

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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## THE DEAR GIRL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BELLA DONNA," "NEVER FORGOTTEN," &c.

### CHAPTER XI. THE DILIGENCE COMES IN.

WE have noticed Sody's, the post-house. Sody, too, was a wine-merchant, which was at the bottom of the hill going out of the town, and where the Paris diligence came in every second day, about four o'clock. The cloud of dust on the hill made Sody, sprinkling sand in a dingy den within, finish as quick as he could; and gathered lounging men and boys in the blouse uniform, and even brought faces to many windows. The sound was like that of an orchestra as the not unmusical jingling and the sonorous tramping of six horses came out of the cloud; and presently the great wain itself—piled like a mountain with men and luggage, swinging and reeling, with the driver swearing and cracking his enormous waggoner's whip, and every horse of the six leaping and tossing and plunging and doing everything but draw like its decent fellows in England—came thundering in, and pulled up with nicety in front of Sody's. It was an ark—a hotel laid on its side on wheels—it seemed to hold so much humanity. These were the Lafitte, Galliard, times. Great men talk of our railways; but the "administration" of this service was marvellous. Time was kept; rain, snow, ice notwithstanding. The great wheeled argosy was got on somehow. If forty horses were necessary, they were found; drivers and conductors were gifted men in their way. The former giants. In the ice-bound days when the country was like steel, they would flog their wild horses down the steepest hills to the music of women's shrieks from within, and to their own frightful swearing. Now a frantic brute would be down and dragged along by the rest: scourged to his feet again by that amazing whip. Those in the coupé had the hoofs of the frantic brutes on a level with their faces. The frightened English ladies at the road-corners would see pink-nosed, wild, cream-coloured Normandy horses, that had been sent by a nobleman to be put into the diligence to be broken in by that severe training. Nearly every one went by diligence to Paris. Posting had infinitely more risks, and was not so certain, and less rapid.

Here it was now come in; here was the mountain of baggage being got down—the "johndarmes," all boots and white tape, lounging by, and giving place to Mr. Blacker, who was scrutinising the passengers with an official air. They seemed a poor set enough, he thought; he could see with a glance, from long practice, their quality. As he was looking on at the confused crowd of helpless strangers—English ladies, with daughters and children, bewildered with the commissaries shouting the names of their establishments, even dragging them away—a gentlemanly-looking man, all over dust, came up to him, and said:

"You seem an Englishman, sir; and I think I saw you at the port—"

Mr. Blacker drew back a little haughtily at this style of address—"seem an Englishman, indeed!" He had noticed that the person was very dusty and shabby. No man had such a just contempt for the "shy" English.

"Possibly, sir," he answered; "I have been there; and what do you want with me?"

"I saw you with Mr. Dacres," the gentleman went on; "perhaps you could help me, as a stranger, and tell me of some quiet lodgings here. I am really hardly well enough for the bustle of a hotel."

A sick and decayed stranger—the next thing, as Mr. Blacker had a sure and certain instinct, would be the usual application in harmony with these symptoms. "My good friend, how can I tell you? I really do not know what will suit people. You must go to an agent, or walk about and look at the houses. It's not in my way at all, I assure you. God bless me, who have we here?"

A post-chaise was clattering down the little hill, with the great speckled Wooverman horses, round as dray-horses, and the picturesque post-boy jogging up and down. There was something to interest Mr. Blacker, and he darted away to play the good Samaritan. A post-chaise and luggage were like an order set in jewels. "There was no mistake" about that; there was nothing on credit here, you see—you paid as you went. It was an exceedingly costly shape of introduction. In an instant the diligence lost interest, and the blouses gathered about the newly arrived chaise. Mr. Blacker, forgetting the shabby fellow who had come in the diligence, was peering in, his hand shading his eyes, with a half smiling recognition, which

his practice of accosting mere strangers had made habitual.

He saw it was a large, full, and pink-faced gentleman in a grey travelling-cap, well drawn down, which seemed like a nightcap, and a distinguished air of wealthy portliness. Beside him was a very girl, blooming, petite, with rosy cheeks, though a little overcome with modesty at the publicity she was exciting. The dusty gentleman stood by with a little curiosity. He had seen Mr. Blacker's eagerness, and was amused. As the door was opened, the pair seemed not a little nervous at all the faces, strange, voluble, half-savage, half good-humoured, which were bent on them. Then the chorus broke out. "Go to Roy'l H'tel, my lor!" "Take you to Wheelers, on the port, near the ships!" "Take my card, sir; the Roy'l is full!" "Hôtel du Nord!" "Hôtel d'Angleterre!" At these invitations they seemed to be a little terrified. The dusty gentleman, still watching, was more amazed at seeing Mr. Blacker elbow his way among them all, calling loftily to the man in white tape, and boots, and huge sabre,

"Here, John Darm! make way, do; it's unbearable; the thing wouldn't be allowed in England. Do keep back. Good evening, sir; let me help you. These are only the ways of the place. This must be put down by government. I am Mr. Blacker, a resident here for many years. If I can be of any use, I shall be delighted."

"Oh, sir!" said the lady, "how kind of you! We don't know what to do. There is some mistake about our passport."

"Yes," said the pink gentleman in the travelling-cap, with an air of half terror, half worry, "it has been wrong all the way from Paris, and they have been threatening us. I am an English gentleman—Mr. Wilkinson, on our tour; and we are willing to pay, I am sure."

Mr. Blacker's face fell; he had counted on a milord, at least. Still there was wealth. His face spread out again into an universal and almost devouring smile.

"Oh! that is nothing; leave it to me. You go to a hotel, of course! The Royal I would recommend; but, of course——"

Here the chorus broke in, as that word was caught. A dozen dirty hands, holding dirty cards, were thrust out on both sides of Mr. Blacker.

"Confusion!" he said, angrily; "will you keep back?"

"Oh, thank you," said the lady. "You are so kind. We did not know *where* to go."

"Leave it all to me, then," went on Mr. Blacker, with the rapidity and promptness of a general giving orders. "You will go to the Royal. Mention my name, and Le Buff will do his best for you. Here, some one, tell Mr. Sody to come out. Dites à M. Sody d'approcher. Mr. le Chef, there is some errure here about the passport; n'est pas en règle, you see." This was addressed to an

officer in a double-horned cap with tassels, who, with a bundle of open papers in his hand, was striding towards them. The officer bowed a great deal as M. Blackhaire spoke to him privately and with great earnestness, for he, too, had the general complimentary impression that the English were in occupation of his town, and its real rulers. There was no difficulty beyond the usual conventional irregularity which the police often delighted in discovering and as readily condoned, and they graciously consented that the lady and gentleman might proceed to the Royale, where "Mr. the chief" would wait on them himself in person. Mr. Blacker announced these glad tidings to the strangers with very much the air of one who has obtained a reprieve.

"I'll see you, myself, in the morning—will call up. I am Mr. Blacker, the secretary to the English Church here, trustee, and all that, you know, and I dare say could be of a little use to you. The authorities are fair enough. Willing to do what they can to oblige me. Here, you drive this lady and gentleman to the Royal. Good evening;" and in a profusion of grateful acknowledgments the pair were driven away.

His wife at home was surprised at the spirits in which her husband returned. Here, indeed, were the "most charming people"—"quite an acquisition"—the "best-bred air"—swans, in short, of a far darker hue than the Beauforts. So in a prolific family the newer and later baby puts the penultimate bantling "out of joint."

The dusty gentleman had seen the whole proceeding with a smile. It was "such a bit of human nature," he thought. Mr. Blacker had walked past him, his eyes seeing only airy visions, his mouth smiling at its welkin, and without even dreaming that he had seen him only a few moments before. He himself took his way home.

"I shall have to go to a dreary hotel after all," he was thinking, "to be elbowed by a cold crowd, to be sitting in public three-quarters of the day, and served as though I was one of a regiment. I can't endure it. A servant's face, even, in one of those rooms, would be something more comforting, more of the air of home."

A gentle face—almost as he spoke—that of a young girl, had come hastily out of "Chang Purdry's"—thus known to the English—a very stout artist, in a white cap and apron, and a fierce knife always in his hand. He kept a "charcuterie," and it was owned grudgingly by Captain Filby that his sausages were "uncommon good, though Heaven only knows how many cats the rascal chopped up in 'em." The young lady, coming out hastily, with a little bag in her hand, almost ran up against the traveller. She drew back with the conventional cry and start. He apologised; but stopped, and said:

"Why, Miss Lucy Dacres! is it not? You remember, I came over with your papa?"

Lucy, at the very first moment, had recalled the handsome face, the black Spanish eyes, and moustache. These things made the same impression on her as they would on any of her sisters.

"Colonel Vivian!" she exclaimed, eagerly. "Ah! so it is!" She put out her hand.

So it had been, the very first second she came out of the shop; but who can help this little worldly training?

"You have come back from Paris! Are you going to stay? Papa will be so glad!"

There was a cordiality in her greeting that touched him.

"I hardly know what I shall be able to do. I am so weary, and have gone through so much. I feel as if I were going to have an old illness back on me. But I will fight it off, if it were only," he said, smiling, "to avoid a sick-room at a hotel."

"You do look ill," she said, impetuously; "indeed you are ill. I saw it at once. You are tired and overworked. Shall I go home, and tell papa?"

"It is nothing," he said, leaning wearily against the door of the little shop. "I have gone through much worse, though I thought I should have died in that dreadful coupé. I must only fight it off, as I have often fought it off before. I meant to have gone on to-night, as I couldn't endure the hotel; and as a capital preparation, I am going on that most weary of all searches, hunting for lodgings—going upstairs here, and meeting strange bargaining faces there. It is a dreadful business, and I shrink from it."

"Oh," said Lulu, eagerly, "we could tell you of a place—a charming one—close to us. Oh, it would exactly suit you! I know it would. So quiet; and they would give the world to have a person like you with them."

He smiled. "Let us go and take them now. You are quite a house-agent, and I am greatly obliged to you. It comes so welcome, after the behaviour of a pompous Samaritan up at the diligence-office, and who quite put me aside when I asked him what I asked you."

"Mr. Blacker, I am sure," said Lucy, laughing.

Striking out of the Place, and turning up one of the streets that led away to the town, they were not long in getting to "Robert's," the house with a court—the only one in that quarter—near where the Daeres lodged. On the wandly pile was the old church, a yellow, Normandy pile, rough and jagged, and with a humped effect about its old shoulders, which, when lit up at night with its tall ragged window, its bent stained-glass, its grand stone disorder, its luxurious rankness of carved and shaken extravagance, seemed like an old mediæval shrine out of the Hôtel Cluny. For of nights it was often lit up while official evening service was going on—some little pastoral rite to which no one need go, but to which every one that passed turned in for a few minutes; it might be to see the pretty fishing-girls, who were to walk in procession in a few weeks.

Robert's was a neat, comfortable clean place—had been considered even handsome in old days, when one of Louis the Sixteenth's intendants had lived there. The court was a great feature. Down in the Great-street it would have brought three times the rent—an addition that would have been very welcome to the hard-working couple who owned it.

Exactly opposite to where the Daeres lodged was a little archway and court, and at the corner of the court a small shop. It was kept by a young pair, newly married, who had waited what seemed to them an eternity; and at last, in despair of any hope of things bettering, had plunged desperately, and with a little aid from friends, who were watching them ("Harcourt Daeres, Esq., a napoleon"), had started this little establishment. Once embarked, they worked frantically, for the liability hanging over them was tremendous; and people noticed the handsome young boy of a husband sawing blocks of wood on the little X-shaped frame all day and night in a manner that would put to shame any gentleman associated with the milling interest, whether living on the Dee or elsewhere. The young wife laboured away within at washing; for they strove in a hundred ways to make out the dreadful sum required by a severe landlord; but their grand dependence were the "apartments," which had let but indifferently during the past season. Lucy was deeply concerned for the struggle of these her protégés, and had seen their young and handsome faces growing every day more wistful and contracted with anxiety and responsibility, and her delight at being able to help them in this house-agency way overcame all diffidence about speaking so intimately to a stranger. She led him in triumph to the house. She found the pair more wistful and anxious still, going over their accounts in a sort of council. She brought joy and hope with her, and almost danced with delight as she saw their brightening faces. The rooms were pretty, bright, clean, and cheerfully furnished.

She went over to tell her father, who, she knew, would be overjoyed, and found him in one of his most buoyant moods.

"A party, Lulu, my chirrup," he called out. "A little gaiety for you. The swells are on view to-night at Mother Dalrymple's; and Blacker's the showman. He can't keep me in his menagerie, as he does the herd. I never mind him. Go nicely dressed, pet; your little white simple frock; and we'll be neat as nine-pins. Poor mamma here will mope at home."

Then Lucy told her adventure. "The handsome man has come back, papa, and is going to stay opposite. Such a face, Harco dear, like the old Spanish cardinal we saw in the Museum! I could study it like a picture. He's worth all the Frenchmen here."

"Witch!" said her father, with his "fond" manner. "Nice training I've given you at Miss Pringle's—bringing off gentlemen with Spanish faces to lodgings opposite, and have 'em convenient for study. Ah, my young lady, if

I had you ten minutes in the witness-box——” Then, seeing some disturbance and alarm in her face at this matter-of-fact picture of what she had done, he added: “Don’t mind, Lulu love; it’s only the way I’d leave it to the jury, supposing they ever put me on a bench—that is, supposing the sky to come down upon us one day. Though God help us before a jury of this place—virgins or matrons. I tell you what, I’ll just run over and see our friend. It’s only polite, you know—a poor stranger in the place, without a friend. And I tell you what, too, we’ll bring him off with us to the divarshion to-night, and my Lulu can study his Spanish face to her hear’s content.”

“No, no,” said she, gravely, “we must not disturb him, Harco dear. He wants to be quiet, and looks very ill.”

“The yellow Spanish tone, my dear,” said he, in high good humour. “You took it for jaundice. I’ll bring him, canvas, frame, and all. Who knows, pet, but we may have him laughing in your room before long, ha! ha!—by a red cord, ha! ha!”

This shape of jest began to trouble Lucy a good deal. When her father was in spirits, and he had got hold of what he thought was a “good thing to work,” she knew there was no restraint. As he said, he made the punch boil with anything that came handy, even with what might affect his darling Lu’s most tender sensibilities.

“Now you must promise me,” she said, gravely, and as though she were lecturing a younger brother, “not to be saying that sort of thing before strangers. You know, dear, the set of people that are here, and how unkindly and unscrupulously they speak.”

He became grave. “What was I called to the bar for? Tell me that. What do the attorneys come to me for? Is there a man among all those rascals in the “stuff”—and there isn’t a better-hearted lot in the world than on circuit—is there one of ‘em, I say, can take a case lightly and gingerly over a hole just covered with a few rotten sticks and a little grass, maybe? Ah! Dacres is the coachee they want for nice tender driving like *that*—eh?” And he seemed to wait a reply to this “poser,” which, had it been addressed privately to that large-hearted circuit where he was so popular, would have been answered in a fashion directly opposite to what he anticipated; for in delicate parts of a case it was notorious his rough indiscreet driving was sure to send everything through.

In such a humour remonstrance was useless, and Lucy saw him gaily cross the street—a boy carolling pleasantly—to invade the premises opposite. Then Lucy saw, with a little alarm, many such crossings.

#### CHAPTER XII. THE PARTY.

On the first floor of the milliner’s shop—“Ong ho” at Mrs. Dalrymple’s—was some agitation. A few friends were coming that night. Here was one of those little parties which people, apologising for the place, said was the

real charm of Dieppe. There was no fuss, no constraint, no elaborate preparation; you were glad to see your friends—so different from the way at home. Suppers, balls, music, splendid dresses, lights—the grand apparatus of festivity—were absent; and their absence was made a positive merit of. Who shall blame this ingenious shift? It was impressed over and over again on the wealthy, who, alas! could stay but a day or so.

The little rooms were cleared a good deal. The good lady, the hostess, enjoying in that strange place the respect which decency and conscience and fair conduct extort from those who have long bid adieu to these virtues, was busy with her preparations, which, as she had not left behind in her native land a good warm hospitality, were liberal. Many called this foolish as they enjoyed it. Below there was kept carefully apart, to be brought in at the proper time, browned delicacies, fowls, galantines, with other things of the same substantial family, prepared under personal superintendence, each the best of its kind, and chosen with skill. Blessings on such kindly purveyors! They usher in their little restoratives towards midnight with a pleasant surprise, which we welcome more than the ostentatious dainties served at the official splendours of a ball.

But at the last moment, just as they were lighting the candles, the little milliners below all assisting with delight, here was Blacker’s heavy step on the stair, this panting figure stalking up, and actually making the good lady of the house nearly drop one of the wax-lights.

“My dear madam, see here! Such a thing has turned up, and I haven’t lost a moment coming off to you. The nicest pair! Just come! I sent ‘em to the Royal at once. The *best* people, and no mistake at all! She of the highest, tip-top connexion. Where are the girls, with the pen and ink? Just fill in something nice—‘request the pleasure,’ and all that.”

There was a pleased agitation invading the happy hostess, a flurry not at all undelightful. The girls clustered from all quarters and crowded about her.

“Dear, dear,” said their mamma, smiling, “where *shall* we put them all? But what’s the name, Mr. Blacker?”

“Wilkinson—Mr. Wilkinson and his wife,” said the girls.

“Now fold it up,” said Mr. Blacker. “I’ll take it myself; in fact, I told them I would show them a little of our quiet society. I saw they liked it. Oh, first-rate people—maid and man in the rumble, and all that. See here, Mrs. Dalrymple—this confidentially—I’ll bring them about half-past eight; not earlier, you know. They are accustomed to the London ways. ‘Pon my word, very nice,” he added, looking round; “very nice, indeed!”

Before eight o’clock that night there was near a dozen people assembled in these little rooms, which looked cozy and inviting enough, though Captain Filby (present in a pink under-

waistcoat) was very pleasant about "a hand-box," and ceiling pressing on your head. He was growling to young Chaytor in the corner: "Why didn't she hire a garsong or two from the hotel—the beggars would have been glad of a franc at this time—to roar names up the stairs? This good woman will be going round to Sody and the rest of them: 'My dear Mussier Sody, I am so sorry, but next month or so I expect a remittance;' and all that. So it's Sody and the other rascals who *really* pay for all this—these wax-lights and all."

There also was M. Pigou, the handsome pastor—already retired into a corner, as into an arbour, with the handsome daughter of the house, his dark eyes "reading hers," as he thought, with an exquisitely hopeless sense of being misunderstood and unintelligible to the whole world. Here was Doctor White, the gay unmarried doctor; but not Doctor Macan. We can hear Mrs. Dalrymple explaining this with nervous anxiety, as though she were a diplomatist.

"You know, Doctor White is our friend, and was recommended to us, and is as agreeable a young man as ever I met. I asked Mr. Macan, but he wrote me back such a stiff, angry letter, saying he wouldn't go into the same room with the other, and that I must have known that. Really, I am not accustomed to be lectured in that way about my little parties. I shall never trouble him again. But not a word to Mr. White; it would only spoil his pleasure for to-night."

But the gentleman alluded to was, of course, in full possession of all the whole transaction, and was "winning golden opinions" by the easy and pleasant way he took it—a nice, pleasant, good-tempered young fellow, and desirous to succeed. No wonder! for he spoke in the magnanimous way of Doctor Macan. No man more admired his abilities than he did. He thought it a little unfair and ungenerous in one of Doctor Macan's standing to try and keep back one in the profession. So far it had not succeeded. The young ladies said Mr. White—it was agreed tacitly that he should not be called "Doctor"—was *so* good-looking.

This little episode was most valuable, and, later, furnished the colony with interesting whispers and speculations for several days. But in a moment this little scandal was absorbed in the grander interest of the arrival of the distinguished guests, Mr. Blacker coming on before and plunging into the room, looking eagerly round, and seizing Mrs. Dalrymple by the wrist, to bring her to meet this grand stranger. It was a procession; Guernsey Beaufort, a London club man, superbly gracious, laying himself out, as it were, you see, to suit himself to this sort of thing. Indeed, he had a good-naturedly amused look as he turned his eyes a little way up to the low ceiling. Mrs. Beaufort, gentle and even sorrowful, all her finery hopelessly betraying her inferior origin, and that she had been married for money. The younger Beaufort's scornful contempt for the

people and the place—constitutional and involuntary—his unconcealed weariness, his openly careless explanation that "Guernsey insisted on bringing him," and that he was counting the minutes till he got back to town, were tokens there were no mistaking; a gulf was all around him, separating him from the *canaille*, and he was on a rock in the middle.

Our Lucy had come early by herself; that is, attended through the Dieppe streets by the little maid who waited on her. That was almost a not unpicturesque and even theatrical sight—the lights twinkling in the shops over the wares, that seemed like gold and silver, and the lamp swinging overhead from lines. At times, when the night was wild, the sullen drone of the sea close by came round the corners. Her father was to drop in later. She was a little excited; it was her first amusement of the kind since she had been manumitted. She looked pretty and attractive. Young Mr. White grew distract talking to the Miss Dalrymples, as he looked over to her. Other eyes, bent on her from a retired corner, were watching her with less complacency. For a time, Lucy, pleased with the lights—and your true entrepreneurs of these little private shows know that light can supply furniture, glitter, magnificence, everything, if it be but turned on in abundance—she was charmed with the festive dresses and the "company manners," all new to her. Thus engrossed, it was some minutes before she saw Miss West's staid face bent on hers, watching grimly and fixedly from a corner. Lucy darted over to her.

"I am so glad we meet here. Isn't it pretty and charming? And I feel as if I was going to enjoy myself. Where is Mr. West? He's coming later?"

"No; he is not coming. He had business at home."

"Not coming?" cried Lucy; "how strange of him! He always goes out with you, does he not?"

"I see you are here by yourself," said the other, quietly; "but I don't think it odd of you. My brother has letters to write."

"Nonsense," said Lucy, gaily; "tell him, from me, I don't believe his excuses. His letters would keep well enough till morning, if he would put his thoughts in water, like flowers."

"I should not venture to give him any message of that sort," said Miss West, with great coldness, "though I am his sister. I should not dare to look for any reasons more than such as he chooses to give me."

Lucy, in a sort of speculative way, her eyes seeming to work out the conclusion:

"Then I'll tell him, for I am privileged to say what I please to him. This is some deep plan or policy. I am sure he is working some scheme. He is so clever, you know; and when he does anything out of the usual course, he has some end in view."

"I shall tell him all these compliments, you may be sure," said Miss West, looking at her.

"I am asking you to tell him," said Lucy, gravely.

Mrs. Dalrymple came up with her friendly manner. "I am so glad you have come, for they all said we were sure not to have you as Mr. West did not come, and as you never went anywhere without him. I could tell you the funny reasons that wicked Captain Filby has been giving for it."

Lucy looked down at Miss West in her corner with a quick intelligence, as though something had occurred to her mind for the first time; but at the same instant Mr. Blacker came plunging and striding at Mrs. Dalrymple, grasped her wrist, and dragged her to the door, with an agitated "Here they are! Come over, quick."

Such a surprise for the company, even extorting an impatient "Who thed—I have we here now?—Blacker losing the half-pint of wits he had," from Captain Filby. The tall, pink-faced, pluffy squire, with that country-looking girl on his arm. Guernsey Beaufort's brother put up his glass, and seemed interested. She had a delighted smile of half pleasure, half confusion. People were not trained well enough at Dieppe to go on talking; but every one stopped in a death-like silence, and stared, and gaped.

Only Mr. Blacker was heard in fluent spasms: "Mrs. Dalrymple, allow me—Mr. Wilkinson—Mrs. Wilkinson. I thought, Mrs. Dalrymple, I might venture to ask for a card for our friends."

"I am delighted," the hostess replied. "I hope you are not fatigued. Here, dear, get Mrs. Wilkinson a seat."

Then followed great disturbance, and rustling and unsettling, and the pretty bride, for such she was, overwhelmed with confusion, was duly seated. Mr. Blacker "lashed himself" (Captain Filby's remark) firmly alongside of the pink squire and pretty stranger, and took care very minutely and unnecessarily to give the details of their meeting, that all the room should learn his title to the possession and manipulation of the stranger. They were his by the laws incident to jetsam and flotsam. That title was always honourably acknowledged in the colony. "And Lady Mary Wilkinson," added Mr. Blacker, very loud, "I hope we may soon be ordering rooms for her."

A greater bustle still when Mrs. Dalrymple with pride leads forward Guernsey Beaufort's brother, who had asked to be made known to Mrs. Wilkinson. He at once drops into a seat beside her, takes possession of her, is observed to make her smile and giggle even, with grave observations delivered in a mysterious way, looking at her askance as he spoke. It was soon remarked that Mrs. Wilkinson had made quite a conquest of Mr. Guernsey Beaufort's brother.

A cheerful voice on the stairs, and Lucy interrupts herself, calling in great spirits to the pastor, who approves of her, and has been telling her that there are at most but

two people in the world who understand him, or ever will understand him:

"Here's dear old Harco at last."

Yes! here he was, talking and laughing up the stairs, and leading in by the arm the handsome stranger—the Spanish face—and revealing to the terrified Mr. Blacker, who gave something like a groan of agony, the dusky stranger who had mistaken him for a Samaritan up at Sody's. But he was now resplendent, fresh, clean, delicate-looking perhaps, attracting all eyes. Beside him, even the glitter of Guernsey Beaufort's brother seemed to fade. Tailoring is to be had cheaply enough, in one sense, by all indiscriminately; but the true air, the carriage, is not to be so bought. Mr. Blacker's penultimately distinguished strangers seemed to fall back. Mr. Dacres, as much at home as if he were at the circuit recess, did the introduction.

"I've brought a friend, Mrs. D. We were dining together, so I thought I might. He and I are old friends—of certainly a fortnight's standing. Ha! ha! Met twice, once in the packet—ah! There's my Lulu's face, hiding like a rose among the bushes. Our little Samaritan, eh, Colonel Vivian? You and I know the meaning of that."

Lucy had gone forward to meet him. "Charming Samaritan!" he said, smiling; "not a Levite who would stop for nobody except in a post-chaise."

"Oh, oh!" said Mr. Dacres, full of suppressed enjoyment. "Let me introduce you. Mr. Blacker, Colonel Vivian."

Blacker, dreadfully taken aback, could only murmur, "Really, so sorry; quite a mistake, Colonel Vivian. Looking out for some friends expected; came up at the same moment, you see."

"Friends! Surely not," said the colonel, good humouredly; "not the people in the post-chaise? I envied them so much, as they seemed strangers, and you volunteered your services. Rather hard on me, who asked you first."

"See here, Colonel Vivian," Mr. Blacker said, tapping him confidentially, as if to draw him aside into a corner, where he would be told something to his advantage. "I am so sorry about this little mistake. But we will go together, tomorrow, to a charming little bijou of a place—a pet corner that I have kept specially for you."

"For me? No, thanks. I am provided for most delightfully close to Mr. Dacres here—Hôtel Robert."

Mr. Blacker knew the place. This was a fresh blow. People standing about knew in an instant that something was going on to the disadvantage of Mr. Blacker, though they were ignorant of details; and he seemed to fall that night like the funds in a panic.

"So you are better?" said Lucy. "Oh, you are looking so much better. And I am sure you like that dear little pair. You will find them willing."

"That is everything," said he, "in everybody. You are willing?"

"Stupid, perhaps, but willing," said she. "But you don't look ill," she added. "I don't think you were very bad; or have they cured you?"

"At this moment," he said, "I am literally in agony. If I was in an open field, with no one near, I should like to give a good shriek."

"But that would do you no good," said Lucy, gravely. "It would be better, would it not, to have gone to bed, or have sent for Doctor Macan?"

"All the Doctor Macans in the world could do me little good. If he can cure India and Jamaica, and the remains of swamp fever flutter about one's head like bats at night! But I am past the time when I should want to be interesting. Seriously, I am glad to be where I am, to know there is a friendly face in the window over the way. I know nothing about friendly faces, nor never shall. Just come to one side, Miss Lucy—that is your charming name—to this wall. Every one seems to be staring so, and listening, I believe. That's better. No, I know nothing about friendly faces."

"But," said Lucy, warmly, "this is all very wrong, and all your own fault, if you won't be angry with me for telling you so. Papa says we can do all that for ourselves. He says," she added, smiling, "we have only to sow friends, and they will come up like a turnip crop about you."

"I tried all that over and over again. I might sow broadcast, but nothing came up for me. I gave the world a good and a fair chance. It never gave me one; but I don't complain."

"Friends are made so easily," said Lucy. "Oh, you don't know how easily. Some have been made in a minute—at first sight—as—as—" She stopped, tried to look grave, then smiled.

"—As our friendship, I hope, will be," he said, gravely; "unhappily, I must come this road very often, and I shall keep on my pretty little rooms always."

"It was not *that*," said Lucy, impetuously. "Only we should be so sorry, and papa likes you."

"Does he?" said the other, smiling.

"But," she went on, "why should you be on this road always, like the Jew? No one is obliged to travel backwards and forwards between Paris and Dieppe." He bowed.

"That is my destiny, all the same. I am sorry I cannot tell you the story. If you knew it, you would say I was right in keeping it locked up in my own dark jail. I have no pleasure in making others sympathise, and it will all end one day. Come, what are they about now—cards?"

Little tables, baize covered, were being drawn out, and candles arranged.

"Cards!" Mr. Ernest Beaufort was heard to say to the lady he had never deserted during the whole evening. "Good Heavens! are we in a country town?"

Mr. Guernsey was more tolerant. It was he, indeed, that had proposed a snug game.

"Whist!" said Mr. Beaufort; "they should send a bellman round, and collect all the old maids of the town!"

#### CHAPTER XIII. LUCY'S NEW FRIEND.

THE hostess and her daughters did not relish this serious interruption to their little festivity. It brought silence; but as it was impetuously supported by Mr. Blacker in hoarse stage-whispers—he himself dragging out tables, offering to send home for cards—there was no opposing it. Mr. Beaufort—who had taken very kindly to the clergyman, and said, loud enough to be overheard, that he was charmed with his easy manners, and that any one could tell *he* had been in the best set—declared that he must have Mr. Wilkinson in his game.

Lucy had been looking on quite downcast at the turn things had taken.

"Oh, I am so sorry," she said. "We are going to be moped, now. The party is over, and you may wish us all good night, Colonel Vivian. Oh, if they had only made a round game! A round game is heaven!"

"And why not a round game?" he said. He never was tired of watching the natural play of expression in her face. "It is not so difficult to get up a round game as to get to heaven."

To her surprise, he went forward, and said, loud enough to be heard by the room (the distinguished, the *really* distinguished stranger was speaking):

"This will be all very dull for the young ladies; they will not be let to talk or gossip. Some one has proposed a round game; it will be merrier, and take every one in, and far better."

A handsome stranger, looking round for the support of the ladies, was not likely to be left alone.

"Oh yes!" cried Lucy, "a round game!"

"Now listen to my Lulu!" said Mr. Daeres, to whom the proposal was a welcome relief, for he was already thinking of "taxing my friend Vivian's generous heart."

The adhesion to the proposal was unanimous. Mr. Wilkinson, a timid man, nervous at his responsibilities—he was to have played with Mr. Ernest as partner, and Mr. Guernsey Beaufort against him—the thing was put aside at once. Blacker was as impetuous against as he was for it.

"Dear, good lady, can't you see they don't want it?" he whispered.

The Beauforts, looking darkly at the author of their defeat, had to give up their pleasant evening's amusement.

The round game then set in. It was the one with the ungracious name—the old rude libel on that gentle sisterhood who prefer to be single. It was then new, and was played uproariously. Mr. Ernest alone declined to join, and sat apart with the lady he distinguished. His remarks, during breaks of silence, were borne to the players.

"We are going back to our school-days again. We might as well be in the curate's house on holiday night. We ought to have blindman's buff next."

Some one was dealing, and there was a silence; when Mr. Vivian's voice was heard:

"The pleasantest sight I ever saw was a game of blindman's buff, which we had one Christmas at Lord Langley's, Governor-General of India. He played himself, and his wife, the commander-in-chief, and a young duke who was travelling. So, if we do clear away the tables by-and-by, we have some precedent for it."

This was an answer to Mr. Beaufort's remark, and yet it seemed merely accidental.

The game was done. There was a pleasant clinking outside. The hospitable lady was busy moving in and out. Presently entered trays, jingling musically. The fragrance of the browned French fowls was borne on the air. Captain Filby was softened, and abated his eternal growl, to say that this was the only sensible thing he had seen since he came into the place.

Blessings, we may say again, on those honest purveyoresses whose delight is to set down something good and appetising, who do not disdain personal service in the kitchen, and who enjoy it themselves in seeing you enjoy it.

In a minute they were all sitting round with alacrity.

"Mr. Vivian! not going away?" the hostess said, in alarm. "You'll offend me."

"A thousand thanks," he answered, "for the most cheerful evening I have spent for years."

"What! must you go away?" said Lucy, her face showing her disappointment—that face which expressed all she felt without restraint—"after your engaging to stay?"

"You are afraid about your protégés," he said, smiling. "They shall not suffer. But I am like the Jew; I may not tarry long in one place. It will be the better. But this is not in my way. Indeed, I have no business to be here."

"Come here, Miss Lucy; what do you say to this?—Colonel Vivian leaving us just as we are only beginning!"

"I will not allow it," said she. "Don't go away yet, Colonel Vivian. I found you a lodging-to-day—a good Samaritan you called me—and now you must let me find you food, meat, and wine."

"I am helpless here," he said, but sat down next to Lulu.

Then that pleasant little meal commenced. The browned French fowls vanished utterly, as though they had taken wings and flown away. Our colonists had not fared so substantially for long. (Was this the secret of the respect "the Widow Dalrymple" enjoyed?) Captain Filby said it was like old England again—"the dear old country we all love so much, but somehow won't live in." The Beaufort gentlemen were discontented.

"A cabin in England," said Mr. Ernest, "before a palace in this wretched hole."

Colonel Vivian was looking on him with hostile disgust.

"The French are a very fair sort of people, in their way," said Mr. Blacker, patronisingly, "but, of course, as compared with the English—"

"I should never think of comparing them, even," said Mr. Beaufort.

"We ought to revive the old vulgar theory," said Vivian, in perfect good humour, "and lay down, once for all, that one Englishman is equal to half a dozen Frenchmen."

"So he is," said the other, getting red, "any day! He'd thrash a dozen of them at a time—a set of dirty, swindling, soup-eating fellows. One of our Guardsmen would eat a dozen of them for breakfast."

Vivian laughed with real heartiness. "You won't be angry," he said, trying to be grave, "but really I have read and heard that there were people who held this view, but I always thought it was a joke. Now I can say I have really seen and heard a person say it. I am quite glad. It is something to have lived for."

This was said with such perfect sincerity and satisfaction, that the ladies tittered, and Lucy involuntarily clapped her hands, and cried out: "Oh! how very good! how funny!" And such is the force of genuine earnestness and true seriousness, on the stage or off, that every one looked eagerly at Mr. Beaufort, as if he were a real curiosity.

The gentleman coloured.

"I don't see your joke," he said. "I don't follow it at all."

But every one the next day was telling "a good thing" that happened last night, and the fun they had, and how the handsome English colonel—whom that artful, quiet girl, Lucy Dacres, had got hold of ("I heard her say, do you know, she was his good Samaritan")—had thoroughly shut up that stuck-up young swell, Beaufort.

Lucy often thought of that night later—"her first party." It seemed such a pleasant scene. She was delighted with her new friend. There was something in his voice—a strange interest. He was different from the hard, selfish, pushing crowd about her. His manner to her was charming. She was a school-girl; she had not learned the regimental drill of her senses. And some ladies, with an amused air, pointed out to each other the open delight with which she listened and looked at her sad and handsome Englishman.

A stiff cold face had noted carefully everything of this behaviour the whole night. The owner of it grew more stiff, grim, and unsocial every moment. The "remarking" people always said she was the greatest oddity in the place. And on to-night she would neither play at cards nor eat nor drink; which unsocial vice offended the good hostess in her nicest point. She still kept in her corner. Lucy was quite unconscious of this observation, and came over now and again to her with that friendly confidential manner which attracted so many friends

to her. She was received in the same cold and hostile way; making her wonder, just once:

"How shall I ever learn to like her? But I must try. I am afraid she dislikes me."

It was at last time to go. The party broke up. Lucy, not a little excited by the night, and with eyes dancing in her head, was a little chilled by the stiff face which she saw close to her, and the hostile eyes. "How she must dislike me!" she thought. "So different from every one else here." Still she went over to her once more.

"Good night, dear Miss West," she said; "and tell Mr. West, from me, I shall come and scold him for shutting himself up."

"I am glad he was not here; though I wished him to come."

The French window gave a noisy clatter, for the wind had been rising during the night. Lucy heard it suddenly sweep down the street, and accepted this as Miss West's reason. But there was a musical voice at her ear.

"Your papa is going now," he said. "As you have done so much for me, I am going to ask to be allowed to go with you. I am a helpless stranger here."

"Of course," Lucy said, in her eager way; "we brought you, and we take you away, and know your new house is opposite ours."

Miss West heard all this, though she was looking another way, took an abrupt good night of her hostess, and departed.

"She seemed offended," the lady of the house said, talking over the party with delight to her girls. "Such odd, blunt manners! I'll never have her here again without her brother. Mr. Beaufort asked, was she a governess?"

Pleasant walk home for the trio, though the French wind had risen, and was sweeping very boisterously round the corners. At that little port they were often reminded of their tremendous neighbour, the sea, lying behind the cliffs rolled up in his mantle, always sulky, and too often bursting out into fearful and savage paroxysms.

The home was but half a street off. There was but one or two hack vehicles in the whole place.

"This is what I like," said Mr. Dacres, gaily. "It makes me feel like a five-year-old. Oh, it's nice, this, when people see each other. Only it seems absurd breaking up in this way. Why, the night's young yet; and our boys on circuit would be just settling snugly into their chairs, and sending the word down to Harcourt Dacres to give 'em 'The light of her eyes,' or 'As a beam.'"

"I've had a pleasant evening, too, and am all the better for it; and I must thank Miss Lucy for it. I shall think of it often when I am the Wandering Jew again."

When he was gone, Mr. Dacres looked after him.

"As nice and gentlemanly a fellow as ever I met with, on or off circuit. I will say that for him. There's the true touch in his bearing and demeanour, Lulu, love. You like him, Lulu, love. I don't wonder you do."

"Oh, I do, papa; that is, I feel for him; for he says he has some trouble hanging over him that may haunt him all his life, and that he has no friendly faces, or people to be kind to him. I so pity these poor lonely creatures that go knocking about the world with a weight of sorrow."

"I have a silent s'row here," said her father, half chanting at the moon. "Just like the poor woman in the play. Well, pet, but what will you do with him?"

"I have a little plan, Harco dear. You must be as kind and attentive to him as you can, and drive these sad thoughts out of his head. He says he must go and travel, but we must not let him."

"Ah, rogue, rogue!" said her father, laughing. "What a head it has! Oh, the girls, the girls! Yes. Try and keep him here. I dare say you'd do more than papa, in your little way. You'll soothe him, never fear."

"Oh, he's charming, Harco; and the way he put down that vulgar young fellow! I admired him so for it. And I have been laying out such plans about him, which we must talk over. He was quite depressed when he came, Harco dear. I thought he would have fallen in the street up there at the diligence. And you see how cheerful he has gone home. Didn't he, papa?"

"Like a bridegroom off to his wedding," said her father, absently. "That was your doing."

"Well," said Lucy, doubtfully, "do you know, I was thinking it might be. It's hardly vanity to say so. In fact, he told me nearly as much. Oh, Harco dear, I should feel such a pride if I could do a little good in that way, and turn people from being miserable into being happy. It makes me wretched to see people wasting their precious lives pining away, wasting in despair, when they might be enjoying everything in this dear charming world. It's like converting the unbelievers, dear, isn't it?"

"Like yourself, Lulu. But," added he, gravely (she didn't see his sly look), "we have another great conversion on hand, love. We mustn't forget *that*."

"Oh no," said she; "but Mr. West and I understand each other perfectly."

"That job's done, eh, Lulu? Well! good night, love. Oh, these girls!"

## OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

### THE LIFE OF A METHODIST PREACHER.

ON a summer morning, in the year 1715, Silas and Dulcibella Told, the children of the doctor of a Guineaman, were wandering about Kingswood, hand in hand, like the pretty babes in the ballad. Their father, a speculative Bristol physician—who had ruined himself by building a wet dock at the Limekilns, Clifton, and then gone to sea as doctor to a slaver, and there died—had brought these children up in a religious way; their mother, the daughter of a Devonshire sea-captain, had also filied their

minds with religious feelings, so that the two children were in the habit of spending all their time in the fields, picking wild flowers, looking for mushrooms, and sitting under the wild rose-bushes "conversing about God and happiness," and "so transported with heavenly bliss" (we use the exact words of one of them in after life), that whether they existed in the body or out of the body they could not tell. Their talk, about God and paradise and the Promised Land, was interrupted with hunts after dragon-flies, scrambles for flowers, wondering watchings at the flashing of the trout in the brooks, and the plucking of daisies for chains. Now and then the bark of a fox, or the blaring of a badger, filled them with an indescribable dread of being devoured by wild beasts. At last they ran and ran till they got among the trees and lost the path, then they sat down together, and kissed each other and cried; for they would never see home again, but starve, and pine, and die, and be covered over with leaves by the robin redbreasts, like the children in the wood, for whom they had so often cried their little hearts out. But the little grave boy soon aroused himself to comfort his sister, and bid her trust in God; and just at that moment a large dog appeared, sent, they had no doubt, by Heaven, and drove them, without barking, out of the wood into the real road home. In Mr. Told's own words (for the grave little boy in after life grew up into one of the Reverend Mr. Wesley's most zealous preachers, and became a noble-hearted visitor at Newgate): "When we looked round us to behold the dog, he was not to be seen. Being heedless, and unapprehensive of any further danger, we wandered again into the woods, and were a second time bewildered, and in greater perplexity than before; when on a sudden, looking around us, we beheld the same dog making towards us, till he came directly up to us; and we being much terrified ran from him, till we got a second time into our knowledge; nor did the dog leave us till we were driven by him where we could not possibly run into any more labyrinths. I then turned about to look for the dog, but saw no more of him, although we were upon an open common. This was the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in our eyes."

In the year 1719, when seven years old, little Silas Told, who never forgot those first impressions, was put into Mr. Colson's Hospital, on St. Augustine's Back, near the Quay, Bristol. This school for one hundred boys had cost eleven thousand pounds building. Its founder was one of those fine old merchants of Queen Anne's time, who gave away money with a divine liberality, and devoted his life to generous and noble works of goodness. Mr. Told, who, when a boy, was present at the public funeral of this great philanthropist, has left an interesting sketch of his history. He was the son of Edward Colson, a journeyman soap-boiler, whose wages did not exceed ten shillings per week, and had ten children then living, of whom Edward was the eldest.

When he had arrived to an age fit to be put out an apprentice, his father bound him to a Virginia captain. He behaved so well as cabin-boy, that, before his ship departed from America for England, he had acquired, by presents from passengers, the sum of fifty pounds; and, being of an exceeding liberal disposition, on his arrival at Bristol he dispensed every farthing to the prisoners at Newgate, and shortly after sailed again to Virginia. On his second return, he disposed of a sum twice as large after the same manner. He gradually grew in wealth till he became an East India merchant (before the Company started). Forty sail of stately ships obeyed his bidding, and wealth flowed in upon him from every quarter of the globe. His charities were kingly. Mr. Told relates two remarkable anecdotes of Mr. Colson's benevolence, and his dread of its being in any way thwarted.

"One of his ships, trading to the East Indies, had been missing for upwards of three years, and was included in the number of those that were destroyed at sea; but at length she arrived, richly laden. His principal clerk brought him the report of her arrival, and of the riches on board; to which he gave answer, that as she was totally given up for lost, he would by no means claim any right to her; therefore ordered the ship and her merchandises to be sold, and the produce thereof to be applied towards the relief of the needy, which directions were immediately carried into execution.

"Another singular instance of his tender consciousness for charity was: at the age of forty, when he entertained some thoughts of changing his condition, he paid his addresses to a lady; but being very timorous lest he should be hindered in his pious and charitable designs, he was determined to make a Christian trial of her temper and disposition, and therefore one morning filled his pockets full of gold and silver, in order that if any object presented itself in the course of their tour over London-bridge, he might satisfy his intentions. While they were walking near St. Agnes church, a woman in extreme misery, with twins in her lap, sat begging; and as he and his intended lady were arm in arm, he beheld the wretched object, put his hand in his pocket, and took out a handful of gold and silver, casting it into the poor woman's lap. The lady, being greatly alarmed at such profuse generosity, coloured prodigiously; so that when they were gone a little further towards the bridge foot, she turned to him and said, 'Sir! do you know what you did a few minutes ago?' 'Madam,' replied Mr. Colson, 'I never let my right hand know what my left hand doth.' He then took his leave of her, and for this reason never married to the day of his death, although he lived to the age of eighty-three. In the year 1721 he died at Mortlake."

The month of July, 1725, was the end of Master Silas Told's golden age of childhood. The cold daybreak began; the frosty outer world came upon him as suddenly as it does on

those landscapes, that when you take them away from the fire-heat, change to snowy grey from April green. The poor little son of the bankrupt doctor was bound apprentice to the seas (at the usual premium from Colson's school of ten pounds) to Captain Moses Lilly, and he sailed from Bristol in the ship the Prince of Wales, in the pleasant month aforesaid, for Jamaica. A religious quick boy, fresh from a gentle home, and six years in a good and almost monastic school, taken from good food and kind friends, he was hurried off to rough, stern, brutal masters, to be sea-sick for months, and all that time sworn at and beaten for his untoward awkwardness. It seemed to him that he had got among the "condemned." Ill, and with no friend, the poor boy's heart was almost broken with grief.

It was a rough life, the sea, then, and little Silas Told had his share of the hardships. The vessel, on her way home from the Bay of Campeachy and Jamaica, was for fourteen weeks short of provisions, the crew being reduced, after the third week, to a biscuit and two-thirds of a pint of water a day. The men would certainly have all perished but that a thunder-rain descended upon them off Cuba, and the captain, stopping the scuppers, saved six casks of muddy bitter water by swabbing the decks and then wringing the swabs into the tubs. When they reached Blue Fields (west point of Jamaica), the last half pint of maggoty water had been drunk, and there was not a biscuit or a spoonful of flour in the hold. Mr. Told, in his autobiography (which is a curious picture of a sailor's life in the last century), says:

"When we came to an anchor in Blue Fields Bay, we hoisted out the long-boat, stowed her full of casks, and despatched her for the fresh water, when one of our men fell flat upon his belly, and drank so immoderately, that a few hours after he came on board he expired; and the next morning we sewed him up in a hammock and threw him overboard, when a large shark descended after him, and, we supposed, swallowed the whole body."

While the Prince of Wales was riding at anchor in Kingston harbour, with one hundred and five hogsheads of sugar just on board, there came on a hurricane, preceded by ominous splitting noises in the air. This storm raged from eight o'clock at night till six o'clock in the following evening. Told's ship parted all her three new cables, and drove twelve miles down the harbour. Seventy-six sail of other ships were dismantled, and cast high and dry on land. A heavy brigantine was tossed upon a wharf, and a sloop of one hundred tons hurled upon its deck. Hundreds of cocoa-nut trees were also snapped or torn up by the roots. The hurricane ceased suddenly, blew again madly for an hour, then lulled for good. During two or three days after, drowned seamen were washed on shore for miles down the harbour.

The hurricane was followed by a pestilence. Every morning Told (himself sick with fever

and ague) saw thirty or forty corpses carried past his window. The brutal captain deserted the sick sailor, and left him to the tender mercies of a negro, who once a day brought a dose of Jesuits' bark to the warehouse, where he had been swung in a hammock. Told, describing his utter misery for eleven months, says:

"At length my master gave me up, and I wandered up and down the town, almost parched with the insufferable blaze of the sun, till I was resolved to lay me down and die, as I had neither money nor friend. Accordingly I fixed upon a dunghill on the east end of the town of Kingston; and, being in so weak a condition, I pondered much upon Job's case, and considered mine similar to that of his. However, I was fully resigned to death, nor had I the slightest expectations of relief from any quarter; yet the kind providence of God was over me, and raised me up a friend in an entire stranger. A London captain, coming by, was struck with the sordid object, came up to me, and, in a very compassionate manner, asked me if I was sensible of any friend upon the island of whom I could obtain relief. He likewise asked me to whom I belonged. I answered, to Captain Moses Lilly, and had been cast away in the late hurricane. This captain appeared to have some knowledge of my master, and, cursing him for a barbarous villain, told me he would compel him to take proper care of me." A quarter of an hour after, Told's master arrived, and took him to a public-house, where he was lodged with a Mrs. Hutchinson. When he recovered, he was taken home by Captain David Jones, a kind and humane man, captain of the Montserrat. The boatswain of this vessel cured the poor boy of his fever in five hours, and he became more lively and active than before.

On the voyage home an accident happened strikingly evidencing the superstitions then prevalent among even sailors of some education. Five weeks after losing sight of Cape Clear. One morning, about seven o'clock, the look-out at the mast-head threw out the signal for land, about two points on the weather-bow; but as at that time the ship was running with the wind on the starboard-beam, the captain deemed it most advisable to brace all sharp up, and lie as near the wind as we possibly could. The land soon became conspicuous to the naked eye from the deck, and the course was changed as the land edged round, but there was no attempt to make any nearer approach towards it than a full league. For ten hours the men watched it as they cleared the decks, bending the cables ready for anchorage, or to run into harbour in case of any emergency. Told says:

"I do not remember ever to have seen any place apparently more fertile, or better cultivated; the fields seeming to be covered with verdure, and very beautiful; and as the surf

of the sea almost convinced us that it was playing on the shore, we were beyond all doubt for the space of ten hours that the ship had made a convenient landfall. Our captain therefore gave the man who first discovered it ten gallons of rum and twenty pounds of sugar; but about six o'clock in the evening, as we were washing the decks, and the sun was shining clear from the westward, in less than a minute we lost all sight of the land, and nothing but the horizon, interspersed with a few pale clouds, was perceptible from the deck. This filled the ship's company with the utmost astonishment and confusion; nor did we make the coast of Ireland for several days after. Our captain and ship's company concluded that it was Old Brazil, which navigators affirm to have been destroyed by an earthquake between five hundred and six hundred years ago."

The Old Brazil was of course simply the Fata Morgana, brilliantly vivid, and seen in an unusual latitude—an optical illusion in the world's camera, very curious as a phenomenon, but quite refusing to be classed as a fact even on the verge of the supernatural.

On arriving at Bristol, Told was transferred by his master to the Royal George (Timothy Tucker commander), bound for Guinea and the West Indies. Told's new captain proved a most cruel villain. One Sunday, a very short time after Told's joining, as he was down in the gun-room, busy at the bread-cask getting out biscuits for the ship's company, Captain Timothy Tucker came down, accused Told loudly of waste, and, going to his cabin, returned with a large horsewhip, and beat the boy till his clothes were cut in ribbons and his bones began to show. He then threw him along the deck, and leaped upon him. This cruelty would have certainly ended in murder, had not the people taken the lad and thrown him under the winlass as if he had been a dead cat.

One day, at Bonny, Told was taken on shore, by the king Arigo, for change of air. On this occasion, when the negroes found a sudden alarm would not cure Told of an excruciating headache, they carried him up to the precipice where their great "palaver house" was, and offered yams, and sacrificed dogs, to their gods. The "grandymen" then led him, through a desert, back to the ship (just as bad as ever), sprinkling the dust before him with palm wine on going on board. Cruel Captain Tucker, to bring him out of the fever, whipped him till he could not stand.

These Guinea captains were savage wretches, hardened by the brutalities of slave-dealing. Once when a black slave was ill, and would not eat, Tucker flogged him savagely, till he was all one wound. He then called for one of his men to bring him two pistols, putting one to the slave's forehead, crying he would "tickeravoo him," which was negroish for "settle him." The poor creature made no resistance, but merely said, "Adomma," "so be it." Tucker fired, the man put his hand to his head, and the blood gushed out like wine from a cask; but he did

not fall. Tucker then put a pistol to his ear, and fired; but the negro still did not drop. "At last," says Told, "the captain swore horribly, and ordered John Lad to fire another through his heart, which was done; he then dropped down dead. All the men slaves, in consequence of this uncommon murder, rose upon the ship's company, with full purpose to slay us all; but we, nimbly betaking ourselves to the cannons, pointed them through a bulk-head that parted the main and quarter deck; which when they perceived, the greater part of them ran down between decks, and the remainder jumped overboard, and were all drowned, save one or two, which, with the assistance of the jolly-boat, we rescued from the violence of the sea."

On his arrival at Bristol, Told's original master received all his wages, and did not even give him a present. He was, therefore, having no friends, compelled to take a second voyage with that terrible murderer, Captain Timothy Tucker.

When the vessel was "slaved," that is, ready with her human cargo, and ready to sail for Bonny, one midnight, outside the bar, the slaves began to scream and howl, crying that Egbo (the devil) was among them. The next morning, when the hatches were opened, forty were dead of suffocation, out of eighty, and were instantly thrown overboard. The ship's cook, having only green wood for his furnace, was always late with his dinner, which so exasperated the fierce-tempered captain that he used to perpetually horsewhip the man, or cut him with his own knife. The poor cook (Jack Bundy), weary of life, at last threw himself over the ship's side, and was drowned, to the captain's great satisfaction.

After this, Told was shipped on board the Scipio, commanded by a liberal, pleasant-tempered man, named Roach. One evening, when they lay at anchor off New Calabar, a negro-dealer came on board to sell slaves, while the captain was brewing a tub of punch on the quarter-deck with the ship's company. Tom Ancora (the dealer, who talked English), making the captain's favourite female slave drink brandy out of his own glass, so irritated Roach that he thrust out Tom's front teeth with his cane, and then ran to the state cabin for his pistol to shoot the man. Tom, however, threw himself overboard, and was picked up by the men of his own canoe. The captain then resolved, against the advice of the whole ship's company, to go on shore and make peace with Tom. He therefore put on his sword, arrayed himself in a state suit of scarlet plush, and went and supped with Tom, who took care, under the guise of frank friendliness, to give him a strong dose of poison that partially paralysed and eventually killed the captain. The friendly negroes could have given him antidotes, but the captain, not believing he had been poisoned, refused their remedies.

Just inside the bar, Adam, a negro, headed a mutiny of the slaves, who threw the cook into a furnace full of boiling rice, and stabbed and

threw overboard the boatswain. Wells, the cooper, they let go because he had often given them water. Told describes the sequel in his own simple way: "The cooper then got over the quarter-deck bulkhead to the arms-chest, took up a loaded pistol, and shot Adam through the head; the other slaves, at seeing their champion dead, ran all down between decks, were closely confined, and admirably well secured, to prevent a second massacre; and as the captain lay dangerously ill, and only five men able to work the ship, we, with the greatest and most elaborate toil, reached the West Indies in three weeks. Upon the ship's arrival there, the owner of her made the cooper a present of sixty pounds for his services on board her at the time of those assassinations."

While at Calabar, Told, sent on shore armed, "to enforce trade," saw a negro dressed in a thick silk grass net, as Mumbo Jumbo, flogging the women. This supposed demon threatened Told, who drew his hanger, resolving, if the rascal had not fled, to have cut off his head.

The admirers of Barry Cornwall's beautiful poem of "The Admiral" will be interested with a superstition of the sailors, related by Told, as preceding the death of Captain Roach:

"Every day, in the course of his weakness in body, he made repeated efforts to reach the cabin windows, in order to receive the cooling air; and at whatever times he looked in the water, a devil-fish was regularly swimming at the stern of the ship; he did not appear to be a fish of prey, but his breadth from fin to fin was about twenty-eight feet, and in length about seven or eight, with a wide tail, and two ivory horns in front. He followed the ship, to our best calculation, near one thousand eight hundred miles; nor was it remembered by any of the ship's crew that a fish of that nature had made its appearance in the course of any of their voyages. Perpetual attempts to destroy or catch this monster was made, by the fastening a thick rope round the body of a dead negro, and casting him overboard, but it was ineffectual; the fish swam close under our stern, got his horns entangled in the rope, underran it to the end, and then tossed his refused prey several yards above the water. When the captain died, he forsook the ship, and we saw him no more."

Told's troubles were not over yet. Between Jamaica and Cuba they were boarded by Spanish pirates, and were instantly stripped and ordered for execution at eight o'clock the following morning, on the platform under Cape Nicholas. Told hid the captain's gold watch under the coals in the fore-castle, and, being ordered to surrender it, was followed down the fore-castle and stunned by a thievish Spanish sailor, who then stole the watch. This being told the Spanish commander, he instantly got back the watch, and let Told and his companions weigh anchor for England. But misfortunes were still waiting for them, as the devil-fish had waited for the captain. Three days after the

pirates let them go out of their clutches, the sentinel one morning reported to the man at the helm fifty sail of ships on the lee bow. These ships, however, proved to be the teeth of a reef, and the next moment the unlucky vessel was on the rocks, irrecoverably lost. The long-boat was instantly lowered, but, being very leaky, sank to the gunwale, and spoiled all the bags of biscuit that had been saved. The men, however, erected an awning to keep off the insufferable heat, and began to explore the coast of the island in their yawl. It promised nothing but land-crabs and sea-fish. The captain then forced Told and three or four other sailors to swim to the wreck, two miles distant, to roll ashore some casks of fresh water. Told, who had seen in the harbour of St. Thomas three sharks divide a man between them, swam in fear and dread, but nevertheless effected his return in safety. After three weeks spent in deplorable misery, the clouds of mosquitoes became so troublesome that Told and his companions, who were almost naked, had to bury themselves in the sand, even their hands and faces, only clearing at intervals their mouths and noses in order to breathe. On his return from a reconnoitring tour round the island, Told was ordered to put out to a sloop lying in the offing. When they came up to the vessel, its crew presented loaded blunderbusses, and threatened to fire on them and send the yawl to the bottom with a shot from a six-pounder, thinking they were pirates. Eventually the captain, however, became reassured, and sent his boats to save the rum, cotton, and pimento from the shattered vessel, aided by the boat of some Virginian turtle fishermen. They then set sail for Boston, and in three weeks came in sight of the Gay Head of St. Matthias's Vineyard, as that curiously stratified headland is called by the Americans. The very night they came to anchor, the vessel drifted on the rocks during a storm, and was lost. Told swam naked to land, with four others, and getting a rope on shore, saved the rest of their companions. The governor of the island, a rich man, with two thousand head of cattle and twenty thousand sheep, wished Told to marry one of his daughters; but Told declined, and crossed over to Sandwich, the nearest town on the mainland. Here and at Hanover the poor shipwrecked men were treated with the greatest kindness and hospitality. Told's brief notes upon Boston are eminently characteristic of the man. "We soon," he says, "entered Boston, a commodious beautiful city, with seventeen spired meetings, the Dissenting religion being then established in that part of the world. I resided here for the space of four months, and lodged with Captain Seaborn, at Deacon Townsend's, by trade a blacksmith. Here I shall only make a few observations, touching the nature and disposition of the inhabitants of that city. Their behaviour is altogether amiable, as peacemakers; and they are naturally blessed with humane inclinations, together with such strict order and economy as I never before observed; nor do I ever remember to have heard one oath uttered,

or the name of the Lord mentioned, save upon a religious occasion, during the four months I tarried at that place."

Told, after this, went out to Antigua in the Ann and Judith, and then to Old Calabar, to buy slaves for the South Carolina planters. In 1733 he sailed in a corn-vessel for Genoa and Leghorn, with a captain who kept them beating to windward in the Channel for five weeks, during the whole of which time they had neither cooked provisions nor dry clothes. On his return home, off the Isle of Wight, poor Told, eager for home and rest, was seized (according to the cruel and arbitrary custom of those days), put on board a tender, and sent to the Phoenix man-of-war. A religious captain on board this vessel gave new impulses to Told's natural bias. He began to hear voices and see visions. He gives a very naïve account of a supernatural cure from rheumatism which he was vouchsafed. "Early one morning," he says, "God undertook my cause, and I began thus to reason with myself: 'The rheumatism! What is it?' and it was strongly suggested to me in a manner not unlike a clear voice, 'It is a violent cold.' I then, with great astonishment, asked, 'What is most proper as a remedy for the cold?' I was answered as before, 'Spring water.' The reason of this I could not comprehend, and asked again, 'Why spring water?' The answer to me (clear as a strong voice) was: 'Man was created out of the dust of the earth, and water springs out of the bowels of the earth, therefore it is the more adapted to his nature.'" He tried the simple remedy suggested by his internal voice, and was, he says, instantly cured.

In 1734, Told married Mary Verney, "a virtuous young woman," and was soon after sent in the Grafton (70 guns) to Lisbon, with our fleet, to protect the Brazilian squadron from the Spaniards. In 1736, after a narrow escape from the ever-ready rocks of Scilly, Told arrived in Chatham river, was paid off, and left the sea for ever.

He now resolved on leading a life according to his higher impulses. He was dissatisfied with the life of Churchmen, yet could find no surer foothold. "It pleased God," he says, "to point me out, in a few months, a school at Staplefoot Tauney, near Passingford Bridge, in the county of Essex, erected by a Lady Luther, who spared no pains in its building; and also bestowed many donations towards the support and maintenance thereof. My whole salary amounted to fourteen pounds per annum, ten pounds whereof was the neat salary from the school; two pounds from Lady Luther, and the like sum from Mr. Moot, a wealthy farmer, with as many day-scholars as I could acquire for my own account."

Lady Luther invited Told and the curate to dine with her three days in the week, and every other day (and this is a curious fact, as illustrating social history) in the servants' hall. The curate used frequently to invite Told, the schoolmaster, to his lodgings to smoke a pipe,

share a bottle of punch, and sing a sea-song. On rebuking the curate for these excesses, which preyed upon his conscience, the curate told him to his (Told's horror) that the Bible was a pack of false theology, on which Told at once renounced his friendship. Told was soon after this deprived of his appointment by the lord of the manor, because Told's boys picked firewood on the land of a farmer of his, who had himself given him leave without the squire's consent.

Told returned to London, and became clerk to a coal and timber merchant at the back of Beaufort-buildings, and after that book-keeper to a bricklayer in Watling-street. It was at this crisis of his fortunes that what he considered his sudden conversion took place, and he became a disciple of Wesley. Of his earlier visions Told gives a curious and simple-hearted account.

"When I was about twelve years old," he says, "I was more profoundly acquainted with divine things, but not with myself as a sinner. Sitting one day in my order, and reading the Pilgrim's Progress, I suddenly laid down the book, leaned my right elbow on my right knee, with my hand supporting my head, and meditated in the most solemn thought upon the awfulness of eternity. Suddenly I was struck with a hand on the top of my head, which affected my whole frame; the blow was immediately followed by a voice with these words: 'Dark! dark! dark!' and although it alarmed me prodigiously, yet, upon the recovery from so sudden a motion, I found myself broad awake in a world of sin. Notwithstanding all my former happiness and bliss, I now found a dreadful difference." On another occasion, when bathing with some schoolfellows, he was all but drowned in a brook near Bristol, and, as he lay insensible, he had a vision of the heavenly city, and of the spirits of the just gliding over its crystal pavement.

In July, 1740, Told first went to Short's-gardens, and after that to the Foundry, to hear Mr. Wesley. Told was greatly prejudiced against the Methodists, believing that they listened to false prophets and cheats, who wanted to turn a penny, and that they assembled for bad purposes in cellars and dens. The meeting was soon after four o'clock in the morning, it being almost dangerous for them to meet at all. The Foundry was a ruinous place, full of holes and corners, with an old pantile roof and a temporary pulpit built up of rotten timber. At one corner, among some old crones, sat an old woman who kept her face covered with her apron the whole time. Every one's countenance bore an expression of profound seriousness. The sermon was on the suddenness of conversion. Told heard a voice say to him, "This is the truth." His soul seemed on fire, and he said to the friend who had brought him:

"As long as I live, I will never part from Mr. Wesley."

The now zealous Methodist became next a clerk at a wharf at Wapping, but, at Mr. Wes-

ley's wish, finally relinquished the employment to take charge of the school at the Foundry, of sixty boys and six girls. For this he had board and lodging, and ten shillings a week. He worked daily from five in the morning till five at night. In the seven years that he held this office, Told educated two hundred and seventy-five boys, and sent them out to good trades.

In the year 1744, Wesley preached at the Foundry school on the text, "I was sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." This sermon threw the morbidly conscientious man, for a time, into a state of hopeless terror, because he believed he had neglected a great Christian duty. Two or three days after, a message came to the school, asking some one of Mr. Wesley's people to come to Newgate to see ten malefactors then under sentence of death, who had been "awakened," and wished some one with whom to pray. One of these men, Lancaster, told him he had been converted that morning at five o'clock, and he should shortly be in paradise. Two of the prisoners were respited, and these two were unconverted. Lancaster thanked God for having been sent to Newgate, and as his irons were being removed, he prayed till the sheriff shed tears. When the last man's irons fell off, Lancaster clapped his hands together, and cried out with joy: "Here comes another of our little flock."

A gentleman present said, with sympathy, "I think it is too great a flock for such an occasion;" but Lancaster replied, rejoicingly, "Oh no; there is room in heaven for us all."

Mr. Told gives a very terrible picture of the executions in those days. (Who does not remember the terrible gibbet of Hogarth, with the hangman lolling on the top, smoking his pipe, and lazily waiting for the death-cart?)

"This," says Told, "was the first time of my visiting the malefactors at Newgate, and of my attendance upon them to the place of execution; and then it was not without much shame and fear, because I clearly perceived the greater part of the populace considered me as one of the sufferers. When we came to the fatal tree, Lancaster lifted up his eyes thereto, and said, 'Blessed be God,' then prayed extemporary in a very excellent manner, and the others behaved with great discretion. John Lancaster had no friend who could procure for his body a proper interment; so that, when they had hung the usual space of time, and were cut down, the surgeon's mob secured the body of Lancaster, and carried it over to Paddington. There was a very crowded concourse, among whom were numberless gin and gingerbread vendors, accompanied by pickpockets of almost every denomination in London; in short, the whole scene resembled a principal fair, rather than an awful execution."

Just after the bodies had been cut down, a party of sailors arrived, armed with truncheons, and inquired of one of the few remaining bystanders—an old woman who sold gin—where the surgeon's mob had taken Lancaster's body to.

They then went and demanded it, and carried it in procession round Islington and Shoreditch, and from there to Coverley's-gardens, where, getting tired of their work of philanthropy, they left the body, by common consent, on the step of the nearest door. This produced a riot, the noise of which brought the old woman of the house down stairs. To her horror, the corpse was the body of her own son.

Silas Told seems to have done great good in Newgate, where he formed thirty-six felons and debtors into a religious society. It was in the midst of a season of great mental agony that Told saw the visions that finally completed his conversion. How extremes meet! They remind us vividly of the visions of St. Francis of Sales. The scene of the event was a secluded field between Ratcliff-row and the Shepherd and Shepherdess, where the unhappy man had been wandering, wishing himself a cow or a dog, and hoping that some chance footpad would murder him.

"On a sudden," he says, "in the twinkling of an eye, a hand struck me a weighty blow on the top of my head, which in some measure affected my senses; but I instantly found myself crying with a loud voice, 'Praise God, praise God,' and, looking up, I beheld the ethereal universe, replete with the glory of God; and that glory of such substance and palpability, I thought I could have laid hold of it with my hand. This attended me for the space of a minute; but was succeeded by an uncommon thick darkness, through which a black dart, as if it was shot from the hill near Islington, pierced its way, and, with wonderful swiftness, entered my heart. I did not feel any pain thereby; but it was followed with these words, 'This is one of your old delusions.' As I looked up, the heavens were unclosed about a mile in length, as it appeared to my mortal eyes, and tapered away to a point at each end. The centre of this awful and sacred avenue was about twelve feet wide, wherein I saw the Lord Jesus standing in the form of a man, holding both his inestimably precious hands upright, and from the palms thereof the blood streaming down; floods of tears gushed from my eyes, and trickled down my cheeks. I said, 'Lord, it is enough!' nor have I once doubted since, but that I was freely justified at that time."

In 1767, Mr. Told visited the infamous Mrs. Brownrigg, then in Newgate under sentence of death for flogging to death her apprentice-girl, Mary Clifford, in Fleur-de-Lis-court, Fetter-lane. She had been a great hypocrite, and had a reputation in Fetter-lane as a religious character. She said to Mr. Told:

"About ten years ago, when I had six small children about me, I walked closely in the ways of God, never being able to accuse myself of negligence or inattention, rising at five o'clock in the morning, and being at Bow-churchyard, in Cheapside, at six o'clock prayers. Then, Mr. Told, I was very happy in my God, who manifested himself to me, so that I walked steadfastly in the light of his blessed countenance

for a considerable time. But, oh! unhappily for me, &c."

She also informed Mr. Told that she had a knife secreted about her when in the Poultry Cooper, and had studied how best to kill herself. She died, however, Mr. Told assures us, sincerely devout and penitent. He accompanied her to the gallows, where she was received by cheers and storms of curses, especially from the women, who filled the carts that were drawn up all down the Old Bailey. The cruel mob threw stones and dirt, and kept shouting: "Pull her hat off, that we may see her face."

Told, one of the patriarchs of early Methodism, after a life of incessant usefulness, died in December, 1779, aged sixty-eight.

#### THE IDEAL.

A TALL majestic lady,  
With locks of deepest dye,  
A silken dress, whose gorgeousness  
Delights no other eye,  
A pretty little cottage,  
With ivy cover'd o'er,  
And she, my pride, my fancy's bride,  
Expectant at the door.

Soft music in the gloaming  
Ebbs gurgling from her throat;  
While I lie still, and drink my fill  
Of each love-burdened note.  
Days spent in sweet communion  
'Neath shade of leafy trees;  
We woo and sing, and ev'rything  
Is poetry and ease.

A tiny fairy being  
Lies nestling on my breast,  
As, tired of play, she seems to say,  
"This is my rightful rest;"  
And in those baby features,  
So beautiful and mild,  
Methinks I trace another face,  
The mother of my child.

#### THE REAL.

A slight but comely lady,  
With rippling chesnut hair,  
A cotton dress, in which, no less,  
She looks extremely fair;  
A busy bustling beauty,  
On household duties bent,  
Who speaks, the while, with happy smile,  
Of kindness and content.

A little house in London;  
No ivy and no flowers,  
But what care we for botany?  
That little house is ours.  
And often in the evening,  
When we hear some well-known cry,  
Or tramp of feet along the street,  
We smile, my wife and I.

No little fairy daughter  
Nestling confidingly;  
Four healthy boys, whose ceaseless noise  
Brings childhood back to me.

Yet these prosaic blessings,  
Of which I have my share,  
In peace and love, soar far above  
My castle in the air.

#### DRY STICKS.

PLUGHING sea-sand and watering dry sticks count for much the same things in human work, and come to about the same results. And yet, unsatisfactory occupations as they are, they are indulged in by many beside those amiable enthusiasts—politicians and others—who systematically spend their strength in trying to make dead bodies live, and brute matter into sprightly organisms. They are indulged in by men of business sometimes; by parents and guardians and teachers often; by the dispensers of public patronage, when there are back-stairs, trodden by dainty feet or powerful ones, leading to their warrant-room; by physicians and prison disciplinarians—these last two with lamentable waste of force and zeal; by statesmen, clergymen, and writers; by all manipulators of human life, indeed, when they press an idea in excess of material, and decide that Will shall command Power. Which last clause contains the whole principle and mystery of watering dry sticks and ploughing sea-sand.

Take the men who endeavour to resuscitate a defunct business, as an example. It may be a brewery noted for a disastrous intimacy with cocculus and strychnine; a journal in the agonies of death by atrophy; an agency with clients once plentiful enough in English houses, but now only located in Spanish castles; a shop which customers obstinately shun because of former ill-repute, or because of the diversion of trade and traffic. Capital and energy may be poured out like water on the concern—enough to have established half a dozen new creations; but the present plant is only a dry stick, and not baptism in Jordan itself could bring it to life again. For all things human seem to have a certain period of vitality—some longer, some shorter, according to original constitution, but all mortal alike. Trades, like men and women, and societies, like nations, like families, like individuals, are not to be revived when once fairly moribund. And the great test of practical insight is, when a man knows the difference between the two states of syncope and death; and what is only suspended animation which may be set going again by timely stimulants, and what is absolute decease, which is done with now and for ever. This, too, will come in the world of the future, when all human powers shall be under laws.

What dry sticks are watered by home love and care!—what sacrificial laying bare of living roots goes on in families for the better earthing-up of bits of dead wood, fit only to be thrown down and cast into the fire!—or, worse still, for misplaced growths, parasites, or pea-sticks, say, which develop an unhealthy vitality, and suck the nourishment from what they were intended

to support. These are the brothers who spend their sisters' money, the husbands who live on their wives' earnings, the fathers who have run through their own, and now fall open-mouthed upon their children's property; these are the pea-sticks with fine green top-knots basking in the sun, while the withered halm and dying flowers at their feet speak of nourishment diverted, and force abstracted, and power, which should have been creative, gone all to pushing out green top-knots on dry sticks. Better if they had remained dry sticks to the end, sapless and leafless, rather than budding evils of an active kind; better that force should be wasted in trying to give nonentity a being, than that it should go to the creation of mischief.

We all know cases where the power of a family is wasted on watering dry sticks—where the eldest son, for instance—for whom are destined all those broad acres, and who is to undertake all that social industry—is bad, or a fool, while the younger branches, who are carted out of the paternal nursery-ground almost as soon as budded, would have done honour to the position their senior will disgrace. Not all the watering in the world will make that dry stick a flowering tree; not, though every drop was drawn out of the family well in buckets of gold made out of the family plate melted down for the service. Schooling will not inform him if he is a dunce according to the configuration of Gall and Spurzheim; not the most eloquent preachments ever written about the moral obligations connected with social position will arouse a spark of social conscience if he is self-indulgent and a sensualist; nor could Lord Chesterfield himself make him a gentleman after the manner of the Bayards or the Cids, if he is naturally a Fagin or a Sykes. He is a dull, dead, dry stick in the beginning, and a dull, dead, dry stick he will continue to the end; and the only sign of vitality he will ever give will be by the absorption of the living juices which else would have gone to make noble growths of better materials. A notable instance of this occurred not long ago; a case known to us all; where money, name, and family all went to form an unclean animal, who—assuredly more pitiable even than blameworthy to those who can accept the necessities of matter—remained a dry stick, which no amount of watering or dressing could make a burgeoning rod! It would have been better for every one if the hopelessness of that stick had been recognised in time, whereby palisading might have been provided, to the saving of force and rampant scandal.

Schoolmasters and schoolmistresses see a great deal of the culture of dry sticks. They help in it at times themselves, when they grind at chaff which can never become flour, and plough at sea-sand which can never bear grain. The boobies they work at, striving to give brains where there are none, and to inculcate accomplishments for which there is no kind of aptitude! Sheep that we are, we must all follow the bell-wether—we must all be shorn,

and ruddled, and branded according to one pattern, like so many casts turned out of the same mould, no matter what the differences of material among us. Because it is the fashion for those who can, to learn music, French, or algebra, we put to the same things those who cannot, and then feel ourselves aggrieved and angry according to righteousness—so we say—when our notable scheme of education by machinery falls to the ground in collapse, and our dry sticks bear no blossoms. Anna Maria can play efficiently, and can sing like a lark—she has that mysterious gift called ear, and knows both time and tune by instinct; but Mary Jane can hardly recognise God save the Queen when she hears it on the brass band, and for the life of her, poor soul! can never make her counting and her crotchets agree. In default of music, though, she has a veritable genius for cookery; or she has the prettiest taste imaginable for that wonderful combination of ends and snippets which goes by the name of millinery: but *cui bono?* Cookery is low, and millinery is vulgar. Cannot puffs and bonnets be bought for ready cash? But music is a divine accomplishment fresh from the hands of Apollo and the Muses, and created expressly for ladies. Wherefore, Mary Jane must study clefs as the accompaniment of her condition, and eschew domestic economy as discords; she must labour at that which she cannot attain, and forego that which is success made to her hand, because the Anna Marias of life have time and tune in pronounced development, and depressions are not recognised in good society. The dry stick which she, like all the rest of us, has in the midst of her living growth must be carefully tended and watered, while the saplings, which only ask leave to grow according to the laws of their nature, are crowded out and destroyed. And so poor Mary Jane bears no fruit of the mental kind at all, being forbidden apples and not able to compass peaches.

What a lamentable instance of this determination that thistles shall bring forth figs and dry sticks bud out into flowering roses, was that of Maulstick's son! Maulstick was an artist with aspirations in excess of power—by no means a rare thing in the artistic world, or elsewhere—going up to heaven on Icarian wings badly secured with common wax, without even an inch of packthread to help; and floundering in the mire in consequence. He had just common sense enough to know the difference between the mire and the ether, and to feel that his wings were, after all, a little insecure, and not quite adapted for long journeys into the empyrean; and he decided that his son's career should be the complement of his—the fulfilment of all in which he had failed. Maulstick's son was a dry stick. Planted in a city office, and perched upon a clerk's stool, with its work ruled out before it, it might have struck down a handful of roots, and have subsequently borne fruit of a kind—poor and shabby in quality, and of scanty quantity at all times, the central sap being of but a watery na-

ture—but still fruit whereby a household could live, if with only Duke Humphrey as the daily guest. But cut and carved into the likeness of an artist—winged and bidden to soar to the empyrean forthwith—he was a failure—a mere lay figure, draped according to rules and devoid of locomotive power. Artist! he had no more artistry in him than he had military genius! A mere dull copyist, what was there in him of the fire that lived in Raffaele and glowed through the soul of Rubens! A formal transcript there, with the tracing-paper held very tight, and a dry detail here—yes, he could do these sure enough! But formal transcripts and dry details could not bring grist to the family mill; and by the time that Maulstick looked down from heaven to earth—from the ideal to the real—and beheld his mistake, the mischief was done, and a tolerable clerk had been spoilt in the vain endeavour to make an impossible artist.

Clericus committed the same mistake when he insisted on his son's taking to square-cut vests and dearly beloved brethren, in continuation of his own special manner of rooting. The lad remonstrated, but in vain; he hated square-cut vests, and wanted nothing with his dearly beloved brethren, save to order them up to the cannon's mouth. Clericus held the purse-strings and rode his son's destiny with that strongest of all martingales. It mattered nothing to him that the boy was born to be a cavalry officer—that his whole soul lay in the pomp and circumstances of the parade-ground—and that the glorious creatures standing in their loose boxes at the Horse Guards were to him like beatified visions, worth all the saints ever canonised. Clericus, guiding destiny with those purse-strings of his, drove past the Horse Guards to the Abbey, and planted there a stick in the shape of a drinking, roystering, fox-hunting parson, who kept his gown on his back simply because no one took the trouble of stripping it off. These were two instances of watering dry sticks and misplanting growths with a vengeance! Ploughing sea-sand in Maulstick's case, without reaping even a mouthful of thistles good for donkeys, if not for daintier feeders; in the other, budding with night-shade what was meant to bear pomegranates. But theirs are by no means exceptional instances; for they both have brothers—many brothers—at this moment employed in the same unprofitable methods of horticulture.

Another manner of watering dry sticks, half-painful and half-pathetic, is, when the strength of a family goes to the maintenance of its weakest members, while the robust, with a useful future if well cared for, are clipt of their power that the sickly, of no future whatever, may be shored up for a few more years of suffering than nature, unassisted, would give them. This is seen much among the poor, and the class immediately above the poor—that class which is fashioned out of the tattered fringe of poor gentility—with appearances to keep up, and inadequate means on which to keep them

up. An unremunerative member to them is almost as heavy a dead weight as with the very poor, to whom it means simply food and clothing out of the common fund, and nothing put into it. And yet it must be done! That sickly girl, that feckless boy must be supported in sufficiency, though the younger ones are pinched for their share: that poor diseased creature must be tended night and day, no matter what the work lying to be done, and the value of the time taken to water the dry stick of a hopeless malady! The butcher's bill must be cut low while the doctor's is running high; the schooling of those who else would have been learning the accidence of their own future profitable gardening must be stopped, while the nurse's fees have to be paid, preparatory to those of the sexton and undertaker. It must be so. Our sick and diseased must not perish for want of extremest care, even though the healthy give of their health and the strong of their power. And in taking the living beams to shore up the dry sticks of the community, the good done to general morality, by the tenderness and self-sacrifice called forth, more than compensates for the individual loss incurred. It is a problem why it should be, but a truth all the same, that so much of public good springs from private damage. The storm which clears the atmosphere for miles round, letting the checked crops grow while it sweeps away the fever that has been brooding in the stifled air, ruins the farmers close at hand; the persecution which established a creed good for all time by the blood of its first professors, brought sorrow and wailing to hundreds of hearths, though it brought light and freedom to millions after; the monstrous wrong which redeemed a race from abject barbarism through the partial suffering of a few—these, and many more examples, if we cared to tabulate them, evidence the truth of public gain coming by private loss—evidence, but do not explain. And on this plea we must accept as necessary, that painful and pathetic watering of dry sticks which one sees in families, when the unremunerative members are kept alive at the expense of the workers, and the spiritual gain of sacrifice is bought by the material loss of strength. Unless, indeed, we go through and beyond all this, and uphold the physical well-doing of the public as superior to its moral elevation. In which case we must knock on the head all the old women, and half the old men, all the feckless, the sickly, the paupers the criminals, and the imbecile; and so reduce society to a residuum of practical efficiency which shall mean simply the dominion of selfishness and the tyranny of force.

There is a good deal of dry stick watering done, almost literally, in the bleaker parts of the country, where husbandry is ten failures for one success. Down in the North are farms lying on the edge of barrenness, where a man's whole lifetime of labour can scarcely dig out a miserable subsistence. Unlike the advancing outposts of the Far West, where toil is rewarded by abundance—where “the earth

tickled with a hoe laughs back with a harvest"—and where every settler's shanty is another stone added to the great temple of civilisation—these outlying farms of England are of no general value, and surely of no special gain. They are simply concerns in which money is laid out at one per cent instead of at five or ten, and hardly wrought for, even at such a per-centage. I have always a feeling of wonder and admiration for the heroism which can devote itself to this ungrateful cultivation. The hungry crops laid year after year by the storms that ever seem to quite leave the uplands, or if not laid, then left to rot in the winter snow for want of sun to ripen for the gathering; the beasts that perish in the bleak winters or the wet springs; the lambs that are lost on the fells, that perish of hunger crag-fast, or are dashed down the precipice, perhaps storm-driven, perhaps hunted by the hill foxes or masterless dogs, wandering loose; the painful, toilsome living that is got between the starved land and the inclement seasons; and yet the farmer toils on, content if he can manage his rent and the children's porridge, and thinking he has gained all a son of Adam needs to enable him to sing *Nunc dimittis* for his own part, if he can be buried free of expense to the parish. I have often grieved over these dry sticks of our Cumberland farms; but I suppose they are in some mysterious way necessary to the nation. There must be fringes everywhere—gradations and shadings, and the lines of demarcation blurred and softened, and links between right and left of varying sizes; and so with farms as with man—beasts and sheep standing in the place of vices, and barley and wheat representing social circumstances.

There is much watering of dry sticks among the young in the time of love-making; among the old, too, for the matter of that: that time never being quite sure as to its limitations, being prolonged or curtailed with an irregularity distracting to statisticians. How many hearts grow only dry sticks for the garden of love! Not, perhaps, all dry sticks—there may be a central clump of blooming May blossom for the one who can find his way; while for all others there are only palisadings of dry wood which no watering, even with the heart's best blood, can make alive. It is of no use trying! Nature is obstinately shut up; the sap will not rise, and the gardener's care is of no avail. When the irremediable mistake of a marriage has been made, and the dry sticks have been enclosed by a ring fence which only death can destroy, then the miserable gardener wakes to the consciousness of the hopeless labour lying in striving to make park palings into flowering trees—then he, or, it may be more unhappily, she, knows the last agony of the soul when life is coupled with death, till the eternal death unchains them. The first wisdom of all who are seeking matrimony and the ring fence, is to prove whether their saplings have roots and are living, or whether they are merely dry

sticks, incapable of growth and beauty. No question is so important: neither money, nor family, nor even health—next to the vitality of love the most needful of all things to prove strictly. But even sickness, like poverty, like vulgar relations, can be endured where there is real love; while, without that love, gold loses its brightness, and health its charm, and strength is no better than weakness, and sorrow sits for ever in the place of joy. For as nature without the rain and the dew—nature, parched into an illimitable Sahara, and peopled with wild beasts only—so is marriage without love!

There is much watering of dry sticks in minor matters, mainly noticeable in families, where dry sticks chiefly abound. It is watering a dry stick when a warm nature seeks to kindle up a stolid to enthusiasm or to poetry; it is watering a dry stick when a caressing mouth seeks to relax a "stiff upper lip" into gracious curves; the endeavour to make obstinacy pliant, to convince folly by force of reason, to win freedom from the domineering man, or woman, whose softest mood means playing Providence to every one's needs, real or fancied, to get generosity from a churl, or candour from a knave—all these are so many watering-pots used in the horticulture of dry sticks: with what result let common sense and experience say! Strength put forth in the attempts to revivify dead faiths and obsolete philosophies is again an example of dry stick watering, and by no means an uncommon one. So is the study of prophecy, both before and after the event. So is the expectation that humanity will live up to idealising laws fit for Utopia or Eden, but not for a sinful world, where women are weak and men are wicked. So again is the making of these idealising laws, Maine or otherwise. So are nine-tenths of the missionary enterprises; and so ninety-nine hundredths of the propagandism of all kinds always going on, whatever the distinctive appellation attached. So are many learned societies—Heaven save the mark!—which pluck one little fluttering twig off the great tree of life, and descant on that as if it were root and bole and branches, all complete. So is much of that "burning zeal" which passes under the name of energy, but which is simply fussiness and the whirl of misdirected power—setting chariot-wheels to hand-barrows, and driving golden ploughs over sea-sands. It is pitiable, indeed, to think how much of the work going on in the world is merely the watering of dry sticks, and how people cling to these dry sticks as to living trees, pitching their tents beneath them as complacently as if they were encamped beneath the cedars of Lebanon, or the vineyards of Italy. There is a glamour in these dead woods greater than that which filled the enchanted forest of Oberon, and no human power can show the bewitched indwellers the true form of the dead things they nurture so tenderly, and water so unceasingly. You may try, but you will not succeed. One by one you may pluck up those

dry sticks and show how rootless, how sapless, they are. The words are not cold on your lips before the waterers have replanted their beloved idols; and you must wait for the Day of Judgment until they are removed.

### JEANNE VACHEROT.

SIXTUS THE FIFTH used to say that he was ready to canonise any woman who got praise from her husband. One of his saints ought to have been Jeanne Vacherot, even although the praise was posthumous.

On the 6th of May, 1640, she was married to Lancelot Le Moine, of Norman extraction, and a notary of the Châtelet, in Paris. He died in January, 1649, leaving her with three boys, Pierre, Jacques, and Louis, and appointing her by his will, dated 1645, their sole guardian during their minority—"desiring them to have no other guardian but her, because it would be their ruin."

The wishes of the defunct were strictly carried out. Jeanne Vacherot, widow of Lancelot Le Moine, was fully invested with the guardianship of her children by sentence of the Châtelet. Discreet and religious, well-conducted, and of good repute, she perfectly fulfilled her duties as a mother and a widow. She gave her three sons an education suitable to their condition—summary, no doubt—but quite sufficient, according to the notions of the day. She sent them to school, where they learnt to read, write, and cipher, and were even taught the elements of the Latin language.

Amongst the property which she had to manage were two farms, situated between Saint Pierre d'Autils and Vernon, a small fortified town in Normandy. They required her occasional visits to the latter place, where she was known by the title of the notress. In September, 1654, she had to pay one of these visits, in order to receive her rents. Her three sons were, at that time, aged—Pierre, fourteen; Jacques, ten; and Louis not quite eight years. She took the youngest only with her, leaving the two others under the care of Catherine Janvier, their maternal grandmother, and a maid-servant, who had had charge of them from their infancy.

All this is common-place enough; the strange part of the story now begins. After the mother's departure, whether the grandmother and the servants allowed the boys to do pretty much as they liked, or whether they were led astray by bad examples, they forgot the way to school, filling up their time with truanting instead, in company with the two sons of a neighbour named Coustard. One fine evening the four young gentlemen failed to return to their respective homes. What had become of them? Neither the Morgue nor the Lieutenant de Police gave the slightest clue to their anxious friends.

After the lapse of several days, Coustard's two lads were brought back again by one of

the Provost Marshal's officers, crestfallen, haggard, tanned, with their clothes in tatters, but right glad to regain the comforts of bed and board, even at the expense of a paternal correction. Of the widow's sons there were not the slightest tidings. They had parted company with the others in the course of their wanderings. Jeanne Vacherot, informed of these sad events at Vernon, had the country searched all round about. In vain she caused their description to be published from village to village with trumpet and drum; she could not hit upon a trace of the fugitives. Several months were spent in fruitless inquiries. The distracted mother frequented fairs, questioned beggars, and visited gipsies' camps, for many stories were then current of children being carried off by strolling mendicants. But it is not easy to steal a boy of ten, still less of fourteen years of age; nor would he, even after a long confinement, forget his name and his parent's dwelling-place.

Finding all her endeavours useless, on the 12th of May, 1655, Jeanne Vacherot made her complaint before a commissaire, acquainting him with the disappearance of her children. It was a prudential step, a formality gone through with in obedience to sage advice, rather than a tardy measure to obtain a clue to the children's whereabouts. The police, at that time, and especially the rural police, was nearly powerless for good, and, what a mother's exertions had failed to accomplish, official interference was not likely to effect.

Meanwhile, poor Jeanne Vacherot had not forgotten her missing boys. One day she caught sight of a pauper lying on the steps of the Hôtel Dieu, in Paris, with a child by his side. A vague and distant resemblance to Jacques at once struck the mother's heart; she advanced and examined the beggar-boy, as she had already done with so many others. No, it was not her Jacques; this one was younger, slighter made; and, besides, with a parent a mistake is not possible, after only eight months' absence. The widow, nevertheless, entreated the father to inquire after her lost boys wherever he went. She minutely described them to him, gave him a small offering, and promised him a handsome recompense if he should succeed in finding them.

On the 25th of July, 1655, the good people of Vernon were assembled at mass in the parish church of Sainte Geneviève. During the Gospel, a mendicant entered, accompanied by a lad who appeared to be about eight years of age. Both of them, in rags and tatters, carried a beggar's wallet, and their dusty and dilapidated shoes indicated that they were on the tramp. Jeanne Vacherot happened to be in church at the time. Now the people of Vernon were perfectly aware of her having lost her two eldest boys; Jacques Le Moine, the younger of the fugitives, was born there; and many persons present had seen the child, and took an interest in his fate.

After the beggars had said a short prayer,

their eyes met Jeanne Vacherot's. She beckoned them to her, gazed hard at the lad, whispered a sentence or two in the man's ear, and then gave him a few sous by way of alms. He thanked her with a bow, and the two were soon lost in the crowd of peasants thronging round the door of the church.

This little incident, brief as it was, did not escape the notice of the congregation. When they saw the notairess conversing with the boy and the man, who appeared to be his father, the same slight resemblance which had attracted the mother also struck numerous other spectators. "'Tis little Jacques Le Moine!" was the general cry. This opinion, expressed in whispers while the service continued, burst forth into a shout when the congregation left the church. The beggar and his boy had stationed themselves at the side of the path by which people passed, in order to receive the alms of the charitable. They were soon surrounded with inquisitive gazers. Another group awaited the widow. As soon as she appeared, the ranks opened, and an empty space was left between her and the mendicants. Jeanne Vacherot passed them with indifference, little thinking that her behaviour was indignantly criticised. "You see she does not even look at him," the gossips muttered; "and yet it is little Jacques. One must be blind not to see it!"

The widow proceeded in the direction of her lodgings; the excited spectators could hold out no longer. One woman stepped up to her, and said, sharply:

"Your poor little Jacques is not in high feather, Madame la Notairess. 'Tis my idea that decent clothing and a bellyful of victuals would suit him better than the three or four sous you have given him out of charity."

Jeanne Vacherot stared at the woman with surprise; but observing that her looks were directed towards the young mendicant, she understood her meaning, and, shrugging her shoulders, replied:

"That child my poor little Jacques! My boy's nose was not so long as his. Besides, don't you see the difference of their eyes?" So saying, she walked quietly home.

Her departure gave the signal for an explosion of wrath.

"She renounces her own child!" the angry women exclaimed. "Heartless creature! Unnatural mother! Cruel parent! Did you notice the unfeeling look she gave the poor boy? She did not expect to see him back again after putting him into the beggar's hands. A nice way of providing for your children, Madame la Notairess! And you, you wretch! you child-stealer! you tool of a mother without mercy—how dare you show your villainous face where everybody knows the poor little fellow? Take yourself off, you gallows-bird! We will soon see whether this abominable stepmother means to persevere in her wicked falsehood!"

The beggar, thus assailed by the mob of furies, opened wide his eyes, not knowing what

he had done to offend them; the child, frightened, began to cry. When the man understood of what they accused him, he took the boy by the hand, and forced his way through the crowd, saying:

"You tell me, good people, that this is not my child! All I know is, that I promised my wife, when she was dying in the hospital, that I would never part with him, and I never have."

He gathered his rags about him with a hitch, and went into the town. The devotees, meanwhile, recruited to their party sundry idlers who had been attracted by the disturbance. They related, with excessive indignation, how coldly cruel the wicked mother, and how shamelessly insolent the beggar, had been. The news that little Jacques had turned up at last, and that his mother refused to acknowledge him, ran up and down the streets of Vernon. At dinner-time the popular excitement experienced a temporary lull; but when people left their homes to go to vespers, the only talk in every group was about poor little Jacques Le Moine and his cruel mother.

Meanwhile the beggar had not been wise enough to turn his back upon the infatuated town. He took up his station in a sunny corner close to the Bissi gate, where he mumbled paternosters, fearing no evil, as he held out his hand to solicit alms. Several of the morning's congregation recognised him, and in a few minutes he and the boy were surrounded by an angry crowd.

"That's he, the wretch! And the little angel deserted by his mother—what a state he is in for a rich man's orphan! Grand Dieu! Such wickedness will bring the vengeance of Heaven upon the town! Don't you know him again, the little darling? I'd put my hand into the fire if it isn't he!"

The tumult went on increasing; several big-wigs of the town came to see what was the matter, with the Procureur du Roi at their head. The gossips and noodles made way respectfully, acquainting him with their suspicions, or rather their belief. The procureur, after a glance at the lad, advanced to the man with frowning looks, and inquired:

"Who are you, sirrah? Where were you born? Where do you come from?"

"Jean Monrousseau—Limousin—from Bapaume."

"How? A Limousin from Bapaume! A pretty story! Bapaume is in the province of Artois, and you say you are a Limousin!"

"I have my papers—my certificates," said the beggar, trembling under the magistrate's eye as he produced, out of a dirty piece of cloth, two or three greasy documents.

The procureur took one of them with the tips of his fingers, opened it with evident disgust, and ran his eye through it. It was a certificate of marriage drawn up in Latin by the curé who had married him to one Jeanne Blond. The magistrate read, opening wide his eyes, "*Philippum Monrousseau et Johannam Blond,*

in nostrâ parochiali ecclesiâ, sub invocatione sancti Nicolai, per nos rectorem Michaelém Hocquet."

"And you call yourself Jean, whereas it appears your real name is Philip! This fellow can't open his mouth without telling a lie. Come here, little one; I want to speak to you."

The procureur separated the child from the beggar, and then asked him a few questions, which were repeated and commented on by fifty prating tongues. "What was his name?"—"Louis." "May be, but don't be afraid of that fellow, my little man. Your name is Jacques. Isn't your name Jacques? Don't you know some village hereabouts? Tell me; come. Bois-Hiérôme; you remember, little Jacques, Bois-Hiérôme? That's the place where you were baptised!"

The lad, frightened out of his wits, assented to everything. His name was Jacques; he *did* know Bois-Hiérôme. He would have agreed to any other suggestion. The Procureur du Roi concluded the interview with a masterstroke. Taking out of the child's hand a few copper coins which had been slipped into it by the charitable, he gave them to a little tailor who was bustling about and haranguing the crowd.

"Take them to the vagabond," he said, "and tell him that little Jacques Le Moine has been recognised; that he refuses to go strolling about with his false father any longer; and that he will be taken to his relations at Bois-Hiérôme."

The little tailor, proud of his mission, communicated the message to the mendicant in a tone of voice and with a few slight additions that were anything but reassuring. The poor devil, finding himself accused of some mysterious crime, and deprived of his boy by magisterial authority, was seized with a sudden and very natural panic, and, breaking through the crowd, tried to run away.

If proof were wanting, here it was—a plain confession of guilt. The innocent do not usually attempt to escape. They ran after him, and caught him without difficulty. With cuffs and curses, and all sorts of treatment, they dragged him before the Lieutenant Particulier, the Lieutenant Général being absent.

That worthy, a cousin-german of the late Lancelot Le Moine, already, according to his own opinion, sufficiently instructed in the matter by public rumour, interrogated Monrousseau with that superabundance of severity which, in France, has always been considered the surest way of reaching the truth. The beggar replied, in substance, that his name was Jean Monrousseau, the son of a stone-cutter of the Limousin; fifty years of age—at least he believed so. After being a shepherd in his youth, he had enlisted as soon as he was turned of twenty, and had taken part in the Italian and Flemish campaigns. While in garrison at Bapaume, he became acquainted with a shoemaker's widow, Jeanne Le Blond, and sought her in marriage. The nuptial benediction was

not given there, because she could not obtain the certificate of her first husband's death; but the ceremony was performed at Arras, on the 17th of May, 1642, by the curé of Saint Nicholas, Michel Hocquet, whose certificate—Greek for Monrousseau, who could not read—erroneously gave him the christian name of Philip.

As soon as he was married, Monrousseau quitted the king's service, and turned ploughman, gardener, and woodman. At Montdidier, where he resided for some time, his wife presented him with twins, who died one after the other. Thence they shifted their quarters to Neuville, where, in November, 1646, his wife was again put to bed with twins—a boy and a girl. The boy was the Louis whom they were now trying to take away from him. Impoverished by Jeanne's deplorable fecundity, they were obliged to beg for their livelihood, and Monrousseau, who bore a good character, easily obtained from the Bishop of Beauvais an authorisation to ask alms in the diocese.

From this date forward—and it was not to be wondered at—Monrousseau's memory got entangled in the marches and countermarches of his mendicant life. He had begged his way backwards and forwards throughout central France, crossing and recrossing it in various directions. In the Limousin he had lost one of his last twins—the girl; and his wife had died at the hospital at Tours, on the 10th of June, 1654. From that time he had wandered about in company with his only surviving child, Louis. He had been to Paris, and seen the Dame Le Moine there. He had left the capital to seek for harvest work in Normandy. By bad luck he had come to Vernon. Such was his statement—not given all in one breath, but torn from him bit by bit; perhaps through fear of the magistrate and the mob—the consequence of guilt, according to them. In this long examination, made up of threats and protestations, the Lieutenant Particulier noted several contradictions. Why should he call himself Philip at Arras, and Jean at Bapaume and at Vernon? He could not tell. Sometimes he had had four children at two births, sometimes only two.

His answers were not clearer nor more consistent with regard to his knowledge of the Widow Le Moine. How many times had he seen her? Only once, in the Place de Grève. But the meeting at the entrance of the Hotel Dieu? That made twice. And then he talked of another interview, a year afterwards, near the Porte Saint Martin. How many times had he been to Paris? Once only; he had left it a fortnight before coming to Vernon. He had been there twice; once during the preceding year. He had been there three times. "Take the vagabond to prison, and put him in irons," was the lieutenant's decision, on his own responsibility, without any other legal formality.

He also caused the Widow Le Moine to be arrested on his verbal order. She was marched

to his house through crowds of people storming, raging, and yelling at her. Confined in one of the lieutenant's chambers, she was confronted with the mendicant. Both persisted—he in claiming, she in denying—the parentage of the boy.

The mother was then confronted with her supposed son. The lad, previously prompted and taught his part, when pushed towards the person whom they told him was his mother, called her "Mamma." Jeanne Vacherot, whatever they could say or do, had only one reply, "That is not my child." Hardened guilt, inhumanity, unfeeling obstinacy. Shameful accusations were thrown in her teeth. The magistrate begged and entreated the widow to open her arms and her heart to the boy; but it never entered into his head to question, separately and calmly, this mother and this son whom they wanted to force upon her. If Jeanne Vacherot were really his mother—if little Monrousseau were really her son—what could be easier than to make the latter relate on the spot all the occurrences of his previous childhood? Could a boy, eleven years of age, have forgotten them after an interval of only ten months? But human fallibility cannot think of everything, not even of what is absolutely essential. The magistrate, in opening the examination, forgot that the boy, if he were Jacques Le Moine, ought to be eleven years old, and he refrained from putting him on his oath, for the reason that he was only eight, or thereabouts.

After several hours of useless torture, Jeanne Vacherot was remanded. The Lieutenant Particulier did not dare to put her in prison, as he had treated the beggar-man; but he urged her to "take counsel of the night," and ordered her to appear at a new confrontation on the morrow. The widow, after what she had seen of the magistrate and the excited populace, took counsel, not of the night, but of her own common sense; and, as soon as the house was clear, by the dispersing of the loiterers who lingered around it, she took advantage of the darkness, and started for Paris.

The events of next day proved that she had acted wisely. As soon as the news of her escape was known—and it spread like wildfire—the indignant mob, enraged at her departure, broke into the house where she had been lodging, smashed the windows, and gutted the rooms. Women, and especially mothers of families, took the lead in executing this popular vengeance.

Meanwhile, the Lieutenant Général, Louis Mordant, returned to Vernon, and took the affair out of the hands of his substitute, the Lieutenant Particulier. A regular inquiry was instituted. One-and-twenty witnesses were heard, twelve of whom were women, and all of whom stated their conviction that the beggar-boy was the widow's son. Thus, Marie Queron, servant to the Widow Cretté, with whom Jeanne Vacherot had lodged at different times during seven or eight years, having with her little

Jacques Le Moine, averred there could be no mistake about the matter—they were his eyes, his features, and his voice. It took from the 26th of July to the 12th of August to put all these depositions in order; and during the early part of that period the boy lived in the Widow Cretté's house, constantly surrounded by idle gossips who wanted to know all that was passing, and who made the child learn by rote every particular they knew.

The little tailor, François Varlot, went further than the rest: he knew how and where Monrousseau had kidnapped Jacques Le Moine. It happened in the Rue Saint Martin; the child told him so during one of his visits to the hospital. And the boy did not deny it.

They had so often talked to the lad about Bois-Hiérôme, and he talked so often about it himself, that the Lieutenant Général thought fit to take him to the village. There he was recognised as the son of Lancelot Le Moine by the farmer, his mother's tenant, the curé, the Seigneur of Bois-Hiérôme, the seigneur's brother, and five other inhabitants; and very soon after that by every single and married woman in the place. They made him say the name of a monastery that stood upon a neighbouring eminence. Was there not a bridge thereabouts?—"Yes, there was," he answered. "Had not my brother," the seigneur asked, "a sore place somewhere when you were here?"—"No, indeed." "Why, yes he had. Think again, my little fellow."—"Ah, yes! he had a sore place on his left hand." "I was quite sure he would recollect it." The whole concluded with a fresh examination of Monrousseau, who persisted in stating that he was the father of the boy. Neither threats nor chains could shake him a jot.

On the 12th of August, the Lieutenant Général's sentence was, that Monrousseau be kept in prison and in chains; that the child in dispute be called Jacques Le Moine, the sentence having the validity of a baptismal certificate; that the relations of the said Jacques Le Moine be convoked to appoint a guardian; a provision of a hundred livres to be assigned to him; and, to that effect, all the goods of the Widow Le Moine in the hands of her farmers to be estreated and seized. Against this sentence the widow appealed to the Parliament of Paris; which opened the door to a labyrinth of law proceedings impossible at the present day.

The Master of Requests, appointed to preside over the new inquiry, was Guillaume de Lamoignon, to whom Louis the Fourteenth, on appointing him First President, said: "If I had known an honest man than yourself, I should have put him in your place." At the very first interview he drew from the mendicant, the boy, and Jeanne Vacherot, answers which could leave no doubt respecting the prejudice, the precipitation, and the blindness of the Vernon worthies. Examined by a magistrate who heard what he said without threatening him, Monrousseau told his tale. Lamoignon could make

allowance for the contradictions and errors of detail inseparable from such a vagabond existence, at a time, too, when the registers and certificates of ecclesiastics offered no guarantee for their accuracy.

Brought together, the mendicant and the boy acknowledged each other, without hesitation, as father and son. The widow declared, in the most calm and natural way, that the child was not hers.

"But if this lady is your mother," said Lamoignon to the boy, "why not avow it? You can do so without the slightest danger either to yourself, to her, or to the man."

"She is not my mother," the boy replied. "My mother died in the hospital at Tours."

"But wouldn't you like to be the son of this lady? You would be much better off; you wouldn't have to beg your bread from town to town."

"I should very well like to be her son, but I am not."

"Then beggar you are, and beggar you will remain."

"What must be, must."

"You are willing, then, to return to Monrousseau, and beg with him?"

"I cannot help it, since he is my father. I cannot turn my back on him."

One detail struck Lamoignon, which the Vernon people either could not or would not see. The beggar-boy could neither read nor write. Now, amongst the papers relating to the children's disappearance, Lamoignon found a certificate from one Gabriel Alexander, a writing-master, stating that the boys could read and write, and knew the rudiments of Latin. The result of the new inquiry was a Decree in Council, dated 2nd June, 1656, sending the parties before the Parlement of Paris to receive judgment on the whole matter.

Scarcely a week after the decree was made, there happened one of those theatrical events which so rarely occur soon enough in the dramas of human justice. The absurdity of the Vernon folk was manifested by the reappearance of the elder of the missing boys, Pierre Le Moine. He told the sad and silly story of his running away with his brother and the two young Coustards, and their parting with the latter. He and Jacques, as soon as they were alone together, directed their steps towards Vernon; but whether through false shame or fear, they gave no sign of life to their friends, and pursued their way, begging, as far as Saint Waast. There, a gentleman of the name of De Montaud saw that, in spite of their rags and haggard looks, they were children of gentle birth. For twelve days he fed and lodged them, when the younger, Jacques Le Moine (whom everybody at Vernon recognised in the

beggar-boy Monrousseau), fell ill and died. He was buried in the cemetery of the church of Saint Waast by the brothers of charity.

In confirmation of his tale, Pierre produced two certificates signed by the curé, the vicaire (curate), the charitable gentleman, several parishioners, and the brothers who had interred poor little Jacques. Pierre continued to reside in M. De Montaud's house for some time after his brother's death, until, yielding to his passion for a vagabond life, he ran away, and took to begging as before. Tired at last of such a wretched existence, or yielding to the voice of reason and duty, he resolved to go and throw himself into his mother's arms.

She greatly needed some such comfort. She was now, as far as she knew, utterly childless, for she had lost, by illness, her youngest boy, Louis, the one who had never left her. But what a strange picture of the state of France in the middle of the seventeenth century! Here were two boys, vagabonding about for a couple of years, without the police, to whom the mother had notified her loss, taking the trouble to find them out. And here was a gentleman, a curé, a religious company, harbouring those children, burying one of them, and witnessing the disappearance of the other, without acquainting the authorities or writing to the family!

It was not until Thursday in Passion Week, 1659, that the First President de Lamoignon pronounced a judgment ordaining Jean Monrousseau to be liberated from prison, and his name erased from the jailer's book; that Louis Monrousseau should recognise and obey him as his father (to be sent to the hospital, nevertheless, to be fed and brought up *like the others*); and that all the goods estreated and seized for Jacques Le Moine's benefit should be restored to Jeanne Vacherot.

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