deserve to be hanged."

Like many a young gentleman who has no intention of pursuing legal studies seriously, Philip entered at an inn of court, and kept his terms duly, though he vowed that his conscience would not allow him to practice (I am not defending the opinions of this squeamish moralist—only stating them). His acquaintance here lay among the Temple Bohemians. He had part of a set of chambers in Parchment Buildings, to be sure, and you might read on a door, "Mr. Cassidy, Mr. P. Firmin, Mr. Vanjohn;" but were these gentlemen likely to advance Philip in life? Cassidy was a newspaper reporter, and young Vanjohn a betting man who was always attending races. Dr. Firmin had a horror of newspaper men, and considered they belonged to the dangerous classes, and treated them with a distant affability.

"Look at the governor, Pen," Philip would say to the present chronicler. "He always watches you with a secret suspicion, and has never got over his wonder at your being a gentleman. I like him when he does the Lord Chatham business, and condescends toward you, and gives you his hand to kiss. He considers he is your better, don't you see? Oh, he is a paragon of a *père noble*, the governor is! and I ought to be a young Sir Charles Grandison." And the young scape-grace would imitate his father's smile, and the doctor's manner of laying his hand to his breast and putting out his neat right leg, all of which movements or postures were, I own, rather pompous and affected.

Whatever the paternal faults were, you will say that Philip was not the man to criticise them; nor in this matter shall I attempt to defend him. My wife has a little pensioner whom she found wandering in the street, and singing a little artless song. The child could not speak yet—only warble its little song; and had thus strayed away from home, and never once knew of her danger. We kept her for a while, until the police found her parents. Our servants bathed her, and dressed her, and sent her home in such neat clothes as the poor little wretch had never seen until fortune sent her in the way of those good-natured folks. She pays

them frequent visits. When she goes away from us, she is always neat and clean; when she comes to us, she is in rags and dirty. A wicked little slattern! And, pray, whose duty is it to keep her clean? and has not the parent in this case forgotten to honor her daughter? Suppose there is some reason which prevents Philip from loving his father—that the doctor has neglected to cleanse the boy's heart, and by carelessness and indifference has sent him erring into the world. If so, woe be to that doctor! If I take my little son to the tavern to dinner, shall I not assuredly pay? If I suffer him in tender youth to go astray, and harm comes to him, whose is the fault?

Perhaps the very outrages and irregularities of which Phil's father complained were in some degree occasioned by the elder's own faults. He was so laboriously obsequious to great men that the son in a rage defied and avoided them. He was so grave, so polite, so complimentary, so artificial, that Phil, in revolt at such hypocrisy, chose to be frank, cynical, and familiar. The grave old bigwigs whom the doctor loved to assemble, bland and solemn men of the ancient school, who dined solemnly with each other at their solemn old houses—such men as old Lord Botley, Baron Bumpsher, Cricklade (who published "*Travels in Asia Minor*," 4to, 1804), the Bishop of St. Bees, and the like—wagged their old heads sadly when they colloqued in clubs, and talked of poor Firmin's scape-grace of a son. He would come to no good; he was giving his good father much pain; he had been in all sorts of rows and disturbances at the university, and the master of Boniface reported most unfavorably of him. And at the solemn dinners in Old Parr Street—the admirable, costly, silent dinners—he treated these old gentlemen with a familiarity which caused the old heads to shake with surprise and choking indignation. Lord Botley and Baron Bumpsher had proposed and seconded Firmin's boy at the Megatherium club. The pallid old boys toddled away in alarm when he made his appearance there. He brought a smell of tobacco-smoke with him. He was capable of smoking in the drawing-room itself. They trembled before Philip, who, for his part, used to relish their senile anger; and loved, as he called it, to tie all their pigtails together.

In no place was Philip seen or heard to so little advantage as in his father's house. "I feel like a humbug myself among those old humbugs," he would say to me. "Their old jokes, and their old compliments, and their virtuous old conversation sickened me. Are all old men humbugs, I wonder?" It is not pleasant to hear misanthropy from young lips, and to find eyes that are scarce twenty years old already looking out with distrust on the world.

In other houses than his own I am bound to say Philip was much more amiable, and he carried with him a splendor of gayety and cheerfulness which brought sunshine and welcome into many a room which he frequented. I have

said that many of his companions were artists and journalists, and their clubs and haunts were his own. Ridley the Academician had Mrs. Brandon's rooms in Thornhaugh Street, and Philip was often in J. J.'s studio, or in the widow's little room below. He had a very great tenderness and affection for her; her presence seemed to purify him; and in her company the boisterous, reckless young man was invariably gentle and respectful. Her eyes used to fill with tears when she spoke about him; and when he was present, followed and watched him with sweet motherly devotion. It was pleasant to see him at her homely little fireside, and hear his jokes and prattle, with a fatuous old father, who was one of Mrs. Brandon's lodgers. Philip would play cribbage for hours with this old man, frisk about him with a hundred harmless jokes, and walk out by his invalid chair, when the old captain went to sun himself in the New Road. He was an idle fellow, Philip, that's the truth. He had an agreeable perseverance in doing nothing, and would pass half a day in perfect contentment over his pipe, watching Ridley at his easel. J. J. painted that charming head of Philip which hangs in Mrs. Brandon's little room—with the fair hair, the tawny beard and whiskers, and the bold blue eye.

Phil had a certain after-supper song of "*Garryowen na Gloria*," which it did you good to hear, and which, when sung at his full pitch, you might hear for a mile round. One night I had been to dine in Russell Square, and was brought home in his carriage by Dr. Firmin, who was of the party. As we came through Soho the windows of a certain club-room called the "*Haunt*" were open, and we could hear Philip's song booming through the night, and especially a certain wild Irish war-whoop with which it concluded, amidst universal applause and enthusiastic battering of glasses.

The poor father sank back in the carriage as though a blow had struck him. "Do you hear his voice?" he groaned out. "Those are his haunts. My son, who might go any where, prefers to be captain in a pot-house, and sing songs in a tap-room!"

I tried to make the best of the case. I knew there was no harm in the place; that clever men of considerable note frequented it. But the wounded father was not to be consoled by such commonplaces; and a deep and natural grief oppressed him, in consequence of the faults of his son.

What ensued by no means surprised me. Among Dr. Firmin's patients was a maiden lady of suitable age and large fortune, who looked upon the accomplished doctor with favorable eyes. That he should take a companion to cheer him in his solitude was natural enough, and all his friends concurred in thinking that he should marry. Every one had cognizance of the quiet little courtship, except the doctor's son, between whom and his father there were only too many secrets.

Some man in a club asked Philip whether he should condole with him or congratulate him on his father's approaching marriage? His what? The younger Firmin exhibited the greatest surprise and agitation on hearing of this match. He ran home: he awaited his father's return. When Dr. Firmin came home and betook himself to his study, Philip confronted him there. "This must be a lie, Sir, which I have heard to-day," the young man said, fiercely.

"A lie! what lie, Philip?" asked the father. They were both very resolute and courageous men.

"That you are going to marry Miss Benson?"

"Do you make my house so happy that I don't need any other companion?" asked the father.

"That's not the question," said Philip, hotly. "You can't and mustn't marry that lady, Sir."

"And why not, Sir?"

"Because in the eyes of God and heaven you

are married already, Sir. And I swear I will tell Miss Benson the story to-morrow, if you persist in your plan."

"So you know that story?" groaned the father.

"Yes. God forgive you," said the son.

"It was a fault of my youth that has been bitterly repented."

"A fault!—a crime!" said Philip.

"Enough, Sir! Whatever my fault, it is not for you to charge me with it."

"If you won't guard your own honor, I must. I shall go to Miss Benson now."

"If you go out of this house you don't pretend to return to it?"

"Be it so. Let us settle our accounts, and part, Sir."

"Philip, Philip! you break my heart," cried the father.

"You don't suppose mine is very light, Sir?" said the son.

Philip never had Miss Benson for a mother-in-law. But father and son loved each other no better after their dispute.

WOOL-GATHERING.

I.

A PLEASANT golden light fills all the chamber where I sit,
The amber curtains close are drawn, and shadows o'er them flit—
The swaying, shifting shadows of the honey-suckle vine,
Whose bare and leafless branches still about the porch entwine:
In summer, fresh and fair they grow, with blossoms for the bees,
But now in wintry nakedness they swing upon the breeze;
Yet here, inside, 'tis warm and bright, and I am quite inclined
To let this golden *demi-jour* make summer in my mind:
I sit with JACK—my terrier-dog—upon my lap curled up,
And, smoking thoughtfully, I seem to sip the classic cup
The Ancients called *Nepenthe*—'tis a draught that brings repose
When one has lived or loved too much—a balm for mental woes.
Yet, in this same *Nepenthe* cup, I know that some will see
Another name for laziness—a common fault with me!

II.

Well, why not preach up laziness? I think it would be well
If some who cry it down a sin could only feel its spell!
The hard, ascetic natures—those who look for naught but Use
In every thing one says or does—whose spirits are obtuse
To all the glorious gains of Art, to all the joys of sense,
And who cut their hard paths straightly by POOR RICHARD'S eloquence!
Cui bono? Is there not a Power above the human mind
That works out all our problems, be they e'er so darkly blind?
And, after all, does Man, the unit, when his life is done
Ever look back upon its field to see the battle won?
No; I think not: we lay our plans, but when our life-star pales
We learn that human prescience inevitably fails;
NAPOLEON on his island—COLUMBUS in his chains—
Are these the proud successes, then, for which we take such pains?