

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I. EASTPORT.

A FEW cottages—scattered like odd grains of corn along a short strip of English coast—after a rickety and precarious infancy, had grown into a village. With such good nutriment as fishing and smuggling, it became a strong child. Later, in the war times, it was fancied by the military authorities: a fort and large barracks were built, and soldiers sent there. From that moment it became respectable, ceased to be a city Arab, and was called Eastport. In a short time it had timidly advanced to the grade of watering-place—a shy *débutante*—raised from the ranks, and apparently as ill at ease in its new finery of dotted villas and dampish plaster terraces, as the serjeant who has been made uncomfortable by a Commission. But, in ten years more its patent would be regularly made out; and it would be enrolled permanently among the dignified watering-places. The threads of railway would converge, and be gathered up there, as into a hand. Beading after beading of snow-white terraces would embroider the edges of the cliffs. A monster hotel, as white and bright as if it were every morning burnished by mammoth housemaids, and teeming with life like a monster warren, would have burst out on the hill, and noble persons have poured in, and have been cramped in tight drawing-rooms, scented with new plaster, at twenty guineas a week. A glistening strand reclaimed from savagery and ugly boulders, would have burst into gay files of sentry-boxes on wheels, travelling out in the sun to the deeper waters, and have become an animated encampment, where the splash and the plunge marked time, and where countless novels and newspapers would be read to the pleasant music of children's prattle and young ladies' voices.

But the moment had not yet come. The fairy queen of fashion, always fanciful and arbitrary, had not yet let her robe fall upon this corner, nor had she touched it with her golden wand. She had not given the signal for the rush. So it lay now in a state of comparative squalor, enjoying a sort of vegetable life—just as its half-dozen stranded fishing-boats lay over on their bulging sides in a helpless and sluggish imbecility. A little pier straggled out awkwardly and timor-

ously to sea: but by-and-by there would be a vote in Parliament, and a new harbour, and fast sailing-packets shooting across with Mails to the Dutch and Belgian coasts opposite.

On the lowest tier, next the shore, were the fishermen's huts. A couple of sloping roads ran up the cliffs like ribbons, and became streets, and on the top the bits of terraces and strips of villas broke out in very spasmodic and disorderly fashion. These were in such white patches, with such sudden gaps—where an ambitious speculator who had gone in for an entire terrace and had been compelled to stop short ingloriously at Number Three—that the whole cliff, taken together, seemed like one gigantic jaw smiling at the sky, with teeth knocked out here and there. The barracks and fort were far away to the right, on a cliff that looked as soft and crumbly and friable as a crag of ripe old dinner-cheese.

In this way the settlement gradually retreated inland, and the sea colony was linked by a chain of houses straggling like *videttes* towards a genuine country town about a mile away. The country town was proud of its watering-place, and lived and had its being by two artificial stimulants—one the presence of soldiery in a sort of fort (a foot regiment and some artillerymen), whose officers were precious to the neighbourhood; the other a steeple-chase of some mark, which annually brought down a strange miscellany, who, for a couple of nights swarmed over the little town, and utilised even its haylofts. The whole district was cheap. As yet life was to be enjoyed there with economy, and it was therefore in esteem with many genteel families whose means were not on the same high level as their gentility. Life, too, was strongly savoured by the presence of the officers, who became the llamas of the territory. They were the salt of that special earth, and the leaven of every social meeting for miles about. With some they were as the air we breathe, and by such were inhaled in deep draughts. The warm tint of their dress became necessary to the landscape, as an agreeable patch of colour, and lit it up as the late Mr. Turner did a dull sea-piece—with a vermilion buoy.

In these barracks one night Captain Fermor and a friend, who was called "Young Brett," were sitting at the fire. The feast was done, and those who had feasted were scattered.

"Young Brett" was a new ensign, white-haired to a strange degree, and half a child in appearance, but he was full of respect and admiration for men of experience, like the Mentor beside him. The Mentor beside him had his legs upon a chair, his shell-jacket open, and on his lips was a steady air of composed indifference and almost habitual disgust.

The fledgeling ensign's enthusiasm was not yet chilled. He was describing a hunt.

"Then went through the Old Field," he said, "up to the brook which runs into the mill-race, where there is such a stiff jump—and such a fall! You never saw such a business, every second fellow down."

"They don't know how to ride," said Captain Fermor, tranquilly. "All tailors, every man of 'em."

"I went over with the rest," said the white boy, a little ruefully, "with such a ducking! Some one pulled me out. That beast I rode pulled so."

"Some way it always is the beast we ride," said the other, with the same inert smile. "It's not a country for a gentleman to hunt over. I had to give it up myself. You know *I've* seen the proper sort of thing. Who were out? the usual set?"

"The usual lot; and that Hanbury, as usual, leading. *He* got over the brook. But then he rides such horses!"

The right side of the other's lip went up a little at this speech, and he raised himself in his chair.

"Of course he did! These country fellows can scramble over every drain in the place. *I* have broken a horse's back before now over a little furrow. Any fool can make a show on a great strong brute that knows every stone and hedge in the place. I don't care to lay mind to studying their topography. If I chose, I suppose I could do it with the best of 'em. But it wouldn't repay me the trouble."

Captain Fermor had an eye-glass which he used occasionally, being a little near-sighted; but he had another moral bit of crystal, through which he unconsciously viewed his own personal nature. It was a sort of polite and social Pantheism. He really fancied that his "το εγω," as the Germans put it, pervaded all things, and that everything that was said or done, in which he was called on to speak or do, must have necessary reference to him.

"But he rode like a man," said the white-haired youth, with a thoughtful admiration; "all through, the same—never thrown out a moment. I wonder what he gave for that horse? Two two nought?"

"Bred him, you may be sure—bred him to sell. That's his line. It's the way with all these low farmer fellows."

"But you recollect the parson said the other day he was of good family—Sir Thomas Hanbury—or Somebody like that."

"That don't make him a good huntsman," said Captain Fermor; then added, with a characteristic want of logic, "it's nothing to me

who he is or what he is—I don't care, I'm sure."

The white ensign, still following his hero with a smile of admiration as he flew over a jump, went on the same key of panegyric. "And then coming home dead beat, would you believe it? I saw his horse at the gate of that terrace where those girls live—Raglan-terrace—and he himself with them in the window, as fresh as if he were out of his bath."

Captain Fermor gave a sort of short contemptuous snort or sniff, and his fawn-coloured moustache, which hung over his mouth like the eaves of a thatched cottage, went up again. But he said nothing.

"They say he's going to be married to one of them," said the ensign; "the younger one, so the doctor told me to-day. But don't say I said it, because it may be only a bit of gossip."

The way in which Captain Fermor opened his aluminium-looking eyes on the youth, was something to see. "Why should I?" he said. "Whom should I tell? I suppose I shall have forgotten it in ten minutes. What on earth, my good child, can you suppose these people and their stories are to *me*? It is very well for you, who have seen no life as yet. You may be quite easy in your mind, and tell your apothecary or parson—whose names, thank God, I don't know—that their secret is quite safe with me—because quite forgotten."

The boy coloured up, and became pink at his forehead, contrasting oddly with his white hair. Captain Fermor, really pleased with himself with having spoken with such success and such an under-current of quiet sarcasm, became of a sudden quite free and good humoured. He took out his pipe and his tobacco-pouch, and began, with an agreeable leisureness, to fill it.

"And so you saw these girls? They *are* pretty," he said, making that allowance.

"Yes, yes!" said the other, eagerly; "there's one *very* handsome. I wish—I wish," he added, "I knew her. But they won't know people."

"I could have known them fifty times over if I wanted," said Captain Fermor, trying whether his pipe drew freely. "There were people plaguing me a dozen times. But *I* don't care for that sort of thing. It's not my line, you see. Made it a rule not to make new acquaintances more than I can manage. People say to me, I wish you would let us introduce you to the—the—what do you call them?"

"Manuels! Manuels!" said the youth.

"But I don't want to. I don't care. There *are* fellows who want to know all the world. I'm not one of that sort."

"O!" said the young ensign, with an unconscious piteousness. "If I could only manage it! They are so handsome; and if I could get to know them!"

"Out of the question, my good fellow," said Captain Fermor, becoming cold again. "I never do that sort of thing, unless for friends, you know. Besides, take my advice; don't trouble

your head about that direction. I fancy you would scarcely be the description of article for them, you see."

In many of those people in whom personality, or this organic egotism is strong, a sort of cruel truth breaks out, almost "brutal," as the French put it. But it is only a logical development, and really almost unconscious. From it the white-haired ensign suffered. And there was silence in consequence for a few moments. Captain Fermor, with his pipe now fairly alight, was still thinking how placidly he could turn a bit of quiet gentlemanly sarcasm. A tranquil smile was mantling about the tube of his pipe, and broke the blue clouds, like a little human sun.

"I suppose," he said, after a time, and taking his pipe out to look at it narrowly—"I suppose that strong-built brute will be entered for the steeple-chase?"

"Yes," said the youth shortly, and there was a wounded modulation in the key. But the captain, wrapped up in his egotistic cloak, had now travelled miles from any results his speech might have produced.

"And I suppose," added the captain, "that fellow Banbury—Hanbury—will ride him?"

"Yes," said the youth, a little more heartily, and trying to forget his hurt, for his soul was in horses. "O, he'll ride! They'll be very good this year. I shall ride."

The captain smiled. Here was another opportunity for stropping his satirical blade.

"Of course they will be good, *because* you ride, eh? You'll draw the whole country. Don't you see what you lay yourself open to by that loose form of speech? I call your attention as a friend. Of course it's no affair of mine."

"Yes, I see! But they are to be first rate. I have entered Kathleen, and Taylor has entered Malakoff. I am in already for the Welter—all gentlemen riders, you know."

Again the captain began to whet his razor. "Then they must let no natives enter. Good gracious! what a lot of cads will start." And again he smiled to himself. It was good practice turning this raw child to profit.

"Brian is to start!" said Young Brett, still on the horses. "And Brent will ride him himself."

"Ah! that is a horse," said Captain Fermor, taking his pipe out of his mouth with real interest. "How he will cut up the local fellows! And a man that can ride. He'll give them a lesson." Here Captain Fermor took a weary stretch, as if life under this accumulation of monotony was indeed a burden.

And yet, taking the average of his days, and the duties with which he filled in his days, he seemed to enter into its current with something far short of indifference. The truth was, this was only the fruit of his extravagant egotism. For him the genuine race of the world was the race that wore uniforms; that is to say, the men whose uniform was scarlet. Other soldiers of other countries were mere impostors, theatrical fellows

with gaudy coats. It was notorious there was but one real "service" known, which was the British. Thus, the bulk of English mankind who did not bear commissions were cagots, and the onus of respectability lay upon them. Again, as with men so with things. Town was the centre, the city of true metal. Town things, bought in Town shops—bought, too, at the places where "our fellows" were accustomed to buy—the true Procrustean gauge to which all things must be stretched or fitted—this was more of our captain's creed. Yet he was a gentlemanly devotee, and did not rant these tenets; but they were so kneaded into his constitution, air, and deportment, that everything he said, and everything he did, seemed to whisper an article of this faith.

CHAPTER II. THE MANUELS.

In the window of that miniature house in Raglan-terrace, where Young Brett had seen the admired horse standing, were the ladies of the Manuel family. The house was number four, in a terrace which started magnificently, intending a swoop of at least a street long, but had halted at number four, through a sudden spasm. In the window was Mrs. Manuel, a short handsome olive-toned elderly lady, whose hair was iron-grey, and whose eyes travelled sharply from east to west, and back again. There was also Violet, her second daughter; and Pauline, her eldest, now flashing out in the sunlight, was framed in the window. There admiring Young Brett saw her, in a window to herself, looking out at the noble horse, and fallen into a true statuesque attitude—into which she fell unconsciously some dozen times in the day.

Young Brett looked wistfully, and languished to know her. But for him, and for such as him, number four was as a convent of the very strictest order. The second daughter, whom they called Violet, was not dark, but round and full, with a strange bright glistening in her eyes, which were large and "fine." About her altogether there was a sense of rich colour, with a sort of devotional air.

The hall door was open as Young Brett passed, and coming out with Hanbury, to feel that great horse all over, with that wonder and respect which foreigners have for great English horses, was a son of the house, with black glossy hair that shone and curled—with a faint olive tint about the cheeks, square heavy eyebrows, bluish shading on cheeks and upper lip, where moustache would later ripen and flourish, and a thoughtful business air beyond his years.

He felt and patted the stout strong horse all over. Then Hanbury, an over-healthy, pink-cheeked, open-faced man of the country, mounted into his saddle with some pride, for he knew that eyes were upon him, and took off his hat to the windows, with an emphasis towards that on the left, where the full-eyed girl was with her mother. Then made his horse amble and plunge gently,

yet with grace, for some purpose of his own, struggling with him in a sham of contest, and finally, as it were, letting him have his way, and plunge off in a dignified canter. All this Young Brett saw, as he had seen many such kindred scenes, with a sort of aching. He pined with a boyish pining for ladies' company, and longed to play at drawing-room knighthood and social jousts.

Manuel—the gossips told each other—had been a quasi Anglo-Spanish merchant, who had lived years at Cadiz, and had married a Spanish woman. Wine was his divinity, and in that faith he had lived and died, sending home butts and casks every week. To the figures that flitted round in the little watering-place, this meagre detail had travelled, and, meagre as it was, no one knew how it had been found out. Still, it was welcome as far as it went. And one more skilful discoverer than the rest was able to point to some cloud or mystery, which hung between them and Mr. Manuel's end. For it was ascertained that the butts and casks had broken up suddenly, and in that deluge, the merchant had disappeared. In short, there was a story and mystery, or there should be a story and mystery, which, being unresolved, caused much torture and suffering in the neighbourhood. Public interest in their regard was the more inflamed by the jealous reserve they maintained in their plaster-covered little castle on Raglan-terrace. The whole colony struggled to know them, men made violent efforts to pour in and carry an acquaintance by assault, but ineffectually. Only Mr. John Hanbury, who rode the admired horse, had found some breach through which he had stolen in.

It seemed natural enough to those who knew him well; for he was penetrated through and through with a blunt gentleness and simplicity which, of all characters in daily currency, is the most acceptable, and even superficially makes the most way. The plated artificial world likes this sort of nature, and inhales it as it does a sea breeze at Brighton. He had been in India in some civil station, had broken down physically, and had come home, thirty-eight years old, with six feet of height, broad shoulders, a square, rather massive face, a large kindly eye, black glossy hair, and a black moustache as glossy. He delighted in sport, had some dozen guns or so with which he had shot the tiger and the elephant, and respected the character of a brave and upright horse pretty much as he did that of an upright Christian. He spoke with an earnestness verging upon dignity, and for him the buffoonery argot, called chaff, nursery language of witlings, was hopelessly unintelligible.

The admired horse Baron ambled up to Raglan-terrace very often, nearly every day. Its rider and owner came yet more often. The dust-men and dust-women of gossip, who went about with baskets on their shoulders and a hook, picking up old torn shreds and scraps and tossing them into their baskets, met the party often on the roads and cliffs. It was given out officially,

as it were, that a marriage must follow; and the eagerness for original details as to the Manuels' history became almost exquisite. Any damaging scraps of whisper about their early days would be most precious now.

Captain Fermor, who spent a great deal of his day in a miserable listlessness, lounging along the roads, but most of all sitting on a low wall by the roadside in the sun, busy with a blunt stunted meerschaum, and swinging his legs like pendulums—like a polite Crusoe cast adrift on this savage district—strange to say, took a greater interest in these ladies than he had acknowledged to his friend Young Brett. He had got to be fond of his wall, and swung his feet pretty much about the same hour each day. He had come to know the sisters thoroughly, their walk even half a mile away, their favourite bonnets, their clothes. He really admired "that second girl," and the sleepy dreamy languor of her eyes, and he half indulged himself in a speculation how, with proper dressing and training, under good masters of fashion, "that girl" might "do" up in Town. But he soon checked himself, almost with a blush, for this heresy—as if anything good *could* come out of barren provincialism.

The two girls tripping past—and they stepped together as sisters do, with the harmony of well-trained ponies—soon came to know the fair officer who swung his limbs upon the wall, quite as well as he knew them. At first they did not know his name, but this somehow reached them in time. There are plenty of such surface intimacies. As they walked past they dropped their eyes with a modest precision, but there was a forced composure about their faces that looked like consciousness. Captain Fermor suspended the pendulum motion, and looked long after them with tranquil approval.

By-and-by when Mr. Hanbury walked by with them very often, this expression changed. Man does not relish familiarity in man, with any of the other sex. It seems a sort of preference after rivalry; and though this view is really absurd, and based upon a fiction, it operates very largely. So at first Captain Fermor's lip used to curl contemptuously, as who should say, "A fellow like that!" Then he grew more hostile, and as one day, Hanbury full of smiles, was stooping well across the sisters, as he walked, in his eagerness in what he told, and as they listened with smiles and an interest that showed clearly they had taken no note of the captain upon his wall, the latter broke out almost loudly with "A low cad of a fellow!" Though why cad, and why low, there was no reason for pronouncing. Nay, he took this prejudice actually away with him from his wall; and when some one was criticising (a little unfairly) the riding of Mr. Hanbury, Captain Fermor joined in with a light growl, and repeated his censure that he was "a cad of a fellow!" So, as there are surface intimacies among people who are never to know each others' minds, so are there these surface animosities.

What irritated the captain specially was the

unconscious way in which the almost gentle blue eye of his enemy used to settle on him—if anything, with a kindly leaning towards him. This the other resented: and felt his lip curling up with contempt.

But the summit of unreasonable exasperation was reached, when Mr. Hanbury was seen riding by with the two young ladies. Captain Fermor almost raged against this outrage on decorum. "In Town," he said, "or, indeed, in any civilised place, it would be screamed at. Two girls going out with a fellow like that; no chaperon. It was a pity," he added, with compassion, "they had no friend to hint to them what was proper. Any fellow, that at all approached a gentleman, would not allow them to compromise themselves like that." And when the marriage rumour reached him, his scorn and amazement could not be contained.

There were other characters on these little provincial boards, invariably to be found on such occasions: types kept in stock, who will drop in presently. Such were doctor and doctor's wife; clergyman and wife; local solicitor in large business, often flying up to London; and the landed gentry, whose nearest representative was Sir Charles Longman, of Longwood. These threads of different colours crossed and recrossed each other, and became plaited together into a sort of dull monotonous strand, which was Life at Eastport. Life, in fact, oozed on here pleasantly for some—tranquilly at least for all. Periodically Sir Charles Longman broke into a spasm of a dinner out at Longwood, and had an artillery officer, and an infantry officer with the parson and the doctor, and a solemn and impressive ceremonial ensued; when Sir Charles Longman, tall and well creased in his skin, and shining as though he had got into a suit of serpent's skin, peered at every one through a very glistening eye-glass, as though he were afraid of mistaking them. His voice came out so aridly, it seemed to have newly arrived from the Desert, and dried up all within the area of its influence like a hot wind. The soldiers went home loudly execrating host and entertainment, but Captain Fermor relished both with a smile of superiority, and said it was refreshing to meet a gentleman after all.

CHAPTER III. A MESS DINNER.

THE barracks, which were the vital organs of the place, and the very centre of its nervous system, were austere and sour looking. Buildings constructed as if for the reformation of the hardened soldiery who resided in them. Like the men themselves, they seemed to fall into line, to deploy into galleries, windows, doors, chill-looking iron-bedsteads, arches, whitewashed passages, and numbered cell boxes. As there was properly no flesh and blood in the place to be taken cognisance of officially by the authorities, but merely letters and numbers, so the same system was reasonably extended to the bedsteads, passages, arches, and even dead walls.

The barracks were on a hill commanding the town, which had been fashioned irresolutely into a sort of fort; and when the sun was shining, little lengths of scarlet ribbon were seen to unwind themselves on the walls, like a cheerful edging to a dull grey surtout, attended also by lively drumming, and the winding of trumpets. In this sort of clumsily disguised reformatory, the soldiers took their punishment, were drilled, snapped at with words of command, and, above all, "inspected."

Which dreadful operation was now just being performed. It was a *depôt*, and samples of several regiments were here herded together for training and exercise. Major-General Shortall had been down, a gaunt, red-cheeked man, with what used to be termed the mutton-chop whisker, and who was determined to do his all to save the service from the destruction to which it was hurrying—by keeping his upper lip clean and bare. The men had been scrubbed, pipeclayed, French polished, burnished, holy-stoned even; had been reviled and sworn into perfect cleanliness, before General Shortall was taken down the ranks.

With a scowl of distrust, as though each private was busy hiding some breakage or stain, and might, after all, skilfully evade detection of his crime, the general walked down by a row of chests and faces, pried into buttons, twitched open cartouche-boxes, and pulled at straps sourly, then walked up past a row of backs, poked, probed as if he were making a surgical examination, and finished off a line with an air of disappointment. Colonels and captains walked with him in agitation.

In the evening, General Shortall was to dine with the mess; so, also, was Sir Charles Longman, the generic territorial person of quality, and one or two gentlemen. It was a sort of little festival. The general, in a grudging sort of fashion, had allowed some commendation to be wrung from him, in which the words "efficient" and "soldier-like" were distinguishable. So there was a weight of care off the minds of the superior officers.

Like two kings at a conference, Sir Charles Longman and General Shortall met on the rug, as at a free town. Colonel Benbow presented them to each other. The general said he had known a Longman in "my old regiment" in Jamaica, and Sir Charles, promptly fixing his glass in position, and painfully investigating the general all over, said, doubtfully, "that he—er—didn't know." They went in to dinner then, in a sort of clanking procession.

Such splendour as the *depôt* could compass was put forward. Two silver soldiers, back to back, in full marching order, with knapsack and straps all complete, with the minutest buckle, exquisitely modelled, had been presented by Colonel Bolstock, C.B., to his regiment on leaving; and the two silver soldiers, leaning on their firelocks, mounted guard at the head of the table, under the general's eye. The study of the

accoutrements, as here reproduced, was an inexhaustible source of delight to the officers. It never palled, and it was customary to refer to it as a standard for other works of Art. But the general had the silver soldiers under inspection, and pronounced, sharply, that the belt of "that fellow on the right" might have tightened by another "hole," which critical bon-mot soon trickled down the whole table, and was greatly admired.

As they were sitting down, Captain Fermor came in hurriedly, and found there was but one little gap near the bottom of the table, into which he dropped. One flank of the gap was red, the other black, and just as he sat down, and waiter hands had pushed in his chair from behind, he found that the black civilian patch resolved itself into "that cad of a fellow," Hanbury!

The mere contagion of the thing was not so much; for once, he could have put up with this sort of society. But the awkwardness was here: "this fellow" was sure "to fasten" an acquaintance on him, "what, positively," as he declared afterwards, "he had been struggling with all his power to fence off," but which *he knew* all the time—he had a presentiment, in fact—would come about.

Honest John Hanbury's face actually lit up when he saw who was his companion. He was delighted, for he was of the line of Uncle Toby.

"Captain Fermor," he said, at once, "we ought to know each other. It is so droll meeting and passing each other in that sort of way—and knowing each other all the time. I am so glad, in short."

The captain's lip went up. "O, I see. Indeed!"

The other assumed that there was corresponding joy at this pleasant dinner consanguinity. "Yes," he went on, "the very thing I was wishing for, and all brought about so naturally—without trouble. Do you know, fifty times I have been on the point of walking up to you and saying, 'Captain Fermor, let me introduce myself.' I should have surprised you, I dare say."

The captain's eyes first settled on Mr. Hanbury's drop chain, then travelled up slowly to his face. "I must say you would," he said; "excuse me for telling you so frankly;" and Captain Fermor grew a shade less ill humoured as he thought how gentlemanly sarcastic he could be at times. (This was where he was so much above "our fellows," who put anything offensive all in the rough and in brute shape.)

Though he had stepped into a social ice-pail, Hanbury did not begin to feel the freezing as yet. "We are always talking of you. I should not betray secrets, but we are. We know you perfectly, meeting you so constantly—on that wall. Ha! ha!"

"Very flattering of you and your family to take such an interest in me—very!"

"Family!" said the other, laughing. "Come,

that is good! Come now! as if you don't know who I mean."

Anything like rallying came on Fermor like an east wind. "I really don't understand," he said, nervously. "I take my walks, and don't trouble myself with all I meet."

"That's a wonderful horse of yours, Mr. Hanbury," struck in a young officer from the other side. "Great quarters!"

Every one broke in here with delight on this topic. A conversational sluice had been lifted, and talk poured out. Horse or horsemanship is the one touch of nature that makes the man world a kin.

"What would you take for him?" "Good action?" "Showy?" "Hands high?" "In for the National?"

Hanbury, a good fellow, put his foot in the stirrup, mounted, and rode his beast up and down for them; that is, he told them all details with fulness and with delight. "Yes," he said, "I have entered him. I shall ride him myself."

"And win, by Jove!" said Young Brett, enthusiastically.

"Well," said Hanbury, with an expression of pleased doubt, "these things are so risky, and one never knows; but I *hope* to do respectably. You have seen him?" he said, turning to Captain Fermor.

"That horse of yours? Well—yes—I believe so."

"Of course he has," said Young Brett, with the same enthusiasm. "And, by Jove, don't he admire him! He told me so!"

Fermor measured Young Brett as if for the rack. The look made him penitent on the spot. "I see so many horses; but I really have not thought of the matter at all."

"O, but you must see him—see him regularly. He's worth a study, I can tell you. Let me see—to-morrow! Yes, I'll ride him down here."

Forsyth, another horse devotee, and pious in the faith, said, "Come at two, and have lunch."

"Thanks," said Hanbury, very earnest about his charger. "So I shall. Though, by the way——" and he started. "No. I can't at two. I have," he said, confidentially as it were to Fermor, "to go out with the two girls, you know. By the way," he added, still in his cloak of simplicity, "you ought to know them."

"Indeed! ought I?" said he, with an expression which was meant to be that of "amused surprise." "Well, granting that, to whom do you allude, pray?"

("I can play on this fellow," he said to himself, with satisfaction, "as upon a piano," which was scarcely a wise conviction, for he could only "strum" upon the piano, and in human music he was but an indifferent player.)

"O the Manuels, to be sure," said the Piano, not seeing that it was being played on. "As I said, it is so odd, almost so droll, meeting in that funny way. We have discussed you very often, I can tell you."

Something like "too much honour," or some

such speech of ironical humility, was on the captain's lips; but, in spite of himself, he felt complacent. Contempt and vanity were struggling for him. So he listened to hear more.

"Miss Manuel is very curious about you, and has all sorts of speculations. She says she is sure, from your face——"

An expression of interest spread over Fermor's face. But there was a Thersites in the regiment just opposite, a rough, loud-speaking, rude, and horribly truthful, a graduated professor of chaff, and he was listening. Fermor justly considered him a "low" fellow, but shrank from him as from a social chimney-sweep.

"Look at Fermor," he said; "he thinks every young lady in love with him. He turns back on the roads if he meets one, for fear of disturbing her peace of mind. Ho! ho!"

And an orchestra of "ho! ho's!" from the instrumentalists about, who relished this coarse music of Thersites, broke out.

Fermor turned red, and addressed his neighbour. He made it a rule, he always said, to take no notice of these "low" jokes. But John Hanbury, being a simple good-humoured creature that knew how to laugh, *did* laugh now very loud. It seemed to him such a comical accident that Thersites should have actually stumbled on the true state of things.

"Why," said he, "as to walking along the roads, I can tell you something," he said, looking slyly at Fermor. "You know there's no hiding of one's face exactly."

"O, ho!" said Thersites. "Was there ever anything like this? What did I say? Now we shall hear something." And the orchestra rubbed its hands, and even struck its thighs with delight.

John Hanbury was one of those who innocently overlook what is strict propriety, in the satisfaction of giving pleasure to others.

"I don't think it is quite fair," he said, looking from side to side; "but since——"

Fermor was blazing and glowing. "I must request," he said, in a low hasty voice to his neighbour, "there will be no more of this. I don't like it."

But Hanbury had been trained in wild places of India, where a joke, being a scarce thing, and, once trapped, is not enlarged without a sort of hunt.

So he nodded his head pleasantly to the right and to the left, as if he had a secret, and said, "He doesn't like it, though. It wouldn't be fair, you know."

Again the orchestra broke in, fortissimo: "Come, come! Nonsense! Out with it."

Major-General Shortall and Sir Charles Longman, who had long since strayed away and got lost in the bogs and marshes of conversation, where every step cost them infinite pains, heard the roar of the instruments, and accepted it as though it were a stick which some one held out to help them out.

"Cheerful," said the general. "What is it?"

"Rather some joke, I think," said Sir Charles, doubtfully, and gluing on his eye-glass to try and get a good view of it.

"O, sir," said Captain Thersites, "only a good thing about Fermor. Tell it, Mr. Hanbury, the general wants to hear it."

Hanbury, still relishing the thing with delight, though, indeed, there was neither joke nor story in the whole, was about to begin, when he chanced to look at his neighbour, and saw his crimson cheeks and his curled lip. Fermor said, "I request you will not take any freedom with my name; at least, I am sure you will respect that of those ladies——"

"Ah! don't mind him," roared the orchestra, suspecting what was going on. But this was a new view for Hanbury, who coloured in his turn. It was conveyed in an unpleasant, even an offensive manner, but the caution was just. His rough, coarse provincialism was stupidly making free with the sacred names of ladies. His face changed in a second.

"Let me suggest," said Fermor, seeing the effect, and suddenly taking out his razor for stropping, "a mess table is scarcely the place—you understand."

Nothing could be got out of Hanbury. Disappointed, the crowd, led by Thersites, followed at the heels of Fermor. Once in six months or so they had their revenge in this shape for many supercilious outrages. Personalities were showered on the luckless man, and even the general was seen to smile in a dry way. Fermor glowed and grew white, and glowed again, and devoted his neighbour to the fury of the gods.

The latter, quite sobered, whispered him earnestly, "Thank you a thousand times! I was so near doing it, and you saved me. I should never have forgiven myself."

That depended very much on his own turn of mind, but he might be sure of this, that Captain Fermor would never forgive him that public mortification. The captain chafed secretly, and looked at his glass as though he were chewing aloe-leaves. But there was worse in store for him.

Some one had flung the party at the head of the table a plank in the shape of a little bit of Indian discussion. "They have such odd words now," said General Shortall. "'Pon my soul, I can't make 'em out. They talk in the Times about wallahs and fellahs, and such stuff. Now, we always called them Blacks simply, and niggers—and as good a word as any, I say."

Captain Fermor, superior always to his own herd, was literary and well read, getting down green cases from Mr. Mudie. Part of his ritual was setting "fellows" right on matters of information. So now, brooding and brooding over his injuries, he saw aid at hand, and listened.

"What—er—is a wallah?" said Sir Charles.

"And they have fellows they call ryots," said the general. "Not but that they have plenty of 'em out there—rows enough." Which remark brought forth, as was fitting, obsequious

hilarity. When this had died away, Captain Fermor saw the opportunity for putting out Mr. Mudie's information to interest.

"They call a wallah, sir," he said, with quiet respect, "one of those unhappy creatures who are obliged to work at forced labour—at the Suez Canal, for instance."

"Ah, quite so," said Sir Charles, interested, making his glass adhere.

"And a ryot," continued Fermor, half turning, "is, I believe, a—a man who works in the fields for a few pots of rice, one of the greatly oppressed castes of India."

The colonel was looking round as if this explanation reflected great credit on the depôt, and the general seemed a little impressed, when John Hanbury, who had been listening with wonder, broke out with honest expostulation, "No, no, no! Come now. What *are* you talking of? That is the funniest jumble—I beg your pardon for saying so—but it's all wrong. And I think you know it is!"

Fermor's lip trembled a little. This was the fruit of being ever so little familiar with these horribly low and familiarly free persons!

"Why 'fellahs,'" continued Hanbury, laughing heartily, "are the Suez people. I wish a wallah heard you speak of him in that way, or a ryot either."

"There'd be a ryot, I suppose," said General Shortall, encouraged to repeat his joke.

"By Jove, yes! Why, they are farmers, cultivators, merchants. It's so funny how you contrived to jumble them."

"It may be funny," said Fermor, with an effort at calmness, "but, with all respect, sir, I think I am right."

"Nonsense, you're not serious."

"Have you read, might I ask, Jenkinson's or Thurlow's travels?" said Fermor, with chilly politeness.

"Not a line of them," said the other, laughing, "but if they say that, they're not worth reading."

"The world thinks differently," said Fermor, looking round with calm triumph. "Jenkinson is a standard book. I have the second edition up-stairs; got it down from London. He travelled five years in India."

"If it comes to that," said Hanbury, with a good-humoured smile, "I was there five-and-twenty, but I don't go upon that."

"Ha, ha!" said Thersites, "not bad that!"

The statement produced a weighty impression.

"That settles it," added Thersites.

"By Jove!" said little Brett, suddenly, "how lucky! I have a Hindustanee dictionary somewhere!"

There was a cry of "Fetch it! fetch it!"

It was fetched, but it confirmed Hanbury and degraded Fermor. Hanbury became the Moonshree or Pundit of the night, an office Fermor had always claimed. He suffered acutely. His "faculties" were now taken from him, and he could see that the (in his eyes) uncouth, half-

civilised fighting miscellany were enjoying his deprivation. He saw the general whisper grimly to the chief with an inquiring smile, and he had a faithful instinct that this was about him.

Presently that potentate rose and went his way. The dining crowd dispersed. They brought away with them the honest John Hanbury into a snug private room, where they lounged and stretched themselves after the rigours of the night, and clouded the air with fumes of tobacco and spirits. These were happy moments. The fighting men were boys again. They were attached by the genial simplicity of Hanbury, and the link was the horse. That noble brute was led out and admired over and over again. They became eloquent, witty, even wise, in that curious tongue. These simple natives interchanged the blank counters and cowries they had for ideas, with a marvellous fluency. They talked of the "National," now close at hand, of the course, of the great horse Baron, of the greater Irish horse that was coming, of the gentlemen riders, of the odds. Then of the "Welter Stakes," and of a grievance against the "handicapper," and monstrous oppression and injustice. And Hanbury, who in some other societies might have been insignificant and overlooked, riding in here on his horse, was immensely respected and hearkened to.

Fermor did not hear the last of that night's defeat for many days. In the barrack life there is a barrenness of incident, and this was welcome. He was sensitive to "low chaff," and though he habitually awed them as being inferior in intellect, it made him shudder one day to hear a low "ungentlemanly" nickname associated with his own. "The Wallah" was actually profanely joined with his sacred being, and one morning he heard "fellows" below, in the court, asking familiarly if "The Wallah" was in his room.

GOING TO LAW IN CEYLON.

WHAT cock-fighting is to a Malay, what horse-racing is to an Englishman, what quail-fighting is to a Chinaman, what pitch-and-toss is to a stable-boy, that Law is to a Singhalese or a Tamulian. It is the amusement that rouses him to exertion; that occupies his waking and his sleeping thoughts; that keeps him going to and fro between the district court and his village, forty miles away in the interior; that leads him to spend his last farthing on the desperate stake; to pledge his wife's last bangle, and his own last earring; that reduces him to beggary and worthlessness, and leaves him nothing to bequeath to his children save lawsuits.

Litigation seems to possess for the Eastern mind a charm little short of fascination. Like drink, the taste once acquired gains fresh force after each indulgence; and when no longer able to gamble in lawsuits himself, the hoary litigant becomes tutor and adviser of embryo disputants, and opens a school for false witnesses in his

village, where, enthroned as judge, he examines, cross-examines, corrects, and directs those in their parts who are to appear in the real court and give their testimony regarding what they know, or are to pretend to know, on the day of trial.

Kandir Kathergamer and Kasiar Tambyar are neighbours. There has for some time past been a growing ill feeling between these two worthies and their families. They are joint shareholders in a palmyra garden: that is to say, the one has an undivided share in it to the extent, as he says, of 1-4th of 3-9ths of 2-32ds by inheritance, and 2-473ds in favour of his wife; the other has some equally minute sub-division; and there is a difference of opinion between them as to the ownership of one particular tree. The palmyra season is fully come. Every five minutes you hear a "flop" in all the gardens, and then there is a rush of two or three persons, and perhaps a shout, and a cry, and a row; and if you inquire what it is about, you are told that this is a fruit, that, like the apple of discord, has fallen from a palmyra-tree, about which there is a dispute, and the struggle is which disputing shareholder shall basket the prize.

Our worthy neighbours aforesaid, whom, for the sake of brevity, we will call K. and T., have each set one of their offspring to watch the falling fruit, with strict injunctions to hold their own. Young Master K., his mother's pride, squats under a tree, basket beside him, and beguiles the time by tearing asunder with his teeth one of the yellow-coloured stringy fruits, till his face and hands are a fine rich ochre. Miss T., a young lady about four years Master K.'s senior, who knows how to make good use of her nails, takes up *her* position. The tree in dispute lies between them.

"Flop" goes a fruit behind Master K., up jumps Miss T., but sits down again; the fruit has fallen from a tree that is without dispute in K.'s domain. Master K. therefore appropriates it unmolested.

Presently there is a flop from one of Miss T.'s trees, and up she jumps and pursues the bounding ball till she has secured it.

At last, "flop" comes a fruit from *the tree*; up jump both, and make a rush at it. It rolls towards Master K., and thus far doth fortune favour him; but, too wise a strategist to leave unguarded his already secured fruits, he runs, dragging his half-filled basket after him. So likewise does Miss T. Master K. seizes the prize, or rather he stoops to seize it, and his hand is just upon it, when down comes Miss T. like a wolf on the fold, gives him a shove, and over he goes, basket and all, and she gets hold of the fruit; round he turns quick as thought, and gives her a punch in the side; down go her basket and nuts, and in a moment her ten claws are in unpleasant proximity to Master K.'s eyes. "My father and mother, I am dead!" cries he. Out rushes his fond paternal parent, his mother following with shrieks. Out come Mr. and Mrs. T. from their abode, and in no time Mr. K. has laid a short thick stick over Mrs. T.'s head, and left her stunned and bleed-

ing: while he and Mr. T. are rolling over each other on the ground, their long hair streaming about them. In rush the neighbours, and separate them. Loud is the strife of words, foul beyond expression the abuse by the females. "To the court with your wounded wife," says a friend; and away they go to their respective houses, screaming at each other all the while, and a swift runner is despatched to the Police Vidahn by the party of Mr. T., who, having wounds and blood to show, is in the better position. "This will never do," says K.'s elder brother, a veteran litigant. "You, too, must have blood and bruises to show." "Well, you see I have a scratch here and a thump there, and I am all over sand and dirt," says K. "Oh, that's good as far as it goes, but it is not enough; we must do some more. Come here," says he to Master K. the valiant, who began the affray; "let me see your face."

Master K., unsuspecting of evil, submits to his uncle's inspection, and in a second his worthy relative has drawn a sharp little knife over an inch of Master K.'s forehead, and the red blood comes streaming down.

"That will do," says he; "now carry him off to court before the others are ready. Get there first, and say T. did it with a kai-katty" (a formidable kind of cleaver, much used by the natives).

Off starts the procession, Master K. carried in the arms of his afflicted father, every drop of blood on his face carefully preserved to create the greater sensation, his head thrown back, his eyes languidly closed, his lips partially open, his hands dangling feebly by his side. Close behind him comes his maternal parent, "a Niobe, all tears," her dishevelled locks streaming over her shoulders, her head unveiled, all appearances disregarded in the affliction of the moment. Straight into the compound of the magistrate they rush, while other relatives follow, and a crowd collected on the way gathers round the gate.

"Oh, my Lord!" cries Mrs. K., and falls prostrate on the floor before the gentleman, and straightway Mr. K. lays his seemingly senseless burden before the "Doray."

If that functionary has had some experience, and suspects that Master K. is shamming, he will, perhaps, unexpectedly apply a little smelling-salts to his nose, and will then find out the trick. But, if very green, he will probably be taken in, and, after having given several very stringent orders for the apprehension of the accused, he will, just as he has gone inside again, be roused by Mr. T. and *his* party, bringing Mrs. T. in a sort of palanquin, with her head cut open. Both parties then enter cases against each other, and the magistrate has, amidst the most conflicting testimony, to determine whether both cases are true or both false, or which is true and which is false.

There is no exaggeration in the above story; it is what happens daily. I bear in mind especially one case in which a man, after cutting a woman's forehead open, in a garden at three p.m.,

cut open the forehead of a girl of his party with her own consent, and in so doing very nearly severed an important artery. Then the two opposing factions entered counter charges against each other, of exactly the same nature.

When a magistrate's district is compact, and the villages are easy of access, his best plan in the early part of his career is to act the detective now and then. The knowledge that his habits are locomotive, and that he will pass down upon a place unexpectedly, is a great point in his favour.

I remember spending half a day, when new to my work, in trying to find out where a man lived. The question was, whether he could have heard the falling of certain cocoa-nuts from a tree, in a case for stealing the fruit? The adverse party said he did not live in the hut where he said he did live, and heard the sound. As I could come to no satisfactory conclusion by the evidence, I found some excuse for adjourning the case till next day; and that evening about nine, I quietly proceeded to the place, accompanied by a guide and an officer of the court, who had been kept in ignorance of my plans, and summoned the inmates. Out stepped my friend fresh from his mat, and made his salaam. I then sent a man up the cocoa-nut-tree, which was at some distance, while I stood close to the hut, to ascertain if the fruit could be heard falling. Soon there was a "thud" on the sand, another, and another, so those two points were established. Nevertheless, the case eventually was shown to be a false one. This mode of procedure may seem very irregular to English lawyers; but in a land where the European stands alone, where the rule is that every witness deceives if he can, and that no regard whatever is paid to the solemnity of an oath, or rather an affirmation, it is a very good way, occasionally.

In the district where I write this, my predecessor once went to a remote village on judicial business. On his way, a man of influence came to him, and said that his granary had been broken into on the previous night, the paddy (or rice with the husk on) stolen, his watcher murdered, and the body made away with. The judge went to the spot indicated, and there he found paddy strewn about and blood upon the sleeping mats of the watcher. An information was laid against certain parties, and inquiry duly made. Subsequently it turned out that the murdered man was alive and well, but in concealment; that the paddy had purposely been scattered about, and the blood sprinkled on the mat by the informant. In fact, the whole affair was a false and malicious conspiracy.

In the north of the island, when a murder or any other crime was committed, I used to go to the house of the suspected murderer, and leave a polite message for him to come and be hanged. He always *came*. The *hanging* was another affair. The fact is, that in that district concealment was very difficult, and the attachment of the people to their homes and families is such, that a man preferred standing

his trial and trusting to the glorious uncertainty of the law, rather than abscond and leave his country for life.

But it is in the long-drawn land case, extending over two, four, six, ten, years, that the native is in his glory. There it is that he finds full scope for his powers of plotting and counter-plotting. Does the plaintiff file a mortgage bond? Straightway he produces a release. Does he sue on a bill? Here is a stamped receipt. Is it a will that he goes upon? The defendant has a testamentary paper of a later date. Has he a dowry deed of 1801? Here is a purchase deed of 1798. All these documents are drawn up in due form, and are made to assume a venerable appearance: the notary uniting with that office the more lucrative one of forger. I once committed a gentleman of the profession for forgery. It was proved that at the time the victim's name was forged he was sitting on an inquest at some distance; and it is generally held that no one can be in two places at once; but the jury thought otherwise, and acquitted the prisoner; "a fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind." I have before me a plaint for "the 307-1920th undivided share" of a small patch of land, and I could give numerous instances of hard-fought battles for minute shares in a single tree worth from six to twenty shillings.

In spite of all this, happily, submission to constituted authority is one of the characteristics of Asiatics; however excited, and however numerous they may be, a single European magistrate may go with perfect impunity among contending factions, and they will submit to his commands like children.

I was roused one night by the intelligence that there was a grand uproar at a seaport about four miles from where I lived. The Tamul seafaring men are splendid fellows—free and independent in their bearing, broad-chested and muscular, and when they do fight, it is with a will. It appeared, subsequently, that there were two parties, the "East Indians" and the "West Indians." The Westerns wished to proceed in due state by torchlight in a wedding procession through the east-end, and the Easterns said it should not be. They might perambulate the west-end to their hearts' content, but beyond their boundary, they should not come. The East Indians rallied at their barrier, towards sunset, with clubs and other weapons, and awaited the course of events. They had not to wait long. Soon the sound of the clarionet and tom-tom are heard in the distance. "Hark, 'tis the Indian drum!" Nearer and nearer comes the procession, the bridegroom seated in an open car borne on men's shoulders, and behind him a closed palanquin. A halt, and a parley by the torchlight. "What do ye in the East Indian country?" A reply. Then, "No you won't." "Yes we will." "Will you, then?" (The Westerns are all unarmed.) "Yes; who are you that speak so proudly?" says an Eastern to a Western chief, and aims a blow at him. (It was an Eastern that began it.) The Westerns step back, and open fly the

doors of the closed palanquin. The Easterns press forward. "Who is in it?" They learn the next minute, when a dozen Western hands are thrust in and drawn out again, and a dozen swords and other weapons gleam for a moment in the air, and come showering down upon Eastern skulls. When I examined next morning the cuts and the slashes, my wonder was that none were killed; but the amount of knocking about that a rice-eater's head can stand, is marvellous. Taken by surprise, the Easterns made stand for a few moments, and then retreated in confusion. Close by the scene of action was a new strongly-built store, and into it a number of them retreated and made fast the door. The Westerns thereupon kept watch and ward over them. They lighted in the street a blazing fire, so that none could escape unseen, and on the walls they wrote in Tamul, "This is the jail bazaar." Meanwhile, some of the Eastern party who had remained outside slunk off through by-ways to where I lived, and gave me as much information as suited their interests. On reaching the spot, I found a crowd collected before the bazaar, and the embers of the fire in the road. When the prisoners within were told I had arrived, they thought it was a ruse to get them out. With the greatest caution they opened one of the doors ever so little, and when they saw I really was there, out they came, twenty-three in all, I think. I know that I marched off forty fellows to the court-house that night, and they went as submissively as lambs.

Caste distinctions are a fruitful source of dispute. Under native rule, the violation of any prescribed custom, or the attempt to do what was only permitted to a higher caste, was a very serious offence. For instance, in the Kandian country, it was a crime punishable with death for any one not of the royal family to whitewash his house. At the present day, in spite of the complete discountenance of caste by government, one constantly hears of quarrels in the remoter parts of the island—and even near town, where civilisation spreads less slowly—in consequence of a low-caste man "aping his betters," as the high caste consider it. For such a man to tile his house instead of thatching it, to wear his clothes below the knee, to allow his wife to drape herself beyond the prescribed rule, to put on earrings if a Tamulian, to celebrate a wedding to the sound of music and with the decorations of clothes—all these are high crimes and misdemeanors, and the perpetrators are liable, if not protected, to have their heads broken and their houses burned about their ears. The proper course for a public officer to pursue in such cases is to give the offenders all the protection of the law; if need be, to be present himself, to see that the headmen, who generally sympathise with and are in league with the high caste, do their duty; and to visit with condign punishment any one who sets authority at defiance. A little firmness in one or two cases has a marvellous effect, and the battle has seldom to be fought more than once in the same place.

One way in which an influential man, or party of men, sometimes take their revenge on a lower or weaker section of the village, is to forbid the washerman to wash for them, or the barber to shave them. They are then at a dead stop; for nothing would induce a man not of the washer caste to shoulder his bundle and get up his own cotton: nor can he, nor would he, make a barber of himself by shaving his own or his fellow's chin. This is sometimes a rather difficult measure to meet, for, of course, under our government the barber and the "dhobie," or washerman, are free agents, and it is not easy to say exactly who the person is who has laid his veto upon the operations of the two functionaries. Moreover, were the parties aggrieved to be directed to bring an action for damages against the disturber of their peace, they would have to tarry while their beards were growing and their clothes getting dirtier. It is a ludicrous sight on these occasions to a man who shaves himself every day, to see some twenty or thirty lugubrious-looking fellows standing in a row, pointing dolefully to their bristly chins in the most helpless manner, and crying for some one to shave them. The magistrate has to remonstrate with the barber and the dhobie, and after a while some compromise is made, and the village appears next day with its chin shorn and its clothes washed.

In the Kandian province there is a class of people called Rhodias. They are outcasts, and no words can express the loathing with which they are regarded by the Kandians. There is nothing repulsive in their appearance: on the contrary, their women are the handsomest in the island, erect as arrows, and graceful as antelopes. Who they are, is not very clearly ascertained. My own idea is, that they were the aborigines of the island, and that the Gangetic race who subdued the island and built the famous city of Ameradhapura subjugated them. Old John Knox, who was a captive in Ceylon in the year 1679, during the time when Kandy had a king, and who has written a truthful work on the island, says that they were "Dodda Vedahs, which signifies hunters," and he relates how it was their special duty to provide game for the king, and how they once produced before him some flesh which he enjoyed so much that he told them to get some more. The barber is in Asia, as in Europe, the great newsmonger, and the next morning the scraper of the royal chin communicated to his majesty the horrible secret that what he had so enjoyed was human flesh.

Filled with rage, the king made a decree that, henceforth and for ever, the descendants of these persons should be outcasts, and be held in loathing and abhorrence; and from time to time, when any of his nobles offended him, he ordered that they and their families should become "Rhodias"—a punishment worse than death. There is at the present day the remnant of a tribe of men who were once more numerous, who live a wild life in the forest, and are, in point of civilisation, of the very lowest grade,

and they are generally called "Veddahs." They use the bow and arrow, and live by the chase. They shun the haunts of other men, abhor everything like a settled life, are small of stature, squalid and repulsive in appearance, and know nothing save the arts of woodcraft. Whether between these Veddahs and the Rhodias (Knox's "Dodda Vedahs") there be any affinity, I cannot say, but the mere fact that they differ so much in appearance is not alone proof to the contrary, for the one tribe has been for centuries living in the unhealthiest jungles of the island, while the other has occupied the most healthy regions, and been constantly intermingled with the very best blood in the land—that of the families of nobles who were degraded and compelled to unite with them. Not being allowed to till the soil, the Veddahs live by their wits partly, and are regarded as great thieves. They make hide ropes, baskets, and mats, as well as formidable whips, which are cracked with the report of a pistol before members of the aristocracy when on festive occasions they move in procession. The women spin plates on their fingers, and perform other little tricks of like nature. They are a race much to be pitied, and at present terribly degraded; and it will be long before the Singhalese will overcome their aversion to them. They crouch before a well-born native as a dog would, and are regarded as little better than dogs.

DANGEROUS EYES.

"Blue eyes melt: Dark eyes burn."

CORNISH SAYING.

THE eyes that melt! The eyes that burn!
The lips that make a lover yearn!
These flash'd on my bewilder'd sight
Like meteors of the Northern Night!

Then said I, in my wild amaze,
What stars be they that greet my gaze?
Where shall my shivering rudder turn?
To eyes that melt, or eyes that burn?

Ah! safer far the darkling sea,
Than where such perilous signals be,—
To rock, and storm, and whirlwind, turn,
From eyes that melt, and eyes that burn!

QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER XLVII. RANELAGH WITH THE LIGHTS OUT.

It was close on one o'clock in the morning, after the countess had gone to supper with her friends, that Lily had packed up such of her tyrant's effects as she ordinarily took home with her, and was ready to go home herself.

She knew the way to the Gardens, and from the Gardens, just as an imprisoned antelope in a menagerie may know its inner lair and its outer paddock, and the bars where the sight-seers stand to give it crumbs of cake. Beyond this there was a vast void, only there were no visitors at the grate to give cakes to Lily.

They lived in a front parlour and bedroom, in a little one-story house in a by-street, close to the river-side. There was a scrap of garden in front, full of very big oleanders and sunflowers. The brass plate, too, which proclaimed that here was an academy for young ladies and gentlemen by Mr. Kafooze, seemed nearly as big as the little green door to which it was screwed. It was a tidy little house, in a tidy little street; only, as all the inhabitants did their washing at home, a smell, rather too strongly pronounced, of soapsuds and damp linen, and the wash-tub generally, hung about it, morning, noon and night. All the little doors had big brass plates upon them. Mr. Kafooze's academy was flanked on one side by a lady who brought people into the world, and, when they had had enough of that ball, assisted them out of it, even to robbing them for their journey; and, on the other, by a distinguished foreigner from Oriental climes, who gave himself out simply as "Fung-yan, Chinese," as though the bare fact of that being his name and nation was amply sufficient to satisfy any purpose of legitimate curiosity. Fung-yan dressed in the European manner, and, unless he wore his pigtail underneath his coat, had even parted with that celestial appendage. His smooth, india-rubber face, twinkling black eyes, and eternal simper, had made him not unpopular with the fair sex. He had even contrived to court, in pigeon-English, the widow of a retired publican with a small annuity, and, to the great scandal of some of the more orthodox Christians of the district, Mrs. Biff, formerly of the King of Prussia, licensed to sell, &c., had become Mrs. Fung-yan. Fung, however, was married at the parish church; it is true that he was accused of burning fireworks and sacrificing half a bushel of periwinkles to his joss in the back garden on the first evening of his honeymoon; but he kept his head high, paid his way, and extorted respect from the neighbourhood. Some said that he swept a crossing, in Chinese costume, for a living; others, that he went round the country swallowing molten sealing-wax, and producing globes full of gold fish from his stomach; a third party would have it that he assisted behind the counter of a tea-dealer in Leadenhall-street; while a fourth insisted that he was an interpreter at a water-side police-court. I think, myself, that Fung-yan was a stevedore down in the docks, where years before he had arrived, a rice-fed, pig-tailed coolie on board an East Indiaman.

The night-watchman held his lantern up to Lily's face as she glided past him towards the water-gate of Ranelagh.

"Good-night, miss."

"Good-night, Mr. Buckleshaw."

"Have my great-coat, miss? It's woundy cold. I shan't miss it."

"Thank you, no, Mr. Buckleshaw. I am well wrapped up. Good-night again."

"It's a sin and a shame to send that poor young gal home at all hours o' night," grumbled the night-watchman, who was an old soldier, and testy and kind hearted, as old soldiers usually

are. "It's a burning shame, and so it is. Them furriners don't seem to care a brass farden what becomes of their own flesh and blood. Such muck, too, as they live upon! The young gal ain't a furriner, though I wonder where that she-devil, who's sending the people crazy with her rough-riding, got hold of her. Well, it ain't no business of mine." And the night-watchman lighted another pipe, and addressed himself once more to the not very interesting task of crunching, with heavy footsteps, the frozen gravel.

The policemen on the beat knew Lily quite well, and more than one cheery "Good-night, miss," greeted her on her way homeward. There was one gallant constable who, when he happened to be on night-duty, always insisted on seeing her to the corner of her street, which happened to be within the limits of his beat. While thus occupied—for Lily could not repel him, he was so civil and obliging—they passed the great inspector himself, in a short cape, and carrying a bamboo cane, and followed by a discreet sergeant.

The inspector stopped. The discreet sergeant, who was of a somewhat suspicious nature, turned his bull's-eye full on Lily, shook his head, and whistled as loudly as the rules of discipline, and his respect for his superior officer, would permit him to do.

"At your old tricks again, Drippan," the inspector remarked, severely. "Who is this young woman?"

Lily was terribly frightened. Drippan, however, who was the gallant constable, hastened to explain. Fortunately, the inspector had on more than one occasion patronised Ranelagh with his wife and family, and had seen Lily waiting for Madame Ernestine at the stage-door of the circus. He was quite satisfied with Constable Drippan's tale, and was even good enough to tell Lily that, if she liked, a constable should escort her, so far as the boundaries of his beat permitted, towards her home, every night.

The next time Mr. Drippan met her he cleared up the mystery of the inspector's severity at their first meeting.

"Hi've got henemies, miss," he explained, "henemies has his sworn to 'ave my 'art's blood, let alone rewenging my good name, and reporting on me at the station when I ain't done nothin'. I should be Hinspector Drippan but for those henemies."

Lily said she was very sorry.

"Well you may be," pursued this victim of malevolence. "I've been druv from beat to beat in a way that's hawful. The minds of sergeants 'ave bin pisoned agin me, and I've been put hunder stoppages for nothink at all."

Lily told him she was very grieved, but was still somewhat puzzled to learn what his sorrow really was.

"I 'ave bin," he continued, in a dark whisper, "a perliceman in Grosvenor-square. I was huniversally respected and moved in the fust families. It was hall halong of a puffidious nussmaid as kep' company with a Fiend in

Human Shape in the Life Guards. She split on me, and the cook—which had bin there seven year—lost her sitiuation. Vy did the hinspector 'ave me up before the commissioners, and play old Gooseberry with me? Because he were jealous. Because I had put his nose outer joint. Ha!"

He paused, as though for sympathy, but Lily, not knowing precisely what to say, went on.

"They're hall agin me. It's hall known at 'ed-quarters, and they'd as soon promote the fireman's dog as me. Hi ham a parayur amongst my brother hofficers. Do I drink? Did Hi hever do the doss when on dooty? Let 'em prove their words. They ses I runs arter the gals. My 'art is blighted. They've sent me down to this jolly old South Lambeth, where there's nothink but cads, costermongers, and fried fish. Hi ham treated in the most exasperatin' way, and hif this sort o' thing's to go on, Hi'm blowed hif Hi don't write to the Weekly Dispatch."

I am ashamed to confess that little Lily—who, having had her own peines de cœur, should have learnt sympathy for another's woe—was not very forcibly impressed by this lamentable tale. I am afraid, indeed, that she was once or twice very near laughing. Poor soul, it was but little matter for mirth she had now. The gallant but unfortunate Drippan did not fail to mark her culpable indifference. From that night he offered to escort her no more; nay, once meeting her at her own street corner, he pretended not to know her, and even murmured, in muffled tone, the injurious words, "Move on!" But Lily often met the inspector, and he had always a kind word for her.

She dared not go to bed, this night of the supper, until her tyrant came home, and when she had lighted a candle, and unpacked the bundle she had brought from Ranelagh, sat down in the little parlour to read. A Sunday newspaper was the only literary matter at hand, and she had read it through at least twice before since the beginning of the week; but she addressed herself again, and most industriously, to its perusal, going through all the advertisements of the splendid corner public-houses, the snug little free beer-shops, the eligible openings in the chandlery line, the unequalled tobacconists', stationery, and Berlin wool businesses for sale, wondering whether they all found purchasers, and whether it took six months or twelve for their lucky purchasers to realise large fortunes. And then she attacked the page devoted to theatricals, and read how Ranelagh was nightly the resort of the highest rank and fashion; how the experiment of a winter season had been a complete success, and how Mr. M'Variety was gaining golden opinions from all sorts of people. What were golden opinions, Lily wondered—money? If that were so, it was strange, for Mr. M'Variety was always grumbling to the countess about the money he was losing. Then Lily went on to read about the countess herself. How Madame Ernestine was the cynosure of all eyes. How her youth,

her beauty, her grace and agility were the delight of thousands, and how she had created, in the high school of horsemanship, a position in which she might have many imitators, but few compeers. A brief biography of the gifted equestrian followed this glowing criticism. Lily learnt, to her astonishment, that the countess was of Spanish extraction—of a noble Andalusian family, indeed; that her mother (in the land of the dark mantilla and the bewitching cachuca) was known as the Pearl of Seville; but that reverses of fortune had forced her papa to adopt the lowly, but still honourable, profession of a matador. Educated in the Terpsichorean department of the Conservatory at Milan, the countess had been instructed in the mysteries of the high school of horsemanship by an Arab sheik, assisted by the Master of the Horse to the Emperor of Austria. Her stud comprised an Andalusian barb, an Estremaduran jennet, a thorough-bred Arab from the Sahara, and a Persian filly from Tiflis. She had been married in early life to an English gentleman of high rank and vast wealth; but the union had not proved a happy one, and the gifted and beauteous Madame Ernestine was now a widow. She had gone through a series of the most startling and romantic adventures, and had received costly presents, mostly consisting of diamonds, from the majority of the sovereigns of Europe. She was eminently accomplished: being a mistress of five languages, and a skilful dancer, painter, and modeller of wax flowers. In age she might be bordering on her twenty-seventh year. Lily could not help asking herself, when she had come to the end of this astonishing narrative, whether it was all true; whether the countess was indeed the wonderful person they made her out to be; or whether newspapers were even addicted to the practice for which the girls at her school used to be punished: to wit, lying.

It must have been nearly two in the morning when the landlord, Mr. Kafooze, knocked at her door, and asked if he might come in. The candle had a very long wick by this time, and Lily had laid down the imaginative newspaper, and was nodding wearily. She started up at the landlord's voice, and bade him enter.

Mr. Kafooze was a very little old man, with a white smooth poll very like a billiard-ball, and reddish eyes, and no perceptible teeth, and a weak piping voice. He dressed habitually in black, had a limp wisp of white kerchief round his neck, and was, perhaps, the last man in South Lambeth who wore knee-breeches, slack cotton hose, and plated buckles in his shoes. The small-clothes and buckles, added to his baldness, were of no small service to him among his neighbours. Parents liked to send their children to a school of which the master looked at once so very clerical and so very scholastic. Mr. Kafooze's academy was on the humblest scale. Some twenty little boys and girls used to come there every morning and afternoon, to all appearance for three purposes: to crack nuts, to munch apples,

and to pinch one another. When the last nut was cracked, the last apple devoured, and the last pinch-extracted squeal uttered, school was dismissed. The pupils generally went home black and blue, so far as their arms were concerned, but not through any corporal chastisement inflicted by Mr. Kafooze. That placid old man had not so much as a halfpenny cane in his academy. His assistant in the business of education was his niece, a humpbacked young person, with red hair, and a firmament of freckles on her countenance, who revelled in the somewhat exceptional name of Rhodope, who passed the major portion of her time either in endeavouring to mollify the bunions with which she was troubled, or in relating ghost stories (of which she had a vast stock) in an under tone to the three senior pupils. Mr. Kafooze sat apart at a little desk, and when the scholars were unusually noisy, would tell them mildly that they were "worse than bluebottles." He was generally intent on the contemplation of a celestial globe, and when he had (as it seemed, being short sighted) smelt at this orb for many minutes, he would rush away to his desk, bury his nose in a quire of foolscap, and cover at least two pages with blots, scrawls, dashes, and hieroglyphical characters of strange design. Whence arose, even among Mr. Kafooze's most friendly critics, a rumour that he was engaged in the discovery of the perpetual motion, to be accomplished by means of clock-work and balloons, and that he had, in furtherance of his scientific ends, entered into a compact with the Evil One. But everybody agreed that "he knew a deal," and was exceedingly genteel in his manners.

"It's only me, my dear," piped Mr. Kafooze, entering the parlour with a little lamp in one hand. With the disengaged hand, which was so thin and shrivelled as to be well-nigh transparent, he shaded the light from Lily.

"You watch late to-night," he resumed, in his weak treble. "Hasn't your mamma come home yet?"

"Madame is supping with some friends," Lily answered, quietly. "Madame" was a discreet compromise into the use of which she had been drilled by the Wild Woman. "Dare to call me anything else, and I will skin you alive, you viper," was her amiable warning to her dependent.

"Ah! it's no business of mine. She's a very good lodger, when she's in a good temper, and has every right to her latch-key. I hope she's enjoying herself. What a famous schoolmistress your mamma would make? Ah! she'd make the little ones mind, I'll warrant you. They don't mind me a bit, nor my niece Rhodope."

"But you, Mr. Kafooze," said Lily, who was accustomed to the little old man, who often came in at night for a quiet gossip, "you are up very late, too."

"Oh! I, my dear young lady, I'm always up late. It's my way. I've so much to do. I sit up with the stars."

Lily thought Mr. Kafooze's fellow watchers were most delightful company, and told him, almost enthusiastically, that she loved to sit up and look at the stars.

"Ah! that isn't it, exactly," rejoined Mr. Kafooze, shaking his head, and with a half sigh. "Twinkle, twinkle, little star, and all that sort of thing. I read the stars, my dear, and have come to know them. Deary me! but there's a deal more to be learnt about them," he added, with another sigh.

"And what do they tell you, Mr. Kafooze?" asked Lily.

"A deal that's good, and a deal that's bad, my dear," the star-gazer replied. "They tell me little that's worth knowing about myself, however. If the stars would be good enough to inform me how it is that I can't earn more than two pound a week, I'd be obliged to them, that's all. The stars, my dear, I can tell you in confidence, have been my stumbling-blocks all through life. My father turned me out of doors, and cut me off—not with a shilling, but without one—all owing to the stars. I attribute my failure in the haberdashery line in the year 'twenty-three, entirely to the stars. I published a 'Voice from the Stars' in the shape of an almanack, for three years running, and lost a very pretty penny by it. And now I've come down to what you see. But I trust in the stars as firmly as ever; and indeed my motive in looking in upon you to-night, was to ask you whether you could tell me what star your mamma was born under. I shouldn't like to ask her myself, for you see she has rather a quick temper."

"I am sure I don't know, Mr. Kafooze," replied Lily, "but I will ask her, if you like."

"For goodness' sake, don't, my dear young lady," Mr. Kafooze interposed, hastily. "She's a remarkable woman, is your mamma, and she might do something dreadful if you were inquisitive about her affairs. I thought that perhaps she might have mentioned something to you incidentally about the stars."

"I do not know, Mr. Kafooze," said Lily, very sadly, who felt somehow impelled to place confidence in the little bald-headed schoolmaster, "whether she is my mamma or not. One day she tells me she is; but the next she denies it, and forbids me to call her anything but Madame. I know that she treats me very unkindly, and that I am very unhappy, Mr. Kafooze."

She buried her face in her hands. She could not help the confession. It was the first wail—the first outcry under cruel agony.

"Hush, hush!" piped the schoolmaster; "you mustn't cry, you mustn't fret, my dear. That would never do. You'll wake the lodger up—as worthy a young man as ever lived, and plays the trombone at Ranelagh for five-and-twenty shillings a week."

He sat down by her side on the little horse-hair sofa, and fell to chafing one of her little hands between his own parchment palms.

"Don't mind me," he quavered; "I'm old

enough to be your great-grandfather. I'm seventy-two, but I don't fret now; I leave it all to the stars."

Lily dried her eyes, and admitted that she had been very foolish, and besought the schoolmaster not to tell madame of what had passed.

"It is not that she strikes me," she explained. "She is always threatening, but she has seldom gone beyond a push, and has never gone so far as she did to-night when she menaced me with her horsewhip. But oh, Mr. Kafooze, she strikes me with her tongue—with her cruel, cruel tongue. Night and day she browbeats and insults me. What am I to do? You have seen me here. How am I to conciliate her? How have I offended her? Do I look, do I act, like a bad, wicked girl?"

"You are a little angel, my dear," quoth old Mr. Kafooze; "a dear, persecuted angel; but you must not fret. You must leave it to time and to the stars. They will make it all right. I won't say that they will avenge you; because vengeance does not belong to the stars."

Lily could only repeat that she was very unhappy—that she did everything she could to please her hard task-mistress, and that it was not her fault.

"It's nobody's fault, my dear," urged the little schoolmaster. "Nobody but Destiny's. I've been fighting against Destiny for three-score years and ten, and she's had her heel upon me, and trampled me under foot many and many a time. But I'll get the best of her, and have her under *my* foot, the jade!" he concluded, clenching his bony hand, and in a most valorous pipe.

The sound of a key was heard turning in the door.

"That's your mamma," quoth he, hastily. "I wouldn't have her see me here for twenty pound. Good-night, my dear. Your mamma's got a destiny too; only I want to know more about her star before I can tell you what it is. I'm afraid it's a bad one." And Mr. Kafooze vanished.

Two persons came into the little parlour: one was the countess, flushed and radiant, the other was Thomas Tuttleshell, Esquire. That gentleman Lily had never before seen; but the countess had often spoken of him as a fellow who had been useful to her. She had, decidedly, but few surplus funds in the way of gratitude, our countess, and dispensed them very grudgingly.

She had torn off her mantle, had flung herself on to the sofa, and sat in her gay dress, fanning herself. Lily had seen her as hot and as excited after her performance in the French booth as the Wild Woman; but she seemed scarcely the same being now. She was different in mien, in voice, in gesture. She was transformed.

Thomas Tuttleshell had escorted her from supper, but whither afterwards, Lily knew not. It was certain that madame and her friends were not in the gardens when the girl left. Perhaps Sir William Long had still chambers where he could conjure up the image of his old parties. Perhaps Thomas knew of some quiet hotel in

the neighbourhood of St. James's, where, even after supper hours, guests who wished to talk, and smoke, and drink champagne, were welcome.

"It's very late—very late, indeed," was the courteous remark of the countess to Thomas, as she flung away her fan, and gave a great yawn; "you had better go home."

"Much obliged to you," thus Thomas; "but allow me at least to apologise for keeping this pretty young lady, whom I presume to be your daughter, up to such a very unseemly hour. You see, miss, that your mamma——"

"My servant needs none of your apologies," the countess interrupted, with her old haughtiness. "If she complained of waiting up early or late, just as it suited my good will and pleasure, I'd break every bone in her skin."

"It would be a pity to hurt such pretty bones."

"Never mind whether they are ugly or pretty. They are none of yours. They are mine. Now, go away, there's a good man. I am tired to death."

"Allow me at least to light a cigar. It's deuced cold."

"I do not allow smoking in my apartments."

"By Jove, Ernestine," cried the usually placable Tom, losing all patience under these continual rebuffs, "you're very different now from what you were when I took you off the boards in France. Why, but for the few Louis that Italian fellow won at the trente et quarante, you wouldn't have had a shoe to your foot."

"I have nothing to do with what I was yesterday. It is enough for me to think of what I am to-day, and what I may be to-morrow." Spoken like a brave and consistent countess.

"At least," remonstrated Tom, "you might remember that I got you a good engagement, and, as an old friend, am at least entitled to a little consideration."

"A fig for your engagements," the woman cried, snapping her fingers; "a fig for the miserable ten pounds a week which your master, M'Variety, gives me. Dix livres sterling. Je me mouche avec ces gages-là!"

"You were glad enough to get them, when I offered the engagement to you at Lyons, and lent you the money to come over to England."

"I might have been. It is so very long ago. In the century before last, I think. Chantez-moi quelque chose de nouveau."

"It was this very summer," grumbled Tom.

"A fig for last summer! a fig for my old friends. Je m'en fiche!" the woman cried. "I have found other old friends—and superb ones, too. I have been in the mud long enough. Now I am about to revenge myself."

"Then I suppose you don't want to see me any more. I wish you a very good-night." Tom was going away in dudgeon.

On the contrary, the countess condescended to explain, "I want to see you every day. You can be very useful to me, l'oncle Thomas. Allons, soyons amis, mon vieux. Tapez là."

She held out her hand in a scornful manner to Mr. Tuttleshell, who took it, and bowed,

somewhat stiffly, for he was still but ill pleased, and was going, when the countess started up and placed herself between him and the door.

"No, we are not going to part like that," she cried, half sarcastically, and half caressingly. "Pas de rancune, mon brave. You must continue to serve me. I want you here to-morrow morning. I want to talk to you before ces messieurs arrivent. Is not to-morrow—to-day, rather, I would say—Saturday? Have they not promised to so call. Am I not to dine with them, there being a relâche at the Gardens? Allons, donnez-moi la patte."

She had still, though haggard, and ruddled, a cajoling kind of way about her which was not ineffective. Tom gave her his hand this time in perfect amity, and, promising to be with her again before noon, took his leave.

He had been slyly examining Lily while parleying with the countess. "By Jove! what a pretty little thing," quoth Thomas Tuttleshell, Esquire, as he put Mr. Kafooze's brass-plate between himself and the parlour. "What a pity she should have such an old tigress for a mother. Clever woman, though. Fiendishly clever. In her day, superb. Sadly fallen off, though. I suppose the little one is her daughter. I wonder what Billy Long's game is. He's sown his wild oats; yet they're a sly lot, these swells: always up to something. He said to-night's meeting was as good as a thousand pounds to him. I wish he'd give me five hundred on account. Heigho! C-a-b!" And Tom Tuttleshell hailed a four-wheeler, and was driven home to bed.

CHAPTER XLVIII. DREAMLAND.

It was a very long time since the girl had dreamed. How could she dream, she had no time. Her life had been wakeful, and hard, and cruel. She had been bedded on no soft pillow, dandled to sleep in no loving arms. Every one around her had been awake, and watchful to strike at her. Tranquil slumbers and bright visions she had just tasted of, here and there, and for a moment; but they had been rudely broken, and intervals of long years rolled between. Sometimes, as a quiet and not unhappy little child, the plaything of the school at Stockwell, she had dreamed, nestling in the soothing shadow of the Misses Bunnicastles' skirts. Then she had certainly dreamed for a whole afternoon at the Greenwich dinner, and for a whole day at Cutwig and Co.'s. A brief and blissful dream had been her sojourn at Madame de Kergolay's; but the waking up only seemed the ruder and more dreadful. Since she had groaned under the sway of the horrible woman, who, in her paint and out of her paint, on the boards and off the boards, was always wild, and capricious, and intolerable, she had forgotten what it was to dream, or rather she had been as one walking in her sleep, mobile, eyes wide open and unconscious. So she might have gone on, to find herself, at last, a dull, stupified, apathetic drudge, too crushed and listless to be discontented. But this was not to be. A great change

was fated to come over her. She was to dream again, and, for a time, delightfully.

The change began on the very morning after the notable supper of the countess with her old friends. She ceased, suddenly, to treat Lily in the same manner as heretofore. She was no longer brutal, sarcastic, impatient with her. She had her old temper, our countess; but when she found that she was losing, or, the rather, on the point of giving way to her temper, she would bite her lips, and stamp her foot, and crisp her fingers, until the fit had passed off. Her self-control was wonderful. Lily was astounded at it; and Mr. Kafooze, at first puzzled, was ultimately led to ascribe the alteration to the conjunction of some more favourable planets in the horoscope. The cardinal point in the mild, although somewhat muddled, philosophy of the little old schoolmaster was neither to praise nor to censure his fellow-creatures for anything. If things went badly, he bowed to the fiat of the stars; and if they went well, he thanked the stars for it. Perhaps, all things considered, one might have a worse system of philosophy than the Kafoozian.

They had visitors in the humble little sitting-room the morrow of the supper. The curiosity of the street was all agog when the distinguished visitors arrived. They came in private carriages—in a Brougham and pair and a cabriolet. The tiger attached to the latter vehicle, a youth of rosy countenance and confident mien, descended into Mr. Kafooze's garden, plucked two roses, stuck one of the flowers in his horse's headstall, and another in his own button-hole, and then gave himself up to whistling, not defiantly, but with an air of cheerful superiority to things in general, and South Lambeth in particular.

Fung-yan, Chinese, who happened to be at home at the time (he always returned at noon to lunch on liver and bacon, rice, and bottled stout), came out to his front door, and surveyed the scene with his never-failing simper, just as his three hundred million prototypes simper as they cross the bridge on the willow pattern plate, or parch tea-leaves in copper pans, surrounded by flowery gardens and curly pagodas, on the grocers' chests. Most of the inhabitants of the street, however, were of opinion that the visit had something to do with a projected railway, the proximate driving of which through their quiet street, and consequent demolition of their dwellings, kept them in a chronic state of apprehension; while two or three ladies of mature age shook their heads, and opined that it was no business of theirs, but that some people had no sense of what was right and proper, especially foreign horse-riders. It was enough to make decent Christian people—having paid rates and taxes for years, and brought up large families most respectable—believe the world was coming to an end, and to cause the bones of their (the Christian bodies') grand-parents to turn in their graves.

Meanwhile, the visitors, quite unconscious of these conflicting criticisms, had made their way

into the little parlour. School was just breaking up as they passed through the passage, and, during the hour of recreation, the juvenile scholars of Mr. Kafooze played with much zest at being a double-knock, at being a gentleman in a white hat, at being a gentleman with a gold-rimmed eye-glass, and, in particular, at being carriages and horses.

Lily had been hurried, but not unkindly, into the back bedroom, when the double-knock announced the arrival of the illustrious party. They were five in number. They were the Pilgrims, plus one; and the additional person was Mr. M'Variety.

"What do you want here?" was the countess's agreeable salutation to her director (she could not be amiable to everybody); "do you want to raise my salary?"

"Don't mind if I do," returned the enterprising manager. "You're certainly drawing. I wish everybody else did as well; but the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan, you remember, the Swedish Albino who used to do the Living Skeleton at Rosherville, and, as a child, was exhibited as the phenomenon with the words Princess Charlotte plainly visible on the pupil of one eye, and, on the other, Leopold of Saxe-Coburg—supposed to mean Saxe-Coburg—from whom I expected great things, has turned out a regular swindle. The confounded idiot has had the measles; and now he's got over them, he's getting quite fat and good-looking."

The countess had only heard the first few words of his remarks. Long before the manager had finished, she was engrossed by the conversation of her more aristocratic guests. How heartily she despised M'Variety in her secret self. What a vulgar, presuming, self-sufficient, under-bred fellow he was! But the rest? Ah, they were true gentlemen. How affable, and easy, and gracious was Milor Carlton. What a grand manner—and a kind one too, for all his dryness—had Sir William Long, Baronet. And Edgar Greyfaunt, the Sultan Greyfaunt, perfumed, and curled, and oiled, like a gorgeous potentate in Vathek, the sultan in a braided pelisse and a sealskin waistcoat. "Il a l'air grand seigneur, celui-là," she muttered. "C'est un lion pur sang. Il a un peu le ton Parisien. C'est peut-être un milord qui a flâné longtemps sur le Boulevard de Gand." And to Edgar she was especially gracious.

On Thomas Tuttleshell, even, she smiled; but she took occasion to whisper to him:

"You never came this morning, false man. So you still bear malice?"

"Not a bit," returned Thomas, in the same low tone; "you gave me a deuce of a reception last night; snowballs and red-hot flat-irons, by way of a change, were nothing to it. However, that's all over now. I would have come this morning, but we were up late, and I was tired to death." Although Thomas was one of the most obliging of mankind, he had a reasonable sense of what was due to his dignity, and did not like to make himself *too* cheap.

"As you please," the countess rejoined,

turning away. "We will have our confidential talk another time." However nettled she might have been by Thomas's apparent neglect, she took care (for good reasons of her own, doubtless) not to show it then or there, and was studiously civil to him. "Messeigneurs," she continued, "can I offer you anything? The wines of South Lambeth are, I am afraid, not of the premiers crûs—the first vintages; but, if you desired it, the neighbourhood should be scoured to procure beverages worthy of you. Will you smoke, Messeigneurs? Illumine your cigars, by all means. I will not do you the injustice to suppose that I could offer you any so good as those which are in your cases."

The gentlemen hastened to disclaim any wish to resort to the deleterious practice she expressed herself willing to tolerate, and assured her that her conversation was already sufficiently delightful without any extraneous aids. By-and-by, Sir William Long gently suggested that she had made them, overnight, a certain promise.

"Ah," she returned, with seeming carelessness, "I know—my little girl. I promised to introduce her to you, did I not? It was a venturesome pledge on my part. Vous êtes par trop mauvais sujets, mes nobles seigneurs. However, you shall see that I can keep my word. Do you really wish to see the child? She is but a little bit of a thing, and quite timid and awkward."

"If she is half as charming as her mamma," Lord Carlton observed, gallantly, "she must be charming indeed."

"Flatterer! How do you know that I am her mamma? Ai-je l'air d'une mère, moi?" The vain woman plumed herself as she spoke. She was really beginning to imagine that she was young again. "But you shall see her. Excuse me for a few moments, and I will present her to you. You are sure that I cannot offer you anything?"

"Don't think you can," put in plain-speaking Mr. M'Variety. "'Tisn't very likely these gents could drink the kind of stuff you would be likely to get from the public-house at the corner. If I'd only thought of it, now, I'd have brought a bottle of champagne in his lordship's carriage."

"With his lordship's permission," Mr. Tuttleshell gently hinted, in an under tone.

"With nobody's permission but my own, Mr. Tom Toady," the manager, who was quick of speech sometimes, retorted.

Thomas looked discomposed, and his lordship laughed. Mr. M'Variety's bluntness rather amused than offended him. It could certainly never be alleged against the enterprising manager that *he* was an adulator of the great. He was fond of the society of the "tipsters," as he called them, made much of them, and treated them with great liberality and hospitality; but he never cringed to or bowed down before them. He had often been known to swear at a lord who got in a carpenter's way behind the scenes; but it was difficult to be offended with

him: he swore so very good humouredly and respectfully. He was quite as affable and quite as hospitable in the society of the gentleman who contracted for the train oil to supply the lamps of Ranelagh, the inspector of police, and the tradesman who manufactured pork-pies for the refreshment-room.

Madame Ernestine went away into the next room; and poor Thomas had rather a hard time of it until her return. That unlucky observation about his lordship's permission brought on his head a number of cutting things. Mr. Greyfaunt was secretly delighted that the harmless client had been put down. Mr. M'Variety hastened, however, to smoothe Thomas's ruffled pinions.

"A right good fellow is Tom," he observed; "only he will put in his oar sometimes where it isn't wanted. Never mind, Tom; if I've hurt your feelings, I'm sorry for it."

It was difficult for Mr. Tuttleshell to be angry with any human being for more than five seconds at a time; and he was assuring M'Variety of his entire belief that he would do nothing willingly to wound his feelings, when the countess entered the parlour.

She brought Lily with her. She had some womanly grace and ingenuity left, this Wild Woman, and, during the few minutes she had been absent, had disposed some ribbons and scraps of lace about the girl's dress, which made her look quite smart. She was very pale, poor little Lily; but her soft brown hair and trusting eyes were beautiful.

"Merciful Heaven!" cried the baronet, starting up. "She's not a bit changed. It's only the dear little girl we saw at Greenwich grown into a woman."

But Lily had grown paler and paler. Flashes of crimson came, transient, across the deadly whiteness of her cheek. But she trembled all over, and stretched forth her hands before her as though her sight were failing her, and she was feeling her way. At length she gave a feeble cry, staggered, and would have fallen, but that the countess caught her in her arms.

"I thought so," she muttered between her teeth.

She bore her into the bedroom, poured water on a handkerchief, damped her forehead and chafed her hands. The girl soon revived. The countess bade her lie on the bed and keep quiet, and she would soon be quite well again. "Sly little imp," she muttered again, as she passed the sitting-room. "Ah, I thought so, I thought so. Thou couldst not deceive me, little Jesuit."

She found her visitors in great perturbation at the untoward occurrence.

"It is nothing," she explained. "I told you. She is a mere child, and has hitherto lived in virtuous retirement." She said this with a grin. "She was alarmed at the sight of so many strangers, but she is already recovered, and will soon be herself again. I was just as timid at her age." And she grinned again. She was not pleasant to look upon when she grinned. She strove to engage her guests in conversation;

but it manifestly flagged. She saw their eyes continually directed towards the closed door, and she hugged herself in her secret soul. She went into the bedroom once or twice, and came out saying that the patient was better, but too much frightened to confront the strangers again. And at last, with great amiability, but sufficient plainness, she told them that she had a rehearsal at the Gardens, and must beg them to excuse her until dinner.

"That's a crammer, whispered the enterprising manager to Thomas Tuttleshell; "there's not so much as a donkey rehearsing at our shop this morning." Whether his enterprise for the moment happened to be a playhouse, an Italian Opera, a garden, a circus, a giant, a dwarf, a concert-room, a chapel, or a wild-beast show, Mr. M'Variety always alluded to it as a shop.

"I suppose something's gone wrong," said Tom, in a return whisper, "and she wants to get rid of us. We'd better be off, Mac."

There was clearly nothing left but for the visitors to go. The countess's face was wreathed with smiles; but there was no mistaking the gesture with which she showed them the door. She bade them adieu until dinner, which was to take place, it was arranged, at some hotel in the West-end. Mr. M'Variety was to be of the party, and the manager whispered, as he passed out, that he had a proposition to make of a nature which might not be wholly displeasing to her. "Decidedly," she thought, "he means to raise my salary." Her views, however, were too ambitious, just then, to be satisfied with a mere two or three pounds added to her weekly stipend.

His lordship's Brougham would call for her at six o'clock. That was clearly as it should be, and another triumph. She was evidently resuming her proper station.

HOSPITALITY.

WHAT is hospitality?

I believe this to be a much more difficult question to answer than it appears at first sight. Our first idea of a hospitable person is of one who "keeps open house," as it is said, and is for ever getting his friends about him—a man, in short, with plenty of money, a good cook, and strong social instincts. Then, thinking a little more deeply, and pursuing the subject something further, you begin immediately to get into difficulties. You reflect upon such words as "hospital," and its tribe. You get your Johnson's dictionary and look up your subject. HOSPITABLE: Giving entertainment to strangers; kind to strangers. HOSPITABLY: With kindness to strangers. HOSPITALITY: The practice of entertaining strangers. Strangers, you think to yourself, always strangers. And then you ask yourself how many times your mutton has shed its gravy for the stranger, and the answer which you have to give is disheartening in the last degree. Bereft of comfort, you fall back upon derivations. HOSPI-

TALITAS: Entertainment of *friends*, or guests. This is much better. "Entertainment of friends" will do admirably. Nothing like going to the fountain-head. It is true that elsewhere the "fountain-head" issues waters which taste more bitterly to you, speaking of "hospes" as "a host that receives strangers." Here is the stranger turning up again. Altogether you are mystified and in doubt about it, and before long find yourself falling back upon the argumentum ad hominem, and looking out among your friends for cases of true and spurious hospitality.

And so you turn over your different friends in your mind, and ask yourself which among them has the reputation of being most thoroughly hospitable, and then, after but a very little reflection, you naturally bethink you of the Fingerglasses. Are they really hospitable, though? you ask yourself.

The abode in which these good people exercise the rites of hospitality is, in truth, never empty. Dinner-parties come off there oftener than in any other house in the square in which they reside; and besides these superb banquets, which are on a sufficiently magnificent scale, there are lots of little dinners consisting of a bit of fish, a curry, a leg of mutton and a pheasant, all which viands are of the highest order of merit. The Fingerglasses are always having company. The pastrycook supplies as many Nesselrode puddings to that house as to any in town, and it is a serious thing to think what the bill for champagne must come to in the course of the year. You never meet the head of that family in the street, but you feel that he looks bare and incomplete, from not having a white tablecloth spread out in front of him covered with plate, and flowers and glass, as on the occasion of the more solemn banquets, or adorned with a short-grained saddle of mutton, as on the snugger and less formal days of more limited hospitality.

But then comes the great question, Is this really hospitality? Who are the guests that surround this well-spread board, and for whom are those good things provided?

Does Mrs. Fingerglass—for she, after all, is at the bottom of all this hospitality—does she invite those among her friends who, she feels, stand the most in need of a dinner, or does she not rather solicit the presence of those who have already abundance of invitations, and who, if they had not, could very well afford to pay for their dinners themselves? It may be the result of accident that she knows such people, but somehow it happens that you meet none but successful men at Mrs. Fingerglass's. Does she ever ask Scalpel now, who is related to her by the mother's side, and who is using frantic exertions to make both ends meet in the up-hill career of a young doctor? She never asks him. It is not that she has any aversion to the medical profession, for Sir Savile Rowley, Physician to the Queen, is a constant guest at the house. Does she ever invite Chopfall now? He used to be an old friend of the Fingerglasses, but he was thrown out by the failure of a certain specu-

lation which went to the deuce, and he has the greatest difficulty in living at all now. Does Mrs. Fingerglass ever ask these unprosperous, but virtuous, men—Scalpel and Chopfall? Nay, if you come to that, did she ever ask Vapours till lately, and till his new spring coal-scuttle won him notoriety?

The history of Vapours is rather a curious one, he being at once a man of fashion and a man of science. Some years ago, this anomalous individual managed to perform so successfully on wood and steel, as to produce a machine for cleaning the roads, which not only won the approval of government, but drew public attention towards the inventor, and caused him to be much sought after, and amiably dealt with by all sorts of people. When this flush of prosperity was his, he was naturally asked at once to the "hospitable" mansion of the Fingerglasses, where he was made much of, and where a small model of his road-scraper, which he presented to the Lady of the House, was, on intimate occasions, used for sweeping the crumbs off the table after dinner. Vapours went through all the stages of feasting provided by the house—from the banquet magnificent to the chop familiar—during the whole season. The next year he was let down altogether, not gently, but with a fierce and startling bump. His machine for cleaning the roads turned out ill in the long run, being so full of cog-wheels and main-springs, that the scavengers who worked it were always getting it out of gear, and such continual repairs became necessary, that at last the engine fell into disuse, and the name of Vapours into contempt. For several years Vapours was unable to rally, but he was working all the time, tilting the tea-kettle lid perhaps, like James Watt, or in some other way usefully employed. Meanwhile, he was invited no more by the Fingerglasses, and perhaps Sir Thomas Piston, the eminent engineer, who was an habitué of the house, and never approved of the presence of Vapours, may have put a spoke in his wheel, and exposed him as an unsuccessful man, and one not thought much of in "the Profession." Piston was an envious old impostor, and hated young men, and everything that they did.

The particular young man named Vapours was destined to become yet more odious than ever in the eyes of Sir Thomas Piston. At the commencement of a certain long winter, the new spring coal-scuttle burst upon the public and carried everything before it. It was a very brilliant thing, this coal-scuttle. It was placed in the side of the grate, and went up and down a shaft into the kitchen for replenishment. When you wanted more fuel on the fire, you had only to touch a spring near the bell, and if the scuttle were in good humour, a large supply of coals was instantly discharged into the grate. Sometimes, when the spring got out of order, the fuel would be cast forth with violence into the middle of the room, but this did not happen often, and the invention was a great success, and Vapours a great inventor.

Now, what does Mrs. Fingerglass do? How once again can she get possession of this long-neglected lion? She acts with shameless effrontery, and, utterly ignoring years of neglect, actually sends a message to Vapours through a mutual friend, wishing to know "What she has done that Vapours never goes near her; and if he has not altogether forgotten the way to her house, will he go and dine there, quite in a friendly manner, next Saturday?"

And now that we have ascertained what Mrs. Fingerglass does, let us next ask what Vapours does? (I know him well, and he told me himself all about it.) He went. He wanted change after the deep thought involved in his recent invention. He wanted to study the ways of the household, and see whether they really were such false people as some said they were. Besides, he was not going to bear malice. She was, after all, a very "hospitable" woman. Yes, he would go.

The fact is, he wanted to go. He wanted the silky luxury of the house. He wanted the good dinners, and the especial dishes and wines, for which this establishment was famous. He wanted to be seen there once again; and, above all, he longed after the praises and flattery which his host and hostess knew well how to bestow. Not a few of us are like this. Not a few clever individuals may be twisted round in a moment by delicate flatteries, and by such a mixed appeal to the vanity and the stomach as is made to those who frequent the Fingerglass establishment. Such persons rave and storm while they are neglected; laugh at the dupes who go to this house to which they (the neglected ones) are no longer invited; and curse the deceit and humbug which are practised there.

Presently the scenes shift, and our neglected friend gets up again in the social scale. To begin with, he is in such good humour in consequence of this circumstance, that he is ready to be on good terms with everybody. He says: "After all, the Fingerglasses have a right to ask whom they like to their house. They can't ask everybody. It may have been an accident that they were so often not at home when I called last year. The footman who made that announcement in such a cut-and-dried manner—it may have been, after all, *only* his manner. Mrs. Fingerglass certainly did not return my salute in the Park; but then, have I not continually heard her say that she is so dreadfully short sighted that she can never see any one?" [And here it is fair to remark, that persons suffering from this infirmity are in the habit of making it widely known that they are "so blind," as they call it, possibly with a prophetic eye to the future, and in order that they may be able *not* to see you in the street, should circumstances make it desirable.]

In seasons of prosperity, then, you are ready to make large allowances for the offenders who have treated you ill in adversity—at least, such are the sentiments of Mr. Vapours. That gentleman is also of opinion that it is very pleasant to be made a fuss with, and that there are *some* people who put you on such good terms with

yourself that you come back to them and their flatteries after any amount of previous neglect. I have no opinion of Vapours, but he is wanted in this illustration of doubtful hospitality.

"Do you know, Mr. Vapours," cries Mrs. Fingerglass, when Vapours enters the drawing-room on the occasion of this grand reconciliation scene—"do you know, that I've almost made up my mind not to speak to you? To be all this time without once coming near me!"

"But, I assure you," urges Mr. Vapours, "that I called very assiduously, and you were never at home."

"Impossible!" says the lady. "My people never told me that you had been. Did you leave a card?"

"Half a card-basketful," retorts Mr. Vapours, a little nettled.

"Then the servants must be to blame. I must positively speak to them about it. Servants now, you know," she adds, throwing up her eyes, "are such wretches. But I'm not going to scold you," she continues; "I'm too glad to see you, for that."

"Not going to scold him!" This was how she forgave Vapours, in the noblest and most charitable manner, for having been so long neglected, speaking as if she really believed he was in the wrong. It certainly was a triumph of humbug, but Mr. Vapours—who had just observed his new invention in the grate—fell into the deception as if it had been the most genuine thing in the world, and when Mrs. Fingerglass said, "To show you that I bear no malice, I shall expect you to take me down to dinner," he offered his elbow at once, and they descended the stairs together.

Lions were roaring all round the table. The man who had just written a series of letters to the Times, which was attracting much attention; the great traveller, who had published a successful account of his triumphs over wild beasts and wild men somewhere or other "up country;" the new artist, whose picture at the Royal Academy was the event of the year; the inventor, who had constructed a target which could defy any kind of cannon; the other inventor, who had made a gun which could perforate any target which had yet appeared; such persons as these were here as a kind of relief to the mere pecuniary or titled eminence of the remainder of the guests. Not one soul who was not remarkable for something—for his wealth, his rank, or his reputation.

Now let no one suppose for a moment that I am complaining of the worthy Fingerglasses for asking whom they please to their table. What I am in doubt about, is whether such entertaining ought to be called hospitality. If the Fingerglasses like to give a series of dinners to all these distinguished people, by all means let such banquets come off. If our friends like to show off their plate to persons who, having rival plate of their own, either despise the Fingerglass silver as inferior, or loathe the sight of it as superior, to their own, by all means let them do so. But call things by their right

names, and the right name for this kind of feasting is not hospitality. Call it an inclination to get your friends about you, a desire to have it said that such and such persons are seen at your table, call it sociability, call it ostentation, call it display—but do not call it hospitality.

But is nobody, then, hospitable? Is this virtue absolutely dead among us? Are we to look on the dark side of things only? Far from it.

In the house of my friend Greatheart—at whose house any man may be proud to visit, whose friendship any man may be proud to enjoy—at that house you meet guests of a different kind to those one encounters ordinarily, as just described, at the Fingerglass establishment. I do not say that you never meet with a clever or distinguished man at Greatheart's. Such persons appear in their turn, but certainly a large portion of the guests are of a class to whom a social meeting round a well-furnished dinner-table is something of a treat. Of course I do not mean that Greatheart asks the beggars out of the street to his table, but I do honestly believe that he is greatly guided in the choice of his guests by the thought that he will be doing good in some way or other to the person he invites. You may do good to people whom you ask to dinner in other ways besides the mere filling of their stomachs. A young man, for instance, cast loose upon London alone, will require, as a positive necessity of his nature, to have some opportunities of social intercourse, and if with his superiors, so much the better. You help to form the manners and habits of such youngsters by asking them to your house, besides aiding to keep them out of mischief.

It is useless to deny that Greatheart's wife's brother is little better than a death's head at a feast. This little man—he is old now, and many crosses have spoiled him—has probably made as utter a failure of life, as far as we outsiders can judge, as any person living. In all the different lines of business in which he has been started from time to time, he has invariably broken down. What was that attempt at print-selling, which was his last effort, but a hideous mockery? Who wanted those engravings after Ostade and Carl du Jardin, which this unfortunate man was always to be found—in the front parlour in Maddox-street—sticking down upon card-board? The room in Maddox-street was taken, and the stock of prints bought as a desperate venture, and the printed circular was sent out announcing that Mr. James Groves—which was the little gentleman's name—had on view a vast collection of rare and choice engravings, chiefly from the works of the old masters, to which the attention of connoisseurs and others was invited. Well, and who went to that room in Maddox-street? Did Sir Folio Porter go there?—he was the gentleman who gave three hundred guineas the other day for a Rembrandt etching, and there is a proverb in existence which designates very clearly the kind of persons whose money is soon parted from

them. Did Mr. Burin—who has the impression of the Burgomaster Sex, with the mark where the graver has slipped upon that magistrate's nose—did he become a frequenter of Mr. Groves's place of business? Did he purchase the Ostades in this magnificent collection? Alas, neither of these harmless lunatics—for no man in his senses would give three hundred guineas for a print—went near the place. It is true that to make up for this deficiency there were other persons who paid frequent visits to the front parlour before spoken of. Nothing could exceed the frequency of Mr. Lounger's visits to this establishment. This gentleman was in the habit of dropping in and having a pinch of poor Groves's snuff, and a dish of chat at all hours. He and Captain English (of the Militia) would spend hours in the front parlour, turning over the prints, and asserting that it was the finest collection in London. But did this pay? By no means. The unfortunate Groves was always behindhand, and was obliged to eke out his income by all sorts of honourable stratagems, into which we need not enter.

For this unprosperous gentleman there was always a cover at his brother-in-law's table, and it was the joy of the little man to sit there glowing with pride and satisfaction. He was generally silent himself, but he listened and enjoyed the conversation of others amazingly, and now and then would get a chance, when Greatheart turned the talk upon engravings and works of art, with a view to bring him out. The vendor of uncoveted prints worshipped his rich brother-in-law for this heavenly mercy, nor was there so much as a single grain of envy in that worship. Greatheart had been disinterestedly kind to him, and I suspect that you will rarely be disinterestedly kind to anybody without bringing such person to love and respect you. The sister of Greatheart's governess is another constant guest at the good man's table. This worthy lady, from having been once a tolerably prosperous miniature-painter, has been obliged to come down to the colouring of photographs. She gives all her ladies unexceptionable complexions, red lips, and languid eyelids with tremendous lashes, and gets something to do in this way, none the less that she always sends the portraits home entirely unlike the originals. Between this good lady—she is deformed—and Groves the unprosperous, there is kept up a great flirtation and habitual interchange of civilities, enlivened occasionally by arguments on art of a very brilliant sort.

To give to people whose lives are so blank and desolate not only a handsome meal, but the change and—to them—the excitement of a feast, is to render them a service of a far higher order than at first sight appears. By such acts you not only reconcile them to their lot, but you soften their natures, you make them in turn more kind and gentle in their thoughts, and disarm of half its force that temptation to bitterness and repining, which is one of the most powerful that comes in a poor man's way.

This, at any rate, is hospitality, and that in

the highest sense of the word. That injunction by which we are bidden, when we make a feast, to call in the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, is (I think) to be taken as in some sort figurative. At the time when it was given, there would probably be one or two rich men in a town or settlement, and a crowd of poor and destitute. Rich men so situated and surrounded by the poor should give such banquets in these days, and in many cases they do so still. But to most of us, that command applies in a more figurative sense, and it seems to me that in Greatheart's case it is entirely carried out according to the spirit, if not the letter of the injunction. And in this, as in all other matters, the right thing answers. Greatheart is spared a hundred mortifications which more ambitious and less hospitable hosts come in for. He does not find his lion engaged on the particular day when he wants to feed him, or indisposed at the last moment and unable to attend, or sulky and unwilling to roar. He does not feel that the eye of Gobble, who has a cordon bleu, is upon his salmi, and that *in* that eye is contempt. He has about him guests who neither laugh at him nor are jealous of him, and it may possibly happen that one day—we will not say when—he will come to know that in opening his house to such persons as we have spoken of above, he has done a better action than he ever imagined, and, looking for no such honour, anticipating no such reward, has entertained an angel unawares at his table.

THE BALLET.

AFTER a long and distinguished life, the ballet has died among us and gone to its grave, unhonoured even by a slight obituary notice. Once as much sought for in London as even that illustrious Italian guest the opera herself, ballet is dead and gone. Her revengeful ghost usually haunts some scene of every grand opera, or revisits the glimpses of the footlights where burlesque or pantomime usurps her inheritance. But though her ghost walks, she is dead; dead past all galvanizing into life again by the enterprise of opera directors. This was evident during the last opera season. And now, is not a sketch of her life due from the journalist to her ancient lineage and past distinction?

Ballet is descended, as her name shows, from those bands of worshippers who were said in the days of the Christian fathers "ballare et cantare," to sing as they swayed to and fro in dance before their heathen idols. The word ballare, which meant a measured swaying now to one side and now to the other, belonged to mediæval Latin, was adopted out of Greek, and was used chiefly by the Christian fathers of the Church to represent what they called the diabolical dance movement of Pagan rites. The word was taken purely into old French romance: as in the romance of Robert le Diable we read of one who now sings, now leaps, and sways to and fro, as one who "puis chante, et puis espringe et bale."

The mediæval Latin word became in Italian ballare, and in French baler. Thence the French bal, and its diminutive ballet. Thence also the word ballad, for the reason that may even yet be seen on a winter's night in the Orkneys, when country neighbours by the hearth join hands in a great circle, and, by dance movement of swaying to and fro together with varying emphasis, express the change of incident and emotion in the metrical tale, the ballad story, that one person chants to the measure all are marking.

But although a ballet is a little ball, in respect of its brevity, it has been high exalted among balls in respect of the artistic nature of its dancing. In fact, the young lady who should now, at a private ball, suddenly rear herself upon her toes, advance kicking, extend one of her legs at right angles to her body, and then stand on the small of her partner's back, and, with outstretched arm, smile at the assembled company, would be regarded as a little too fast even for the present age. Even upon the stage this mere gymnastic exercise has much to answer for, to those who would explain the present ruin of the ballet. It belongs wholly, except in grotesque parts, to the period of the ballet's decline. In former days the better part of dancing, called the poetry of motion, was allied to music of its own, the prose of sound, and to the dumb show that should compress all Demosthenes into a gesture. A remote branch of the ballet family was developed in Italy, under the name of Art Comedy, out of the old Roman mimes; but in that Art Comedy, the dumb show, or expression through gesture and facial expression, went for more than the dancing and the rhythm. The family of entertainments afterwards so highly distinguished, is more immediately descended from a re-union of dance with speech and song, which took place in Italy early in the sixteenth century. And the ballet appeared thereafter as the little ball, when it was an incident of the great balls; for its place was not upon the public stage, but as a splendid and costly incident of private entertainments at a royal court or in the palace of a luxurious noble. The principal ballet-dancers were then kings and queens, and princes and princesses, and the corps de ballet was made up of grandees of the court. At the court of Turin there was a man especially famous for the planning of this sort of play; but the French, who adopted it from Italy, gave it the name and fame since current through Europe, and by them also it was advanced to a place of honour on the public stage.

Baltasarino, who was called Beaujoyeux, was a Paganini of that sixteenth century, whom the Marshal Brissac recommended to the service of Queen Marie de Médicis. By him, under such patronage, the Italian ballet was introduced into Paris, where it was improved by Ottavio Rinuccini, another Italian, under the patronage of the same queen. The young ballet had also Cardinal Richelieu for a tutor and guide. Richelieu invented splendid effects, and engaged Louis the Thirteenth himself as a dancer in one of the

ballets at St. Germain. The greater Louis the Fourteenth was also an active ballet-dancer in his youth. It is said that when thirty-two years old he took seriously to heart a couple of lines in Racine's *Britannicus*—where it is said that Nero's singular merit was to dispute for prizes unworthy of his hands, to give up himself as a show to the Romans—and that King Louis never again danced in the presence of his subjects. What he may have done in his private chamber when he was alone and could take off his wig, there is no telling. In his later years, not even his most confidential gentleman of the bed-chamber ever saw Louis the Fourteenth with his wig off. When he went to bed, he retired within the enclosure of its curtains with his wig on, and the wig was then thrust out mysteriously from between their folds. In the morning the wig was as mysteriously returned, and, when the curtains were drawn, the royal figure-head over the royal night-dress corresponded to the stamp on the French coinage. But "the grand monarch" always loved the ballet, and spent lavishly for its decoration as one of the chief entertainments of his court. In his younger days, Benserade was the chief writer of words for the ballets.

The famous ballet-masters of his time were Chicanneau, Noblet, St. André, and Magnus. In the year sixteen 'sixty-nine Abbé Perrin, the poet, and his composer, Cambert, got the privilege for establishing a French opera, as an academy of music. The French opera was then actually established by the musician Lully and the opera poet Philip Quinault, who decorated his pieces to the utmost with dance and pantomime; so that it was he who first made the incidental ballet a recognised part of opera performance. Quinault, the son of a baker, had acquired in his youth the favour of Tristan the Hermit, who gave him lodging and board at his own table, and when he died, left Quinault a good legacy, wherewith he bought the post of valet de chambre to the king. Quinault's first dramatic piece, *The Rivals*, had been presented by his friend Tristan to the players as a work of his own, and was to be paid for accordingly. But, when the piece was found to be really the work of a youth of eighteen, the players wished to reduce by one-half their promise to pay, and at last agreed to pay the author a proportion of their takings; that is said to have been the beginning in France of the custom of the author's share in the success of his pieces. After that first success, Quinault wrote one or two pieces every year, but his best skill was shown in the lyric plays he wrote for Lulli during fourteen years after the establishment of the French opera. Lulli paid him liberally, and held to him closely. The king knighted and pensioned him. He had produced in *Armida* his best work, when the death of Lulli and religious expectation of his own end caused him to stop short in his career, and he began a poem entitled *Heresy Destroyed*, by saying that "he had sung too much of sports and loves, and must attune himself to a sublimer strain;

to his tender muse he bade adieu; he bade her adieu for ever." That was the man to whom we owe what the bills call "in the course of the opera an incidental ballet," and the founding of the glories of the ballet on the operatic stage. His first lyric piece, *The Festivals of Bacchus and of Love*, he called a pastoral; but his *Triumph of Love*, presented at St. Germain in courtly fashion, and danced by the courtiers to Lulli's music, was formally called a ballet.

It is rather an odd fact that immediately after this time the only home of what was called the ballet was in the schools of the Jesuits, where, on great occasions, the pupils danced "*Ballets de Collège*," as grammar-school boys nowadays give recitations. The ballets introduced into the operas were called *divertissements*, or *fêtes*.

After Quinault's death, in sixteen 'eighty-eight, the new path he had struck out for public entertainment was followed by weaker men, until, in sixteen 'ninety-seven, the second reformer of the ballet was found in Antoine Houdart de la Motte. He strengthened the dramatic interest in both ballet and opera, and, in the year just named, his first ballet opera, "*Europe Galante*," with Campra's music, established a new model for the French ballet of the next coming age. Young Louis the Fifteenth danced more than once in it at the Tuileries. The ballet-opera, as then constituted, consisted of a prologue and three or four acts, each with a well-defined action that included, and was illustrated by, one or two *divertissements* of blended dance and song. But the several acts, though they had unity of sentiment, did not develop one plot, and the ballet, as dance-work, had no independent place in such performance. In the last year of the seventeenth century Regnard planned to Campra's music a comedy-ballet of the Carnival of Venice, with detached carnival dancing introduced among the love intrigues forming the slight story of the piece. Then came La Motte's *Carnival and Folly*, in which heathen deities were set dancing. That was called an allegoric ballet. Another of his pieces gave occasion, through a slight story, to the dancing of shepherds, fauns, satyrs, dryads, in a pastoral ballet. Heroes and kings were next set tripping on the light fantastic toe in a heroic ballet. Advance now became rapid. In seventeen 'twenty-three Fuselier wrote, for the music of Colin de Beaumont, a play of Greek and Roman *fêtes*, in which he was the first to have the action of what story there was, told in

dance. In seventeen 'forty-seven appeared *Festivals of Hymen and of Love*, written by Cahusac to the music of Rameau, which added to a story told by dance, the use of wonderful effects of machinery; but the steps taken by these last improvers of the ballet did not lead to any great success.

The true creator of the later power of the ballet, as an independent entertainment, was Jean Georges Noverre, who wholly parted it from opera, shut the mouths of the dancers, and set the ballet very high on its own toes as a five-act play of music, dance, and pantomime. He wrote, a hundred years ago, two volumes, praised by Voltaire, of *Letters upon Dancing and Ballets*, and was that rare thing in creation—a male dancer with a head and brains. He danced well, and he wrote well about dancing. He went back to the study of the ancient pantomime; and of the stage ballet of the century last past, its action, its ingenious machinery, its careful grouping, he may be called the founder. He had Gardel and Vestris among his pupils.

The rest of the tale is of that which we have in our time seen. Who knows but there may be a chance for the revival in London of *Romeo and Juliet* as set by Vincenzo Saleotti! We have seen as queer things on the London stage. A genius apart was that of the Copenhagen ballet-master, Vincenzo Saleotti, who, in the present century, produced great pantomimic ballets, and gave, as an entertainment occupying a whole evening, the ballet of *Romeo and Juliet*; in which all is pantomime, and the actual dancing is confined to the ball-room scene; There *Romeo and Juliet* express their love and mutual attraction, by hopping about after each other among the dancers, and, being at last face to face, express everything in a tender *pas de deux*.

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