

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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VERY HARD CASH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND."

CHAPTER XLI.

DR. SHORT arrived, approved Dr. Phillips's treatment, and said the case was severe but not hopeless, and he would call again. A bed was prepared in the house for Mr. Hardie: but neither he nor any of the Dodds closed an eye that sorrowful night.

About midnight, after a short slumber, the sufferer became uneasy, and begged to be left with Julia. Julia was sent for, and found her a good deal excited. She inquired more than once if they were quite alone, and then asked for paper and a pencil. She wrote a few lines, and made Julia put them in a cover and seal them. "Now dear friend," she said, "promise me not to open this, nor even to let your mother; it is not for your happiness that what I have written should be seen by her or you; no, no, much better not. Come; dear friend, pledge me your honour." Julia pledged her honour.

Then Jane wrote on the cover, "From a dying sister." Julia saw that; and wept sore.

Jane comforted her. "Do not weep for me, love: I am content to go, or stay. This is not my doing; so I know it must be for the best. He is leading me by a way that I know not. Oh my beloved friend, how sweet it is to lie in His hands, and know no will but His. Ay, I thank Him for crossing my will, and leading me to himself by His own good way, and not by poor blind, foolish, mine."

In this spirit of full resignation she abode constant, and consoled her weeping friends from time to time, whenever she was quite herself.

About daybreak, being alone with her father, she shed a few tears at his lonely condition. "I fear you will miss me," said she. "Take my advice, dear; be reconciled with Alfred at once, and let Julia be your daughter, since I am leaving you. She is all humility and heart. Dying, I prize her and her affection more highly; I seem to see characters clearer, all things clearer, than I did before my summons came."

The miserable father tried to be playful and scold her: "You must not talk nor think of death," he said. "Your bridal-day is to come first; I know all; Edward Dodd has told me he loves

you. He is a fine noble fellow; you shall marry him: I wish it. Now, for his sake, summon all your resolution, and make up your mind to live. Why, at your age, it needs but to say, 'I will live, I will, I will;' and when all the prospect is so smiling, when love awaits you at the altar, and on every side! If you could leave your poor dotting father, do not leave your lover: and here he is with his mother crying for you. Let me comfort him; let me tell him you will live for his sake and mine."

Even this could not disturb the dying Christian. "Dear Edward," she said; "it is sweet to know he loves me. Ah, well, he is young; he must live without me till I become but a tender memory of his youth. And oh, I pray for him that he may cherish the words I have spoken to him for his soul's good, far longer than he can remember these features that are hastening to decay."

At ten in the morning Mr. Hardie's messenger returned without Alfred, and with a note from Dr. Wycherley to this effect: that the order for Alfred's admission into his asylum being signed by Mr. Thomas Hardie, he could not send him out even for a day except on Thomas Hardie's authority; it would be a violation of the law. Under the circumstances, however, he thought he might venture to receive that order by telegraph. If then Mr. Hardie would telegraph Thomas Hardie in Yorkshire to telegraph him (Wycherley), Alfred should be sent with two keepers wherever Mr. T. Hardie should so direct.

Now Mr. Hardie had already repented of sending for Alfred at all. So, instead of telegraphing Yorkshire, he remained passive, and said sullenly to Mrs. Dodd, "Alfred can't come, it seems."

Thus Routine kept the brother from his dying sister.

They told Jane, with aching hearts, there was reason to fear Alfred could not arrive that day.

She only gave a meaning look at Julia, about the paper; and then she said with a little sigh, "God's will be done."

This was the last disappointment Heaven allowed Earth to inflict on her; and the shield of Faith turned its edge.

One hour of pain, another of delirium, and now the clouds that darken this mortal life seemed to part and pass, and Heaven to open full upon

her. She spoke of her coming change no longer with resignation; it was with rapture. "Oh!" she cried, "to think that from this very day I shall never sin again, shall never again offend Him by unholy temper, by un-Christ-like behaviour!"

The strong and healthy wept and groaned aloud; but she they sorrowed for was all celestial bliss. In her lifetime she had her ups and downs of religious fervour; was not without feverish heats, and cold misgivings and depression; but all these fled at that dread hour when the wicked are a prey to dark misgivings, or escape into apathy. This timid girl, that would have screamed at a scratch, met the King of Terrors with smiles and triumph. For her the grave was Jordan, and death was but the iron gate of life everlasting. *Mors janua vitæ*. Yet once or twice she took herself to task: but only to show she knew what the All-Pure had forgiven her. "I often was wanting in humility," she said. "I almost think that if I were to be sent back again into this world of sin and sorrow I am leaving behind, I should grow a little in humility; for I know the ripe Christian is like the ripe corn, holds his head lower than when he was green; and the grave it seems to be ripening *me*. But what does it matter? since He who died for me is content to take me as I am. Come quickly, Lord Jesus, oh, come quickly! Relieve Thy servant of the burden of the flesh, and of the sins and foibles that cling to it, and keep her these many years from Thee."

This prayer was granted; the body failed more and more; she could not swallow even a drop of wine; she could not even praise Her Redeemer: that is to say, she could not speak. Yet she lay and triumphed. With hands put together in prayer, and eyes full of praise and joy unspeakable, she climbed fast to God. While she so mounted in the spirit, her breath came at intervals unusually long, and all were sent for to see Death conquer the body and be conquered by the soul.

At last, after an unnaturally long interval, she drew a breath like a sigh. They waited for another; waited, waited in vain.

She had calmly ceased to live.

The old doctor laid down her hand reverently, and said, "She is with us no more." Then with many tears, "Oh, may we all meet where she is now, and may I go to her the first."

Richard Hardie was led from the room in a stupor.

Immediately after death all the disfiguring effect of pain retired, and the happy soul seemed to have stamped its own celestial rapture on the countenance at the moment of leaving it; a rapture so wonderful, so divine, so more than mortal calm, irradiated the dead face. The good Christians she left behind her looked on and feared to weep, lest they should offend Him, who had taken

her to Himself, and set a visible seal upon the house of clay that had held her. "Oh, mamma," cried Julia with fervour, "look! look! Can we, dare we, wish that angel back to this world of misery and sin?" And it was some hours before she cooled, and began to hang on Edward's neck and weep his loss and hers, as weep we mortals must, though the angels of Heaven are rejoicing.

Thus died in the flower of her youth, and by what we call a violent death, the one child Richard Hardie loved; member of a religious party whose diction now and then offends one to the soul: but the root of the matter is in them; allowance made for those passions, foibles, and infirmities of the flesh, even you and I are not entirely free from, they live fearing God; and die loving Him.

There was an inquest next day, followed in due course by a public trial of James Maxley. But these are matters which, though rather curious and interesting, must be omitted, or touched hereafter and briefly.

The effect of Jane's death on Richard Hardie was deplorable. He saw the hand of Heaven; but did not bow to it: so it filled him with rage, rebellion, and despair. He got his daughter away and hid himself in the room with her; scarcely stirring out by night or day. He spoke to no one; he shunned the Dodds: he hated them. He said it was through visiting their house she had met her death, and at their door. He would not let himself see it was he who had sent her there with his lie. He loathed Alfred, calling him the cause of all.

He asked nobody to the funeral: and, when Edward begged permission to come, he gave a snarl like a wild beast and went raging from him. But Edward *would* go: and at the graveside pitying Heaven relieved the young fellow's choking heart with tears: but no such dew came to that parched old man, who stood on its other side like the withered Archangel, his eyes gloomy and wild, his white cheek ploughed deep with care and crime and anguish, his lofty figure bowed by his long warfare, his soul burning and sickening by turns, with hatred and rebellion, with desolation and despair.

He went home and made his will; for he felt life hang on him like lead, and that any moment he might kill himself to be rid of it. Strange to say, he left a sum of money to Edward Dodd. A moment before, he didn't know he was going to do it: a moment after, he was half surprised he had done it, and minded to undo it; but would not take the trouble. He went up to London, and dashed into speculation as some in their despair take to drink. For this man had but two passions; avarice, and his love for his daughter. Bereaved of her, he must either die or live for gain. He sought the very cave of Mammon; he plunged into the Stock Exchange.

When Mr. Hardie said, "Alfred can't come, it

seems," Mrs. Dodd misunderstood him, naturally enough. She thought the heartless young man had sent some excuse; had chosen to let his sister die neglected rather than face Julia: "As if she would leave her own room while *he* was in my house," said Mrs. Dodd, with sovereign contempt. From this moment she conceived a horror of the young man. Edward shared it fully, and the pair always spoke of him under the title of "the Wretch:" this was when Julia was not by. In her presence he was never mentioned. By this means she would in time forget him, or else see him as they saw him.

And as, after all, they knew little to Mr. Hardie's disadvantage, except what had come out of "the Wretch's" mouth, and as moreover their hearts were softened towards the father by his bereavement, and their sight of his misery, and also by his grateful words, they quite acquitted him of having robbed them, and felt sure the fourteen thousand pounds was at the bottom of the sea.

They were a little surprised that Mr. Hardie never spoke nor wrote to them again; but being high minded and sweet tempered, they set it down to all-absorbing grief, and would not feel sore about it.

And now they must leave the little villa where they had been so happy, and so unhappy.

The scanty furniture went first; Mrs. Dodd followed, and arranged it in their apartments. Julia would stay behind to comfort Edward, inconsolable herself. The auction came off. Most of the things went for cruelly little money compared to their value: and with the balance the sad young pair came up to London, and were clasped in their mother's arms. The tears were in her tender eyes. "It is a poor place to receive my treasures," she said: Edward looked round astonished; "It was a poor place," said he, "but you have made a little palace of it, somehow or another."

"My children's love can alone do that," replied Mrs. Dodd, kissing them both again.

Next day they consulted together how they were to live. Edward wished to try and get his father into a public asylum; then his mother would have a balance to live upon out of her income. But Mrs. Dodd rejected this proposal with astonishment. In vain Edward cited the 'Tiser that public asylums are patterns of comfort, and cure twice as many patients as the private ones do. She was deaf alike to the 'Tiser and to statistics. "Do not argue me out of my common sense," said she. "My husband, your father, in a public asylum, where anybody can go and stare at my darling!"

She then informed them she had written to her Aunt Bazalgette and her Uncle Fountain, and invited them to contribute something towards David's maintenance.

Edward was almost angry at this. "Fancy asking favours of *them*," said he.

"Oh, I must not sacrifice my family to false pride," said Mrs. Dodd; "besides, they are entitled to know."

While waiting for their answers, a word about the parties, and their niece.

Our Mrs. Dodd, born Lucy Fountain, was left at nineteen to the care of two guardians: 1, her Uncle Fountain, an old bachelor, who loved comfort, pedigree, and his own way; 2, her Aunt Bazalgette, who loved flirting, dressing, and her own way; both charming people, when they got their own way; verjuice, when they didn't; and egotists deep as ocean.

From guardians they grew match-makers and rivals by proxy: Uncle schemed to graft Lucy on to a stick called Talboys, that came in with the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, known in pedigrees as "the Norman Conquest." Aunt, wife of a merchant of no Descent, except from a high stool, devoted her to Richard Hardie. An unlooked-for obstacle encountered both: Lucy was not amorous. She loved these two egotists, and their quadrupeds; but there she stopped dead short. They persisted; and, while they pulled her to and fro and ruffled her native calm, David Dodd, first mate of the Something or other, East India-man—brown cheek, honest speech, heart of gold—fell deep in love and worshipped her at a distance. His timidity and social insignificance made him harmless; so egotist Fountain had him in to dessert to spin yarns; egotist Bazalgette invited him to her house to flirt with. At this latter place he found Hardie and Talboys both courting Lucy; this drove him mad, and in his fury he popped. Lucy declined him *secundum artem*: he went away blessing her, with a manly sob or two. Lucy cried a little and took a feminine spite against his rivals, who remained to pester her. Now Talboys, spurred by uncle, had often all but popped; only some let, hindrance, or just impediment had still interposed: once her pony kept prancing at each effort he made towards Hymen; they do say the subtle virgin kept probing the brute with a hair pin, and made him caracole and spill the treacle as fast as it came her way. However, now Talboys elected to pop by sea. It was the element his ancestors had invaded fair England by; and on its tranquil bosom a lover is safe from prancing steeds, and the myriad anti-pops of terra firma. Miss Lucy consented to the water excursion demurely, designing to bring her sickly wooer to the point, and so get rid of him for ever and ever. Plot and counter-plot were baffled by the elements: there came an anti-pop out of the south-west called a gale. Talboys boated so skilfully that he and his intended would have been united without ceremony by Father Nep. at the bottom of the British Channel, but for David Dodd, who was hovering near in jealous anguish and a cutter. He saved them both, but in the doing of it missed his ship, and professional ruin faced him. Then good-hearted Lucy was miserable, and appealed to Mr. Bazalgette, and he managed somehow to get David made captain of the Rajah. The poor girl thought she had squared the account with David; but he refused the ship unless she would go halves, and while her egotists bullied and vexed her, he

wrought so upon her pity, and teased her so, that to get rid of his importunity she married him. In time she learned to love him ten times better than if she had begun all flames. Uncle and aunt cut her tolerably dead for some years; Uncle came round the first; some antiquarian showed him that Dodd was a much more ancient family than Talboys. "Why, sir, they were lords of sixteen manors under the Heptarchy, and hold some of them to this day." Mrs. Bazalgette, too, had long corresponded with her periodically, and on friendly terms.

The answers came on the same day, curiously enough. Uncle Fountain, ruined by railway speculation, was living on an allowance from creditors; but his house was at their service if they liked to live with him—and board themselves.

Mrs. Bazalgette's was the letter of a smooth woman, who has hoarded imperishable spite. She reminded her niece after all these years, that her marriage with David was an act of disobedience and ingratitude. She then enumerated her own heavy expenses, all but the 400*l.* a year she spent in bedizening her carcass, and finally, amidst a multitude of petty insults, she offered to relieve Mrs. Dodd of—Julia. Now Poetry has reconciled us to an asp in a basket of figs; but here was a scorpion in a bundle of nettles. Poor Mrs. Dodd could not speak after reading it. She handed it to Edward, and laid her white forehead wearily in her hand. Edward put the letter in an envelope, and sent it back with a line in his own hand declining all correspondence with the writer.

"Now then, dears," said he, "don't be cast down. Let this be a warning to us, never to ask favours of anybody. Let us look the thing in the face; we must work or starve: and all the better for us. Hard work suits heavy hearts. Come, have you any plan?"

"To be sure we have," said Julia eagerly. "I mean to go for a governess, and then I shall cost mamma nothing, and besides I can send her the money the people give me."

"A pretty plan!" said Edward sadly; "what, we three part company? Don't you feel lonely enough without that? I do, then. How can we bear our burdens at all, if we are not to be all together to cheer one another along the weary road? What, are we to break up? Is it not enough to be bereaved?"

He could say no more for the emotion his own words caused him; he broke down altogether, and ran out of the room.

However, he came back in an hour with his eyes red, but his heart indomitable; determined to play a man's part for all their sakes. "You ladies," said he, with something of his old genial way, that sounded so strange to one looking at his red eyes, and inspired a desire to hug him, "are full of talent, but empty of invention. The moment you are ruined, or that sort of thing, it is *go* for a governess, *go* for a companion, *go* here, *go* there, in search of what? In-

dependence? No; Dependence. Besides, all this *going* is bosh. Families are strong if they stick together, and if they go to pieces they are weak. I learned one bit of sense out of that mass of folly they call antiquity; and that was the story of the old bloke with his twelve sons, and fagot to match. 'Break 'em apart,' he said; and each son broke his stick as easy as shelling peas. 'Now break the twelve all tied together: devil a bit could the duffers break it then. Now we are not twelve, we are but three; easy to break one or two of us apart, but not the lot together. No: nothing but death shall break this fagot, for nothing less shall part us three.'

He stood like a Colossus, and held out his hands to them; they clung round his neck in a moment, as if to illustrate his words; clung tight, and blessed him for standing so firm and forbidding them to part.

Mrs. Dodd sighed, after the first burst of enthusiastic affection, and said: "If he would only go a step further and tell us what to do in company."

"Ay, there it is," said Julia. "Begin with me. What can I do?"

"Why, paint."

"What, to sell? Oh dear, my daubs are not good enough for that."

"Stuff! Nothing is too bad to *sell*."

"I really think you might," said Mrs. Dodd; "and I will help you."

"No, no, mamma, I want you for something better than the fine arts. You must go in one of the great grooves: Female vanity: you must be a dressmaker; you are a genius at it."

"My mamma a dressmaker," cried Julia: "oh, Edward, how can you? how dare you? poor, poor mamma!"

"Don't be so impetuous, dear. I think he is right: yes, it is all I am fit for. If ever there was a Heaven-born dressmaker, it's me."

"As for myself," said Edward, "I shall look out for some business in which physical strength goes further than intellectual attainments. Luckily there are plenty such. Breaking stones is one. But I shall try a few others first."

It is easy to settle on a business, hard to get a footing in one. Edward, convinced that the dressmaking was their best card, searched that mine of various knowledge, the 'Tiser, for an opening: but none came. At last one of those great miscellaneous houses in the City advertised for a lady to cut cloaks. He proposed to his mother to go with him. She shrank from encountering strangers. No, she would go to a fashionable dressmaker she had employed some years, and ask her advice. Perhaps Madame Blanch would find her something to do. "I have more faith in the 'Tiser," said Edward, clinging to his idol.

Mrs. Dodd found Madame Blanch occupied in trying to suit one of those heart-breaking idiots, to whom dress is the one great thing, and all things else, sin included, the little ones. She had tried on a scarf three times; and it discon-

tented her when on, and spoilt all else when off. Mrs. Dodd saw, and said obligingly, "Perhaps were I to put it on you could judge better." Mrs. Dodd, you must know, had an admirable art of putting on a shawl or scarf. With apparent nonchalance she settled the scarf on her shapely shoulders so happily, that the fish bit, and the scarf went into its carriage; forty guineas, or so. Madame cast a rapid but ardent glance of gratitude Dodd-wards. The customer began to go, and after fidgeting to the door and back for twenty minutes actually went somehow. Then madame turned round, and said, "I'm sure, ma'am, I am much obliged to you; you sold me that scarf: and it is a pity we couldn't put her on your bust and shoulders, ma'am, then perhaps a scarf might please her. What can I do for you, ma'am?"

Mrs. Dodd blushed, and with subdued agitation told Madame Blanch that this time she was come not to purchase but to ask a favour. Misfortune was heavy on her; and, though not penniless, she was so reduced by her husband's illness and the loss of 14,000*l.* by shipwreck, that she must employ what little talents she had to support her family.

The woman explored her from head to foot to find the change of fortune in some corner of her raiment: but her customer was as well, though plainly, dressed as ever, and still looked an easy-going duchess.

"Could Madame Blanch find her employment in her own line? What talent I have," said Mrs. Dodd humbly, "lies in that way. I could not cut as well as yourself, of course; but I think I can as well as some of your people."

"That I'll be bound you can," said Madame Blanch dryly. "But dear, dear, to think of your having come down so. Have a glass of wine to cheer you a bit; do now, that is a good soul."

"Oh no, madam. I thank you; but wine cannot cheer me: a little bit of good news to take back to my anxious children, that would cheer me, madam. Will you be so good?"

The dressmaker coloured and hesitated; she felt the fascination of Dignity donning Humility, and speaking Music: but she resisted. "It won't do, at least here. I shouldn't be mistress in my own place. I couldn't drive you like I'm forced to do the rest; and, then, I should be sure to favour you, being a real lady, which is my taste, and you always will be, rich or poor; and then all my ladies would be on the bile with jealousy."

"Ah, madam," sighed Mrs. Dodd, "you treat me like a child; you give me sweetmeats, and refuse me food for my family."

"No, no," said the woman hastily. "I don't say I mightn't send you out some work to do at home."

"Oh, thank you, madam." N.B. The dressmaker had dropped the Madam, so the lady used it now at every word.

"Now stop a bit," said Madame Blanch. "I know a firm that's in want. Theirs is easy work

by mine, and they cut up a piece of stuff every two or three days." She then wrote on one of her own cards Messrs. Cross, Fitchett, Copland, and Tylee, 11, 12, 13, and 14, Primrose-lane, City. "Say I recommend you. To tell the truth, an old hand of my own was to come here this very morning about it, but she hasn't kept her time; so this will learn her business doesn't stand still for lie-a-beds to catch it."

Mrs. Dodd put the card in her bosom and pressed the hand extended to her by Madame Zaire Blanch; whose name was Sally White, spinster. She went back to her children and showed them the card, and sank gracefully into a chair, exhausted as much by the agitation of asking favours as by the walk. "Cross, Fitchett, Copland? Why they were in the 'Tiser yesterday," said Edward: "look at this; a day lost by being wiser than the 'Tiser."

"I'll waste no more then," said Mrs. Dodd, rising quietly from the chair. They begged her to rest herself first. No, she would not. "I saw this lost by half an hour," said she. "Succeed or fail, I will have no remissness to reproach myself with." And she glided off in her quiet way, to encounter Cross, Fitchett, Copland, and Tylee, in the lane where a primrose was caught growing—six hundred years ago. She declined Edward's company rather peremptorily. "Stay and comfort your sister," said she. But that was a blind; the truth was, she could not bear her children to mingle in what she was doing. No, her ambition was to ply the scissors and thimble vigorously, and so enable them to be ladies and gentlemen at large. She being gone, Julia made a parcel of water-colour drawings, and sallied forth all on fire to sell them. But, while she was dressing, Edward started on a cruise in search of employment. He failed entirely. They met in the evening, Mrs. Dodd resigned, Edward dogged, Julia rather excited. "Now let us tell our adventures," she said. "As for me, shop after shop declined my poor sketches. They all wanted something about as good, only a little different: nobody complained of the grand fault, and that is their utter badness. At last one old gentleman examined them, and oh! he was so fat; there, round. And he twisted his mouth so" (imitating him) "and squinted into them so: then I was full of hope; and said to myself, 'Dear mamma and Edward!' And so, when he ended by saying 'No,' like all the rest, I burst out crying like a goose."

"My poor girl," cried Mrs. Dodd, with the tears in her own eyes, "why expose yourself to these cruel rebuffs?"

"Oh, don't waste your pity, mamma; those great babyish tears were a happy thought of mine; he bought two directly to pacify me; and there's the money. Thirty shillings!" And she laid it proudly on the table.

"The old cheat," said Edward; "they were worth two guineas apiece, I know."

"Not they; or why would not anybody else give twopence for them?"

"Because pictures are a Drug."

He added that even talent was not saleable unless it got into the Great Grooves; and then looked at Mrs. Dodd; she replied that unfortunately those Grooves were not always accessible. The City firm had received her stiffly, and inquired for whom she had worked. "Children, my heart fell at that question. I was obliged to own myself an amateur and beg a trial. However, I gave Madame Blanch's card: but Mr.—I don't know which partner it was—said he was not acquainted with her: then he looked a little embarrassed, I thought, and said the Firm did not care to send its stuff to ladies not in the business; I might cut it to waste, or— He said no more; but I do really think he meant I might purloin it."

"Why wasn't I there to look him into the earth? Oh, mamma, that you should be subjected to all this!"

"Be quiet, child; I had only to put on my armour; and do you know what my armour is? Thinking of my children. So I put on my armour, and said quietly, we were not so poor but we could pay for a piece of cloth should I be so unfortunate as to *spoil* it; and I offered in plain terms to deposit the price as security. But he turned as stiff at that as his yard measure; 'that was not Cross and Co.'s way of doing business,' he said. But it is unreasonable to be dejected at a repulse or two: and I am not out of spirits; not much:" with this her gentle mouth smiled; and her patient eyes were moist.

The next day, just after breakfast, was announced a gentleman from the City. He made his bow and produced a parcel, which proved to be a pattern cloak. "Order, ladies," said he briskly, "from Cross, Fitchett, and Co., Primrose-lane. Porter outside with the piece. You can come in, sir." Porter entered with a bale. "Please sign this, ma'am." Mrs. Dodd signed a receipt for the stuff, with an undertaking to deliver it in cloaks at 11, Primrose-lane, in such a time. Porter retreated. The other said, "Our Mr. Fitchett wishes you to observe this fall in the pattern. It is new."

"I will, sir. Am I to trouble you with any money—by way of deposit, sir?"

"No orders about it, ma'am. Ladies, your most obedient. Good morning, sir."

And he was away.

All this seemed like a click or two of City clockwork: followed by rural silence. Yet in that minute commerce had walked in upon genteel poverty, and left honest labour and modest income behind her.

Great was the thankfulness, strange and new the excitement. Edward was employed to set up a very long deal table for his mother to work on, Julia to go and buy tailors' scissors. Calculations were made how to cut the stuff to advantage, and in due course the heavy scissors were heard snick, snick, snicking all day long.

Julia painted zealously, and Edward, without

saying a word to them, walked twenty miles a day hunting for a guinea a week; and finding it not. Not but what employment was often bobbed before his eyes: but there was no grasping it. At last he heard of a place peculiarly suited to him; a packing foreman's in a warehouse at Southwark; he went there, and was referred to Mr. A.'s private house. Mr. A. was in the country for a day. Try Mr. B. Mr. B. was dining with the Lord Mayor. Returning belated, he fell in with a fire; and, sad to say, life was in jeopardy: a little old man had run out at the first alarm, when there was no danger, and, as soon as the fire was hot, had run in again for his stockings, or some such treasure. Fire does put out some people's reason; clean. While he was rummaging madly, the staircase caught, and the smoke cut off his second exit, and drove him up to a little staircase window at the side of the house. Here he stood, hose in hand, scorching behind and screaming in front. A ladder had been brought: but it was a yard short: and the poor old man danced on the window-ledge and dare not come down to a gallant fireman who stood ready to receive him at great personal peril. In the midst of shrieks and cries and shouts of encouragement, Edward, a practised gymnast, saw a chance. He ran up the ladder like a cat, begged the fireman to clasp it tight; then got on his shoulders and managed to grasp the window-sill: he could always draw his own weight up by his hands: so he soon had his knee on the sill, and presently stood erect. He then put his left arm inside the window, collared the old fellow with his right, and, half persuasion, half force, actually lowered him to the ladder with one Herculean arm amidst a roar that made the Borough ring; such a strain could not long be endured; but the fireman speedily relieved him by seizing the old fellow's feet and directing them on to the ladder, and so, propping him by the waist, went down before him, and landed him safe. Edward waited till they were down: then begged them to hold the ladder tight below; he hung from the ledge, got his eye well on the ladder below him, let himself quietly drop, and caught hold of it with hands of iron, and twisting round, came down the ladder on the inside hand over head without using his feet, a favourite gymnastic exercise of his learnt at the Modern Athens. He was warmly received by the crowd and by the firemen. "You should be one of us, sir," said a fine young fellow who had cheered him and advised him all through. "I wish to Heaven I was," said Edward: the other thought he was joking, but laughed and said, "Then you should talk to our head man after the business; there is a vacancy, you know."

Edward saw the fire out, and rode home on the engine. There he applied to the head man for the vacancy.

"You are a stranger to me, sir," said the head man. "And I'm sure it is no place for you; you are a gentleman."

"Well; is there anything ungentlemanly in saving people's lives and property?"

"Hear! hear!" said a comic fireman.

The compliment began to tell, though. Others put in their word. "Why, Mr. Baldwin, if a gentleman ain't ashamed of us, why should we be ashamed of him?"

"Where will ye get a better?" asked another; and added, "He is no stranger; we've seen him work."

"Stop a bit," said the comic fireman: "what does the dog say? just call him, sir, if you please; his name is Charlie."

Edward called the fire-dog kindly; he came and fawned on him; then gravely snuffed him all round, and retired wagging his tail gently, as much as to say, "I was rather taken by surprise at first, but, on the whole, I see no reason to recal my judgment."

"It is all right," said the firemen in chorus; and one that had not yet spoken to Edward now whispered him mysteriously, "Ye see that there dog he knows more than we do."

After the dog, a biped oracle at head-quarters was communicated with, and late that very night Edward was actually enrolled a fireman; and went home warmer at heart than he had been for some time. They were all in bed; and, when he came down in the morning, Julia was reading out of the 'Tiser a spirited and magniloquent description of a fire in Southwark, and of the heroism displayed by a young gentleman unknown, but whose name the writer hoped at so much the line would never be allowed to pass into oblivion; and be forgotten. In short, the 'Tiser paid him in one column for years of devotion. Now Edward, of course, was going to relate his adventure; but the journal told it so gloriously, he hesitated to say, "I did all that." He just sat and stared, and wondered, and blushed, and grinned like an imbecile.

Unfortunately looks seldom escaped the Doddesses. "What is that for?" inquired Julia, reproachfully. "Is that sheepish face the thing to wear, when a sister is reading out an heroic action? Oh, these are the things that make one long to be a man, to do them. What *are* you thinking about, dear?"

"Well, I am thinking the 'Tiser is pitching it rather strong."

"My love, what an expression!"

"Well, then, to be honest, I agree with you that it is a jolly thing to fight with fire and save men's lives; and I am glad you see it in that light; for now you will approve the step I have taken. Ladies, I have put myself in the way of doing this sort of thing every week of my life. I'm a fireman."

"You are jesting, I trust?" said Mrs. Dodd, anxiously.

"No, mamma. I got the place late last night, and I'm to enter on my duties and put on the livery next Monday. Hurrah!"

Instantly the admirers of fiery heroes at a distance overflowed with grief and mortification at the prospect of one in their own family. They could not speak at all at first: and, when they

did, it was only "Cruel! cruel!" from Julia; and "Our humiliation is now complete," from Mrs. Dodd.

They soon dashed Edward's spirits, and made him unhappy; but they could not convince him he had done wrong. However, in the heat of remonstrance, they let out at last that they had just begun to hope by dint of scissors and paint-brush to send him back to Oxford. He also detected, under a cloud of tender, loving, soothing, coaxing, and equivocating, expressions, their idea of a Man: to wit, a tall, strong, ornamental creature, whom the women were to cocker up, and pet, and slave for; and be rewarded by basking, dead tired, in an imperial smile or two let fall by their sovereign protégé from his arm-chair. And, in fact, good women have often demoralised their idols down to the dirt by this process; to be sure their idols were sorryish clay, to begin.

Edward was anything but flowery, so he paraded no manly sentiments in reply; he just bluntly ridiculed the idea of his consenting to prey on them; and he said humbly, "I know I can't contribute as much to our living as you two can—the petticoats carry the brains in our family—but, be a burden to you? Not if I know it."

"Pride! pride! pride!" objected Julia, lifting her grand violet orbs like a pensive Madonna.

"And such pride! The pride that falls into a fire-bucket," suggested prosaic mamma.

"That is cutting," said Edward: "but, *soyons de notre siècle*; flunkeyism is on the decline. I'll give you something to put in both your pipes:

Honour and rank from no condition rise.

Act well thy part; in that the honour lies."

"Yes, yes," said Mrs. Dodd, "only first choose your part: and let your choice be reasonable."

"Mine was Hobson's; who never chooses ill. Come, come," said he, and appealed calmly to their reason: by which means he made no impression at all. Then he happened to say, "Besides, I *must* do something; I own to you I am more cast down than I choose to show. Mother, I feel like lead ever since she died." Now on this, their faces filled with sympathy directly. So encouraged he went on to say; "but when I got my hand on that old duffer's collar, and lowered him to the ladder, and the fire shot roaring out of the window after him, too late to eat him, and the crowd cheered the fireman and me, I did feel warm about the waistcoat, and, for the first time this ever so long, life seemed not quite ended; I felt there was a little bit of good left, that even a poor dunce like me could do, and she could approve; if she can look down and see me, as I hope she can."

"There, there," said Mrs. Dodd tearfully, "I am disarmed. But, my darling, I do not know what you are talking about: stay; why Edward, surely—I hope—you were not the young gentleman in the paper: the one that risked his life so nobly; so foolishly if it was you."

"Why, mother, didn't I tell you it was me?" said Edward colouring.

"No, that you did not," said Julia. "Was it? was it? oh do be quick and tell one. There, it was."

"Well it was: ah, I remember now; that splendiferous account shut me up. Oh I say, didn't the 'Tiser pitch it strong?"

"Not at all," cried Julia; "I believe every word, and ever so much more. Mamma, we have got a hero: and here he is at breakfast with us, like an ordinary mortal." She rose suddenly with a burst of her old fire and fell upon him, and kissed him, and said earnestly how proud she was of him: "and so is mamma; she may say what she likes."

"Proud of him! ah that I am; very proud: and very unhappy. Heroes are my horror. How often, and how earnestly have I prayed that my son might not be brave like his father; but stay quietly at home out of harm's way."

Here remonstrance ended: the members of this family, happy by nature, though unhappy by accident, all knew when to yield to each other.

Unfortunately, in proportion as all these excitements great and small died, and her life became quiet and uniform, the depth of Julia's wound showed itself more and more. She never sang nor hummed, as she used to do, going about the house. She never laughed. She did burst out with fervid sentiments now and then; but very rarely: on the whole a pensive languor took the place of her lovely impetuosity. Tears rushed in a moment to her eyes with no visible cause. She often stole to the window, and looked all up and down the street: and, when she was out of doors, she looked down every side-street she passed; and sometimes, when a quick light step came behind them, or she saw a tall young gentleman at a great distance, her hand twitched her mother's arm or trembled on it. And, always, when they came home, she lingered a moment at the door-step and looked all round before she went in.

At all these signs one half of Mrs. Dodd's heart used to boil with indignation, and the other half melt with pity. For she saw her daughter was looking for "the Wretch." Indeed Mrs. Dodd began to fear she had done unwisely in ignoring "the Wretch;" Julia's thoughts dwelt on him none the less; indeed all the more as it seemed: so the topic interdicted by tacit consent bade fair to become a barrier between her and Mrs. Dodd, hitherto her bosom friend as well as her mother. This was intolerable to poor Mrs. Dodd: and at last she said one day, "My darling, do not be afraid of me; rob me of your happy thoughts if you will, but oh, not of your sad ones."

Julia began to cry directly. "Oh no, mamma," she sobbed, "do not you encourage me in my folly. I know I have thrown away my affections on one who—I shall never see him again: shall I, mamma? Oh to think I can say those words, and yet go living on."

Mrs. Dodd sighed. "And if you saw him, would that mend the chain he has chosen to break?"

"I don't know; but if I could only see him, to part friends! It is cruel to hate him now he has lost his sister; and then I have got her message to give him. And I want to ask him why he was afraid of me; why he could not tell me he had altered his mind: did he think I wanted to have him against his will? Oh, mamma," said she imploringly, "he seemed to love me; he seemed all truth. I am a poor unfortunate girl."

Mrs. Dodd had only caresses to soothe her with. She could not hold out any hopes.

One day Julia asked her timidly if she might be a district visitor: "My dear friend was: and advised me to be one too; but I was wilful in those days and chose to visit by fits and starts, and be independent. I am humbled now a little: may I, mamma? Since she died every word of hers seems a law to me."

Mrs. Dodd assented cordially; as she would to anything else her wounded one had proposed.

This project brought Julia into communication with the new curate; and who should it prove to be but Mr. Hurd? At sight of him she turned white and red, and the whole scene in the church came back to her. But Mr. Hurd showed considerable tact for so young a man; he spoke to her in accents of deep respect, but confined his remarks strictly to the matter in hand. She told her mother when she got home; and expressed her gratitude to Mr. Hurd, but said she wished they did not live in the same parish with him. This feeling, however, wore off by degrees, as her self-imposed duties brought her more and more into contact with him, and showed her his good qualities.

As for Mr. Hurd, he saw and understood her vivid emotion at sight of him; saw and pitied; not without wonder that so beautiful a creature should have been jilted. And from the first he marked his sense of Alfred's conduct by showing her a profound and chivalrous respect, which he did not bestow on other young ladies in his parish; on the contrary, he rather received homage from them than bestowed it. By-and-by he saw Julia suppress if not hide her own sorrow, and go sore-hearted day by day to comfort the poor and afflicted: he admired and almost venerated her for this. He called often on Mrs. Dodd, and was welcome. She concealed her address for the present from all her friends except Dr. Sampson; but Mr. Hurd had discovered her; and ladies do not snub the clergy. Moreover, Mr. Hurd was a gentleman, and inclined to High Church. This she liked. He was very good-looking too, and quiet in his manners. Above all, he seemed to be doing her daughter good; for Julia and Mr. Hurd had one great sentiment in common. When the intimacy had continued some time on these easy terms, Mrs. Dodd saw that Mr. Hurd was falling in love with Julia, and that sort of love warm, but respectful, which soon leads to marriage, espe-

cially when the lover is a clergyman. This was more than Mrs. Dodd bargained for; she did not want to part with her daughter, and under other circumstances, would have drawn in her horns. But Mr. Hurd's undisguised homage gratified her maternal heart, coming so soon after that great insult to her daughter; and then she said to herself, "At any rate he will help me cure her of 'the Wretch.'" She was not easy in her mind, though; could not tell what would come of it all. So she watched her daughter's pensive face as only mothers watch; and saw a little of the old peach bloom creeping back.

That was irresistible: she let things go their own way, and hoped for the best.

VERMICULARITIES.

WORMS, on the Rhine, in Hessen Darmstadt, is not vermicular, but geographical. Neither are silk-worms, glow-worms, wire-worms, caddis-worms, worms at all, but the imperfect or the perfect forms of moths, beetles, weevils, and flies. A slow-worm is a snake or serpent. Every language, ancient or modern, exercises its own right to call worms what are not worms. In short, "worm," like many others, is an encroaching and aggressive word, claiming much which it has no right to. It is a feudal seigneur who shifts his landmark, so as to take in every tempting scrap of contiguous ground.

From a worm was produced the phoenix, of which there never was but one; and when she came to her end by burning, out of her ashes there arose another worm, which afterwards grew to be another phoenix. A silk-worm with the motto "Sibi vincula nectit" is a device of the courtier who makes himself a slave and spins his own chains, although they be silken. A worm figures the remorse of conscience. Naked as a worm, expresses the very extreme of nudity. The worm turning when trodden upon, is the protest of the feeble against injury and injustice. To draw the worms out of anybody's nose, is to get him to talk and betray his secrets. There are two Saints Ver or Verus—that is, Saints Worm.

It is hard to say which are the most remarkable, the doubtful white-worms, as big as one's little finger, bred in the snow on the mountains of Ararat and Caucasus, which, being crushed, give out a moisture colder than the snow itself; or the undoubted tropical guinea-worms which breed in people's feet and legs, and which, if not extracted whole, become extremely dangerous, and are consequently obliged to be reeled out on a little roller with the utmost care. The large marine-worm, which burrows in sand and is used by fishermen as bait, contrasts strongly, in its love of salt-water, with its cousin-german, the common earth-worm, to whom saline matters, beyond a certain strength of solution, are deadly poison. This latter, the worm best known to us, has a right to the honour of representing its group. M. Macé (in his History of a Mouthful of Bread) briefly describes it as a

tube open at both ends, to allow its aliment to enter and leave it.

The ruminant quadrupeds are fabricators of meat out of grass. Their office is to prepare food for human stomachs, by disengaging the albumen from coarse preparations in which it is lost, for us. The sad fate of several Australian explorers has shown what is the result of innutritious vegetable diet, however abundant the supply—starvation. But the ruminant has below him inferior workmen, who prepare *his* raw material ready to mouth—namely, the vegetables, who extract the elements of albumen from earth, air, and water, the ultimate sources of all nourishment. The earth-worm is also a preparer of nutritious material; but after the fashion of vegetables. It derives its sustenance and its substance in great measure directly from the earth itself.

In damp weather, you will see on your lawn, and, what is worse, on your garden walks, little lumps of moulded earth which resemble paste that has been squeezed through a tube. They are worm-casts. The worm causes moist earth to pass through its tube, for the sake of robbing it of the elements of fertility which it had held in reserve for the nourishment of vegetables. Much has been said about the good done by, the beneficial influence of, earth-worms; too much, perhaps. No doubt they have their assigned place and office in the grand scale of creation; at least they exist for their own private enjoyment of their vermicular life, such as it is. But certainly they rob plants of what would otherwise fall to their share. They are greedy rivals, appropriating the nutriment which properly belongs to leaves, flowers, and fruit. Why else do they resort to and fatten in the richest patches of garden-ground, the mellowest and most fertilising heaps of manure? The worm feeds on the fat of the earth, which it converts directly, without the medium of the vegetable, into azotised aliment, for the service of the mole, the hen, and the Chinaman. The Madagascarites are also great helminthophagists. The Chinese kitchen, so largely hospitable, only admits the worm for want of better things; but the hen is passionately fond of it. We ourselves do not despise it, when it appears in the modified form of a poached egg, or a wing of roast chicken—the second avatar or transformation of the juices of the manure-heaps which have impregnated our garden-ground. Oil of worms is of good repute for many purposes, amongst others for tempering steel—an application which I give, as the French newspapers say, with every reservation. Albert the Great reveals, amongst his other secrets, that pounded earth-worms applied to cut or ruptured sinews, cause them to reunite in a very brief space of time.

We are told of certain savage tribes who, when hard pressed by famine, swallow lumps of clay to allay their hunger and cheat their stomachs. In the great Indian periods of scarcity, we have heard of hordes of starving wretches crowding down the rivers' banks to devour in quantities the fat rich mud from

which the magnificent vegetation of the country derives its development. It is a desperate application of the primitive mode of alimentation which succeeds perfectly with the worm, but which becomes a cruel mockery when applied to an organisation that exacts so much to sustain it as man's. The marine-worm, still robuster than the earth-worm, lives and thrives by swallowing sand with whatever small proportion of mud or organic refuse it may happen to contain.

Most of the ancients held the opinion that worms were spontaneously produced from corruption, without any eggs or other mode of generation. Sir Thomas Browne and Mr. Samuelson inform us that the worm is no exception to the general rule that every living creature comes from an egg. The baby-worm, however, is born sometimes with, sometimes without, its egg-shell, depending, we are told by Dr. Carpenter, on the nature of the soil which the worms are inhabiting: in a light and loose soil, the young quit the parent prepared to act for themselves; but in a tough clayey soil, they continue in the pupal form for some time, so as to arrive at a still higher development before commencing to maintain an independent existence.

There is a family of worms, the Gordians, whose history is spoken of as obscure, because nobody knows much about them. Their length is so great in proportion to their extreme slenderness, that they look like animated threads; whence the popular belief that a hair from a horse's tail will, under favourable circumstances, turn to a worm. They are mostly found in water; but it is questionable whether water be the constant or even the habitual habitat of all the species. They do not live long kept in a bottle of water. I have had them brought to me, from ditches, after heavy and sudden rains; and I have found them in my garden (which contains no pond or reservoir), but always after a thunder-shower, sometimes on the ground, but once climbing on the top of a lily-stem. Whether they issued from the earth, or came down with the rain-drops, I cannot tell.

The earth-worm takes the highest rank in its class, from being annulose, or made up of distinct rings, which in full-grown subjects vary from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty in number. It is the rings which give to this familiar creature its great physiological interest. They foreshadow an approach to the articulate animals [and the Norfolk peasantry make of it an articulate word, converting "worm" into "wur-rum"], prefiguring a division into segments or joints. They suggest the first idea of vertebræ, or bits of backbone, to which muscles may be attached, and from which limbs may spring. Mr. Samuelson tells you to lay a worm on the palm of your hand, and as it tries to crawl away you will feel a slight sensation of roughness. Take a pocket lens, and examine the under side of the worm's body, and you will perceive several rows of fine sharp-hooks extending from one end to the other of the worm's body, each annulated division being furnished with four pairs of these hooks, which

are situated upon small protuberances on the creature's skin. These hooks cause the rough sensation alluded to; and that portion of the body on which they are placed corresponds to the abdomen of the higher animals, the hooks themselves being neither more nor less than rudimentary feet, to aid the worm in its progress. A centipede may be a worm in an advanced and more fully developed condition.

Internally, as well as externally, each of the earth-worm's rings (with the exception of the torquis, or swelled fleshy band, which looks like the scar of a wound) is the exact reproduction of all the rest; indeed, as the young worm increases in length, the number of its rings is augmented by the *subdivision* of those which it possessed at its birth. They are all formed of circular muscles, enclosed between two coats, which are prolonged and continued from one ring to the other. A series of nervous ganglions, running like a necklace through the whole length of the body, sets a-going, and gives warning to, this muscular system of rings, each of which has thus its own local centre of sensation and impulsion. How efficient they are, is proved by the rapidity with which worms, taking the air and seeking companionship on a moist electric summer's evening, dart back into their holes as your footstep approaches them.

Each ring is also fed on the spot by the nutritive fluids with which it is in contact, the interior tunic possessing the double property of secreting digestive juice, and absorbing digested juices. The result is veritable blood, which is concocted in all parts of the body at once. Sir Everard Home, in his Thirteenth Lecture on Comparative Anatomy, illustrated by Bower, shows that the earth-worm is provided with a central artery, shining through its semi-transparent skin like a fine crimson streak, with six bags or cells filled with red blood, on each side of it.

Each, therefore, of the earth-worm's rings is, all by itself, at once a little eating and digesting machine, and also a little walking machine—that is to say, a complete animal. Each ought, in strictness, to be able to suffice to itself and to live apart; which is proved by experiment to be the case, approximatively. Milne Edwards tells us that, if you cut an earth-worm transversely into two, three, ten, and even twenty pieces, each morsel can continue to live, after the creature's original and normal manner of life, so as to constitute a new individual.

Twenty fractions seems a great many to make of one unfortunate worm; because, according to most gardeners' summary observations, several rings need remain united in order to heal the bleeding wounds. But suppose you cut a worm only into halves with your spade: before the cutting, there was one being; after the cutting, there are two. But if there are two after the stroke of the spade, it must be because there were two before it. Moreover, there is no necessity for the operation being actually performed, in order to be assured of the particular and individual life of each single ring. There is a worm well known, at least by name

(for it is fortunately not met with every day), the tape-worm, which fixes itself in the human intestine, and feeds on chyme as the earth-worm feeds on garden mould. Now, the tape-worm, with its indefinite chain of rings, is no other than a long Indian file of perfectly distinct individuals—so distinct that, from time to time, rings are detached which fall off of themselves, like fruit arrived at maturity, and take their departure to live elsewhere and become the parents of a new band of parasites, provided some lucky chance introduce them to another intestine, the only place and climate which suits their delicate constitution. Enthusiastic persons have lived, who, in their zeal for the cause of science, have swallowed morsels of tape-worm, and have perfectly succeeded in rearing fine specimens in their own interior—and at their own expense, the cost nearly amounting to loss of life.

Man, we are told, is but a worm. And not only is man a worm himself, but he contains within him several worms. I do not allude to the internal parasites with which you may illustrate the numeration table—counting them by units, ten, hundreds, or thousands—from the mostly solitary species above alluded to, to the multitudinous ascaris; but to far more aristocratical representatives of things vermicular.

Did you ever watch a worm or a leech crawling across a plate or a table? On the surface of its body, a wave-like swelling passes from the tail to the head, as if some solid substance or ball was rolling forwards withinside the creature. If you could see your own œsophagus, or gullet, performing its functions, you would observe an exactly similar movement, which has been called *vermicular*, on account of its resemblance to a worm in motion.

You may strike off from your list of friends the man who heedlessly would set foot upon a worm, not merely for his cruelty but for his heedlessness. A miserable earth-worm can teach him more than enters into most men's philosophy. A worm has been defined to be an independent, creeping, digestive tube. The worm is the starting-point of a long ascensional animal scale. It is the rudimental form of all the complex organisations which come after it. What is it composed of? Of a tube, itself composed of rings. On this tube, as a foundation, the animal machine has been built; and these rings, developed and modified in a thousand ways, have given rise to the multiform creatures which drive classifiers to despair, because they will not understand that the animal creation must be one, since there is only one Creator. Animals higher than the worm are, therefore, digestive tubes—with additions and ornaments, and served by organs; but those ornaments and additions do not allow us to ignore the vermicular life which exists, however unfelt and unsuspected, within them.

Each of our organs is a distinct being, which has its own proper nature and its special function—its life apart, consequently. *Our* life is the sum total of all these united little lives melting together, by a mysterious combination,

into one single common life, which is everywhere in general, and nowhere in particular.

The worm, then, is a creeping digestive tube. Our digestive tube has never ceased to crawl and writhe from the moment when we came into the world. Hidden within us, invisibly crouched in its palace, like an Oriental despot who leaves his slaves to provide for all his wants, it is constantly replenished, not with coarse earth, but with delicate chyme extracted for it by its servants, the hands, the mouth, the teeth, the tongue, the throat, and the stomach. But the humble worm is the veritable primitive animal. The oyster has been regarded as a primitive animal; but it is, comparatively, of high degree; for, like man, it also contains a worm within itself.

Below the worm, the animal properly so called ceases. Zoophytes are animals, if you will, animated plants, if you prefer it. Their name has been expressly chosen to denote their double and ambiguous nature. Some of them, as the coral polypes, are the intersection or the point of junction between the three kingdoms of nature—the animal, vegetable, and mineral; namely, an animal vegetation giving as its result a mineral mass extracted from sea-water by an infinity of little living retorts, which continue to this day, beneath our eyes, their work commenced at the beginning of the world—which is no less than the fabrication of continents for the use of future generations. Such is the task incessantly performed by creatures who are the worm's inferiors.

DEPRAVATIONS OF ENGLISH.

OUR mother English is threatened with a deluge of barbarisms. We are extending its bounds so rapidly and recklessly that we shall soon be obliged to publish a new edition of our standard Dictionaries every year, as we do of our Directories, Peerages, and Parliamentary Guides. "Who's who in 1863?" is not so important a question as "What's what?" One cannot take up a paper without very quickly being brought to a stand-still by some new word for which we consult our Johnson in vain. Such words grow like mushrooms, or like riddles; and, as in the latter case, nobody seems to know where they come from, or who made them; for the authors, with singular modesty, never step forward to claim their laurels. Old words, too, are twisted into unwonted shapes; nouns do duty as verbs; the eccentricities of slang are adopted in grave discussions; and it is somewhat difficult for a man whose conception of the language was fixed twenty years ago to keep up with this wild masquerade of neologisms.

The national love of slang has a good deal to do with the growing depravation of our classical tongue. Slang, no doubt, has existed at all times, but never with such grave and respectable countenance as now. We find it in Shakespeare; but Shakespeare only wrote it dramatically, when depicting such characters as Nym, Bardolph, and Pistol. We find it in the pages of the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*, with the same

intention, and not as part of the essayist's own verbal stock. Waller lamented the dangers which English poets had to encounter in consequence of writing in "a daily-changing tongue;" but he attributed the evil, not to slang, but to the natural growth of the language:

Poets that lasting marble seek
Must carve in Latin or in Greek:
We write in sand; our language grows,
And, like the tide, our work o'erflows.

In the present day, slang is assimilated with lamentable facility. It enters largely into the composition of parliamentary wit; it moves to laughter in the law courts; it helps to point the style and enforce the arguments of writers in the press. People now are not courageous—they are "plucky." Nothing is ever long—it is "lengthy." We form resolutions not immediately, but "right away;" we enter into engagements "on our own hook." The desire to write in a popular style is the cause of this, and the public encourage it. Slanginess is considered smart, and indicative of a knowledge of affairs and society. It is amusing to observe the complacency and quiet self-esteem with which most men will utter a cant phrase of the day, as if they had themselves invented it on the spot, and it were something superlatively brilliant and felicitous. "Neither you, nor I, nor any other man," has induced many a foolish fellow to think himself a born wit. "How's your poor feet?" a year ago cheated half the natives of Cockaigne into the belief that they were gifted with a special genius for repartee. The heaviest face kindled with unwonted light, the dullest voice chuckled with conscious fun, as the words came forth. And every one laughed, and was fully persuaded that he had heard the sarcasm for the first time, and was delightfully surprised at its readiness, point, and applicability. This, however, is a habit of the uneducated, and has not yet infected the higher classes of our periodical literature, though it is unpleasantly conspicuous in the cheap comic journals. In the better order of papers, what is chiefly to be complained of is the use of words and phrases which have no warrant and no real use, for the paltry purpose of appearing familiar with the town and its habits.

Most of the questionable expressions at the present day are borrowed from the Americans; and, fond as we are of rating our republican kinsmen for their vulgarity and uncouthness, it is wonderful to see the eager quickness with which we adopt any of their perversions of the language. Even well-educated people now use the word "expect" in the sense of "suspect." They will say that they "expect" a thing *was* so and so—which is a preposterous confusion of ideas. They caught a glimpse of some one in the City this morning, and they "expect it was Smith." This, we believe, was originally an importation from the United States, and came in, if we mistake not, about twenty years ago. People had been very well content until then to say suspect when they

meant suspect; but as soon as it was known that the Americans said "expect" instead, it became at once a smart and clever thing to say so too. It showed that you understood the age in which you lived—knew the kind of speech which society demanded, and were not an old "fogy." That the use of the word was ridiculously wrong, was a matter of supreme indifference; if it was the last new fashion from the West, that was sufficient. It might be supposed that such absurdities would live their brief season, and die out; but this is unfortunately not the case. Nothing is so permanent as established corruption. We have a greedy appetite for vulgarisms, especially when they are of transatlantic origin. "Go-ahead," used as an adjective, is now as common in England as in America; but it must be admitted that this is a much more expressive phrase, and therefore more capable of justification, than the great majority of our importations. "A fix," for a dilemma, or difficulty, is a stupid barbarism, which ought to be scouted out of the language; yet we find it frequently used in conversation, and even sometimes in respectable writing. The word "loafer," for idler, is making way with us, though perhaps somewhat slowly. "Posted up," in the sense of well-informed, on any current topic the aspects of which change from day to day, is now of frequent use. We have fallen so desperately in love with the American expression "*over* a thousand," that "*above* a thousand," which had the sanction of centuries, has almost disappeared. The new phrase may be as good as the old, and we do not mean to say that it is grammatically wrong or essentially vulgar; but the abandonment of any mode of expression which has formed part of the language for generations is always objectionable, unless there should be some positive advantage in the change. For some reason best known to themselves, the people of the United States choose to say "sun-down" for sunset. It is, we think, very questionable whether the compound is grammatically allowable; but at any rate it will be sad to find a beautiful expression, which has come down to us through countless generations of ancestors—which has its roots in five centuries of literature—which is linked with some of the most lovely passages in our poetry, and which, in fact, is part of the very poetry of common speech—giving way before a compound with no associations at all. Yet we have serious misgivings of such a result. "Sun-down" has of late made its appearance in some of our English newspapers; and, knowing from former experience with what senseless avidity our countrymen seize on the like corruptions, we are not without a fear that some years hence we shall see the setting of sunset.

English writers have also recently adopted the American trick of forming verbs out of nouns. We say that a certain act was "motived" by this or that consideration; and a morning paper stated the other day in its leading columns that, in consequence of the Metropolitan Railway having come to an arrangement

with the Great Western in regard to the Bishop's-road station, the former company would continue "to *function* along the whole line." This may, for aught we know, be good railway directors' language, but we submit that it is not English. Many of these corruptions proceed from the commercial love of brevity—an instinct common to both hemispheres, though, like everything else, exaggerated to inordinate proportions in the Western. The Americans almost invariably omit the definite article before such titles as "Honourable" and "Reverend;" and we have recently taken to the same form of abbreviation. You need but glance at a daily paper to see, in the report of some meeting, a statement that "we observed on the platform Rev. Zachariah Jones and Hon. Adolphus Verisopht." The saving of time thus effected is not sufficient compensation for this inelegant clipping of our English; and even though parallel cases may be quoted, which have now received the sanction of time, it is always a desperate argument to defend one bad thing by another.

The almost universal knowledge of French, the constant translation of diplomatic documents from that language in our newspapers, and the frequent discussion of continental politics in parliament and the press, have also done a disservice to English by the introduction of a great many Gallic idioms. The danger, however, is less from this than from the American source of corruption. Our language has always had a tendency to throw out any French modes of expression which may have been temporarily adopted; whereas transatlantic interpolations are not only readily received, but generally retained. It is in this direction, therefore, that we ought to be especially on our guard.

Of course, no one would object to the introduction of new words and phrases where they are clearly required. Language has many of the characteristics of a vital organism; and it would be the merest pedantry, as ineffectual as pedantic, to say that the English tongue—a tongue spoken by the most vigorous and expanding race in the world—is not to throw forth fresh shoots when a legitimate demand arises. The railway system has introduced into general parlance, if it has not created, many new terms which are worthy additions to the vocabulary. "Stoke," "shunt," "siding," &c., are all perfectly legitimate words. So is "telegram," though, when it was first used, some over-particular scholars objected to its construction, as being questionable Greek. However that may be—and the point is doubtful—the word is now very good English, and we could not get on without it. All we quarrel with is purposeless innovation, made in the spirit of coxcombry and ignorance. A hundred and fifty years ago, Swift, lamenting the corruptions which were even then creeping into the language, proposed to Harley, Earl of Oxford, the then prime minister, to establish "a society or academy for settling and ascertaining the purity of our tongue; to set a mark on the improprieties which custom has made familiar; to throw out vicious phrases and

words, to correct others, and perhaps retrieve some others now grown obsolete; and to adjust the orthography, pointing, &c." Such a standard might be useful; but whether it would do much to check our national weakness for slang, is more than doubtful.

EATABLE GHOSTS.

AMONG the many supernatural annoyances which disturb the comfort of the Eibo-folk—that is to say, the population of Swedish origin that inhabits the northern coast and the islands of the Gulf of Riga—may be mentioned a formidable legion of semi-substantial ghosts, whose visits are anything but "few and far between." Like the ghosts of other nations, they are the spectres of deceased persons, and they have the generic quality of vanishing at cock-crow. But they are distinguished from the ghosts of the ordinary nurse's tale by certain powers and privileges peculiar to themselves. They can put on various shapes; they are not without a certain degree of acquisitiveness, and they can produce palpable effects, as though they were not altogether incorporeal.

Whatever be the vices of the ghosts who figure in our own village records, they are habitually honest. Nay, honesty is their characteristic quality, for even if they represent some defunct old sinner, who has hid his neighbour's gold under a hearthstone, the very object of their visit is to disclose the hidden treasure, that it may be restored to the lawful owner. So is it not with the ghosts of the Eibo-folk. In the island of Nucko—which, by the way, is a peninsula at low water—a respectable old gentleman once saw a tall white figure come out of a churchyard, and make a dash at some horses that were grazing hard by. Fortunately the horses were too quick for the ghost, and consequently were not to be caught. The same island furnishes us with an instance of a ghost that perfectly knew how to stand up for its rights. A certain woman was negligently buried without a cap, and as this was a sort of thing not to be tolerated, her ghost soon appeared in the house she had once inhabited, and by shouting "Bare-head! Bare-head!" conveyed a very intelligible hint. A council of friends was held, and it was decided that the grave of the deceased should not be opened, but that the next corpse buried in the same churchyard should be provided with an extra cap, to be handed over to its neglected neighbour. This decision was carried into effect, and there is every reason to believe that the newly-interred body honourably and promptly executed its trust, for the noisy ghost was never heard after the burial. Ghosts were not always so considerately treated. At a place called Kattbeck, on the continent, an old fellow whose duty it was to burn charcoal, unluckily reduced all his stock of wood to ashes, and fearing the beating that was the ordinary consequence of such mishaps, hanged himself. The house was taken by another man of similar

vocation, but the ghost of the former occupant soon came back, with a rope in its hand, and made a terrible disturbance. This was not to be endured; so the new tenant, seeing the ghost standing at the door one fine moonlight night, took his opportunity. He cut a silver coin into nine pieces, and shot them through the head of the spectre, who vanished with a loud roar, and never was seen afterwards. It is worthy of observation that the marksman took care that the ghost's shadow did not fall upon him, since if it had done so, he would have been wholly in its power. For we must understand that the Eibo ghost is not only somewhat substantial, but that it casts a shadow. Possibly the fate of this twice-killed suicide came to the ears of another ghost, who appeared at Dirslätt (nearer the isthmus which joins Nucko to the continent), and who was mischievous beyond the average, but showed a singular deficiency in personal courage. When the men were absent from home, this spectral nuisance would extinguish the lights, drive the women out of doors, let the cattle loose, and accompany all these enormities with a frightful uproar; but if a man was on the premises, it did not so much as show its face. Shall we harbour a suspicion that the women devised this timid ghost on purpose to make the men keep proper hours? The most unsatisfactory tale relates to the ghost of an old gentleman, who made a point of visiting his family every Thursday. Passing through the front room of the homestead, which includes the kitchen, he tapped at the door of the sitting-room until it was opened, and the eldest son was deputed to receive the restless father. The ghost explained the cause of its visitation, on the solemn promise of the son that it should not be revealed to any one else. This was a sad balk to the more curious members of the family, and very probably the enlightened son gave himself many conceited airs on the strength of his exclusive information. But the interview so far answered its purpose, that the Thursday visits were not repeated. In the importance given to the Thursday by the Eibo-folk, a reverence to the God Thor may be traced, and it is worthy of remark that the operations of grinding and spinning on Thursday afternoon are deemed unlucky, and likely to cause a disorder in the sheep. At Rälby, a village in the island of Worms, there was a strong-minded young man, who went so far as to shoot the ghost of his own father, with a silver coin cast into the form of a bullet. The ghost disappeared, and in its place was found a quantity of slime. Feeling something like remorse, the son mixed up the ghost's remains with some sand, in order to give them consistency, and wrapping them up in a cloth, piously deposited them in the churchyard. At Oesterby, in Nucko, there was a most ingenious ghost, which baffled all attempts to put it down. First it appeared on the stove, in the shape of a black dog, and when the unwelcome beast had vanished, a little grey man was seen to effect an entrance through the wall, just above the window, and hop about

maliciously on one leg. This form gave hopes of a capture, but no sooner was an attempt made to seize the mannikin, than, hey presto! he was converted into a fowl, which defied all pursuit. Still more daring was a ghost that, in the shape of a black he-goat, met a peasant of Rälby on his way home from a shooting expedition. The peasant levelled his gun at the animal, but it immediately changed into a black man, snatched the weapon out of his hands, and broke off the lock. A prayer caused the spectre to vanish, and the peasant ran away likewise; but the latter, on returning to the spot next day, found the fragments of the gun lying at a distance from each other. A ghost who met a man coming home to Kertell, in Dago, had an easier method of dealing with aggressors. Its form was that of a great hulking fellow, and it carried a huge leather sack. Into this the man must needs plunge his knife, when such a strong gust of wind came from the hole, that it knocked him down. In this instance the ghost seems to have had the right on its side, and there is no doubt that the man was a churlish lout, for when he met the spectre he had just been quarrelling with a neighbour, although it was Christmas-eve. Very harmless, too, was a white figure that came up to a peasant of Worms, who was driving home from the pastor's residence to his own home at Borby, in Worms. It seated itself behind him, and evidently intended no mischief, as it leaped down at the journey's end, but it had frightened the poor man out of his wits, as he afterwards proved by giving tobacco instead of corn to his chickens.

An old proverb tells us that the meat of one is the poison of another, and we are informed that ghosts, though generally esteemed an nuisance by the human inhabitants of the Eibo-district, are regarded as an exquisite delicacy by the wolves. A peasant who died at Kertell, in Dago, adopted the common bad habit of revisiting his old residence, and making a great noise, but this affliction might perhaps have been borne, if he had not beaten his widow, with whom he had lived on very bad terms. With his brother he attempted to curry favour, and finding him engaged in heating a lime-kiln in the mountains, offered to lend a helping hand. The brother, however, wanted no such assistance, but cried out to the intrusive spectre, "Have you forgotten whence you came? You ought to be under ground. Be off to the wolf." Perceiving that his affability was thrown away, the spectre retired, and proceeded to the house, but when he reached the stepping-stones of a brook, he was met by a wolf, who devoured him on the spot.

What ought a philanthropist to do if he unexpectedly comes upon a ghost that is in danger of being eaten up by a wolf? Certainly the ghost is more human in appearance, but as far as flesh and blood go the living quadruped would seem to be more nearly akin to us. The casuists of the Eibo-folk decide in favour of the wolf, if we may judge from the following incident. A ghost, seized with one of those fits of home-

sickness which are so little respected by the survivors, was on his way to his former residence, when he was suddenly assailed by a pack of wolves, and forced to take shelter on the top of a hayloft. The disappointed wolves stood howling below, and the ghost, becoming insolent from a sense of security, showed them his leg, and scoffingly asked them if that resembled a wolf's foot? Unluckily, he had reckoned without his host, in the most literal sense of the expression, for the peasant to whom the premises belonged thrust a pitchfork through the roof, ran him through the leg, and cast him among the wolves, who at once ate him up. On the following morning a few drops of blood were seen upon the spot. This story belongs to Worms, but the utility of wolves in devouring ghosts is so generally acknowledged among the Eibo-folk, that they have a proverb: If it was not for the wolves, the world would be full of goblins.

These ghosts of the Eibo-folk do not in general appeal very strongly to our moral sympathies; but there seems to have been one in the island of Worms of whom the temperance party might be proud. An ill-conditioned fellow, who was terribly fond of brandy, had a son so badly crippled that he could only walk on all-fours. Less fortunate than Tiny Tim, in the Christmas Carol, he gained by his deformity nothing but curses from his brutal parent, and was glad enough to die when he had attained his ninth year. Death, however, did not bring the poor little fellow as much rest as he had anticipated, for one Thursday evening he appeared to his brothers and sisters, perfectly cured of his deformity, and well planted on his feet, but with a very dismal countenance. When he had called several times, always seating himself on the threshold, and always departing without a word, the children made their father acquainted with the facts. That disreputable gentleman asked the little ghost what he wanted, and was informed that the heaviness of his curses prevented the poor child from sleeping in his grave. "That was my sin," said the repentant father; "depart in peace." The child vanished never to reappear, and the father thenceforward abstained from brandy. Might not this story furnish an illustration to the British Workman?

The inhabitants of the provinces adjoining the Gulf of Riga look back with horror to a great plague which visited them in the year 1710, and committed ravages from which it is said the population of Esthonia has not yet recovered. When we hear that of sixty-three preachers in this single province forty-eight perished, we may estimate the sufferings of the people in general. As might be supposed, the plague was attended with the usual revolting circumstances; the dead were buried without coffins or any mark of respect, the only care of survivors being to remove them as speedily as possible. As a singular instance of the despair that is common to these visitations, it is recorded that many of the people, abandoning all hope, put on their best clothes, and quietly sat in their houses awaiting the approach of the destroying

angel. Others fled into the woods, where they lived in huts, and it is said that relics of their sojourn are still to be found.

According to some of the traditions of the Eibo-folk, the immediate cause of the plague was a little grey man, who might be seen and heard at a distance, but whom no one could approach. If he intended to spare a house, he passed it by with the words, "Here I have nothing to do;" but otherwise he entered the dwelling and struck the residents with his staff, whereupon they immediately expired. The people of Runo he seems to have treated with a sort of cruel courtesy, as he rode about the island in a calash, with a three-cornered hat upon his head. It appears that the boatman who brought him to the island was the first to perish. The boatmen of Dago seem to have understood this form of visitation, for when they were returning from a foreign ship, which was moored near their island, and to which they had taken provisions, and a little boy three feet high, with a three-cornered hat on his head, leaped into their boat, they threw him overboard. However, he resumed his place, and thus the pestilence was brought to Kertell. The island Kyno was invaded in a more artful manner. There a man found an image on the coast that looked as if it had been broken off a ship. He took it home, and laid it against the wall. When the night came it began to whimper and groan, as if it was in pain, and he could neither quiet it nor remove it, but soon fell sick and died. It was afterwards taken out and thrown into the sea by persons stronger or cleverer than the original finder; but the mischief was already done, and nearly the whole village perished.

The supposition that an odd kind of goblin is the proximate cause of the plague, does not preclude the belief that he is the agent of a Higher Power. On one occasion the personified Pestilence visited a house at Kertell, where all were asleep except an elderly virgin. The pestilence touched them upon the bosom in turns with its staff, thus making a blue mark, which soon spread over the entire body. When all was dead except the old maid, she called on the pestilence to destroy her also, but was told that her name was not on the list, and she survived the visitation accordingly. A similar story is told of a visitation at Kerslatt, in Worms. Here, while the other inhabitants of a house were sleeping, a little grey man, carrying a staff, a candle, and a book, walked in, and was closely watched by an old gentleman, who sat awake by the stove. He touched the sleepers three times, but when he came to a cradle, in which there was a child, he looked at it, took out his book, turned over the leaves, and left the infant unscathed. The child lived, and so, also, did the old man, to tell the tale.

The Finns are born conjurors, which certainly does not seem to be the case with the Eibo-folk; and hence it is but natural that in the legends of the latter, magical victories over the plague are ascribed to their more astute neighbours. A Finnish servant-girl at Kertell contrived to lock

up the plague in an empty stable, but a stupid slut would sleep in the stall in spite of all warnings, and not only perished herself, but let loose the malady. So large a space as a stable was not required, for on another occasion the same Finnish girl bored a hole in the door-post, into which she thrust the pestilence, and then stopped up the aperture with a peg of juniper, which kept the prisoner fast for seven years, seven months, and seven days. A certain emperor seems to have driven the plague out of one of the villages by a magnificent coup d'état. He caused a ship, freighted with the sick and dead of the plague, and with the living Death (!) as one of the passengers, to sail upon the high seas, there to be set on fire. Who this particular emperor was we cannot say, but we suspect that he flourished a little before 1710.

If the grey man or boy is only an agent, it seems very clear that he likes his occupation. When the corpses were carried to the churchyard he was seen dancing about in the fields, with his three-cornered hat in his hand, evidently delighted with his own mischief.

Before taking leave of the strange goblins of the Eibo-folk, we may remark that the ghosts have a keen sense of the proper mode of wearing one's apparel. A cowherd of Kertell, who had been suddenly struck blind by a malignant spirit, recovered his sight immediately by turning his glove inside out. Similar stories are recorded among the Russians proper, and it is said that if one of these is assailed by the wood-spirit, and thereby loses his way, he takes off all his clothes and puts them on again with the inside out. If this process is found too tedious, it seems that a turned cap or stocking will answer every purpose.

YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY IN INDIA.

JANUARY in the Red Sea. Noon. The Peninsular and Oriental Company's steam-ship *Nemesis* is making nine knots an hour through the bluest water I ever beheld. We left Suez yesterday, and begin to feel intensely Eastern, as overland passengers always do at this point. Those who had never made the journey before, appeared to expect that their Indian experiences would commence as soon as they left Southampton. By much reading of guide-books they brought their minds into a state which rendered it impossible to call their lunch anything but tiffin, or their cigars anything but cheroots; and I believe that but for the ruthless prohibition of the cold weather they would already have begun to don their white clothing, of which they had, with a prudence quite unnecessary, kept out a supply for impossible contingencies. By talking to the old Indians on board—who gave themselves airs of superiority—they had actually picked up whole phrases of Hindustanee in the first few days, which they aired remorselessly, to the confusion of appropriateness and the bewilderment of comprehension. They bought government Manillas (made in the Mi-

norics) of the stewards, by way of training, and realised in the beginning a no uncommon end, by making themselves thoroughly sick of the country to which they were bound.

It was by the second mail in December, 1853, that I traversed the overland route for the first time. In those days even the railway through France was incomplete. The railway from Paris dropped you at Châlons, and the steamer took you up at that point, along the Saone, to Lyons. The diligence carried you thence to Avignon, where the railway began again, taking you in triumphantly to Marseilles with the air of having brought you all the way. This mixed mode of travelling is certainly more picturesque and pleasant than being propelled the whole way by the same agency, with as few breaks as possible, and no rest to speak of. There were several English travellers making their way to catch the same mail as myself. I had met one of them before, at Dover, when he had asked me if I was going any further than Calais, and I had answered, "Just a little further—towards Caubul." We now fraternised of course, and the other overland people did the same, making up a little party of their own, and experiencing a foretaste of that strong characteristic of "Indians," a sense of that bond of union which, however they may quarrel among themselves, seems to separate them from the rest of mankind. Among those on board were two young gentlemen going out in the Civil Service; one free, the other in the custody of his father. The former was ready to bet any amount on anything, and play whist at impossible points; the only serious care he condescended to recognise, relating to the safety of three boxes of saddlery—including, I believe, a side-saddle or two for contingencies—which he was taking out with him in anticipation of that first-rate stud which he has probably found out by this time costs a great deal of money to keep, even in India. He presented a contrast in most respects to the second griff, who, besides being in custody, was treated like a criminal. Not for him were the adventurous bets, or the impossible points. For him no Mr. Peat had provided saddles upon improved principles, with English trees such as the Indian-made article can never match, and sound leather, such as even Cawnpore cannot supply; bits adapted to every kind of mouth, Arab, Caubul, Waler, or humble tattoo of Mofussil life; bridles that will hold anything, and spurs that are a delight to the heel. In the stead of these indulgences he was furnished with plenty of lectures upon the impropriety of gambling in any shape, and the ruinous consequence of keeping horses of luxury for any other purpose than carrying their owner whither he may want to go, for which object it must be admitted that some ten or twenty of those animals does seem an undue allowance. There was an old major (majors were not minors then as they sometimes are now) who had been disappointed, as majors of the old school always are, who scowled upon his young allies, said un-

pleasant things touching what would have been their state and prospects "in his time," and did not hesitate to liken them to "young bears with all their troubles to come." There was also a subaltern officer who had been out to India sufficiently long not to like it, and to prefer being at home on sick leave, which a certain class of servants of the extinct East India Company appear to consider the natural and proper state of things in a civilised universe, and any invasion of which, even after three or four years spent in the most vigorous amusements at home, they consider a violation of their privileges.

At Marseilles we passed Christmas-day, upon which occasion the people of the hotel treated us to a French version of the pudding of Britain, which would possibly have been a very delightful production had it appeared in a solid instead of a liquid form; but for great travellers (in prospect) like ourselves it would have been inappropriate to have betrayed any insular prejudices, so we all sipped it philosophically, like citizens of the world. The following day saw our embarkation on board the *Vectis*, one of the swiftest of the P. and O. ships, employed expressly for the mail service between Marseilles and Malta. The conditions of this short voyage, like the rest of the sea route, were the same as in the present day; but the transit through Egypt varied considerably. The railway at that time was among the things that were to be, but was not; and the Nile boat was our means of passage to Cairo: a preliminary boat taking us to the Nile, along the canal as far as Atfeh. To any person looking upon these boats in the light of hotels, and attaching much importance to personal comfort, it must be confessed that the experience was decidedly unpleasant; and as the majority of the passengers did take this view of their claims upon the company in consideration of liberal passage-money paid beforehand, you may be sure that the grumbling was no joke, and that threats to write to the *Times* were the rule rather than the exception. But the more sensible minority took a philosophical view of the matter, made themselves independent of bad refreshments by undergoing a little temporary starvation, and of bad accommodation below by contenting themselves with the deck, and gave themselves up to the mental enjoyment of the new scenes by which they were surrounded. At Cairo came more change and new sensations in abundance; and the old mode of transit across the desert, in vans, had charms in the way of novelty and excitement compared with which the railway is tame indeed.

But all these things have passed away, and the journey through Egypt is now as prosaic as a trip from London to Liverpool by the express train. It is not until we get once more on ship-board, in the Red Sea, that we feel ourselves really in the East. And it is here that these reflections occur to me, while reclining under the awning on the raised fore-castle, whither sensible men retire to smoke,

and to get whatever amount of air is to be had, which is sure to be at the bows.

My fellow-passengers will most certainly find a great many things changed, besides the overland route. India to-day is not the same India that it was yesterday—yesterday being understood as a playful way of alluding to ten years ago. Yesterday the East India Company were the kings of the country. To-day, her Majesty reigns in her proper person. The old régime had its good side as well as its bad. The Company was a good master, at any rate, to those in its employ, who deplore its downfall with tears in their eyes, and a great deal less in their pockets than they had in the days of its prosperity. The Company's servants in those times had the loaves and fishes of the State all to themselves. Small chance was there then for the barrister of seven years' standing, or the interloper of any kind, to get a share of them. The Supreme Court judgeships, to be sure, were given to members of the British bar; but the judges of the Sudder, or Native Court of Appeal, were more highly paid, and were, besides, eligible for even more elevated appointments. As for the non-professional interloper, he had nothing to hope for but subordinate posts, which if not posts of honour were certainly posts of danger, for he was always exposed to the chance of being thrown out of employment at the caprice of his superiors, who were not bound to provide for him for life, as in the case of the patented, or covenanted, men. The outsiders, indeed, whatever their natural social position, belonged to a different class altogether—so separated by the official barrier that there could be no mingling of the two in private intercourse, except in very rare cases. In the military service the Company's officers enjoyed equally exclusive rights. For them, and for them only, were the great majority of staff appointments, the snug little things—and the snug great things too—in civil employ, always much coveted by military men in India, who in most cases seemed to take up the sword mainly as a means of carving their way to the pen. A Queen's officer got the command in chief, to be sure, and generally the presidential commands; but there was very little else within the grip of her Majesty's service, whose presence, even in the country, was looked upon almost in the light of an impertinence.

There are men—very good men, very sincere men, and by no means very foolish men—not quite so extinct as the dodo, who believed, and do believe, that the old system was a far better one than the new; that India was better governed under the Company than it is under the Crown; that the natives were more attached to our rule, and that we held the country under less hazardous conditions than in the present day. The very objection most frequently made to the old system, they consider to have been one of the main sources of our strength. The administration was given up to about a dozen families, who monopolised the nominations to the services, and by consequence monopolised everything else that preferment could procure. The more

fortunate got appointed to the Civil Service, or, failing this in consequence of incapacity or misconduct at college, obtained cavalry commissions; so numerous were the plucked candidates for civil employ, who subsequently turned up in those pretty uniforms of grey and silver which have now faded like the light of other days, and were well known as the "Haileybury Irregulars." The next best thing to the Civil Service was the Artillery, always held in high honour in India, as it deserved to be; and for those who would not, or could not, aspire to this arm of the service, there was the Native Infantry. In this manner were "the families" distributed through the services; and the fact that few besides the said families were found on its rolls is still considered, as I have said, by persons whose opinions are entitled to respect, a benefit to England and to India, which must be placed on the losing side of the latter-day reforms. The natives, they say, believed in the old families; their names were hailed as a safeguard; a guarantee that the antiquas vias would still be preserved as standing ground; an assurance that old rights would be maintained, and—I am afraid I must add—that old wrongs would not be interfered with. The latter is the awkward point; granting it, the advocates of the old system were probably in the right. But what can be said for the permanency of a system which relied upon so brittle a basis? It might hold together for a time, but its breaking up was inevitable. It would be nonsense to suppose that there were no men out of the pale of "the families" competent to administer the government. The time came when this prejudice had to be broken down. The principle of nomination gave way to competition in the Civil Service and in the scientific branches of the army, the Artillery and the Engineers. In the Civil Service the old names are not lost sight of. The "Competition Wallahs" are not all new men: they include members of some of the best of the "old families," who have proved that they can fight their way as well as gain it by favour; but they also include others, whose families were never before heard of, who promise to be second to none in the race for distinction.

The amalgamation of the old "Company's army" with that of her Majesty has not, to say the least, been a measure of unmixed benefit. That it was a logical consequence of the accession of the direct government of the Crown is not to be denied. But there is no more reason why things in India should be reduced to their logical consequences than things at home, where we are cheerful and prosperous in the midst of anomalies which would drive a thoroughly consistent man to despair. The absorption of the Company's army into the army of the line—which is the real effect of the measure, the official term "amalgamation" being a misnomer—deprives the country of a local force, far less easy to create than to destroy. I here allude to the European army, as far as the men are concerned; but to the army, European and Native,

as far as the officers are concerned. The native force is necessarily local, but the officers, whether sent to native regiments or not, are all on the same footing with the officers of the line, except those who have been transferred to the staff corps, and who are therefore no longer eligible for regimental employ. The local European army was (with the exception of the additional regiments added to it a few years ago) a force composed of a better class of men, for the most part, than usually enlist in the line; men tempted by larger pay, and greater opportunities of promotion than exist at home, to embark their fortunes in the East; and who had sometimes good reasons for desiring to remain where they would be known in their new position. In the Artillery, in particular, there were frequently men of good position, who had exhausted their means, and offended their families, and desired nothing better than an obscurity which would be an obscurity at any rate, and from which they would have a chance of emerging into fame and fortune. Such men form materials for an army, which no great general has ever despised. The "Company's Europeans," moreover, were acclimatised men, not likely to die off like rotten sheep the first bad season; men who were prepared to make the country their home; men who, by acquiring the native language, in a greater or less degree, had gained some knowledge of the character of the natives, and who were therefore more likely to cultivate them as allies than kick them as "niggers." They did not, moreover, require to be brought home every few years, and so saved an immense expense to the State; the waste, not only of money but of life, in the local army, being held, by the best calculations, to be considerably less than among the troops of the line serving in India. The greater popularity of the old service over the new was sufficiently shown by the "White Mutiny" of 1859, when the majority of the men of the local force refused to serve on the new footing proposed to them, and insisted upon having their discharge.

The case of the officers was not so easily disposed of. They could not take their own parts exactly as the men had taken theirs; all they could do was to contend for the retention of their rights as to pay, promotion, &c., upon which they entered the service, and these were very handsomely guaranteed to them when the amalgamation measure passed the House of Commons. But the guarantee turned out mere moonshine. There are at the present moment many hundreds of officers of the old army out of employ—the State paying them a very large sum for doing nothing; but a very small sum compared with what they would receive if they were only allowed to earn it. This is more or less the state of the juniors; the seniors have for the most part complied with a very pressing invitation to retire upon "bonuses," which arrangement they loudly declare to mean nothing more than a liberal measure of starvation. The remains of the "Company's army," officers and men, will soon disappear; and all we can hope

is, that all the evils anticipated will not be brought about by the change.

This is not the only amalgamation of which we have to see the effects in India. The Supreme Court, and the Sudder (or Native Court of Appeal), have just been united, under the name of the High Court, of which there is one in each presidency. The Queen's judges and the Company's judges (natives among the latter) will henceforth sit upon the same bench and administer the same law. There are some objections to the plan, as the Company's judges have hitherto known nothing but Company's law, and the native judges are not supposed to be proof against prejudices of race, and may possibly look upon the Europeans brought before them in the same light as the Scotch doctor regarded his English patients, when he remarked upon their perversity in dying, by saying that it would be a long time before they made up for Flodden. But if the perfect equality of the two races is to be insisted upon as the spirit of the future government of India (in the letter it is impossible to carry it out), some plan of the kind is inevitable, and the present will doubtless answer the purpose. One advantage will most certainly be gained—that the "civilian" judges, as well as the barrister judges, must manage to understand the pleadings of the bar, or be driven from the bench; and that the former, as well as the latter, must of necessity undergo a special training for the purpose. A crying evil incident to the old state of things will thus be avoided. For the rest, it is considered by the philosophical advocates of the elevation of natives to the bench of the High Court, that if an European suffer any injustice at their hands, he will make such a noise about it as to prevent a recurrence of the scandal. So that the judge does not hang his man off-hand, this argument has perhaps some value; but as the question is principally interesting to persons about to commit crime, I may be pardoned for leaving its more comprehensive consideration to their care.

The constitution of the local government has undergone a change, as well as the legal administration. It is something less than ten years ago that the legislative council was first called into existence. Great hopes were entertained of the experiment; but it was soon found that the assembly was too large for conversation, and too small for debate; and another anomaly was also apparent in the fact that the members, being all public servants, the council included a paid opposition as well as a paid ministry: the power of the former becoming so great that the governor-general had to suspend the standing orders whenever a difficulty arose, and to carry his measures through by sheer force of bullying. The members most generally in opposition were the judges of the Supreme Court, who, being independent of the government of India, could venture to have opinions of their own. They did good service on more than one occasion; but there was no room for real independence in a council so constituted, where it was felt, moreover, that the forms of the House of Commons

were out of place, and only obstructive to business. So the legislative council was included in the last batch of reforms, and is now called the council of the governor-general. It includes the select number of gentlemen forming the old supreme council, who assist the governor-general in his more private deliberations; but in its legislative capacity it is much enlarged, and now contains non-official as well as official members, the former consisting of natives as well as Europeans. In the present council there are no members representing the different presidencies and provinces, as in the former. The presidencies and provinces have separate councils of their own, formed on a similar plan, which are likely to do their own work for themselves far better than they could get it done for them in Calcutta. The powers of these councils are not so great as those of their centralised predecessor. Their members are free to furnish as much information, advice, or even protestation, as they please, upon any measure of the government; but they are not competent to reverse it by their votes, and the governor-general, governor, or lieutenant-governor, as the case may be, has authority to decide for himself in the last resort, as if there were no such councils at all. This may seem rather like a retrograde movement for these enlightened days; but, after all, the powers of the former council were very like a sham. There is no pretence of making the present assembly a little House of Commons; and until India is ripe for representative institutions—which she will be before many years are over—it is better that such institutions should not be brought into contempt. The admittance of non-official members in the mean time is a great step, besides being an immense present advantage, both to the government and the public.

A paper currency adds another to the signs of the new times which are beginning to bewilder old Indians. For some years past, the notes of the bank of Bengal have been in circulation in Calcutta, and very convenient the Calcutta people have found them. It is no uncommon thing now, for ladies and gentlemen to go about with money in their pockets, which they never thought of doing under the régime of rupees. Even now the force of habit has not entirely spent itself, and people scrawl down their signatures in tradesmen's books for such little matters as a pair of gloves, an ice cream, or having their hair cut, when they would find it, if not more pleasant in the beginning, certainly more profitable in the end, to pay in cash. But the signature currency is not nearly so much in use as formerly in Calcutta, and notes are generally adopted as the medium of exchange. "Up the country," notes do not circulate, and the old system prevails. People cannot or will not carry rupees about them, and everything they buy is noted down at the time, and noted up as high as possible at the end of the month. Mr. Wilson, with the concurrence of Lord Canning, determined upon a scheme for a paper currency which was perfected by Mr. Laing; but the

home government, for some mysterious reason, will not allow it to extend to the whole of India, but has ordered that it be confined to Bengal. One would have thought, after the experience of the mutinies, when the plunder of the provincial treasuries provided the rebels with the means of carrying on the war many months after they must otherwise have collapsed for want of funds, that no means would have been neglected to avoid the necessity of sending large quantities of specie into the provinces; but it seems, greatly to Mr. Laing's disgust, and that of every Indian reformer, that the benefits of the new currency scheme are to stop at the very point where they are most required.

Among the most important political reforms which will greet the new comer in India, are those important measures in connexion with the sale of waste lands in fee simple; the permissive redemption of the land-tax, under certain restrictions, by a capitalised payment; and the extension of the permanent settlement, which has worked well in Bengal, to the North-West Provinces. The effect of these measures will be to give the British settler desiring to cultivate the soil, a footing in the country which he has never before obtained; and to render to the landowner, native as well as European, a degree of security calculated to give an immense stimulus to capital and industry, and to improve the condition of all classes of the people. Perhaps, however, I am reckoning without my host in anticipating these immediate benefits to India. It is true that Lord Canning sanctioned the scheme for the sale of waste lands, and the permissive redemption of the government demand upon other lands, and drew up the conditions upon which those measures were to be carried out; while he agreed to the principle of the extended permanent settlement, leaving only the details of the measure for after adjustment. Before he was added to the list of victims to the wear and tear of high office in India, he firmly believed that he had conferred these important benefits upon the country, and the thought, I can well believe, lessened the bitterness of death. For these services he was lauded in parliament and the press, as few men have ever been lauded; and so general was the concurrence in the wisdom of his later acts, that the most inveterate of his earlier opponents were content to forget past differences, and look to his policy in the future with a gratitude which none doubted to be deserved.

But scarcely are the earthly remains of the son of George Canning consigned to rest in Westminster Abbey, than ruthless hands are laid on his best works, and the measures which of all others are especially required at the present moment for the encouragement of the cotton cultivation in India—not to speak of the general benefits which they would confer—are postponed for an indefinite period by the home government, on the ground that the conditions proposed by the late governor-general are all wrong, and must be revised. This is especially vexatious in reference to the waste lands mea-

sure, which has been in actual operation for nearly a year: a number of grants having been made on Lord Canning's conditions, which were understood to have been long since approved at home. The main reasons given for the delay are, that the lands must be surveyed before they are sold: which means that they cannot be sold for years to come, if they are ever sold; and that whenever they are sold they shall be sold by public auction:—which means that after a man has expended time, labour, and money, in making himself acquainted with the suitability of a certain locality, another man may wrest from him the fruits of his enterprise by out-bidding him, or running up the purchase-money to a ruinous amount. Lord Canning proposed that the lands should be sold at a certain rate per acre, and under this condition large tracts have been already allotted—to be resumed, it seems, until some very doubtful period when the whole question shall have been reconsidered. People in India are already very much incensed at this wanton interference with a measure which has been lauded by the best authorities as being everything that it should be, and I suppose I shall find on my arrival that Calcutta is in a state of greatly increased heat on the subject. The great defect complained of in the new Indian constitution, is, that it gives too great a power to the Secretary for India and his council at home, to the great prejudice of the local authorities, who find their best exertions wasted, and themselves abased in the eyes of the natives to a point at which government has become well-nigh impossible.

In material improvements, immense progress has been made between yesterday and to-day. Ten years ago there was no electric telegraph, and not a mile of railway open in either of the three presidencies. The post was the only means of communication, and the traveller who travelled as quick as the post did not accomplish much more than a hundred miles a day. Something under that amount was thought a very fair rate of proceeding, and a dâk journey was an exploit not to be lightly undertaken, even in the later days, when improved roads have permitted regular horse conveyance. When palankeens were the ordinary mode of transit, it would be rash indeed to predict when the traveller would arrive at his journey's end. Since the mutinies, when the policy of opening up the country to British settlement has been recognised by the government, the railways have been pushed forward with great vigour; the great lines in the three presidencies are rapidly approaching completion; and branches are also progressing in several directions. The journey from Calcutta to Delhi, which took nine or ten days by the dâk, may now be accomplished in four; and when the line is completed throughout the distance, in about two. An equal—or nearly an equal—rate of progress has been made elsewhere; and in a few years there will be a network of railway communication all over the country, connecting all the important places. Who can estimate the progress

which this will effect in the condition, habits, and manners, of the people, as well as in the enterprise, industry, and comforts, of our own countrymen? Mr. Laing, who never takes a sanguine view of things except in a strictly business-like manner, told us lately that there are no bounds to the prosperity at which India is capable of arriving, if her resources are fairly brought into play; and almost every mail brings us news of some new road to wealth, or some old one not sufficiently traversed. A few years ago the China wars gave an impetus to the cultivation of tea; India already shares a considerable portion of the market, with the country which has hitherto supplied the world. A few years more, and she may render us independent of China altogether. The war broke out in America, and shut off the Southern States from the cotton market. It is from India that we have drawn much relief in the difficulty; and, with proper encouragement, the cultivation may be so extended in that country as to render it of little importance—as far as our cotton manufacture is concerned—if the North and the South go on fighting till doomsday. For the production of silk, too, India has a far greater field than has hitherto been employed; and in this article of manufacture she may easily be the rival of China in a few years.

As regards means of postal communication, India is in advance even of home. We pride ourselves upon our penny post. They have a three-farthing post in India, which extends anywhere between the Himalayas and Cape Comorin—through the whole length and breadth of the land. This is an improvement effected within the last ten years. There must be more roads and railways, however, before the department can be as efficient as it might be; and a great deal has to be done in canals, before the commerce of the country can be fairly developed. But these are only questions of time. The policy of pushing forward public works and opening India to all comers, being once determined on, the rest is easy enough; already the effects of the immense material progress made since the mutinies, is seen in the extraordinary rise in the revenue, which—combined with a judicious reduction of expenditure—has resulted in the transformation of an apparently chronic deficit into a surplus of which any Chancellor of the Exchequer might be proud.

What cannot fail to impress the new arrival are the social changes which have taken place in India during the last few years. Time was, when the traveller on arriving, say at Calcutta, was such an object of interest to the residents that he might proceed at once to almost anybody's house, and make it his castle as long as he pleased. The barest introduction was sufficient to ensure him a welcome. Now, nobody thinks of going to stay at a private house, unless it be that of a particular friend or connexion. There are monster hotels where any number of travellers may be put up, and may be as well accommodated as in Europe, and the new comer who presents a letter of introduction gets only the conventional

invitation to dinner—which is most likely to be à la Russe. Time was, when to this dinner (not then à la Russe) he would go dressed in white or nankeen jacket, waistcoat, and trousers of the same pleasant fabric. After that, came a period when a man was expected to go in a black coat, but was uniformly asked by the host or hostess if he would not have a white jacket instead, which he as uniformly said he would; and the arrangement became such a regular one that people who gave parties always provided jackets for their guests, some of whom, however, who were particular about fit, sent their own by their servants, and kept them furtively in the verandah until it was time to put them on. Now, everybody dresses for dinner as they do in Europe, and even white pantaloons are the exception instead of the rule. In past times, the hookah was the invariable companion of every male guest. Towards the conclusion of dinner a faint scent filled the air, which heralded the approach of the hookah-badars, of whom each placed the standing bowl of his master's pipe on a little piece of carpet behind his chair, brought the snake round conveniently, and insinuated the mouthpiece into its owner's hand. Then came such a hubble-bubbling as the new generation has never heard, and such a perfume as may be imagined from the composition of the chillum, which besides tobacco includes various perfumes, and condiments of a sweet character, among which I may mention the article of raspberry jam. Everybody was then supposed to be at the pinnacle of enjoyment—even the ladies liked the odour, and often, it is whispered, produced it for themselves when at home. Now, the scent of a hookah in a house is considered almost disreputable—more especially as it gives rise to surmises that it is not the only respect in which the master of the house accommodates himself to native habits. As for taking a hookah out to dinner, nobody ever dreams of such a thing. Some seven years ago, I saw such a proceeding on the part of one or two old Indians—privileged persons in houses where they were well known—and at the mess of a Native Infantry regiment, about the same time, they were sometimes introduced after dinner. But at the same station (this was in the provinces) a hookah which was brought by some innocent guest to the mess of a "Queen's" regiment, so scandalised the colonel that there was nothing for it but to take it away as fast as possible. Even up the country, where hospitality is more free than in Calcutta, there are hotels at every station—bad hotels to be sure, but still hotels—besides the government bungalows: so that no traveller need have an excuse for intruding upon his friends, unless they particularly wish to be intruded upon.

I have hinted at other native habits in connexion with hookahs—of course I mean the habit of having a zenana attached to the house for the accommodation of one or more native ladies. This is no longer a habit, I need scarcely say, with our countrymen, and if ever practised is scarcely ever known. Nor do old

Indians, when preferring an English alliance, get out their wives from Europe—ordering them of their agents like so much beer or brandy,—as they are accused of having done in the old days. The matrimonial market is now so well supplied in India that no man need go far to fix his affections—indeed, the general complaint among subalterns and other persons who are apt to suffer from what they call in Ireland “a pain in the pocket”—is, that their affections (confound them) fix themselves too soon. But granting this inconvenience, the change is decidedly a gain, and so is the new fashion, introduced of late years with considerable success—of leaving off drinking beer and brandy—*before* a point at which the consequences become disgraceful. Anglo-Indians in the present day are almost as sober as any class of persons I know. At dinner-parties people do not sit over their wine even so long as in England, and most of those who are able avoid beer altogether—substituting the lighter refreshment of champagne, which they take *ab ovo usque ad mala*—that is to say, from the soup to the coffee—thus avoiding that “mixing” which elderly gentlemen at home regard with much honour, and which few men in a tropical climate can long stand with impunity.

If any excesses are ever committed, it is by daring men just out from England—bachelors, perhaps, or some monsters of the kind—and as their proceedings would be much the same anywhere, their faults can scarcely be set down to the Anglo-Indians. Everywhere in society, the old character given to Anglo-Indians is fast becoming inapplicable. One hears as little of high play and debt, as of delirium tremens; and when our countrymen ill-treat the natives, we *do* hear of it—which accounts for two or three instances of late, which have not brought us into very good odour in that respect. A class of domestic scandals, usually including elopements, are also far less frequent than formerly; and as far as these are concerned, it can scarcely be said that Anglo-Indians are open to greater condemnation than their European neighbours.

On the whole, the change from Yesterday to To-day is decidedly for the better. What the new arrival will miss, is a class of people in the country who consider it as their home. The danger which we run is that of becoming *too* English; of depending upon ourselves too much, and considering the natives too little. Our political policy now, is, conciliation of the native princes and aristocracy, in order that we may employ them as our allies in improving the condition of the people. Our social policy should be of a similar kind. It is difficult, I know, to mingle much more with the natives than we do, in private life, and the difficulty arises principally on their side. But the attempt should be made, and I hope will be made, and with success, as the settlement of our countrymen extends. At present, nearly everybody lives in India with a view to “home;” all supply themselves from home, as far as is in their power, with every-

thing that they eat, drink, and wear; anything “native” is looked down upon with contempt; and the time is fast coming—unless a healthy change takes place—when we may meet with hundreds of persons who have been in India, but when we may look for an “Indian” in vain!

TIPPING THE TEAPOT.

Two years ago, the Lord Chancellor deprived us of the services of our friend the curate, by giving him a living which would just secure him bread. For this the Reverend Timothy Tritt, who is a grateful little round man, will never cease to bless his patron.

Tritt was always popular in Grumbleton: was liked better, indeed, than the rector. This, though, is commonly the case. Rectors are past romance, and curates are not too far gone—so, at least, say the ladies. Curates have nothing to do with parochial grievances in vestry; it is no business of theirs to compel recalcitrant members of the flock to yield their yearly allowance of fleece for the proper comfort of the rectorial body. Lastly, rectors are generally married, and curates are well disposed to follow the example.

So soon as it became confidentially known throughout the parish that the Rev. T. Tritt had got a living, all the ladies determined to get up a testimonial for him. How impressive was the presentation-day, graced by the beauties and virtues of Grumbleton, reckoning from Miss Virginia Stocke (such was her name then), bright Mary Gould, and the Misses Mynn, to the damsels last presented for confirmation, and who looked so deeply interested in all that was going to happen. Admiral Groggen was there, with his jolly nose and ear-trumpet; as an influential parishioner he had undertaken the duty of spokesman. Rector Drowse was there with all his belongings; the Grobey family, the Slobey family, old Mrs. Tittlemy, and the curate in full canonical apparel, were all there. It was an influential gathering of grateful parishioners, including every child in the parish above ten years old. We met on a hot July day, and the room was crammed to suffocation. There was a table in front of the rector, and on the table there was a shiny mahogany box. It shone nearly as much as Mr. Tritt's smooth pate, which he polished ever and anon with a white pocket-handkerchief, unmindful that it had long reached its maximum of radiance. He tried, meanwhile, to look as if he were not specially interested in what was going on. Report has been uncertain, wavering between the probability of his transplanting to the new soil Virginia Stocke or Jessie Mynn. He mustn't commit bigamy, but both girls have been enthusiastic in the matter of the Testimonial.

The schoolroom was garlanded with festoons and appropriate mottoes. One or two old devices had been retained: “Welcome the coming, speed the parting friend,” was thought too prettily done to be excluded, and not altogether inappropriate, although it certainly did

appear to have an eye to the new curate, as well as Mr. Tritt. Indeed, there was much curiosity about him. "May fortune shower her choicest gifts upon you," was another device, considered most ingenious and appropriate. We omit the Scriptural phrases which Grumbleton, not being an original, soon fell a quoting, as people do when they don't know what else to say. A pile of *carte de visite* portraits of the curate in full canonical apparel, was also on the table, to remind the sorrowing parishioners of their departed pastor when his voice should no longer be heard among them.

The harmonium and school children at a given signal struck up, and all joined in singing. Mr. Tritt's bass was audible, though rather hoarse, on the occasion. A bass voice, and a mild temper disposing him to coo with it, are the fortunate conjunctions for a curate. The model curate blends orchestrally the serpent (or the bassoon) with the dove.

Admiral Groggen's ears are deaf to the strain, and he stares out of window, ruminating oratory, while the music has possession of the public. When it has ceased, curiosity enforces instant silence, while the rector, a man who does common things well, and uncommon things not so well, briefly opens the proceedings by calling on Admiral Groggen to proceed to business. The gallant admiral would certainly have been more at home in laying his ship alongside his enemy, but we have all to do queer things sometimes, and must manage as well as we can. Speaking up, therefore, as if there were a strange craft in sight, and he had mislaid his speaking-trumpet, he informs the company that Mr. Tritt is about to leave them for a new scene of labours, to which he has been preferred by the Lord Chancellor. He is glad of his good fortune, but sorry to lose him. He believes he preaches excellent sermons, but, owing to deafness, is of course unable to judge. His deafness explained why he sometimes fell asleep during Mr. Tritt's sermons; a better apology, he would remind them, than some other folks had. Oh, they didn't sleep in church? He was glad to hear it; men ought to keep their eyes open when on duty, and women too (loud cheers), which the admiral could not hear, so that he had got well into the principal part of his speech when the noise subsided. Here however, he was a little at fault. "And this mahogany box," he repeated, taking it up and scanning it attentively, "varnished very nicely, Mr. Tritt." (Mr. T., in canonical apparel, bows assent.) "Jessie, my dear, where the deuce is the key?" A little titter and confusion among the ladies; meanwhile, Admiral Groggen proceeds: "Grateful recollection; good-hearted man; help the poor—none of you ladies know anything about the key?"

"The key," says Miss Virginia, very quietly, "is here, Admiral Groggen."

"Oh, oh," said the speaker. "Now, Mr. Tritt, we shall get on, sir! Yes, my dears," continued the admiral, quite blandly, and unlocking the chest as he went on, "it's all right. And now,

Reverend Mr. Tritt, A.M.," he continued, his eye catching sight of the inscription, "I have the honour to request, on behalf of the grateful parishioners of Grumbleton, your acceptance of *this teapot*," holding it aloft amid the applause of the company, and then handing it across the table to the curate, who took it nervously in both hands, opened the lid, looked in, and set it down on the table; "this cream ewer," which accordingly followed the teapot; "and this sugar-basin, sir, which, if it has no sugar in it at the present moment, has something where-withal to sweeten the cares of existence, and —and—to help keep the kettle boiling."

A heavy purse of gold was lifted from the basin by the gratified and greatly affected recipient, amidst loud applause from all, which the admiral could notice, if he could not hear.

"Bless you, my worthy friend!" said the admiral, shaking the curate's hand warmly; "get a good wife, Timothy, to make tea for you, as soon as you can."

A great many damp eyes sparkled in the schoolroom at that moment, but it is gratifying to state that Mr. Tritt was equal to the occasion.

Of course he shed tears. Of course he was overcome by his feelings. Of course he was taken by surprise. He would remember them in his prayers when he was far away; and he hoped they would remember him. He should never look at the teapot and the tea-service, without a charming reminiscence of dear Grumbleton. He might find many discouragements before him; rather expected he should; but the remembrance of this day's proceedings, the touching address of their gallant old friend—(Here Tritt raised his voice a little, to make the deaf man hear.) "That's right, give it 'em well," said Admiral Groggen, under the impression that the curate was improving the occasion. "Sarve 'em right; Grumbleton folks good for nothing, as you say." Whereat everybody began to laugh, and nothing more could be said, sentimental or serious.

The rector asked everybody to luncheon, and the proceedings of the day closed with an affecting address to the school children, and a fire-balloon, which came down somewhere and did mischief.

The months rolled on in Grumbleton, Miss Stocke made a very good humdrum wife for Tritt, and the time soon came when the successor in the curacy was to give way to the son of the rector, who wanted a title. But nobody spoke of the former curate; his photograph was framed and hung up in some of the cottages, but I believe the Mynns had lost theirs. The wine merchant had one, but that came as a label on a case of returned empties from Grumbleton.

"It's no use," said Admiral Groggen, "giving Thews a tea-pot and a bag of money, you know. *He's* got plenty of money, so what will you do?"

"An inkstand," suggested Miss Rose Mynn.

"To get him to write his sermons, eh? A cricket-bat, I should say. Well, settle it among you. There's my mite, whenever you want it. Everybody does speak well of Thews, certainly."

On this occasion the Misses Mynn called into their councils the secretary of the Grumbleton cricket club, who, being considered a good man of business, immediately suggested the appointment of a committee, to consist of the ladies and gentlemen of the parish; the committee to meet for the purpose of considering what was to be done, and how to do it.

At the first meeting, Mr. Arthur Briare and Miss Rose Mynn were made honorary secretaries, and the committee was named. It consisted of eight young ladies, and as many gentlemen. After this the business was adjourned to that day week, for materials, book of minutes, and subscribers' names, which were to be inscribed on vellum. It was also agreed to meet at Mynn Villa. The proceedings closed; when the chairwoman, vacating the chair, was led to the piano, where a few songs and glees were sung, before the table was pushed aside for a carpet dance. The committee separated at a late hour, having established a precedent for committee meetings which is hereby recommended as an antidote to their usual dulness. Say, for a "Committee of the whole House," an equal number of gentlemen and ladies, and a chairman who can play the fiddle. Never was there such a committee as this in Grumbleton for punctual attendance, and subscribers' names came in apace. It beat the rector's weekly parochial, to pieces, and being held on the same evening, furnished everybody with a reason why they could not possibly go. The curate, of course, was supposed to know nothing of the proceedings, and therefore to his mitigated pleasure, but we hope his ultimate profit, was in attendance on the rector.

The report of the committee was voluminous, and cost the honorary secretaries a constant laying of their heads together. It is among the chronicles of Grumbleton, and may, all but an extract or two, be suffered to remain there. The handwriting is Miss Rose Mynn's, and the obliterations are noted down.

April 1, 1863.—On this lovely spring morning, after breakfast, the committee and the friends (and admirers obliterated) of Mr. Thews met together in the assembly-room. All (with one or two exceptions!) looked very happy, and Mr. Thews came with the rector and the family. Mr. Thews looked very well, and wore a white tie on the occasion. Among the company were Admiral and Mrs. Groggen, the Hon. Mrs. Briare, Mr. and Mrs. Grobey, Mr. and Mrs. Slobey, Mrs. Tittlemy, &c. &c. When the parties were arranged, the following address, adopted unanimously by the ladies and gentlemen of the committee, was read by the honorary secretary, Mr. Briare:

"Dear Sir,—We, the committee of parishioners of Grumbleton, beg to express our regret at the prospect of losing your services, mingled with our earnest hope that, with the blessing of Providence, you may be happy in your new sphere of duty. During the two years which you

have spent among us, we can recal many traits of a pleasing kind developed in your career.

"We beg your acceptance of the accompanying salver and soup-ladle, as a slight but sincere mark of our esteem and regard, and subscribe ourselves,

"Dear Sir,

"Your sincere well-wishers and
"Affectionate friends."

Here follow the signatures of the eight young ladies and six gentlemen, on behalf of all Grumbleton, with the counter-signature of the hon. secretaries.

This document, with the plate, Mr. Thews received with a bow and a smile; if he did not make a long speech or shed any tears, it was because he was a muscular Christian, and couldn't do either the one or the other. Everybody went away, delighted at the proceedings, to a *déjeûner* at Mrs. Briare's. On this occasion, Admiral Groggen was persuaded to sing Lord Lovel, which he did with high good humour. At the verse of the briar and the rose twining together in a true lovers' knot, the whole company suddenly joined in the chorus—which gave considerable colour to the rumour that a knot would in due time be tied between the honorary secretaries.

Possessed of such attractions, it is impossible that clerical testimonials can ever lose their influence on the minds of grateful parishioners. In the hope, however, of reducing to a few general rules a subject not sufficiently systematised, the following will be found serviceable in a practical way:

In the case of a parish-going curate, an inkstand or salver, or both, may answer the purpose.

In the case of a man whose means are not large, gown and cassock, and bag of money; in that of a tea-table curate, teapot; also coffee-service, to do the thing handsomely, with suitable inscription, not omitting the M.A.

An illuminated farewell address, written on vellum, unless accompanied by something substantial, has been known to occasion disappointment, and cannot, therefore, be recommended.

In the case of a D.D., a piece of plate or a portrait is a suitable token of respect, but such are comparatively rare.

It must not be forgotten that testimonials are by no means confined to the clergy. It is now the custom to "recognise" in this way the merits of all persons who are fairly paid for doing their duty. It is wonderful how grateful the public is becoming.

"Why?" asked a railway passenger the other day of a country town tradesman—"why did you give your station-master a testimonial?"

"Why, sir, you see," was the reply, "these men can annoy us a good deal if they like."

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