Tales from Blackwood, by Various

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TALES FROM "BLACKWOOD"

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WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS EDINBURGH AND LONDON

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TALES FROM "BLACKWOOD."

ADVENTURES IN TEXAS.

ABRIDGED FROM THE GERMAN OF SEALSFIELD

BY FREDERICK HARDMAN.

[MAQA. NOVEMBER, DECEMBER, 1848.]
“What took you to Texas?” is a question that has so frequently been asked me by friends in the States, that a reply to it is perhaps the most appropriate commencement I can make to a sketch of my adventures in that country. Many of my fellow-citizens have expressed their surprise—more flattering to me and my family than to Texas—that a son of Judge Morse of Maryland, instead of pitching his tent in his native State, should have deserted it for a land which certainly, at the time I first went to it, was in anything but good repute, and of whose population the Anglo-Saxon portion mainly consisted of outlaws and bad characters, expelled or fugitive from the Union. The facts of the case were these:--I went to Texas, endorsed, as I may say, by a company of our enlightened New York Yankees, whose speculative attention was just then particularly directed to that country. In other words, I had the good or ill luck, as you may choose to think it, to be the possessor of a Texas-Land-Scrip—that is to say, a certificate issued by the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company, declaring and making known to all whom it might concern, that Mr Edward Morse had paid into the hands of the cashier of the said company the sum of one thousand dollars, in consideration of which, he, the said Edward Morse, was duly entitled and authorised to select, within the district and territory of the aforesaid Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company, a tract of land of the extent of ten thousand acres, neither more nor less, to take possession of and settle upon it, and, in a word, to exercise over it all the rights of a proprietor; under the sole condition that in the selection of his ten thousand acres he should not infringe on the property or rights of the holders of previously given certificates.

Ten thousand acres of the finest land in the world, and under a heaven compared to which our Maryland sky, bright as it is, appears dull and foggy! It was certainly a tempting bait; too tempting by far not to be caught at by many in those times of speculation; and accordingly, our free and enlightened citizens bought and sold their millions of Texan acres just as readily as they did their thousands of towns and villages in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan, and their tens of thousands of shares in banks and railways. It was a speculative fever, which has since, we may hope, been in some degree cured. At any rate, the remedies applied have been tolerably severe.

I had not escaped the contagion, and, having got the land on paper, I thought I should like to see it in dirty acres. My intention was to select my plot of ground and take possession of it, and then, if I did not like the country, to turn it into dollars again. If, upon the other hand, the country pleased me, I would return to Maryland, get together what was needful for the undertaking, and set up my roof-tree in Texas for good and all. Accordingly, in company with a friend who had a similar venture, I embarked at Baltimore on board the Catcher schooner, and, after a three weeks’ voyage, arrived in Galveston Bay.

The grassy shores of this bay, into which the river Brazos empties itself, rise so little above the surface of the water, which they strongly resemble in colour, that it would be difficult to discover them, were it not for three stunted trees growing on the western extremity of a long lizard-shaped island that stretches nearly sixty miles across the bay, and conceals the mouth of the river. These trees are the only landmark for the mariner; and, with their exception, not a single object—not a hill, a house, nor so much as a bush,
relieves the level sameness of the island and adjacent continent.

After we had, with some difficulty, got on the inner side of the island, a pilot came on board and took charge of the vessel. The first thing he did was to run us on a sandbank, off which we got with no small labour, and by the united exertions of sailors and passengers, and at length entered the river. In our impatience to land, I and my friend left the schooner in a cockleshell of a boat, which upset in the surge, and we found ourselves floundering in the water. Luckily it was not very deep, and we escaped with a thorough drenching.

When we had scrambled on shore, we gazed about us for some time before we could persuade ourselves that we were actually upon land, so unnatural was its aspect. It was, without exception, the strangest coast we had ever seen, and there was scarcely a possibility of distinguishing the boundary between earth and water. The green grass grew down to the edge of the green sea, and there was only the streak of white foam left by the latter upon the former to serve as a line of demarcation. Before us was a perfectly level plain, a hundred or more miles in extent, covered with long fine grass, rolling in waves before each puff of the sea-breeze, with neither tree, nor house, nor hill, to vary the unbroken monotony of the surface. Ten or twelve miles towards the north and north-west, we distinguished some dark masses, which we afterwards discovered to be groups of trees; but to our eyes they looked exactly like islands in a green sea, and we subsequently learned that such groups, innumerable in Texan prairies, are called islands by the people of the country. A more appropriate name, or one better describing their appearance, could not be given to them.

Proceeding along the shore, we came to a blockhouse situated behind a small tongue of land projecting into the river, and decorated with the flag of the Mexican republic, waving in all its glory from the roof. This building, the only one of which, at that time, Galveston harbour could boast, served, as may be supposed, for a great variety of uses. It was the custom-house and the barracks for the garrison (consisting of a company of Mexican infantry), the residence of the controller of customs, and of the civil and military intendant, the headquarters of the officer commanding, and it served, moreover, as hotel, and wine and spirit store. Alongside the board, on which was depicted a sort of hieroglyphic, intended for the Mexican eagle, hung a rum-bottle doing duty as a sign, and the republican banner threw its protecting shadow over an announcement of--"Brandy, Whisky, and accommodation for Man and Beast."

Approaching the house, we saw the whole garrison assembled before the door. It consisted of a dozen dwarfish, spindle-shanked Mexican soldiers, none of them so big or half so strong as American boys of fifteen, and whom I would have backed a single Kentuckky woodsman, armed with a riding-whip, to have driven to the four winds of heaven. These heroes all sported tremendous beards, whiskers, and mustaches, and had a habit of knitting their brows, in the endeavour, as we supposed, to look fierce and formidable. They were crowding round a table of rough planks, and playing a game at cards, in which they were so deeply engrossed that they took no notice of our approach. Their officer, however, came out of the house to meet us with a friendly greeting.
Captain Cotton, formerly editor of the Mexican Gazette, now civil and military superintendent of Galveston, customs-director, harbour-master, and tavern-keeper, and a Yankee to boot, seemed to trouble his head—to the credit of his good sense be it said—much less about his various dignities and titles (of which he had more than there were soldiers in his garrison) than about his capital French and Spanish wines, which, it is to be presumed, he laid in duty free. As to the soldiers, in all my life I never saw such wretched-looking, shrivelled dwarfs. I could not help fancying them grotesque elves or goblins, transported thither by some old sorcerer's power. We were never tired of staring at them and at the country, which also had something supernatural in its aspect. It was like an everlasting billiard-table, without an end. It is a strange feeling, I can tell you, after being three weeks at sea, to run into a harbour which is no harbour, and to land upon a shore which is only half land, and which seems each moment about to roll away in waves from under your feet. Our fellow-passengers, several of whom had now landed and joined us, gazed about them as puzzled and bewildered as we were, and hastened into the blockhouse with a speed which showed them to be assailed by the same uneasy feeling as ourselves. Looking out from the blockhouse, the interminable expanse of meadow and ocean was blended into one vast plain, out of which the building rose like a diminutive island. It was with a sensation of real relief that we once more found ourselves on board our schooner.

It took us three full days to ascend the river Brazos to the town of Brazoria, a distance of only thirty miles. On the first day, nothing but the everlasting meadow was to be seen on either hand; but, on the second, we got nearer to islands: the pasture became a park, dotted with magnificent groups of trees. Not a sign of man was visible in this stupendous park—a boundless ocean of grass and foliage. An ocean of this kind has a far more powerful effect upon those who for the first time wander through its solitudes than has an ocean of water. We saw this exemplified in our travelling companions, land-seekers like ourselves, with the sole difference that, not being overburdened with the circulating medium, they had come without scrip. They were by no means of the class of sentimental travellers—nothing of the Yorick about them—but, on the contrary, were wild, rough fellows, who had played all sorts of mad pranks during the three weeks' voyage. Here, however, they all, without exception, became quiet—nay, sedate and serious. The very wildest of them, and some of them really were as rude and desperate a lot as ever roamed the world round in search of adventures—grew taciturn, and gave utterance to none of the coarse oaths and horrible blasphemies with which, when at sea, they had frequently disgusted us. They behaved like people who had just entered a church. All their countenances wore an expression of gravity and awe. And, in a certain sense, we surely might be said to have entered one of God's temples; for what more noble temple could be erected in his honour than the magnificent scene around us! All was so still, and solemn, and majestic! Forest and meadow, trees and grass, all so pure and fresh, as if just from the hand of the mighty and eternal Artificer. No trace of man's sinful hand, but all the beautiful, immaculate work of God!

Fifteen miles above the mouth of the river Brazos, we entered the first forest. Sycamores, and, further on, pecan-trees, waved on either hand over the water. We saw a herd of deer, and a large flock of wild turkeys, both of which, already tolerably shy, took to flight at our appearance. The quality of the land was, as will be easily imagined, the point to which our attention was chiefly directed. On the coast we had found it light and sandy, with a very thin crust of good soil, but without any signs of swamp or slime; further from the sea, the crust or fertile surface increased in thickness from one to
four--eight--twelve--at last fifteen--and, at Brazoria, twenty feet over the bed of sand and loam. As yet we had seen nothing like a hillock or a stone; and indeed it would have been very difficult in a district a hundred miles broad and long, to have found a stone as big as a pigeon's egg. On the other hand, there was wood in plenty for houses and fences; so we had no cause for anxiety in that respect. Our hopes grew brighter each mile that we advanced.

On our arrival at Brazoria, however, those sanguine hopes received a cruel blow. At the time I speak of--namely, in the year 1832--Brazoria was an important town--for Texas, that is to say--consisting of above thirty houses, three of which were of brick, three of boards, and the remainder of logs, all thoroughly American, with the streets arranged in the American manner, in straight lines and at right angles to each other. The only objection to the place was, that in the spring, at the season of the floods, it was all under water; but the worthy Brazorians overlooked this little inconvenience, in consideration of the inexhaustible fertility of the soil. It was early in March when we arrived, but we found already an abundance of new potatoes, beans, peas, and the most delicious artichokes that ever rejoiced an epicure. But we also found something else, much less agreeable to my friend and myself, and that was, that our scrip was not quite so good as it might be, and--like much other scrips, past, present, and to come--bore a stronger resemblance to waste paper than to bank-notes. Our unpleasant doubts became a fatal certainty on the arrival of William Austin, son of Colonel Austin. He gave us to read the report of the proceedings of the Mexican congress, after perusing which, we were within an ace of lighting our cigars with our certificates.

It appeared that, in the year 1824, the Mexican Congress had passed an act, having for its object the encouragement of emigration from the United States to Texas. In consequence of this act, an agreement was entered into with contractors--or empresarios, as they call them in Mexico--who bound themselves to bring a certain number of settlers into Texas within a given time, at their own charges, and without any expense to the Mexican government. On the other hand, the Mexican government had engaged to furnish land to these emigrants at the rate of five square leagues to every hundred families; but to this agreement the special condition was attached, that all settlers should be, or become, Roman Catholics. Failing this, and until they gave satisfactory proofs of their belonging to the Church of Rome, the validity of their claims to the land was not recognised, and they were liable any day to be turned out of the country at the point of the bayonet.

Of all this, the New York "Galveston-Bay-and-Texas-Land-Company," like smart Yankees as they were, had wisely said not a word to us, but had sold us the land with the assurance that it had been placed at their disposal by the Mexican government, on the sole condition of their importing into it, within the year, a certain number of settlers. Such was the tenor of their verbal and written declarations, such the tenor of the scrip; trusting to which, we had set out on our wild-goose-chase. Clear it now was that we had been duped and taken in; equally evident that the Roman Catholic Mexican government would have nothing to say to us heretics.

This information threw us into no small perplexity. Our Yankee friends at Brazoria, however, laughed at our dilemma, and told us that we were only in the same plight as hundreds of our countrymen, who had come to Texas in total ignorance of this condition, but who had not the less taken possession of
their land and settled there; that they themselves were amongst the number; and that, although it was just as likely they would turn negroes as Roman Catholics, they had no idea of being turned out of their houses and plantations; that, at any rate, if the Mexicans tried it, they had their rifles with them, and should be apt, they reckoned, to burn powder before they allowed themselves to be kicked off such an almighty fine piece of soil. So, after a while, we began to think, that as we had paid our money and come so far, we might do as others had done before us--occupy our land and wait the course of events. The next day we each bought a horse, or mustang, as they call them there, which animals were selling at Brazoria for next to nothing, and rode out into the prairie to look for a convenient spot to settle.

These mustangs are small horses, rarely above fourteen hands high, and are descended from the Spanish breed introduced by the original conquerors of the country. During the three centuries that have elapsed since the conquest of Mexico, they have increased and multiplied to an extraordinary extent, and are to be found in vast droves in the Texan prairies, although they now begin to be somewhat scarcer. They are taken with the lasso, concerning which instrument or weapon I will here say a word or two, notwithstanding that it has been often described.

The lasso is usually from twenty to thirty feet long, very flexible, and composed of strips of twisted ox-hide. One end is fastened to the saddle, and the other, which forms a running noose, held in the hand of the hunter, who, thus equipped, rides out into the prairie. When he discovers a troop of wild horses, he manoeuvres to get to windward of them, and then to approach as near to them as possible. If he be an experienced hand, the horses seldom or never escape him; and as soon as he finds himself within twenty or thirty feet of them, he throws the noose with unerring aim over the neck of the one he has selected for his prey. This done, he turns his own horse sharp round, gives him the spur, and gallops away, dragging his unfortunate captive after him, breathless, and with his windpipe so compressed by the noose, that he is unable to make the smallest resistance, but, after a few yards, falls headlong to the ground, and lies motionless and almost lifeless, sometimes indeed badly hurt and disabled. From that day forward, the horse which has been thus caught never forgets the lasso; the mere sight of it makes him tremble in every limb; and, however wild he may be, it is sufficient to show it to him, or to lay it on his neck, to render him as tame and docile as a lamb.

The horse taken, next comes the breaking in, which is effected in a no less brutal manner than his capture. The eyes of the unfortunate animal are covered with a bandage, and a tremendous bit, a pound weight or more, clapped into his mouth; the horsebreaker puts on a pair of spurs six inches long, with rowels like penknives, and jumping on his back, urges him to his utmost speed. If the horse tries to rear, or turns restive, one pull, and not a very hard one either, at the instrument of torture they call a bit, is sufficient to tear his mouth to shreds, and cause the blood to flow in streams. I have myself seen horses' teeth broken with these barbarous bits. The poor beast whinnies and groans with pain and terror; but there is no help for him; the spurs are at his flanks, and on he goes full gallop, till he is ready to sink from fatigue and exhaustion. He then has a quarter of an hour's rest allowed him; but scarcely has he recovered breath, which has been ridden and spurred out of his body, when he is again mounted, and has to go through the same violent process as before. If he breaks down during this rude trial, he is either knocked on the head or driven away as useless; but if he holds out, he is marked with a hot iron, and left to graze on the prairie. Henceforward, there is no particular difficulty in catching him when
wanted; his wildness is completely punished out of him, but for it is substituted the most confirmed vice and malice that can possibly be conceived. These mustangs are unquestionably the most deceitful and spiteful of all the equine race. They seem perpetually looking out for an opportunity of playing their master a trick; and very soon after I got possession of mine, I was near paying for him in a way that I had certainly not calculated upon.

We were going to Bolivar, and had to cross the river Brazos. I was the last but one to get into the boat, and was leading my horse carelessly by the bridle. Just as I was about to step in, a sudden jerk, and a cry of "Mind your beast!" made me jump on one side; and lucky was it that I did so. My mustang had suddenly sprung back, reared up, and then thrown himself forward upon me with such force and fury, that, as I got out of his way, his fore feet went completely through the bottom of the boat. I never in my life saw an animal in such a paroxysm of rage. He curled up his lips till his whole range of teeth was visible, his eyes literally shot fire, the foam flew from his mouth, and he gave a wild screaming neigh that had something quite diabolical in its sound. Whilst I stood perfectly thunderstruck at this outbreak, one of the party took a lasso and very quietly laid it over the animal's neck. The effect was magical. With closed mouth, drooping ears, and head low, there stood the mustang, meek and docile as any old jackass. The change was so sudden and comical, that we all burst out laughing; although, when I came to reflect on the danger I had run, it required all my love of horses to prevent me from shooting the brute upon the spot.

Mounted upon this ticklish steed, and in company with my friend, I made various excursions to Bolivar, Marion, Columbia, Anahuac, incipient cities consisting of from five to twenty houses. We also visited numerous plantations and clearings, to the owners of some of which we were known, or had messages of introduction; but either with or without such recommendations, we always found a hearty welcome and hospitable reception, and it was rare that we were allowed to pay for our entertainment.

We arrived one day at a clearing, which lay a few miles off the way from Harrisburg to San Felipe de Austin, and belonged to a Mr Neal. He had been three years in the country, occupying himself with the breeding of cattle, which is unquestionably the most agreeable, as well as profitable, occupation that can be followed in Texas. He had between seven and eight hundred head of cattle, and from fifty to sixty horses, all mustangs. His plantation, like nearly all the plantations in Texas at that time, was as yet in a very rough state; and his house, although roomy and comfortable enough inside, was built of unhewn tree-trunks, in true backwoodsman style. It was situated on the border of one of the islands, or groups of trees, between two gigantic sycamores, which sheltered it from the sun and wind. In front, and as far as could be seen, lay the prairie, with its waving grass and many-coloured flowers; behind the dwelling arose the cluster of forest trees in all their primeval majesty, laced and bound together by an infinity of wild vines, which shot their tendrils and clinging branches hundreds of feet upwards to the very top of the trees, embracing and covering the whole island with a green network, and converting it into an immense bower of vine leaves, which would have been no unsuitable abode for Bacchus and his train.

These islands are one of the most enchanting features of Texan scenery. Of infinite variety and beauty of form, and unrivalled in the growth and magnitude of the trees composing them, they are of all
shapes--circular, parallelograms, hexagons, octagons--some again twisting and winding like dark-green
snakes over the brighter surface of the prairie. In no park or artificially laid-out grounds could anything
be found at all equaling these natural shrubberies in beauty and symmetry. In the morning and evening
especially, when surrounded by a sort of veil of light-greyish mist, and with the horizontal beams of the
rising or setting sun gleaming through them, they offer pictures which it is impossible to weary of
admiring.

Mr Neal was a jovial Kentuckian, and he received us with the greatest hospitality, only asking in return
all the news we could give him from the States. It is difficult to imagine, without having witnessed it,
the feverish eagerness and curiosity with which all intelligence from their native country is sought after
and listened to by these dwellers in the desert. Men, women, and children crowded round us; and
though we had arrived in the afternoon, it was near sunrise before we could escape from the inquiries
by which we were overwhelmed, and retire to the beds that had been prepared for us.

I had not slept very long when I was roused by our worthy host. He was going out to catch twenty or
thirty oxen, wanted for the market at New Orleans. As the kind of chase which takes place after these
animals is very interesting, and rarely dangerous, we willingly accepted the invitation to accompany
him; and having dressed and breakfasted in all haste, got upon our mustangs and rode off into the
prairie.

The party was half-a-dozen strong, consisting of Mr Neal, my friend and myself, and three negroes.
What we had to do was to drive the cattle, which were grazing on the prairie in herds of from thirty to
fifty head, to the house, and then those selected for the market were to be taken with the lasso and sent
off to Brazoria.

After riding four or five miles, we came in sight of a drove; splendid animals, standing very high, and
of most symmetrical form. The horns of these cattle are of unusual length, and, in the distance, have
more the appearance of stags' antlers than of bulls' horns. We approached the herd to within a quarter of
a mile. They remained quite quiet. We rode round them, and in like manner got in rear of a second and
third drove, and then spread out, so as to form a half circle and drive the cattle towards the house.

Hitherto my mustang had behaved exceedingly well, cantering freely along, and not attempting to play
any tricks. I had scarcely, however, left the remainder of the party a couple of hundred yards, when the
devil by which he was possessed began to wake up. The mustangs belonging to the plantation were
grazing some three quarters of a mile off; and no sooner did my beast catch sight of them, than he
commenced practising every species of jump and leap that it is possible for a horse to execute, and
many of a nature so extraordinary, that I should have thought no brute that ever went on four legs
would have been able to accomplish them. He shied, reared, pranced, leaped forwards, backwards, and
sideways; in short, played such infernal pranks, that, although a practised rider, I found it no easy
matter to keep my seat. I heartily regretted that I had brought no lasso with me, which would have
tamed him at once, and that, contrary to Mr Neal's advice, I had put on my American bit instead of a
Mexican one. Without these auxiliaries, all my horsemanship was useless. The brute galloped like a
mad creature some five hundred yards, caring nothing for my efforts to stop him; and then, finding
himself close to the troop of mustangs, he stopped suddenly short, threw his head between his fore-legs, and his hind feet into the air, with such vicious violence, that I was pitched clean out of the saddle. Before I well knew where I was, I had the satisfaction of seeing him put his fore feet on the bridle, pull bit and bridoon out of his mouth, and then, with a neigh of exultation, spring into the midst of the herd of mustangs.

I got up out of the long grass in a towering passion. One of the negroes who was nearest to me came galloping to my assistance, and begged me to let the beast run for a while, and that when Anthony, the huntsman, came, he would soon catch him. I was too angry to listen to reason, and I ordered him to get off his horse, and let me mount. The black begged and prayed of me not to ride after the brute; and Mr Neal, who was some distance off, shouted to me, as loud as he could, for Heaven's sake, to stop; that I did not know what it was to chase a wild horse in a Texan prairie, and that I must not fancy myself in the meadows of Louisiana or Florida. I paid no attention to all this--I was in too great a rage at the trick the beast had played me; and, jumping on the negro's horse, I galloped away like mad.

My rebellious steed was grazing quietly with his companions, and he allowed me to come within a couple of hundred paces of him; but just as I had prepared the lasso, which was fastened to the negro's saddle-bow, he gave a start, and galloped off some distance further, I after him. Again he made a pause, and munched a mouthful of grass--then off again for another half mile. This time I had great hopes of catching him, for he let me come within a hundred yards; but just as I was creeping up to him, away he went with one of his shrill neighs. When I galloped fast, he went faster; when I rode slowly, he slackened his pace. At least ten times did he let me approach him within a couple of hundred yards, without for that being a bit nearer getting hold of him. It was certainly high time to desist from such a mad chase, but I never dreamed of doing so; and indeed the longer it lasted, the more obstinate I got. I rode on after the beast, who let me come nearer and nearer, and then darted off again with his loud, laughing neigh. It was this infernal neigh that made me so savage--there was something spiteful and triumphant in it, as though the animal knew he was making a fool of me, and exulted in so doing. At last, however, I got so sick of my horse-hunt that I determined to make a last trial, and, if that failed, to turn back. The runaway had stopped near one of the islands of trees, and was grazing quite close to its edge. I thought that, if I were to creep round to the other side of the island, and then steal across it, through the trees, I should be able to throw the lasso over his head, or, at any rate, to drive him back to the house. This plan I put in execution: rode round the island, then through it, lasso in hand, and as softly as if I had been riding over eggs. To my consternation, however, on arriving at the edge of the trees, and at the exact spot where, only a few minutes before, I had seen the mustang grazing, no signs of him were to be perceived. I made the circuit of the island, but in vain--the animal had disappeared. With a hearty curse, I put spurs to my horse, and started off to ride back to the plantation.

Neither the plantation, the cattle, nor my companions, were visible, it is true; but this gave me no uneasiness. I felt sure that I knew the direction in which I had come, and that the island I had just left was one which was visible from the house, whilst all around me were such numerous tracks of horses, that the possibility of my having lost my way never occurred to me, and I rode on quite unconcernedly.
After riding for about an hour, I began to find the time rather long. I looked at my watch: it was past one o'clock. We had started at nine, and, allowing an hour and a half to have been spent in finding the cattle, I had passed nearly three hours in my wild and unsuccessful hunt. I began to think I must have got further from the plantation than I had as yet supposed.

It was towards the end of March, the day clear and warm, just like a May-day in the Southern States. The sun now shone brightly out, but the early part of the morning had been somewhat foggy; and as I had only arrived at the plantation the day before, and had passed the whole afternoon and evening indoors, I had had no opportunity of getting acquainted with the bearings of the house. This reflection made me rather uneasy, particularly when I remembered the entreaties of the negro, and the loud exhortations Mr. Neal addressed to me as I rode away. I said to myself, however, that I could not be more than ten or fifteen miles from the plantation, that I should soon come in sight of the herds of cattle, and that then there would be no difficulty in finding my way. But when I had ridden another hour without seeing the smallest sign either of man or beast, I got seriously uneasy. In my impatience, I abused poor Neal for not sending somebody to find me. His huntsman, I had heard, was gone to Anahuac, and would not be back for two or three days; but he might have sent a couple of his lazy negroes: or, if he had only fired a shot or two as a signal. I stopped and listened, in hopes of hearing the crack of a rifle. But the deepest stillness reigned around, scarcely the chirp of a bird was heard--all nature seemed to be taking the siesta. As far as the eye could reach was a waving sea of grass, here and there an island of trees, but not a trace of a human being. At last I thought I had made a discovery. The nearest clump of trees was undoubtedly the same which I had admired and pointed out to my companions soon after we left the house. It bore a fantastical resemblance to a snake coiled up and about to dart upon its prey. About six or seven miles from the plantation we had passed it on our right hand, and if I now kept it upon my left, I could not fail to be going in a proper direction. So said, so done. I trotted on most perseveringly towards the point of the horizon where I felt certain the house must lie. One hour passed, then a second, then a third: every now and then I stopped and listened, but nothing was audible--not a shot nor a shout. But although I heard nothing, I saw something which gave me no great pleasure. In the direction in which we had ridden out, the grass was very abundant and the flowers scarce; whereas the part of the prairie in which I now found myself presented the appearance of a perfect flower-garden, with scarcely a square foot of green to be seen. The most variegated carpet of flowers I ever beheld lay unrolled before me; red, yellow, violet, blue--every colour, every tint was there; millions of magnificent prairie roses, tuberoses, asters, dahlias, and fifty other kinds of flowers. The finest artificial garden in the world sinks into insignificance when compared with this parterre of nature's own planting. My horse could hardly make his way through the wilderness of flowers, and I for a time remained lost in admiration of this scene of extraordinary beauty. The prairie in the distance looked as if clothed with rainbows, that waved to and fro over its surface.

But the difficulties and anxieties of my situation soon banished all other thoughts, and I rode on with complete indifference through scenes which, under other circumstances, would have captivated my entire attention. All the stories I had heard of mishaps in these endless prairies, recurred in vivid colouring to my memory--not mere backwoodsmen's legends, but facts well authenticated by persons of undoubted veracity, who had warned me, before I came to Texas, against venturing without guide or compass into these dangerous wilds. Even men who had been long in the country were often known to
lose themselves, and to wander for days and weeks over these oceans of grass, where no hill or variety of surface offers a landmark to the traveller. In summer and autumn, such a position would have one danger the less—that is to say, there would be no risk of dying of hunger; for at those seasons the most delicious fruits—grapes, plums, peaches, and others—are to be found in abundance. But we were now in early spring, and although I saw numbers of peach and plum-trees, they were only in blossom. Of game also there was plenty, both fur and feather; but I had no gun, and nothing appeared more probable than that I should be starved, although surrounded by food, and in one of the most fruitful countries in the world. This thought flashed suddenly across me, and for a moment my heart sank within me as I first perceived the real danger of my position.

After a time, however, other ideas came to console me. I had been already four weeks in the country, and had ridden over a large slice of it in every direction, always through prairies, and I had never had any difficulty in finding my way. True, but then I had always had a compass, and been in company. It was this sort of over-confidence and feeling of security that had made me adventure so rashly, and in spite of all warning, in pursuit of the mustang. I had not waited to reflect, that a little more than four weeks' experience was necessary to make one acquainted with the bearings of a district three times as big as New York State. Still I thought it impossible that I should have got so far out of the right track as not to be able to find the house before nightfall, although that was now rapidly approaching. Indeed, the first shades of evening, strange as it may seem, gave this persuasion increased strength. Home-bred and gently nurtured as I was, my life, before coming to Texas, had been by no means one of adventure, and I was so used to sleep with a roof over my head, that when I saw it getting dusk I felt certain I could not be far from the house. The idea fixed itself so strongly in my mind, that I involuntarily spurred my mustang, and trotted on, peering out through the now fast-gathering gloom, in expectation of seeing a light. Several times I fancied I heard the barking of the dogs, the cattle lowing, or the merry laugh of the children.

"Hurrah! there is the house at last—I see the lights in the parlour windows."

I urged my horse on, but when I came near the house, it proved to be an island of trees. What I had taken for candles were fire-flies, that now issued in swarms from out of the darkness of the islands, and spread themselves over the prairie, darting about in every direction, their small blue flames literally lighting up the plain, and making it appear as if I were surrounded by a sea of Bengal fire. Nothing could be more bewildering than such a ride as mine, on a warm March night, through the interminable, never-varying prairie; overhead the deep blue firmament, with its hosts of bright stars; at my feet, and all around, an ocean of magical light, myriads of fire-flies floating upon the soft still air. It was like a scene of enchantment. I could distinguish every blade of grass, every flower, every leaf on the trees—but all in a strange unnatural sort of light, and in altered colours. Tuberoses and asters, prairie roses and geraniums, dahlias and vine branches, began to wave and move, to range themselves in ranks and rows. The whole vegetable world around me appeared to dance, as the swarms of living lights passed over it.

Suddenly, from out of the sea of fire, sounded a loud and long-drawn note. I stopped, listened, and gazed around me. It was not repeated, and I rode on. Again the same sound, but this time the cadence
was sad and plaintive. Again I made a halt, and listened. It was repeated a third time in a yet more melancholy tone, and I recognised it as the cry of a whip-poor-will. Presently it was answered from a neighbouring island by a katydid. My heart leaped for joy at hearing the note of this bird, the native minstrel of my own dear Maryland. In an instant the house where I was born stood before the eyesight of my imagination. There were the negro huts, the garden, the plantation, everything exactly as I had left it. So powerful was the illusion, that I gave my horse the spur, persuaded that my father's house lay before me. The island, too, I took for the grove that surrounded our house. On reaching its border, I literally dismounted, and shouted out for Charon Tommy. There was a stream running through our plantation, which, for nine months out of the twelve, was passable only by means of a ferry, and the old negro who officiated as ferryman was indebted to me for the above classical cognomen. I believe I called twice, nay, three times--but no Charon Tommy answered; and I awoke as from a pleasant dream, somewhat ashamed of the lengths to which my excited imagination had hurried me.

I now felt so weary and exhausted, so hungry and thirsty, and, withal, my mind was so anxious and harassed by my dangerous position, and by the uncertainty how I should get out of it, that I was really incapable of going any further. I felt quite bewildered, and stood for some time gazing before me, and scarcely even troubling myself to think. At length I mechanically drew my clasp-knife from my pocket, and set to work to dig a hole in the rich black soil of the prairie. Into this hole I put the knotted end of my lasso, and then, filling in the earth and stamping it down with my foot, as I had seen others do since I had been in Texas, I passed the noose over my mustang's neck, and left him to graze, whilst I myself lay down outside the circle which the lasso would allow him to describe. An odd manner, it may seem, of tying up a horse; but the most convenient and natural one in a country where one may often find oneself fifty miles from any house, and five-and-twenty from a tree or bush.

I found it no easy matter to sleep, for on all sides I heard the howling of wolves and jaguars—an unpleasant serenade at any time, but most of all so in the prairie, unarmed and defenceless as I was. My nerves, too, were all in commotion; and I felt so feverish that I do not know what I should have done, had I not fortunately remembered that I had my cigar-case and a roll of tobacco, real Virginia dulcissimus, in my pocket—invaluable treasures in my present situation, and which on this, as on many other occasions, did not fail to soothe and calm my agitated thoughts.

Luckily, too, being a tolerably confirmed smoker, I carried a flint and steel with me; for otherwise, although surrounded by lights, I should have been sadly at a loss for fire. A couple of havannahs did me an infinite deal of good, and after a while I sank into the slumber of which I stood so much in need.

The day was hardly well broken when I awoke. The refreshing sleep I had enjoyed had given me new energy and courage. I felt hungry enough, to be sure, but light and cheerful, and I hastened to dig up the end of the lasso, and to saddle my horse. I trusted that, although I had been condemned to wander over the prairie the whole of the preceding day, as a sort of punishment for my rashness, I should now have better luck, and, having expiated my fault, be at length allowed to find my way. With this hope I mounted my mustang and resumed my ride.
I passed several beautiful islands of pecan, plum, and peach trees. It is a peculiarity worthy of remark, that these islands are nearly always of one sort of tree. It is very rare to meet with one where there are two sorts. Like the beasts of the forest, that herd together according to their kind, so does this wild vegetation preserve itself distinct in its different species. One island will be entirely composed of live oaks, another of plum, and a third of pecan trees; the vine only, common to them all, embraces them all alike with its slender but tenacious branches. I rode through several of these islands. They were perfectly free from bushes and brushwood, and carpeted with the most beautiful verdure possible to behold. I gazed at them in astonishment. It seemed incredible that nature, abandoned to herself, should preserve herself so beautifully clean and pure, and I involuntarily looked around me for some trace of the hand of man. But none was there. I saw nothing but herds of deer, that gazed wonderingly at me with their large clear eyes, and when I approached too near, galloped off in alarm. What would I not have given for an ounce of lead, a charge of powder, and a Kentucky rifle! Nevertheless, the mere sight of the beasts gladdened me, and raised my spirits. They were a sort of society. Something of the same feeling seemed imparted to my horse, who bounded under me, and neighed merrily, as he cantered along in the fresh spring morning.

I was now skirting the side of an island of trees of greater extent than most of those I had hitherto seen. On reaching the end of it, I suddenly came in sight of an object whose extraordinary appearance far surpassed any of the natural wonders I had as yet beheld, either in Texas or the United States.

At the distance of about two miles rose a colossal mass, in shape somewhat like a monumental mound or tumulus, and apparently of the brightest silver. As I came in view of it, the sun was just covered by a passing cloud, from the lower edge of which the bright rays shot down obliquely upon this extraordinary phenomenon, lighting it up in the most brilliant manner. At one moment it looked like a huge silver cone; then took the appearance of an illuminated castle with pinnacles and towers, or the dome of some great cathedral; then of a gigantic elephant, covered with trappings, but always of solid silver, and indescribably magnificent. Had all the treasures of the earth been offered me to say what it was, I should have been unable to answer. Bewildered by my interminable wanderings in the prairie, and weakened by fatigue and hunger, a superstitious feeling for a moment came over me, and I half asked myself whether I had not reached some enchanted region, into which the evil spirit of the prairie was luring me to destruction by appearances of supernatural strangeness and beauty.

Banishing these wild imaginings, I rode on in the direction of this strange object; but it was only when I came within a very short distance that I was able to distinguish its nature. It was a live oak of most stupendous dimensions, the very patriarch of the prairie, grown grey in the lapse of ages. Its lower limbs had shot out in a horizontal, or rather a downward-slanting direction, and, reaching nearly to the ground, completed the base of a vast dome, several hundred feet in diameter, and full a hundred and thirty feet high. It had no appearance of a tree, for neither trunk nor branches were visible. It seemed a mountain of whitish-green scales, fringed with long silvery moss, that hung like innumerable beards from every bough and twig. Nothing could better convey the idea of immense and incalculable age than the hoary beard and venerable appearance of this monarch of the woods. Spanish moss of a silvery grey draped the whole mass of wood and foliage, from the topmost bough down to the very ground; short near the top of the tree, but gradually increasing in length as it descended, until it hung like a deep
fringe from the lower branches. I separated the vegetable curtain with my hands, and entered this august temple with feelings of involuntary awe. The change from the bright sunlight to the comparative darkness beneath the leafy vault was so great, that I at first could distinguish scarcely anything. But when my eyes got accustomed to the gloom, nothing could be more beautiful than the effect of the sun's rays, which, in forcing their way through the silvered leaves and mosses, took as many varieties of colour as if they had passed through a window of painted glass, and gave the rich, subdued, and solemn light observable in old cathedrals.

The trunk of the tree rose, free from all branches, full forty feet from the ground, rough and knotted, and of such enormous size that it might have been taken for a mass of rock covered with moss and lichens, whilst many of its boughs were nearly as thick as the trunk of any tree I had ever previously seen.

I was so absorbed in the contemplation of the vegetable giant, that for a short space I almost forgot my troubles; but as I rode away from the tree they returned to me in full force, and my reflections were certainly of no very cheering or consolatory nature. I rode on, however, most perseveringly. The morning slipped away; it was noon, the sun stood high in the cloudless heavens. My hunger had now increased to an insupportable degree, and I felt as if something were gnawing within me--something like a crab tugging and riving at my stomach with his sharp claws. This feeling left me after a time, and was replaced by a sort of squeamishness, a faint sickly sensation. But if hunger was bad, thirst was worse. For some hours I suffered martyrdom. At length, like the hunger, it died away, and was succeeded by a feeling of sickness. The thirty hours' fatigue and fasting I had endured were beginning to tell upon my naturally strong nerves: I felt my reasoning powers growing weaker, and my presence of mind leaving me. A feeling of despondency came over me--a thousand wild fancies passed through my bewildered brain; whilst at times my head grew dizzy, and I reeled in my saddle like a drunken man. These weak fits, as I may call them, did not last long; and each time that I recovered I spurred my mustang onwards. But all was in vain--ride as far and as fast as I would, nothing was visible but a boundless sea of grass.

At length I gave up hope, except in that God whose almighty hand was so manifest in the beauteous works around me. I let the bridle fall on my horse's neck, clasped my hands together, and prayed as I had never before prayed, so heartily and earnestly. When I had finished my prayer I felt greatly comforted. It seemed to me, that here in the wilderness, which man had not as yet polluted, I was nearer to God, and that my petition would assuredly be heard. I gazed cheerfully around, persuaded that I should yet escape the peril in which I stood. Just then, with what astonishment and inexpressible delight did I perceive, not ten paces off, the track of a horse!

The effect of this discovery was like an electric shock, and drew a cry of joy from my lips that made my mustang start and prick his ears. Tears of delight and gratitude to Heaven came into my eyes, and I could scarcely refrain from leaping off my horse and kissing the welcome signs that gave me assurance of succour. With renewed strength I galloped onwards; and had I been a lover flying to rescue his mistress from an Indian war-party, I could not have displayed more eagerness than I did in following up the trail of an unknown traveller.
Never had I felt so thankful to Providence as at that moment. I uttered thanksgivings as I rode on, and contemplated the wonderful evidences of His skill and might that offered themselves to me on all sides. The aspect of everything seemed changed, and I gazed with renewed admiration at the scenes through which I passed, and which I had previously been too preoccupied by the danger of my position to notice. The beautiful appearance of the islands struck me particularly, as they loomed in the distance, swimming in the bright golden beams of the noonday sun, dark spots of foliage in the midst of the waving grasses and many-hued flowers of the prairie. Before me lay the eternal flower-carpet, with its innumerable asters, tuberoses, and mimosas— that delicate plant which, when approached, lifts its head, seems to look at you, and then droops and shrinks back in alarm. This I saw it do when I was two or three paces from it, and without my horse’s foot having touched it. Its long roots stretch out horizontally in the ground, and the approaching tread of a horse or man is communicated through them to the plant, and produces this singular phenomenon. When the danger is gone by, and the earth ceases to vibrate, the mimosa may be seen again to raise its head, quivering and trembling, as though not yet fully recovered from its fears.

I had ridden on for three or four hours, following the track I had so fortunately discovered, when I came upon the trace of a second horseman, who appeared to have here joined the first traveller. It ran in a parallel direction to the one I was following.

Had it been possible to increase my joy, this discovery would have done so. I could now entertain no doubt that I had hit upon the way out of this terrible prairie. It struck me as rather singular that two travellers should have met in this immense plain, which so few persons traversed; but that they had done so was certain, for there were the tracks of the two horses, as distinct as possible. The trail was fresh, too, and it was evidently not long since the horsemen had passed. It might still be possible to overtake them; and in this hope I rode on faster than ever—as fast, at least, as my mustang could carry me through the thick grass and flowers, which in some places were four or five feet high.

During the next three hours I passed over ten or twelve miles of ground; but although the trail still lay plainly and broadly marked before me, I saw nothing of those who had left it. Still I persevered. I must overtake them sooner or later, provided I did not lose the track; and that I was most careful not to do, keeping my eyes fixed upon the ground as I rode along, and never deviating from the line which the travellers had followed.

Thus the day passed away, and evening approached. I still retained hope and courage; but my physical strength was giving way. The gnawing sensation of hunger increased. I felt sick and faint; my limbs were heavy, my blood seemed chill in my veins, and all my senses grew duller under the influence of exhaustion, thirst, and hunger. My eyesight was misty, my hearing less acute, the bridle felt cold and heavy in my fingers.

Still I rode on. Sooner or later I must find an outlet; the prairie must have an end somewhere. True, that the whole of Southern Texas is one vast prairie; but then there are rivers flowing through it, and if I could reach one of those, I should not be far from the abodes of men. By following the streams five or six miles up or down, I should be sure to find a plantation.
Whilst thus reasoning with and encouraging myself, I perceived the traces of a third horse, running parallel to the two which I had so long followed. This was indeed encouragement. It was certain that three travellers, arriving from different points of the prairie, and all going in the same direction, must have some object, must be repairing to some village or clearing; and where or what this was had now become indifferent to me, so long as I once more found myself in the habitations of men. I spurred on my mustang, who began to flag a little in his pace with the fatigue of our long ride.

The sun set behind the high trees of an island that bounded my view westward, and there being little or no twilight in those southerly latitudes, the broad day was almost instantaneously replaced by the darkness of night. I could proceed no further without losing the track of the three horsemen; and as I happened to be close to an island, I fastened my mustang to a branch with the lasso, and threw myself on the grass under the trees.

This night, however, I had no fancy for tobacco. Neither the cigars nor the dulcissimus tempted me. I tried to sleep, but in vain. Once or twice I began to doze, but was roused again by violent cramps and twitchings in all my limbs. I know of nothing more horrible than a night passed as I passed that one--faint and weak, enduring torture from hunger and thirst, striving after sleep, and never finding it. The sensation of hunger I experienced can only be compared to that of twenty pairs of pincers tearing at the stomach.

With the first grey light of morning I got up and prepared for departure. It was a long business, however, to get my horse ready. The saddle, which at other times I could throw upon his back with two fingers, now seemed of lead, and it was as much as I could do to lift it. I had still more difficulty in drawing the girths tight; but at last I accomplished this, and, scrambling upon my beast, rode off. Luckily my mustang's spirit was pretty well taken out of him by the last two days' work; for if he had been fresh, the smallest spring on one side would have sufficed to throw me out of the saddle. As it was, I sat upon him like an automaton, hanging forward over his neck, sometimes grasping the mane, and almost unable to use either rein or spur.

I had ridden on for some hours in this helpless plight, when I came to a place where the three horsemen whose track I was following had apparently made a halt--perhaps had passed the previous night. The grass was trampled and beaten down in a circumference of some fifty or sixty feet, and there was a confusion in the horse-tracks as if they had ridden backwards and forwards. Fearful of losing the right trail, I was looking carefully about me to see in what direction they had recommenced their journey, when I noticed something white amongst the long grass. I got off my horse to pick it up. It was a piece of paper with my own name written upon it; and I recognised it as the back of a letter in which my tobacco had been wrapped, and which I had thrown away at my halting-place of the preceding night. I looked around, and recognised the island and the very tree under which I had slept or endeavoured to sleep. The horrible truth instantly flashed across me--the horse-tracks I had followed were my own: since the preceding morning, I had been riding *in a circle*!

I stood for a few seconds thunderstruck by this discovery, and then sank upon the ground in utter despair. At that moment I should have been thankful to any one who would have knocked me on the
head as I lay. All I wished for was to die as speedily as possible.

I remained I know not how long in a desponding, half-insensible state upon the grass. Several hours must have elapsed; for when I got up, the sun was low in the western heavens. My head was so weak and wandering that I could not well explain to myself how it was that I had been thus riding after my own shadow. Yet the thing was clear enough. Without landmarks, and in the monotonous scenery of the prairie, I might have gone on for ever following my horse's track, and going back when I thought I was going forwards, had it not been for the discovery of the tobacco-paper. I was, as I subsequently learned, in the Jacinto prairie, one of the most beautiful in Texas, full sixty miles long and broad, but in which the most experienced hunters never risked themselves without a compass. It was little wonder, then, that I, a mere boy of two-and-twenty, just escaped from college, should have gone astray in it.

I now gave myself up for lost, and with the bridle twisted round my hand, and holding on as well as I could by the saddle and mane, I let my horse choose his own road. It would perhaps have been better had I done this sooner: the beast's instinct would probably have led him to some plantation. When he found himself left to his own guidance, he threw up his head, snuffed the air three or four times, and then, turning round, set off in a contrary direction to that he was before following, and at such a brisk pace that it was as much as I could do to keep upon him. Every jolt caused me so much pain, that I was more than once tempted to let myself fall off his back.

At last night came, and, thanks to the lasso, which kept my horse in awe, I managed to dismount and secure him. The whole night through I suffered from racking pains in head, limbs, and body. I felt as if I had been broken on the wheel; not an inch of my whole person but ached and smarted. My hands were grown thin and transparent, my cheeks fallen in, my eyes deep sunk in their sockets. When I touched my face, I could feel the change that had taken place; and as I did so, I caught myself once or twice laughing like a child. I was becoming delirious.

In the morning I could scarcely rise from the ground, so utterly weakened and exhausted was I by my three days' fasting, anxiety, and fatigue. I have heard say that a man in good health can live nine days without food. It may be so in a room, or in a prison, but assuredly not in a Texan prairie. I am quite certain that the fifth day would have seen the last of me.

I should never have been able to mount my mustang, but he had fortunately lain down, so I got into the saddle, and he rose up with me and started off of his own accord. As I rode along, the strangest visions passed before me. I saw the most beautiful cities that painter's fancy ever conceived, with towers, cupolas, and columns, whose summits lost themselves in the clouds; marble basins and fountains of bright sparkling water, rivers flowing with liquid gold and silver, and gardens whose trees were bowed down with magnificent fruit--fruit which I had not strength to raise my hand and pluck. My limbs were heavy as lead, my tongue, lips, and gums, dry and parched. I breathed with the greatest difficulty, and within me was a burning sensation, as if I had swallowed hot coals; whilst my extremities, both hands and feet, did not appear to form a part of myself, but to be instruments of torture affixed to me, and causing me the most intense suffering.
I have a confused recollection of a sort of rushing sound, the nature of which I was unable to determine, so nearly had all consciousness left me; then of finding myself amongst trees, the leaves and boughs of which scratched and beat against my face as I passed through them; then of a sudden and rapid descent, with the broad bright surface of a river below me. I clutched at a branch, but my fingers lacked strength to retain their grasp—there was a hissing, splashing noise, and the waters closed above my head.

I soon rose, and endeavoured to strike out with my arms and legs, but in vain; I was too weak to swim, and again I went down. A thousand lights danced before my eyes; there was a noise in my brain as if a four-and-twenty pounder had been fired close to my ear. Just then a hard hand was wrung into my neckcloth, and I felt myself dragged out of the water. The next instant my senses left me.
CHAPTER II.

LYNCH LAW.

When I recovered from my state of insensibility, and once more opened my eyes, I was lying on the bank of a small but deep river. My horse grazed quietly a few yards off, and beside me stood a man with folded arms, holding a wicker-covered flask in his hand. This was all I was able to observe; for my state of weakness prevented me from getting up and looking around me.

"Where am I?" I gasped.

"Where are you, stranger? By the Jacinto; and that you are by it, and not in it, is no fault of your'n, I reckon."

There was something harsh and repulsive in the tone and manner in which these words were spoken, and in the grating, scornful laugh which accompanied them, that jarred upon my nerves, and inspired me with a feeling of aversion towards the speaker. I knew he was my deliverer; that he had saved my life when my mustang, raging with thirst, had sprung head-foremost into the water; that, without him, I must inevitably have been drowned, even had the river been less deep than it was; and that it was by his care, and the whisky he had made me swallow, and of which I still had the flavour on my tongue, that I had been recovered from my death-like swoon. But had he done ten times as much for me, I could not have repressed the feeling of repugnance, the inexplicable dislike, with which the mere tones of his voice filled me. I turned my head away in order not to see him. There was a silence of some moments' duration.

"Don't seem as if my company was over and above agreeable," said the man at last.

"Your company not agreeable? This is the fourth day since I saw the face of a human being. During that time not a bit nor a drop has passed my tongue."

"Hallo! That's a lie!" shouted the man, with another strange, wild laugh. "You've taken a mouthful out of my flask; not taken it, certainly, but it went over your tongue all the same. Where do you come from? The beast ain't your'n."

"Mr Neal's," answered I.

"See it is by the brand. But what brings you here from Mr Neal's? It's a good seventy mile to his plantation, right across the prairie. Ain't stole the horse, have you?"

"Lost my way--four days--eaten nothing."

These words were all I could articulate. I was too weak to talk.
"Four days without eatin'!" cried the man, with a laugh like the sharpening of a saw, "and that in a Texas prairie, and with islands on all sides of you! Ha! I see how it is. You're a gentleman—that's plain enough. I was a sort of one myself once. You thought our Texas prairies was like the prairies in the States. Ha, ha! And so you didn't know how to help yourself. Did you see no bees in the air, no strawberries on the airth?"

"Bees? Strawberries?" repeated I.

"Yes, bees, which live in the hollow trees. Out of twenty trees there's sure to be one full of honey. So you saw no bees, eh? Perhaps you don't know the creturs when you see 'em? Ain't altogether so big as wild-geese or turkeys. But you must know what strawberries are, and that they don't grow upon the trees."

All this was spoken in the same sneering, savage manner as before, with the speaker's head half turned over his shoulder, while his features were distorted into a contemptuous grin.

"And if I had seen the bees, how was I to get at the honey without an axe?"

"How did you lose yourself?"

"My mustang--ran away--"

"I see. And you after him. You'd have done better to let him run. But what d'ye mean to do now?"

"I am weak--sick to death. I wish to get to the nearest house--an inn--anywhere where men are."

"Where men are," repeated the stranger, with his scornful smile. "Where men are," he muttered again, taking a few steps on one side.

I was hardly able to turn my head, but there was something strange in the man's movement that alarmed me; and, making a violent effort, I changed my position sufficiently to get him in sight again. He had drawn a long knife from his girdle, which he clutched in one hand, whilst he ran the forefinger of the other along its edge. I now for the first time got a full view of his face, and the impression it made upon me was anything but favourable. His countenance was the wildest I had ever seen; his blood-shot eyes rolled like balls of fire in their sockets; his movements and manner were indicative of a violent inward struggle. He did not stand still for three seconds together, but paced backwards and forwards with hurried, irregular steps, casting wild glances over his shoulder, his fingers playing all the while with the knife, with the rapid and objectless movements of a maniac.

I felt convinced that I was the cause of the struggle visibly going on within him—that my life or death was what he was deciding upon. But, in the state I then was, death had no terrors for me. The image of my mother, sisters, and father, passed before my eyes. I gave one thought to my peaceful, happy home, and then looked upwards and prayed.
The man had walked off to some distance. I turned myself a little more round, and, as I did so, I caught sight of the same magnificent phenomenon which I had met with on the second day of my wanderings. The colossal live oak rose in all its silvery splendour, at the distance of a couple of miles. Whilst I was gazing at it, and reflecting on the strange ill-luck that had made me pass within so short a distance of the river without finding it, I saw my new acquaintance approach a neighbouring cluster of trees, amongst which he disappeared.

After a short time I again perceived him coming towards me with a slow and staggering step. As he drew near, I had an opportunity of examining his whole appearance. He was very tall and lean, but large-boned, and apparently of great strength. His face, which had not been shaved for several weeks, was so tanned by sun and weather, that he might have been taken for an Indian, had not the beard proved his claim to white blood. But his eyes were what most struck me. There was something so frightfully wild in their expression, a look of terror and desperation, like that of a man whom all the furies of hell were hunting and persecuting. His hair hung in long ragged locks over his forehead, cheeks, and neck, and round his head was bound a handkerchief, on which were several stains of a brownish-black colour. Spots of the same kind were visible upon his leathern jacket, breeches, and mocassins; they were evidently blood stains. His hunting-knife, which was nearly two feet long, with a rude wooden handle, was now replaced in his girdle, but in its stead he grasped a Kentucky rifle.

Although I did my utmost to assume an indifferent countenance, my features doubtless expressed something of the repugnance and horror with which the man inspired me. He looked loweringly at me for a moment from under his shaggy eyebrows.

"You don't seem to like the company you've got into," said he. "Do I look so very desperate, then? Is it written so plainly on my face?"

"What should there be written upon your face?"

"What? What? Them questions are for fools and children."

"I will ask you none; but as a Christian, as a countryman, I beseech you----"

"Christian?" interrupted he, with a hollow laugh. "Countryman!" He struck the butt of his rifle hard upon the ground. "That is my countryman--my only friend!" he continued, as he examined the flint and lock of his weapon. "That releases from all troubles: that's a true friend. Pooh! perhaps it'll release you too--put you to rest."

These last words were uttered aside, and musingly.

"Put him to rest, as well as----. Pooh! One more or less--Perhaps it would drive away that cursed spectre."

All this seemed to be spoken to his rifle.
"Will you swear not to betray me?" cried he to me. "Else, one touch----"

As he spoke, he brought the gun to his shoulder, the muzzle pointed full at my breast.

I felt no fear. I am sure my pulse did not give a throb the more for this menace. So deadly weak and helpless as I lay, it was unnecessary to shoot me. The slightest blow from the butt of the rifle would have driven the last faint spark of life out of my exhausted body. I looked calmly, indifferently even, into the muzzle of the piece.

"If you can answer it to your God, to your and my Judge and Creator, do your will."

My words, which from faintness I could scarcely render audible, had, nevertheless, a sudden and startling effect upon the man. He trembled from head to foot, let the butt of his gun fall heavily to the ground, and gazed at me with open mouth and staring eyes.

"This one, too, comes with his God!" muttered he. "God! and your and my Creator--and--Judge."

He seemed hardly able to articulate these words, which were uttered by gasps and efforts, as though something had choked him.

"His and my--Judge"--groaned he again. "Can there be a God, a Creator and Judge?"

As he stood thus muttering to himself, his eyes suddenly became fixed, and his features horribly distorted.

"Do it not!" cried he, in a shrill tone of horror, that rang through my head. "It will bring no blessin' with it. I am a dead man! God be merciful to me! My poor wife! my poor children!"

The rifle fell from his hands, and he smote his breast and forehead in a paroxysm of the wildest fury and despair. It was frightful to behold the conscience-stricken wretch, stamping madly about, and casting glances of terror behind him, as though demons had been hunting him down. The foam flew from his mouth, and I expected each moment to see him fall to the ground in a fit of epilepsy. Gradually, however, he grew more tranquil.

"D'ye see nothin' in my face?" said he in a hoarse whisper, suddenly pausing close to where I lay.

"What should I see?"

He came yet nearer.

"Look well at me--through me, if you can. D'ye see nothin' now?"

"I see nothing," replied I.
"Ah! I understand; you can see nothin'. Ain't in a spyin' humour, I calcilate. No, no, that you ain't. After four days and nights fastin', one loses the fancy for many things. I've tried it for two days myself. So, you are weak and faint, eh? But I needn't ask that, I reckon. You look bad enough. Take another drop of whisky; it'll strengthen you. But wait till I mix it."

As he spoke, he stepped down to the edge of the river, and scooping up the water in the hollow of his hand, filled up his flask with it. Then returning to me, he poured a little into my mouth.

Even the bloodthirsty Indian appears less of a savage when engaged in a compassionate act, and the wild desperado I had fallen in with seemed softened and humanised by the service he was rendering me. His voice sounded less harsh; his manner was calmer and milder.

"You wish to go to an inn?"

"For Heaven's sake, yes. These four days I have tasted nothing but a bit of tobacco."

"Can you spare a bit of that?"

"All I have."

I handed him my cigar-case, and the roll of _dulcissimus_. He snatched the latter from me, and bit into it with the furious eagerness of a wolf.

"Ah! the right sort this!" muttered he to himself. "Ah, young man, or old man--you're an old man, ain't you? How old are you?"

"Two-and-twenty."

He shook his head doubtingly.

"Can hardly believe that. But four days in the prairie, and nothin' to eat. Well, it may be so. But, stranger, if I had had this bit of tobacco only ten days ago----A bit of tobacco is worth a deal sometimes. It might have saved a man's life!"

Again he groaned, and his accents were wild and unnatural.

"I say, stranger!" cried he in a threatening tone. "I say! D'ye see yonder live oak? D'ye see it? It's the Patriarch, and a finer and mightier one you won't find in the prairies, I reckon. D'ye see it?"

"I do see it."

"Ah! you see it," cried he fiercely. "And what is it to you? What have you to do with the Patriarch, or with what lies under it? I reckon you had best not be too curious that way. If you dare take a step under
that tree----" He swore an oath too horrible to be repeated.

"There's a spectre there," cried he; "a spectre that would fright you to death. Better keep away."

"I will keep away," replied I. "I never thought of going near it. All I want is to get to the nearest plantation or inn."

"Ah! true, man--the next inn. I'll show you the way to it. I will."

"You will save my life by so doing," said I, "and I shall be ever grateful to you as my deliverer."

"Deliverer!" repeated he with a wild laugh. "Pooh! If you knew what sort of a deliverer--Pooh! What's the use of savin' a life, when--yet I will--I will save yours; perhaps the cursed spectre will leave me then. Will you not? Will you not?" cried he, suddenly changing his scornful mocking tones to those of entreaty and supplication, and turning his face in the direction of the live oak. Again his wildness of manner returned, and his eyes were fixed as he gazed for some moments at the gigantic tree. Then darting away, he disappeared among the trees, whence he had fetched his rifle, and presently emerged again, leading a saddled horse with him. He called to me to mount mine, but seeing that I was unable even to rise from the ground, he stepped up to me, and with the greatest ease lifted me into the saddle with one hand, so light had I become during my long fast. Then taking the end of my lasso, he got upon his own horse and set off, leading my mustang after him.

We rode on for some time without exchanging a word. My guide kept up a sort of muttered soliloquy; but as I was full ten paces in his rear, I could distinguish nothing of what he said. At times he would raise his rifle to his shoulder, then lower it again, and speak to it, sometimes caressingly, sometimes in anger. More than once he turned his head, and cast keen searching glances at me, as though to see whether I were watching him or not.

We had ridden more than an hour, and the strength the whisky had given me was fast failing, so that I expected each moment to fall from my horse, when suddenly I caught sight of a kind of rude hedge, and, almost immediately afterwards, of the wall of a small blockhouse. A faint cry of joy escaped me, and I endeavoured, but in vain, to give my horse the spur. My guide turned round, fixed his wild eyes upon me, and spoke in a threatening tone.

"You are impatient, man! impatient, I see. You think now, perhaps----"

"I am dying," was all I could utter. In fact, my senses were leaving me from exhaustion, and I really thought my last hour was come.

"Pooh! dyin'! One don't die so easy. And yet--d----n!--it might be true."

He sprang off his horse, and was just in time to catch me in his arms as I fell from the saddle. A few drops of whisky, however, restored me to consciousness. My guide replaced me upon my mustang, and
CHAPTER II.

after passing through a potato ground, a field of Indian corn, and a small grove of peach-trees, we found ourselves at the door of the blockhouse.

I was so utterly helpless, that my strange companion was obliged to lift me off my horse, and carry me into the dwelling. He set me down upon a bench, passive and powerless as an infant. Strange to say, I was never better able to observe all that passed around me, than during the few hours of physical debility that succeeded my immersion in the Jacinto. A blow with a reed would have knocked me off my seat, but my mental faculties, instead of participating in this weakness, seemed sharpened to an unusual degree of acuteness.

The blockhouse in which we now were was of the poorest possible description; a mere log hut consisting of one room, that served as kitchen, sitting-room, and bedchamber. The door of rough planks swung heavily upon two hooks, which fitted into iron rings, and formed a clumsy substitute for hinges; a wooden latch and heavy bar served to secure it; windows, properly speaking, there were none, but in their stead a few holes covered with dirty oiled paper; the floor was of clay, stamped hard and dry in the middle, but out of which, at the sides of the room, a crop of rank grass was growing, a foot or more high. In one corner stood a clumsy bedstead, in another was a sort of bar or counter, on which were half a dozen drinking glasses of various sizes and patterns. The table consisted of four thick posts, firmly planted in the ground, and on which were nailed three boards that had apparently belonged to some chest or case, for they were partly painted, and there was a date, and the three first letters of a word upon one of them. A shelf fixed against the side of the hut supported an earthen pot or two, and three or four bottles, uncorked, and apparently empty; and from some wooden pegs wedged in between the logs, hung suspended a few articles of wearing apparel of no very cleanly aspect.

Pacing up and down the hut with a kind of stealthy cat-like pace, was an individual, whose unprepossessing exterior was in good keeping with the wretched appearance of this Texan shebeen house. He was an undersized, stooping figure, red-haired and large-mouthed, with small reddish pig's eyes, which he seemed totally unable to raise from the ground, and whose lowering, hang-dog expression corresponded fully with the treacherous, restless, panther-like stealthiness of his step and movements. Without greeting us either by word or look, this personage dived into a dark corner of the tenement, brought out a full bottle, and, placing it and glasses upon the table, resumed the monotonous exercise in which he had been indulging on our entrance.

My guide and deliverer said nothing whilst the tavern-keeper was getting out the bottle, although he watched all his movements with a keen and suspicious eye. He now filled a large glass of spirits, and tossed it off at a single draught. When he had done this, he spoke for the first time.

"Johnny!"

Johnny made no answer.

"This gentleman has eaten nothing for four days."
"Indeed," replied Johnny, without looking up, or intermitting his sneaking, restless walk from one corner of the room to the other.

"I said four days, d'ye hear? Four days. Bring him tea immediately, strong tea, and then make some good beef-soup. I know you have bought some tea and rum and sugar. The tea must be ready directly, the soup in an hour at farthest, d'ye understand? And then I want some whisky for myself, and a beefsteak and potatoes. Now, tell all that to your Sambo."

Johnny did not seem to hear, but continued his walk, creeping along with noiseless step, and each time that he turned, giving a sort of spring like a cat or a panther.

"I've money, Johnny," said my guide. "Money, man, d'ye hear?" And so saying, he produced a tolerably full purse.

For the first time Johnny raised his head, gave an indefinable glance at the purse, and then, springing forward, fixed his small, cunning eyes upon those of my guide, whilst a smile of strange meaning spread over his repulsive features.

The two men stood for the space of a minute, staring at each other, without uttering a word. An infernal grin distended Johnny's coarse mouth from ear to ear. My guide gasped for breath.

"I've money," cried he at last, striking the butt of his rifle violently on the ground. "D'ye understand, Johnny? Money; and a rifle too, if needs be."

He stepped to the table and filled another glass of raw spirits, which disappeared like the preceding one. Whilst he drank, Johnny stole out of the room so softly that my companion was only made aware of his departure by the noise of the wooden latch. He then came up to me, took me in his arms without saying a word, and carrying me to the bed, laid me gently down upon it.

"You make yourself at home," snarled Johnny, who just then came in again.

"Always do that, I reckon, when I'm in a tavern," answered my guide, quietly pouring out and swallowing another glassful. "The gentleman shall have your bed to-day. You and your Sambo may sleep in the pigsty. You have none though, I believe?"

"Bob!" screamed Johnny furiously.

"That's my name--Bob Rock."

"For the present," hissed Johnny, with a sneer.

"Just as yours is Johnny Down," replied Bob in the same tone. "Pooh! Johnny, guess we know one another?"
"Rayther calcilate we do," replied Johnny through his teeth.

"And have done many a day," laughed Bob.

"You're the famous Bob from Sodoma in Georgia?"

"Sodoma in Alabama, Johnny. Sodoma lies in Alabama," said Bob, filling another glass. "Don't you know that yet, you who were above a year in Columbus, doin' all sorts of dirty work?"

"Better hold your tongue, Bob," said Johnny, with a dangerous look at me.

"Pooh! Don't mind him; he won't talk, I'll answer for it. He's lost the taste for chatterin' in the Jacinto prairie. But Sodoma," continued Bob, "is in Alabama, man! Columbus in Georgia! They are parted by the Chatahoochie. Ah! that was a jolly life on the Chatahoochie. But nothin' lasts in this world, as my old schoolmaster used to say. Pooh! They've druv the Injuns a step further over the Mississippi now. But it was a glorious life--warn't it?"

Again he filled his glass and drank.

The information I gathered from this conversation as to the previous life and habits of these two men, had nothing in it very satisfactory or encouraging for me. In the whole of the south-western States there was no place that could boast of being the resort of so many outlaws and bad characters as the town of Sodoma. It is situated, or was situated, at least, a few years previously to the time I speak of, in Alabama, on Indian ground, and was the harbour of refuge for all the murderers and outcasts from the western and south-western parts of the Union. There, under Indian government, they found shelter and security; and frightful were the crimes and cruelties perpetrated at that place. Scarcely a day passed without an assassination, not secretly committed, but in broad sunlight. Bands of these wretches, armed with knives and rifles, used to cross the Chatahoochie, and make inroads into Columbus; break into houses, rob, murder, ill-treat women, and then return in triumph to their dens, laden with booty, and laughing at the laws. It was useless to think of pursuing them, or of obtaining justice, for they were on Indian territory; and many of the chiefs were in league with them. At length General Jackson and the government took it up. The Indians were driven over the Mississippi, the outlaws and murderers fled, Sodoma itself disappeared; and, released from its troublesome neighbours, Columbus is now as nourishing a State as any in the west.

The recollections of their former life and exploits seemed highly interesting to the two comrades; and their communications became more and more confidential. Johnny filled himself a glass, and the conversation soon increased in animation. I could understand little of what they said, for they spoke a sort of thieves' jargon. After a time, their voices sounded as a confused hum in my ears, the objects in the room got gradually less distinct, and I fell asleep.

I was roused, not very gently, by a mulatto woman, who poured a spoonful of tea into my mouth before I had well opened my eyes. She at first did not attend to me with much apparent good-will; but by the
time she had given me half-a-dozen spoonsful, her womanly sympathies were awakened, and her manner was kinder. The tea did me an infinite deal of good, and infused new life into my veins. I finished the cup, and the mulatto laid me down again on my pillow, with far more gentleness than she lifted me up.

"Gor! Gor!" cried she, "what poor young man! Berry weak. Him soon better. One hour, massa, good soup."

"Soup! What do you want with soup?" grumbled Johnny.

"Him take soup. I cook it," screamed the woman.

"Worse for you if she don't, Johnny," said Bob; "worse for you, I say."

Johnny muttered something in reply, but I did not distinguish what it was, for my eyes closed, and I again fell asleep.

It seemed as if I had not been five minutes slumbering when the mulatto returned with the soup. The tea had revived me, but this gave me strength; and when I had taken it I was able to sit up in the bed.

Whilst the woman fed me, Bob ate his beefsteak. It was a piece of meat that might have sufficed for six persons, but the man was as hungry as if he had eaten nothing for three days. He cut off wedges half as big as his fist, swallowed them with ravenous eagerness, and, instead of bread, bit into some unpeeled potatoes. All this was washed down with glass after glass of raw spirits, which had the effect of wakening him up, and infusing a certain cheerfulness into his strange humour. He still spoke more to himself than to Johnny, but his recollections seemed agreeable; he nodded self-approvingly, and sometimes laughed aloud. At last he began to abuse Johnny for being, as he said, such a sneaking, cowardly fellow—such a treacherous, false-hearted gallows-bird.

"It's true," said he, "I am gallows-bird enough myself, but then I'm open, and no man can say I'm afeard; but Johnny, Johnny, who----"

I do not know what he was about to say, for Johnny sprang towards him, and placed both hands over his mouth, receiving in return a blow that knocked him as far as the door, through which he retreated, cursing and grumbling.

I soon fell asleep again, and whilst in that state I had a confused consciousness of various noises in the room, loud words, blows, and shouting. Wearied as I was, however, I believe no noise would have fully roused me, although hunger at last did.

When I opened my eyes I saw the mulatto woman sitting by my bed, and keeping off the mosquitoes. She brought me the remainder of the soup, and promised, if I would sleep a couple of hours more, to bring me as good a beefsteak as ever came off a gridiron. Before the two hours had elapsed I awoke,
hungrier than ever. After I had eaten all the beefsteak the woman would allow me, which was a very
moderate quantity, she brought me a beer-glass full of the most delicious punch I ever tasted. I asked
her where she had got the rum and lemons, and she told me that it was she who had bought them, as
well as a stock of coffee and tea; that Johnny was her partner, but that he had done nothing but build the
house, and badly built it was. She then began to abuse Johnny, and said he was a gambler, and worse
still; that he had had plenty of money once, but had lost it all; that she had first known him in Lower
Natchez, but he had been obliged to run away from there in the night to save his neck. Bob was no
better, she said; on the contrary--and here she made the gesture of cutting a man's throat--he was a very
bad fellow, she added. He had got drunk after his dinner, knocked Johnny down, and broken
everything. He was now lying asleep outside the door; and Johnny had hidden himself somewhere.

How long she continued speaking I know not, for I again fell into a deep sleep, which this time lasted
six or seven hours.

I was awakened by a strong grasp laid upon my arm, which made me cry out, more, however, from
alarm than pain. Bob stood by my bedside; the traces of the preceding night's debauch plainly written
on his haggard countenance. His blood-shot eyes were inflamed and swollen, and rolled with even more
than their usual wildness; his mouth was open, and the jaws were stiff and fixed; he looked like one
fresh from the perpetration of some frightful deed. I could fancy the first murderer to have worn such
an aspect when gazing on the body of his slaughtered brother. I shrank back, horror-struck at his
appearance.

"In God's name, man, what do you want?"

He made no answer.

"You are in a fever. You've the ague!"

"Ay, a fever," groaned he, shivering as he spoke; "a fever, but not the one you mean; a fever, young
man, such as God keep you from ever having."

His whole frame shuddered as he uttered these words. There was a short pause.

"Curious that," continued he; "I've served more than one in the same way, but never thought of it
afterwards--was forgotten in less than no time. Got to pay the whole score at once, I suppose. Can't rest
a minute. In the open prairie it's the worst; there stands the old man, so plain, with his silver beard, and
the spectre just behind him."

His eyes rolled, he clenched his fists, and striking his forehead furiously, rushed out of the hut.

In a few minutes he returned, apparently more composed, and walked straight up to my bed.

"Stranger, you must do me a service," said he abruptly.
"Ten rather than one," replied I; "anything that is in my power. Do I not owe you my life?"

"You're a gentleman, I see, and a Christian. You must come with me to the squire--the Alcalde."

"To the Alcalde, man? What must I go there for?"

"You'll see and hear when you get there; I've something to tell him--something for his own ear."

He drew a deep breath, and remained silent for a short time, gazing anxiously on all sides of him.

"Something," whispered he, "that nobody else must hear."

"But there's Johnny there. Why not take him?"

"Johnny!" cried he, with a scornful laugh; "Johnny! who's ten times worse than I am, bad as I be; and bad I am to be sure, but yet open and above board, always till this time; but Johnny! he'd sell his own mother. He's a cowardly, sneakin', treacherous hound, is Johnny."

It was unnecessary to tell me this, for Johnny's character was written plainly enough upon his countenance.

"But why do you want me to go to the Alcalde?"

"Why does one want people before the judge? He's a judge, man; a Mexican one certainly, but chosen by us Americans; and an American himself, as you and I are."

"And how soon must I go?"

"Directly. I can't bear it any longer. It leaves me no peace. Not an hour's rest have I had for the last eight days. When I go out into the prairie, the spectre stands before me and beckons me on; and if I try to go another way, he comes behind me and drives me before him under the Patriarch. I see him just as plainly as when he was alive, only paler and sadder. It seems as if I could touch him with my hand. Even the bottle is no use now; neither rum, nor whisky, nor brandy, rid me of him; it don't, by the 'tarnal. --Curious that! I got drunk yesterday--thought to get rid of him; but he came in the night and drove me out. I was obliged to go. Wouldn't let me sleep; was forced to go under the Patriarch."

"Under the Patriarch? the live oak?" cried I, in astonishment. "Were you there in the night?"

"Ay, that was I," replied he, in the same horribly confidential tone; "and the spirit threatened me, and said, says he, 'I will leave you no peace, Bob, till you go to the Alcalde and tell him.'"

"Then I will go with you to the Alcalde, and that immediately," said I, raising myself up in bed. I could not help pitying the poor fellow from my very soul.
"Where are you going?" croaked Johnny, who at this moment glided into the room. "Not a step shall you stir till you've paid."

"Johnny," said Bob, seizing his less powerful companion by the shoulders, lifting him up like a child, and then setting him down again with such force, that his knees cracked and bent under him;--"Johnny, this gentleman is my guest, d'ye understand? And here is the reckonin', and mind yourself, Johnny--mind yourself, that's all."

Johnny crept into a corner like a flogged hound; the mulatto woman, however, did not seem disposed to be so easily intimidated. Sticking her arms in her sides, she waddled boldly forward.

"You not take him 'way, Massa Bob?" screamed she. "Him stop here. Him berry weak--not able for ride--not able for stand on him foot."

This was true enough. Strong as I had felt in bed, I could hardly stand upright when I got out of it.

For a moment Bob seemed undecided, but only for one moment; then, stepping up to the mulatto, he lifted her, fat and heavy as she was, in the same manner as he had done her partner, at least a foot from the ground, and carried her screaming and struggling to the door, which he kicked open. Then setting her down outside, "Silence!" roared he, "and some good strong tea instead of your cursed chatter, and a fresh beefsteak instead of your stinking carcass. That will strengthen the gentleman; so be quick about it, you old brown-skinned beast, you!"

I had slept in my clothes, and my toilet was consequently soon made, by the help of a bowl of water and a towel, which Bob made Johnny bring, and then ordered him to go and get our horses ready.

A hearty breakfast of tea, butter, Indian-corn bread, and steaks, increased my strength so much, that I was able to mount my mustang. I had still pains in all my limbs, but we rode slowly; the morning was bright, the air fresh and elastic, and I felt myself getting gradually better. Our path led through the prairie; the river, fringed with wood, on the one hand, the vast ocean of grass, sprinkled with innumerable islands of trees, on the other. We saw abundance of game, which sprang up under the very feet of our horses; but although Bob had his rifle, he made no use of it. He muttered continually to himself, and seemed to be arranging what he should say to the judge; for I heard him talking of things which I would just as soon not have listened to, if I could have helped it. I was heartily glad when we at length reached the plantation of the Alcalde.

It seemed a very considerable one, and the size and appearance of the framework house bespoke comfort and even luxury. The building was surrounded by a group of China trees, which I should have thought about ten years of age, but which I afterwards learned had not been planted half that time, although they were already large enough to afford a very agreeable shade. Right in front of the house rose a live oak, inferior in size to the one in the prairie, but still of immense age and great beauty. To the left were some two hundred acres of cotton fields, extending to the bank of the Jacinto, which at this spot made a sharp turn, and winding round the plantation, enclosed it on three sides. Before the house
lay the prairie, with its archipelago of islands, and herds of grazing cattle and mustangs; to the right,
more cotton fields; and in rear of the dwelling, the negro cottages and out-buildings. There was a
Sabbath-like stillness pervading the whole scene, which seemed to strike even Bob. He paused as
though in deep thought, and allowed his hand to rest for a moment on the handle of the lattice door.
Then with a sudden and resolute jerk, bespeaking an equally energetic resolve, he pushed open the gate,
and we entered a garden planted with orange, banana, and citron trees, the path through which was
enclosed between palisades, and led to a sort of front court, with another lattice-work door, beside
which hung a bell. Upon ringing this, a negro appeared.

The black seemed to know Bob very well, for he nodded to him as to an old acquaintance, and said the
squire wanted him, and had asked after him several times. He then led the way to a large parlour, very
handsomely furnished for Texas, and in which we found the squire, or more properly speaking, the
Alcalde, sitting smoking his cigar. He had just breakfasted, and the plates and dishes were still upon the
table. He did not appear to be much given to compliments or ceremony, or to partake at all of the
Yankee failing of curiosity, for he answered our salutation with a laconic "good-morning," and scarcely
even looked at us. At the very first glance, it was easy to see that he came from Tennessee or Virginia,
the only provinces in which one finds men of his gigantic mould. Even sitting, his head rose above
those of the negro servants in waiting. Nor was his height alone remarkable; he had the true
West-Virginian build; the enormous chest and shoulders, and herculean limbs, the massive features and
sharp grey eyes; altogether an exterior well calculated to impose on the rough backwoodsmen with
whom he had to deal.

I was tired with my ride, and took a chair. The squire apparently did not deem me worthy of notice, or
else reserved me for a later scrutiny: but he fixed a long, searching look upon Bob, who remained
standing, with his head sunk on his breast.

The judge at last broke silence.

"So here you are again, Bob. It's long since we've seen you, and I thought you had clean forgotten us.
Well, Bob, we shouldn't have broke our hearts, I reckon; for I hate gamblers--ay, that I do--worse than
skunks. It's a vile thing is play, and has ruined many a man, both in this world and the next. It's ruined
you too, Bob."

Bob said nothing.

"You'd have been mighty useful here last week; there was plenty for you to do. My step-daughter
arrived; but as you weren't to be found, we had to send to Joel to shoot us a buck and a few dozen
snipes. Ah, Bob! one might still make a good citizen of you, if you'd only leave off that cursed play!"

Bob still remained silent.

"Now, go into the kitchen and get some breakfast."
Bob neither answered nor moved.

"D'ye hear? Go into the kitchen and get something to eat. And, Ptoly"--added he to the negro--"tell Veny to give him a pint of rum."

"Don't want yer rum--ain't thirsty"--growled Bob.

"Very like, very like," said the judge sharply. "Reckon you've taken too much already. Look as if you could swallow a wild cat alive. And you," added he, turning to me--"Ptoly, what the devil are you at? Don't you see the man wants his breakfast? Where's the coffee? Or would you rather have tea?"

"Thank you, Alcalde, I have breakfasted already."

"Don't look as if. Ain't sick, are you? Where do you come from? What's happened to you? Ain't got the ague, have you? What are you doing with Bob?"

He looked keenly and searchingly at me, and then again at Bob. My appearance was certainly not very prepossessing, unshaven as I was, and with my clothes and linen soiled and torn. He was evidently considering what could be the motive of our visit, and what had brought me into Bob's society. The result of his physiognomical observations did not appear very favourable either to me or my companion. I hastened to explain.

"You shall hear how it was, judge. I am indebted to Bob for my life."

"Your life! Indebted to Bob for your life!" repeated the judge, shaking his head incredulously.

I related how I had lost my way in the prairie; had been carried into the Jacinto by my horse; and how I should inevitably have been drowned but for Bob's aid.

"Indeed!" said the judge, when I had done speaking. "So Bob saved your life! Is that true, Bob? Well, I am glad of it, Bob--very glad of it. Ah! if you could only keep away from that Johnny. I tell you, Bob, Johnny will be the ruin of you. Better keep out of his way."

This was spoken gravely and earnestly, the speaker pausing between the sentences to take a pull at his cigar, and a sup out of his glass.

"Yes, Bob," he repeated; "only keep away from Johnny!"

"It's too late," answered Bob.

"Don't know why it should be. Never too late to leave a debauched, sinful life; never, man!"

"Calkilate it is, though," replied Bob sullenly.
"You calculate it is?" said the judge, fixing his eyes on him. "And why do you calculate that? Take a glass--Ptoly, a glass--and tell me, man, why should it be too late?"

"I ain't thirsty, squire," said Bob.

"Don't talk to me of your thirst; rum's not for thirst, but to strengthen the heart and nerves, to drive away the blue devils. And a good thing it is, taken in moderation."

As he spoke he filled himself a glass, and drank half of it off. Bob shook his head.

"No rum for me, squire. I take no pleasure in it. I've something on my mind too heavy for rum to wash away."

"And what is that, Bob? Come, let's hear what you've got to say. Or, perhaps, you'd rather speak to me alone. It's Sunday to-day, and no business ought to be done; but for once, and for you, we'll make an exception."

"I brought the gentleman with me on purpose to witness what I had to say," answered Bob, taking a cigar out of a box that stood on the table. Although the judge had not asked him to take one, he very quietly offered him a light. Bob smoked a whiff or two, looked thoughtfully at the judge, and then threw the cigar through the open window.

"It don't relish, squire; nothin' does now."

"Ah, Bob! if you'd leave off play and drink! They're your ruin; worse than ague or fever."

"It's no use," continued Bob, as if he did not hear the judge's remark; "it must out. I fo't agin it, and thought to drive it away, but it can't be done. I've put a bit of lead into several before now, but this one----"

"What's that?" cried the judge, chucking his cigar away, and looking sternly at Bob. "What's up now? What are you saying about a bit of lead? None of your Sodoma and Lower Natchez tricks, I hope? They won't do here. Don't understand such jokes."

"Pooh! they don't understand them a bit more in Natchez. If they did, I shouldn't be in Texas."

"The less said of that the better, Bob. You promised to lead a new life here; so we won't rake up old stories."

"I did, I did!" groaned Bob; "and I meant it too; but it's all no use. I shall never be better till I'm hung."

I stared at the man in astonishment. The judge, however, took another cigar, lighted it, and, after puffing out a cloud of smoke, said, very unconcernedly--
"Not better till you're hung! What do you want to be hung for? To be sure, you should have been long ago, if the Georgia and Alabama papers don't lie. But we are not in the States here, but in Texas, under Mexican laws. It's nothing to us what you've done yonder. Where there is no accuser there can be no judge."

"Send away the nigger, squire," said Bob. "What a free white man has to say, shouldn't be heard by black ears."

"Go away, Ptoly," said the judge. "Now then," added he, turning to Bob, "say what you have to say; but mind, nobody forces you to do it, and it's only out of good-will that I listen to you, for to-day's Sunday."

"I know that," muttered Bob; "I know that, squire; but it leaves me no peace, and it must out. I've been to San Felipe de Austin, to Anahuac, everywhere, but it's all no use. Wherever I go, the spectre follows me, and drives me back under the cursed Patriarch."

"Under the Patriarch!" exclaimed the judge.

"Ay, under the Patriarch!" groaned Bob. "Don't you know the Patriarch--the old live oak near the ford, on the Jacinto?"

"I know, I know!" answered the judge. "And what drives you under the Patriarch?"

"What drives me? What drives a man who--who----"

"A man who----" repeated the judge gently.

"A man," continued Bob, in the same low tone, "who has sent a rifle bullet into another's heart. He lies there, under the Patriarch, whom I----"

"Whom you?" asked the judge.

"Whom I killed!" said Bob, in a hollow whisper.

"Killed?" exclaimed the judge. "You killed him? Who?"

"Ah! who? Why don't you let me speak? You always interrupt me with your palaver," growled Bob.

"You are getting saucy, Bob," said the judge impatiently. "Go on, however. I reckon it's only one of your usual tantrums."

Bob shook his head. The judge looked keenly at him for a moment, and then resumed in a sort of confidential, encouraging tone.
"Under the Patriarch; and how did he come under the Patriarch?"

"I dragged him there, and buried him there," replied Bob.

"Dragged him there! Why did you drag him there?"

"Because he couldn't go himself, with more than half an ounce of lead in his body."

"And you put the half ounce of lead into him, Bob? Well, if it was Johnny, you've done the country a service, and saved it a rope."

Bob shook his head negatively.

"It wasn't Johnny, although----But you shall hear all about it. It's just ten days since you paid me twenty dollars fifty."

"I did so, Bob; twenty dollars fifty cents; and I advised you at the same time to let the money lie till you had a couple of hundred dollars, or enough to buy a quarter or an eight of Sitio land; but advice is thrown away upon you."

"When I got the money, I thought I'd go down to San Felipe, to the Mexicans, and try my luck, and, at the same time, see the doctor about my fever. As I was goin' there, I passed near Johnny's house, and fancied a glass, but determined not to get off my horse. I rode up to the window, and looked in. There was a man sittin' at the table, havin' a hearty good dinner of steaks and potatoes, and washin' it down with a stiff glass of grog. I began to feel hungry myself, and while I was considerin' whether I should 'light or not, Johnny came sneakin' out, and whispered to me to come in, that there was a man inside with whom somethin' might be done if we went the right way to work; a man who had a leather belt round his waist cram-full of hard Jackson; and that, if we got out the cards and pretended to play a little together he would soon take the bait and join us.

"I wasn't much inclined," continued Bob; "but Johnny bothered me so to go in, that I got off my horse. As I did so, the dollars chinked in my pocket, and the sound was like the devil's voice 'ticing me to play.

"I went in; and Johnny fetched the whisky bottle. One glass followed another. There were beefsteaks and potatoes too, but I only eat a couple of mouthfuls. When I had drank two, three, ay, four glasses, Johnny brought the cards and dice. 'Hallo, Johnny!' says I; 'cards and dice, Johnny! I've twenty dollars fifty in my pocket. Let's have a game! But no more drink for me; for I know you, Johnny, I know you----'

"Johny larfed slyly, and rattled the dice, and we sat down to play. I hadn't meant to drink any more, but play makes one thirsty; and with every glass I got more eager, and my dollars got fewer. I reckoned, however, that the stranger would join us, and that I should be able to win back from him; but not a bit
of it: he sat quite quiet, and ate and drank as if he didn’t see we were there. I went on playin' madder
than ever, and before half an hour was over, I was cleaned out; my twenty dollars fifty gone to the
devil, or what's the same thing, into Johnny's pocket.

"When I found myself without a cent, I was mad, I reckon. It warn't the first time, nor the hundredth,
that I had lost money. Many bigger sums than that--ay, hundreds and thousands of dollars had I played
away--but they had none of them cost me the hundredth or thousandth part of the trouble to get that
these twenty dollars fifty had; two full months had I been slavin' away in the woods and prairies to airm
them, and caught the fever there. The fever I had still, but no money to cure it with. Johnny only larfed
in my face, and rattled my dollars. I made a hit at him, which, if he hadn't jumped on one side, would
have cured him of larfin' for a week or two.

"Presently, however, he came sneakin' up to me, and winkin' and whisperin'; and, 'Bob!' says he, 'is it
come to that with you? are you grown so chicken-hearted that you don't see the beltful of money round
his body?' said he lookin' at it. 'No end of hard coin, I guess; and all to be had for little more than half
an ounce of lead.'"

"Did he say that?" asked the judge.

"Ay, that did he, but I wouldn't listen to him. I was mad with him for winning my twenty dollars; and I
told him that, if he wanted the stranger's purse, he might take it himself, and be d----d; that I wasn't
goin' to pull the hot chestnuts out of the fire for him. And I got on my horse, and rode away like mad.

"My head spun round like a mill. I couldn't get over my loss. I took the twenty dollars fifty more to
heart than any money I had ever gambled. I didn't know where to go. I didn't dare go back to you, for I
knew you would scold me."

"I shouldn't have scolded you, Bob; or, if I had, it would only have been for your good. I should have
summoned Johnny before me, called together a jury of twelve of the neighbours, got you back your
twenty dollars fifty, and sent Johnny out of the country; or, better still, out of the world."

These words were spoken with much phlegm, but yet with a degree of feeling and sympathy which
greatly improved my opinion of the worthy judge. Bob also seemed touched. He drew a deep sigh, and
gazed at the Alcalde with a melancholy look.

"It's too late," muttered he; "too late, squire."

"Perhaps not," replied the judge; "but let's hear the rest."

"Well," continued Bob, "I kept ridin' on at random, and when evenin' came I found myself near the
palmetto field on the bank of the Jacinto. As I was ridin' past it, I heard all at once a tramp of a horse.
At that moment the queerest feelin' I ever had came over me; a sort of cold shiverin' feel. I forgot where
I was; sight and hearin' left me; I could only see two things, my twenty dollars fifty, and the well-filled
belt of the stranger I had left at Johnny's. Just then a voice called to me.

"'Whence come, countryman, and whither going?' it said.

"'Whence and whither,' answered I, as surly as could be; 'to the devil at a gallop, and you'd better ride on and tell him I'm comin'.'

"'You can do the errand yourself,' answered the stranger, larfin'; 'my road don't lie that way.'

"As he spoke, I looked round, and saw, what I was pretty sure of before, that it was the man with the belt full of money.

"'Ain't you the stranger I see'd in the inn yonder?' asked he.

"'And if I am,' says I, 'what's that to you?'

"'Nothin',,' said he; 'nothin', certainly.'

"'Better ride on,' says I, 'and leave me quiet.'

"'Will so, stranger; but you needn't take it so mighty onkind. A word ain't a tomahawk, I reckon,' said he. 'But I rayther expect your losin's at play ain't put you in a very church-goin' humour; and, if I was you, I'd keep my dollars in my pocket, and not set them on cards and dice.'

"It riled me to hear him cast my losin's in my teeth that way.

"'You're a nice feller,' said I, 'to throw a man's losses in his face. A pitiful chap you are,' says I.

"I thought to provoke him, and that he'd tackle me. But he seemed to have no fancy for a fight, for he said, quite humble like--

"'I throw nothin' in your face; God forbid I should reproach you with your losses! I'm sorry for you, on the contrary. Don't look like a man who can afford to lose his dollars. Seem to me one who airns his money by hard work.'

"We were just then halted at the further end of the cane-brake, close to the trees that border the Jacinto. I had turned my horse, and was frontin' the stranger. And all the time the devil was busy whisperin' to me, and pointin' to the belt round the man's waist. I could see where it was, plain enough, though he had buttoned his coat over it.

"'Hard work, indeed,' says I; 'and now I've lost everything; not a cent left for a quid of baccy.'
"'If that's all,' says he, 'there's help for that. I don't chew myself, and I ain't a rich man; I've wife and children, and want every cent I've got, but it's one's duty to help a countryman. You shall have money for tobacco and a dram.'

"And so sayin', he took a purse out of his pocket, in which he carried his change. It was pretty full; there may have been some twenty dollars in it; and as he drew the string, it was as if the devil laughed and nodded to me out of the openin' of the purse.

"'Halves!' cried I.

"'No, not that,' says he; 'I've wife and child, and what I have belongs to them; but half a dollar----'

"'Halves!' cried I again, 'or else----'

"'Or else?' repeated he; and as he spoke, he put the purse back into his pocket, and laid hold of the rifle which was slung on his shoulder.

"'Don't force me to do you a mischief,' said he. 'Don't,' says he; 'we might both be sorry for it. What you're thinkin' of brings no blessin'.'

"I was past seein' or hearin'. A thousand devils from hell possessed me.

"'Halves!' I screeched out; and, as I said the word, he sprang out of the saddle, and fell back over his horse's crupper to the ground.

"'I'm a dead man!' cried he, as well as the rattle in his throat would let him. 'God be merciful to me! My poor wife, my poor children!'"

Bob paused; he gasped for breath, and the sweat stood in large drops upon his forehead. He gazed wildly round the room. The judge himself looked very pale. I tried to rise, but sank back in my chair. Without the table, I believe I should have fallen to the ground.

There was a gloomy pause of some moments' duration. At last the judge broke silence.

"A hard, hard case!'" said he. "Father, mother, children, all at one blow. Bob, you are a bad fellow; a very bad fellow; a great villain!"

"A great villain," groaned Bob. "The ball was gone right through his breast."

"Perhaps your gun went off by accident," said the judge, anxiously. "Perhaps it was his own ball."

Bob shook his head.
"I see him now, judge, as plain as can be, when he said, 'Don't force me to do you a mischief; we might both be sorry for it.' But I pulled the trigger. His bullet is still in his rifle.

"When I saw him lie dead before me, I can't tell you what I felt. It warn't the first I had sent to his account; but yet I would have given all the purses and money in the world to have had him alive agin. I must have dragged him under the Patriarch, and dug a grave with my huntin'-knife, for I found him there afterwards."

"You found him there?" repeated the judge.

"Yes. I don't know how he came there. I must have brought him, but I recollect nothin' about it."

The judge had risen from his chair, and was walking up and down the room, apparently in deep thought. Suddenly he stopped short.

"What have you done with his money?"

"I took his purse, but buried his belt with him, as well as a flask of rum, and some bread and beef he had brought away from Johnny's. I set out for San Felipe, and rode the whole day. In the evenin', when I looked about me, expectin' to see the town, where do you think I was?"

The judge and I stared at him.

"Under the Patriarch. The ghost of the murdered man had driven me there. I had no peace till I'd dug him up and buried him agin. Next day I set off in another direction. I was out of tobacco, and I started across the prairie to Anahuac. Lord, what a day I passed! Wherever I went, he stood before me. If I turned, he turned too. Sometimes he came behind me, and looked over my shoulder. I spurred my mustang till the blood came, hopin' to get away from him, but it was all no use. I thought when I got to Anahuac I should be quit of him, and I galloped on for life or death. But in the evenin', instead of being close to the salt-works as I expected, there was I agin, under the Patriarch. I dug him up a second time, and sat and stared at him, and then buried him agin."

"Queer that," observed the judge.

"Ay, very queer!" said Bob, mournfully. "But it's all no use. Nothin' does me any good. I shan't be better--I shall never have peace till I'm hung."

Bob evidently felt relieved now; he had in a manner passed sentence on himself. Strange as it may appear, I had a similar feeling, and could not help nodding my head approvingly. The judge alone preserved an unmoved countenance.

"Indeed!" said he; "indeed! You think you'll be no better till you're hung?"
"Yes," answered Bob, with eager haste. "Hung on the same tree under which he lies buried."

"Well, if you will have it so, we'll see what can be done for you. We'll call a jury of the neighbours together to-morrow."

"Thank ye, squire," murmured Bob, visibly comforted by this promise.

"We'll summon a jury," repeated the Alcalde, "and see what can be done for you. You'll perhaps have changed your mind by that time."

I stared at him like one fallen from the clouds, but he did not seem to notice my surprise.

"There is, perhaps, some other way to get rid of your life, if you are tired of it," he continued. "We might hit upon one that would satisfy your conscience."

Bob shook his head. I involuntarily made the same movement.

"At any rate, we'll hear what the neighbours say," added the judge.

Bob stepped up to the judge, and held out his hand to bid him farewell. The other did not take it, and turning to me, said, "You had better stop here, I think."

Bob turned round impetuously.

"The gentleman must come with me."

"Why must he?" said the judge.

"Ask himself."

I again explained the obligations I was under to Bob, how we had fallen in with one another, and what care and attention he had shown me at Johnny's.

The judge nodded approvingly. "Nevertheless," said he, "you will remain here, and Bob will go alone. You are in a state of mind, Bob, in which a man is better alone, d'ye see; and so leave the young man here. Another misfortune might happen; and, at any rate, he's better here than at Johnny's. Come back to-morrow, and we'll see what can be done for you."

These words were spoken in a decided manner, which seemed to have its effect upon Bob. He nodded assentingly, and left the room. I remained staring at the judge, and lost in wonder at these strange proceedings.
When Bob was gone, the Alcalde gave a blast on a shell, which supplied the place of a bell. Then seizing the cigar-box, he tried one cigar after another, broke them peevishly up, and threw the pieces out of the window. The negro, whom the shell had summoned, stood for some time waiting, whilst his master broke up the cigars and threw them away. At last the judge's patience seemed quite to leave him.

"Hark ye, Ptoly!" growled he to the frightened black, "the next time you bring me cigars that neither draw nor smoke, I'll make your back smoke for it. Mind that, now. There's not a single one of them worth a rotten maize-stalk. Tell that old coffee-coloured hag of Johnny's, that I'll have no more of her cigars. Ride over to Mr Ducie's and fetch a box. And, d'ye hear? tell him I want to speak a word with him and the neighbours. Ask him to bring the neighbours with him to-morrow morning. And mind you're home again by two o'clock. Take the mustang we caught last week. I want to see how he goes."

The negro listened to these various commands with open mouth and staring eyes, then, giving a perplexed look at his master, shot out of the room.

"Whither away, Ptoly?" shouted the Alcalde after him.

"To Massa Ducie."

"Without a pass, Ptoly? And what are you going to say to Mr Ducie?"

"Him nebber send bad cigar again, him coffee-cullud hag. Massa speak to Johnny and neighbours. Johnny bring neighbours here."

"I thought as much," said the judge, with perfect equanimity. "Wait a minute; I'll write the pass, and a couple of lines for Mr Ducie."

This was soon done, and the negro despatched on his errand. The judge waited till he heard the sound of the horse's feet galloping away, and then, laying hold of the box of despised cigars, lit the first which came to hand. It smoked capitally, as did also one that I took. They were Principes, and as good as I ever tasted.

I passed the whole of that day alone with the judge, who, I soon found, knew various friends of mine in the States. I told him the circumstances under which I had come to Texas, and the intention I had of settling there, should I find the country to my liking. During our long conversation, I was able to form a very different, and much more favourable, estimate of his character, than I had done from his interview with Bob. He was the very man to be useful to a new country; of great energy, sound judgment, enlarged and liberal views. He gave me some curious information as to the state of things in Texas; and did not think it necessary to conceal from me, as an American, and one who intended settling in the country, that there was a plan in agitation for throwing off the Mexican yoke, and declaring Texas an independent republic. The high-spirited, and, for the most part, intelligent emigrants from the United States, who formed a very large majority of the population of Texas, saw themselves, with no very patient feeling, under the rule of a people both morally and physically inferior to themselves. They
looked with contempt, and justly so, on the bigoted, idle, and ignorant Mexicans, whilst the difference of religion, and interference of the priests, served to increase the dislike between the Spanish and Anglo-American races.

Although the project was as yet not quite ripe for execution, it was discussed freely and openly by the American settlers. "It is the interest of every man to keep it secret," said the judge; "and there can be nothing to induce even the worst amongst us to betray a cause, by the success of which he is sure to profit. We have many bad characters in Texas, the offscourings of the United States--men like Bob, or far worse than him; but debauched, gambling, drunken villains though they be, they are the men we want when it comes to a struggle; and when that time arrives, they will all be found ready to put their shoulders to the wheel, use knife and rifle, and shed the last drop of their blood in defence of their fellow-citizens, and of the new and independent republic of Texas. At this moment we must wink at many things which would be severely punished in an older and more settled country; each man's arm is of immense value to the State; for on the day of battle we shall have, not two to one, but twenty to one opposed to us."

I was awakened the following morning by the sound of a horse's feet; and, looking out of the window, saw Bob dismounting from his mustang. The last twenty-four hours had told fearfully upon him. His limbs seemed powerless, and he reeled and staggered in such a manner that I at first thought him intoxicated. But such was not the case. His was the deadly weariness caused by mental anguish. He looked like one just taken off the rack.

Hastily putting on my clothes, I hurried down stairs and opened the house door. Bob stood with his head resting on his horse's neck, and his hands crossed, shivering and groaning. When I spoke to him, he looked up, but did not seem to know me. I tied his horse to a post, and taking his hand, led him into the house. He followed like a child, apparently without the will or the power to resist; and when I placed him a chair, he fell into it with a weight that made it crack under him, and shook the house. I could not get him to speak, and was about to return to my room to complete my toilet, when I again heard the tramp of mustangs. This was a party of half-a-dozen horsemen, all dressed in hunting-shirts over buckskin breeches and jackets, and armed with rifles and bowie-knives; stout, daring-looking fellows, evidently from the south-western states, with the true Kentucky half-horse half-alligator profile, and the usual allowance of thunder, lighting, and earthquake. It struck me, when I saw them, that two or three thousand such men would have small difficulty in dealing with a whole army of Mexicans, if the latter were all of the pigmy, spindle-shanked breed I had seen on first landing. These giants could easily have walked away with a Mexican in each hand.

They jumped off their horses, and threw the bridles to the negroes in the usual Kentuckian devil-may-care style, and then walked into the house with the air of people who make themselves at home everywhere, and who knew themselves to be more masters in Texas than the Mexicans themselves. On entering the parlour, they nodded a "good morning" to me, rather coldly to be sure, for they had seen me talking with Bob, which probably did not much recommend me. Presently, four more horsemen rode up, and then a third party, so that there were now fourteen of them assembled, all decided-looking men, in the prime of life and strength. The judge, who slept in an adjoining room, had
been awakened by the noise. I heard him jump out of bed, and not three minutes elapsed before he entered the parlour.

After he had shaken hands with all his visitors, he presented me to them, and I found that I was in the presence of no less important persons than the Ayuntamiento of San Felipe de Austin; and that two of my worthy countrymen were corregidores, one a procurador, and the others *buenos hombres*, or freeholders. They did not seem, however, to prize their titles much, for they addressed one another by their surnames only.

The negro brought a light, opened the cigar-box, and arranged the chairs; the judge pointed to the sideboard and to the cigars, and then sat down. Some took a dram, others lit a cigar.

Several minutes elapsed, during which the men sat in perfect silence, as if they were collecting their thoughts, or as though it were undignified to show any haste or impatience to speak. This grave sort of deliberation, which is met with among certain classes, and in certain provinces of the Union, has often struck me as a curious feature of our national character. It partakes of the stoical dignity of the Indian at his council fire, and of the stern religious gravity of the early Puritan settlers in America.

During this pause Bob was writhing on his chair like a worm, his face concealed by his hands, his elbows on his knees. At last, when all had drunk and smoked, the judge laid down his cigar.

"Men!" said he.

"Squire!" answered they.

"We've a business before us, which I calculate will be best explained by him whom it concerns."

The men looked at the Squire, then at Bob, then at me.

"Bob Rock! or whatever your name may be, if you have aught to say, say it!" continued the judge.

"Said it all yesterday," muttered Bob, his face still covered by his hands.

"Yes, but you must say it again to-day. Yesterday was Sunday, and Sunday is a day of rest, and not of business. I will neither judge you, nor allow you to be judged, by what you said yesterday. Besides, it was all between ourselves, for I don't reckon Mr Morse as anything; I count him still as a stranger."

"What's the use of so much palaver, when the thing's plain enough?" said Bob peevishly, raising his head as he spoke.

The men stared at him in grave astonishment. He was really frightful to behold: his face of a sort of blue tint; his cheeks hollow; his beard wild and ragged; his blood-shot eyes rolling, and deep sunk in their sockets. His appearance was scarcely human. "I tell you again," said the judge, "I will condemn no
man upon his own word alone; much less you, who have been in my service, and eaten of my bread. You accused yourself yesterday, but you were delirious at the time--you had the fever upon you."

"It's no use, Squire," said Bob, apparently touched by the kindness of the judge. "You mean well, I see; but though you might deliver me out of men's hands, you couldn't rescue me from myself. It's no use--I must be hung--hung on the same tree under which the man I killed lies buried."

The men, or the jurors, as I may call them, looked at one another, but said nothing.

"It's no use," again cried Bob, in a shrill, agonising tone. "If he had attacked me, or only threatened me; but no, he didn't do it. I hear his words still, when he said, 'Do it not, man! I've wife and child. What you intend brings no blessin' on the doer.' But I heard nothin' then except the voice of the devil; I brought the rifle down--levelled--fired--"

The man's agony was so intense that even the iron-featured jury seemed moved by it. They cast sharp but stolen glances at Bob. There was a short silence.

"So you have killed a man?" said a deep bass voice at last.

"Ay, that have I!" gasped Bob.

"And how came that?" continued his questioner.

"How it came? You must ask the devil, or Johnny. No, not Johnny, he can tell you nothing; he was not there. No one can tell you but me; and I hardly know how it was. The man was at Johnny's, and Johnny showed me his belt full of money."

"Johnny!" exclaimed several of the jury.

"Ay, Johnny! He reckoned on winning it from him, but the man was too cautious for that; and when Johnny had plucked all my feathers, won my twenty dollars fifty----"

"Twenty dollars fifty cents," interposed the judge, "which I paid him for catching mustangs and shooting game."

The men nodded.

"And then, because he wouldn't play, you shot him?" asked the same deep-toned voice as before.

"No--some hours after--by the Jacinto--near the Patriarch--met him down there, and killed him."

"Thought there was something out o' the common thereaway," said one of the jury; "for as we rode by the tree a whole nation of kites and turkey buzzards flew out. Didn't they, Mr Heart?"
Mr Heart nodded.

"Met him by the river, and wanted halves of his money," continued Bob mechanically, "He said he'd give me something to buy a quid, and more than enough for that, but not halves. 'I've wife and child,' said he----"

"And you?" asked the juror with the deep voice, which, this time, had a hollow sound in it.

"Shot him down," said Bob, with a wild, hoarse laugh.

There was a dead pause of some duration. The jury sat with eyes fixed upon the ground.

"And who was the man?" said a juror at last.

"Didn't ask him; and it warn't written on his face. He was from the States; but whether a hosier, or a buckeye, or a mudhead, is more than I can say."

"The thing must be investigated, Alcalde," said another of the jury, after a second pause.

"It must so," answered the Alcalde.

"What's the good of so much investigation?" grumbled Bob.

"What good?" repeated the Alcalde. "Because we owe it to ourselves, to the dead man, and to you, not to sentence you without having held an inquest on the body. There's another thing which I must call your attention to," continued he, turning to the jury; "the man is half out of his mind--not *compos mentis*, as they say. He's got the fever, and had it when he did the deed; he was urged on by Johnny, and maddened by his losses at play. In spite of his wild excitement, however, he saved that gentleman's life yonder, Mr Edward Nathaniel Morse."

"Did he so?" said one of the jury.

"That did he," replied I, "not only by saving me from drowning when my horse dragged me, half-dead and helpless, into the river, but also by the care and attention he forced Johnny and his mulatto to bestow upon me. Without him I should not be alive at this moment."

Bob gave me a look which went to my heart. The tears were standing in his eyes. The jury heard me in deep silence.

"It seems that Johnny led you on and excited you to this?" said one of the jurors.

"I didn't say that. I only said that he pointed to the man's money-bag, and said----But what is it to you what Johnny said? I'm the man who did it. I speak for myself, and I'll be hanged for myself."
"All very good, Bob," interposed the Alcalde; "but we can't hang you without being sure you deserve it. What do you say to it, Mr Whyte? You're the procurador--and you, Mr Heart and Mr Stone? Help yourselves to rum or brandy; and, Mr Bright and Irwin, take another cigar. They're considerable tolerable the cigars--ain't they? That's brandy, Mr Whyte, in the diamond bottle."

Mr Whyte had got up to give his opinion, as I thought; but I was mistaken. He stepped to the sideboard, took up a bottle in one hand and a glass in the other, every movement being performed with the greatest deliberation.

"Well, Squire," said he, "or rather Alcalde--"

After the word "Alcalde," he filled the glass half full of rum.

"If it's as we've heard," added he, pouring about a spoonful of water on the rum, "and Bob has killed the man"--he continued, throwing in some lumps of sugar--"murdered him"--he went on, crushing the sugar with a wooden stamp--"I rather calculate"--here he raised the glass--"Bob ought to be hung," he concluded, putting the tumbler to his mouth and emptying it.

The jurors nodded in silence. Bob drew a deep breath, as if a load were taken off his breast.

"Well," said the judge, who did not look over well pleased, "if you all think so, and Bob is agreed, I calculate we must do as he wishes. I tell you, though, I don't do it willingly. At any rate, we must find the dead man first, and examine Johnny. We owe that to ourselves and to Bob."

"Certainly," said the jury with one voice.

"You are a dreadful murderer, Bob, a very considerable one," continued the judge; "but I tell you to your face, and not to flatter you, there is more good in your little finger than in Johnny's whole hide. And I'm sorry for you, because, at the bottom, you are not a bad man, though you've been led away by bad company and example. I calculate you might still be reformed, and made very useful--more so, perhaps, than you think. Your rifle's a capital good one."

At these last words the men all looked up, and threw a keen inquiring glance at Bob.

"You might be of great service," continued the judge encouragingly, "to the country and to your fellow-citizens. You're worth a dozen Mexicans any day."

Whilst the judge spoke, Bob let his head fall on his breast, and seemed reflecting. He now looked up.

"I understand, Squire; I see what you're drivin' at. But I can't do it--I can't wait so long. My life's a burthen and a sufferin' to me. Wherever I go, by day or by night, he's always there, standin' before me, and drivin' me under the Patriarch."
There was a pause of some duration. The judge resumed.

"So be it, then," said he with a sort of suppressed sigh. "We'll see the body to-day, Bob, and you may come to-morrow at ten o'clock."

" Couldn't it be sooner?" asked Bob impatiently.

"Why sooner? Are you in such a hurry?" asked Mr Heart.

"What's the use of palaverin'?" said Bob sulkily. "I told you already I'm sick of my life. If you don't come till ten o'clock, by the time you've had your talk out and ridden to the Patriarch, the fever'll be upon me."

"But we can't be flying about like a parcel of wild geese, because of your fever," said the procurador.

"Certainly not," said Bob humbly.

"It's an ugly customer the fever, though, Mr Whyte," observed Mr Trace; "and I calculate we ought to do him that pleasure. What do you think, Squire?"

"I reckon he's rather indiscreet in his askin's," said the judge, in a tone of vexation. "However, as he wishes it, and if it is agreeable to you," added he, turning to the Ayuntamiento; "and as it's you, Bob, I calculate we must do what you ask."

"Thankee," said Bob.

"Nothing to thank for," growled the judge; "and now go into the kitchen and get a good meal of roast beef, d'ye hear?" He knocked upon the table. "Some good roast beef for Bob," said he to a negress who entered; "and see that he eats it. And get yourself dressed more decently, Bob--like a white man and a Christian, not like a wild redskin."

The negress and Bob left the room. The conversation now turned upon Johnny, who appeared, from all accounts, to be a very bad and dangerous fellow; and after a short discussion, they agreed to lynch him, in backwoodsman's phrase, just as coolly as if they had been talking of catching a mustang. When the men had come to this satisfactory conclusion, they got up, drank the judge's health and mine, shook us by the hand, and left the room and the house.

The day passed more heavily than the preceding one. I was too engrossed with the strange scene I had witnessed to talk much. The judge, too, was in a very bad humour. He was vexed that a man should be hung who might render the country much and good service if he remained alive. That Johnny, the miserable, cowardly, treacherous Johnny should be sent out of the world as quickly as possible, was perfectly correct, but with Bob it was very different. In vain did I remind him of the crime of which Bob had been guilty--of the outraged laws of God and man--and of the atonement due. It was no use. If
Bob had sinned against society, he could repair his fault much better by remaining alive than by being hung; and as to anything else, God would avenge it in his own good time. We parted for the night, neither of us convinced by the other's arguments.

We were sitting at breakfast the next morning, when a man, dressed in black, rode up to the door. It was Bob, but so metamorphosed that I scarcely knew him. Instead of the torn and bloodstained handkerchief round his head, he wore a hat; instead of the leathern jacket, a decent cloth coat. He had shaved off his beard too, and looked quite another man. His manner had altered with his dress; he seemed tranquil and resigned. With a mild, submissive look, he held out his hand to the judge, who took and shook it heartily.

"Ah, Bob!" said he, "if you had only listened to what I so often told you! I had those clothes brought on purpose from New Orleans, that, on Sundays at least, you might look like a decent and respectable man. How often have I asked you to put them on, and come with us to meeting, to hear Mr Bliss preach? There is some truth in the saying, that the coat makes the man. With his Sunday coat, a man often puts on other and better thoughts. If that had been your case only fifty-two times in the year, you'd have learned to avoid Johnny before now."

Bob said nothing.

"Well, well! I've done all I could to make a better man of you--all that was in my power."

"That you have," answered Bob, much moved. "God reward you for it!"

I could not help holding out my hand to the worthy judge; and as I did so, I thought I saw a moisture in his eye, which he suppressed, however, and, turning to the breakfast table, bade us sit down. Bob thanked him humbly, but declined, saying that he wished to appear fasting before his offended Creator. The judge insisted, and reasoned with him, and at last he took a chair.

Before we had done breakfast, our friends of the preceding day began to drop in, and some of them joined us at the meal. When they had all taken what they chose, the judge ordered the negroes to clear away, and leave the room. This done, he seated himself at the upper end of the table, with the Ayuntamiento on either side, and Bob facing him.

"Mr Whyte," said the Alcalde, "have you, as procurador, anything to state?"

"Yes, Alcalde," replied the procurador. "In virtue of my office, I made a search in the place mentioned by Bob Rock, and there found the body of a man who had met his death by a gunshot wound. I also found a belt full of money, and several letters of recommendation to different planters, from which it appears that the man was on his way from Illinois to San Felipe, to buy land of Colonel Austin, and settle in Texas."
The procurador then produced a pair of saddle-bags, out of which he took a leathern belt stuffed with money, which he laid on the table, together with the letters. The judge opened the belt, and counted the money. It amounted to upwards of five hundred dollars in gold and silver. The procurador then read the letters.

One of the corregidors now announced that Johnny and his mulatto had left their house and fled. He, the corregidor, had sent people in pursuit of them, but as yet there were no tidings of their capture. This piece of intelligence seemed to vex the judge greatly, but he made no remark on it at the time.

"Bob Rock!" cried he.

Bob stepped forward.

"Bob Rock, or by whatever other name you may be known, are you guilty or not guilty of this man's death?"

"Guilty!" replied Bob, in a low tone.

"Gentlemen of the jury, will you be pleased to give your verdict?"

The jury left the room. In ten minutes they returned.

"Guilty!" said the foreman.

"Bob Rock," said the judge solemnly, "your fellow-citizens have found you guilty; and I pronounce the sentence--that you be hung by the neck until you are dead. The Lord be merciful to your soul!"

"Amen!" said all present.

"Thank ye," murmured Bob.

"We will seal up the property of the deceased," said the judge, "and then proceed to our painful duty."

He called for a light, and he and the procurador and corregidors sealed up the papers and money.

"Has any one aught to allege why the sentence should not be put in execution?" said the Alcalde, with a glance at me.

"He saved my life, judge and fellow-citizens!" cried I, deeply moved.

Bob shook his head mournfully.

"Let us go, then, in God's name," said the judge.
Without another word being spoken, we left the house and mounted our horses. The judge had brought a Bible with him; and he rode on, a little in front, with Bob, doing his best to prepare him for the eternity to which he was hastening. Bob listened attentively for some time; but at last he seemed to get impatient, and pushed his mustang into so fast a trot, that for a moment we suspected him of wishing to escape the doom he had so eagerly sought. But it was only that he feared the fever might return before the expiration of the short time he yet had to live.

After an hour's ride, we came to the enormous live oak distinguished as the Patriarch. Two or three of the men dismounted, and held aside the heavy moss-covered branches, which swept the ground and formed a complete curtain round the tree. The party rode through the opening thus made, and drew up in a circle beneath the huge leafy dome. In the centre of this ring stood Bob, trembling like an aspen leaf, his eyes fixed on a small mound of fresh earth, partly concealed by the branches, and which had escaped my notice on my former visit to the tree. It was the grave of the murdered man.

A magnificent burial-place was that: no poet could have dreamed or desired a better. Above, the huge vault, with its natural frettings and arches; below, the greenest, freshest grass; around, an eternal half light, streaked and varied, and radiant as a rainbow. It was impossibly beautiful.

Bob, the judge, and the corregidors, remained sitting on their horses, but several of the other men dismounted. One of the latter cut the lasso from Bob's saddle, and threw an end of it over one of the lowermost branches; then uniting the two ends, formed them into a strong noose, which he left dangling from the bough. This simple preparation completed, the Alcalde took off his hat and folded his hands. The others followed his example.

"Bob!" said the judge to the unfortunate criminal, whose head was bowed on his horse's mane; "Bob! we will pray for your poor soul, which is about to part from your sinful body."

Bob raised his head. "I had something to say," exclaimed he, in a wandering and husky tone. "Something I wanted to say."

"What have you to say?"

Bob stared around him; his lips moved, but no word escaped him. His spirit was evidently no longer with things of this earth.

"Bob!" said the judge again, "we will pray for your soul."

"Pray! pray!" groaned he. "I shall need it."

In slow and solemn accents, and with great feeling, the judge uttered the Lord's Prayer. Bob repeated every word after him. When it was ended--

"May God be merciful to his soul!" exclaimed the judge.
"Amen!" said all present.

One of the corregidors now passed the noose of the lasso round Bob's neck, another bound his eyes, a third person drew his feet out of the stirrups, whilst a fourth stepped behind his horse with a heavy riding-whip. All was done in the deepest silence; not a word was breathed, nor a foot-fall heard on the soft, yielding turf. There was something awful and oppressive in the profound stillness that reigned in the vast enclosure.

The whip fell. The horse gave a spring forwards. At the same moment Bob made a desperate clutch at the bridle, and a loud "Hold!" burst in thrilling tones from the lips of the judge.

It was too late; Bob was already hanging. The judge pushed forward, nearly riding down the man who held the whip, and, seizing Bob in his arms, raised him on his own horse, supporting him with one hand, whilst with the other he strove to unfasten the noose. His whole gigantic frame trembled with eagerness and exertion. The procurador, corregidors--all, in short, stood in open-mouthed wonder at this strange proceeding.

"Whisky! whisky! Has nobody any whisky!" shouted the judge.

One of the men sprang forward with a whisky-flask, another supported the body, and a third the feet, of the half-hanged man, whilst the judge poured a few drops of spirits into his mouth. The cravat, which had not been taken off, had hindered the breaking of the neck. Bob at last opened his eyes, and gazed vacantly around him.

"Bob," said the judge, "you had something to say, hadn't you, about Johnny?"

"Johnny," gasped Bob, "Johnny."

"What's become of him?"

"He's gone to San Antonio, Johnny."

"To San Antonio!" repeated the judge, with an expression of great alarm overspreading his features.

"To San Antonio--to Padre Jose," continued Bob; "a Catholic. Beware!"

"A traitor, then!" muttered several.

"Catholic!" exclaimed the judge. The words he had heard seemed to deprive him of all strength. His arms fell slowly and gradually by his side, and Bob was again hanging from the lasso.

"A Catholic! a traitor!" repeated several of the men; "a citizen and a traitor!"
"So it is, men!" exclaimed the judge. "We've no time to lose," continued he, in a harsh, hurried voice; "no time to lose; we must catch him."

"That must we," said several, "or our plans are betrayed to the Mexicans."

"After him immediately to San Antonio!" cried the judge, with the same desperately hurried manner.

"To San Antonio!" repeated the men, pushing their way through the curtain of moss and branches. As soon as they were outside, those who were dismounted sprang into the saddle, and, without another word, the whole party galloped away in the direction of San Antonio.

The judge alone remained, seemingly lost in thought; his countenance pale and anxious, and his eyes following the riders. His reverie, however, had lasted but a very few seconds, when he seized my arm.

"Hasten to my house!" cried he; "lose no time; don't spare horse-flesh. Take Ptoly and a fresh beast; hurry over to San Felipe, and tell Stephen Austin what has happened, and what you have seen and heard."

"But, judge----"

"Off with you at once, if you would serve and save Texas. Bring my wife and daughter back."

And so saying, he literally drove me from under the tree, pushing me out with both hands. I was so startled at the expression of violent impatience and anxiety which his features assumed, that, without venturing to make further objection, I struck the spurs into my mustang and galloped off.

Before I had got fifty yards from the tree, I looked round: the judge was nowhere to be seen.

I rode full speed to the judge's house, and thence on a fresh horse to San Felipe, where I found Colonel Austin, who seemed much alarmed by the news I brought him, had horses saddled, and sent round to all the neighbours. Before the wife and step-daughter of the judge had made their preparations to accompany me home, he and fifty armed men rode off in the direction of San Antonio.

I escorted the ladies to their house, but scarcely had we arrived there, when I was seized with fever, the result of my recent fatigues and sufferings. For some days my life was in danger, but a good constitution, and the kindest and most watchful nursing, triumphed over the disease. As soon as I was able to mount a horse, I set out for Mr Neal's plantation, in company with his huntsman Anthony, who, after spending many days, and riding over hundreds of miles of ground in quest of me, had at last found me out.

Our way led past the Patriarch; and, as we approached it, we saw innumerable birds of prey and carrion-crows circling round it, croaking and screaming. I turned my eyes in another direction; but, nevertheless, I felt a strange sort of longing to revisit the tree. Anthony had ridden on, and was already
hidden from view behind its branches. Presently I heard him give a loud shout of exultation. I jumped off my horse, and led it through a small opening in the leafage.

Some forty paces from me, the body of a man was hanging by a lasso from the very same branch on which Bob had been hung. It was not Bob, however, for the corpse was much too short and small for him.


"It was," answered Anthony. "Thank Heaven, there's an end of him!"

I shuddered. "But where is Bob?"

"Bob?" cried Anthony. "Bob!"

I glanced at the grave. The mound of earth seemed larger and higher than when I had last seen it. Doubtless the murderer lay beside his victim.

"Shall we not render the last service to this wretch, Anthony?" asked I.

"The scoundrel!" answered the huntsman. "I won't dirty my hands with him. Let him poison the kites and the crows!"

We rode on.

HOW WE GOT POSSESSION OF THE TUILERIES.

A ROMANCE AFTER THE MANNER OF ALEXANDER DUMAS.

BY PROFESSOR AYTOUN.

[MAGA. APRIL 1848.]
CHAPTER I.

HEADS OR TAILS?

I like political ovations. It is a very pleasant thing to perambulate Europe in the guise of a regenerator, sowing the good seed of political economy in places which have hitherto been barren, and enlightening the heathen upon the texture of calico, and the blessings of unreciprocal free-trade. I rather flatter myself that I have excited considerable sensation in certain quarters of Europe, previously plunged in darkness, and unillumined by the argand lamp of Manchester philosophy. Since September last, I have not been idle, but have borne the banner of regeneration from the Baltic to the shores of the Bosphorus.

As the apostle of peace and plenty, I have everywhere been rapturously greeted. Never, I believe, was there a sincerer, a more earnest wish prevalent throughout the nations for the maintenance of universal tranquillity than now; never a better security for that fraternisation which we all so earnestly desire; never a more peaceful or unrevolutionary epoch. Such, at least, were my ideas a short time ago, when, after having fulfilled a secret mission of some delicacy in a very distant part of the Continent, I turned my face homewards, and retraced my steps in the direction of my own Glaswegian Mecca. In passing through Italy, I found that country deeply engaged in plans of social organisation, and much cheered by the sympathising presence of a member of her Britannic Majesty's Cabinet. It was delightful to witness the good feeling which seemed to prevail between the British unaccredited minister and the scum of the Ausonian population,—the mutual politeness and sympathy exhibited by each of the high contracting parties,—and the perfect understanding on the part of the Lazzaroni, of the motives which had induced the northern peer to absent himself from felicity awhile, and devote the whole of his vast talents and genius to the cause of foreign insurrection. I had just time to congratulate Pope Pius upon the charming prospect which was before him, and to say a few hurried words regarding the superiority of cotton to Christianity as a universal tranquillising medium, when certain unpleasant rumours from the frontier forced their way to the Eternal City, and convinced me of the propriety of continuing my retreat towards the land of my nativity. Not that I fear steel, or have any abstract repugnance to grape, but my mission was emphatically one of peace; I had a great duty to discharge to my country, and that might have been lamentably curtailed by the bullet of some blundering Austrian.

Behold me, then, at Paris—that Aspasian capital of the world. I had often visited it before in the character of a tourist and literateur, but never until now as a politician. True, I was not accredited: I enjoyed neither diplomatic rank, nor the more soothing salary which is its accompaniment. But, in these times, such distinctions are rapidly fading away. I had seen with my own eyes a good deal of spontaneous diplomacy, which certainly did not seem to flow in the regular channel; and, furthermore, I could personally testify to the weight attached abroad to private commercial crusades. I needed no official costume; I was the representative of a popular movement; I was the champion of a class; and my name and my principles were alike familiar to the ears of the illuminati of Europe. Formerly I had been proud of associating with Eugene Sue, Charles Nodier, Paul de Kock, and other characters of ephemeral literary celebrity; I had wasted my time in orgies at the Cafe de Londres, or the Rocher de Cancale, and was but too happy to be admitted to those little parties of pleasure in which the majority of the cavaliers are feuilletonists, and the dames, terrestrial stars from the constellation of the Theatre des
Varietes. Now I looked back on this former phase of my existence with a consciousness of having wasted my energies. I had shot into another sphere--was entitled to take rank with Thiers, Odillon Barrot, Cremieux, and other champions of the people; and I resolved to comport myself accordingly. I do not feel at liberty to enter into the exact details of the public business which detained me for some time in Paris. It is enough to say, that I was warmly and cordially received, and on the best possible terms with the members of the extreme gauche.

One afternoon about the middle of February, I was returning from the Chamber of Deputies, meditating very seriously upon the nature of a debate which I had just heard, regarding the opposition of ministers to the holding of a Reform banquet in Paris, and in which my friend Barrot had borne a very conspicuous share. At the corner of the Place de la Concorde, I observed a tall swarthy man in the uniform of the National Guard, engaged in cheapening a poodle. I thought I recognised the face--hesitated, stopped, and in a moment was in the arms of my illustrious friend, the Count of Monte-Christo, and Marquis Davy de la Pailleterie!

"Capdibious!" cried the author of Trois Mousquetaires--"Who would have thought to see you here? Welcome, my dear Dunshunner, a thousand times to Paris. Where have you been these hundred years?"

"Voyaging, like yourself, to the East, my dear Marquis," replied I.

"Ah, bah! That is an old joke. I never was nearer Egypt than the Bois de Boulogne; however, I did manage to mystify the good public about the baths of Alexandria. But how came you here just now? Dix mille tonnerres! They told me you had been made pair d'Angleterre."

"Why, no; not exactly. There was some talk of it, I believe. But jealousy--jealousy, you know--"

"Ah, yes,--I comprehend! Ce vilain Palmerston, n'est-ce pas? But that is always the way; ministers are always the same. You will hardly credit it, my dear friend, but I--I with my ancient title--and the most popular author of France, am not even a member of the Chamber of Deputies!"

"You amaze me!"

"Yes--after all, you manage better in England. There is that little D'Israeli--very clever man--Monceton Milles, Bourring, and Wakeley, all in the legislature; while here the literary interest is altogether unrepresented."

"Surely, my dear Marquis, you forget--there's Lamartine."

"Lamartine! a mere sentimentalist--a nobody! No, my dear friend; France must be regenerated. The daughter of glory, she cannot live without progression."

"How, Marquis? I thought that you and Montpensier--"
"Were friends? True enough. It was I who settled the Spanish marriages. There, I rather flatter myself, I had your perfidious Albion on the hip. But, to say the truth, I am tired of family alliances. We want something more to keep us alive—something startling, in short—something like the Pyramids and Moscow, to give us an impulse forward into the dark gulf of futurity. The limits of Algeria are too contracted for the fluttering of our national banner. We want freedom, less taxation, and a more extended frontier."

"And cannot all these," said I, unwilling to lose the opportunity of converting so remarkable a man as the Count of Monte-Chrсто to the grand principles of Manchester—"cannot these be attained by more peaceful methods than the subversion of general tranquillity? What is freedom, my dear Marquis, but an unlimited exportation of cotton abroad, with double task hours of wholesome labour at home? How will you diminish your taxation better, than by reducing all duties on imports, until the deficit is laid directly upon the shoulders of a single uncomplaining class? Why seek to extend your frontier, whilst we in England, out of sheer love to the world at large, are rapidly demolishing our colonies? Did you ever happen," continued I, pulling from my pocket a bundle of the Manchester manifestos, "to peruse any of these glorious epitomes of reason and of political science? Are you familiar with the soul-stirring tracts of Thompson and of Bright? Did you ever read the Socialist's scheme for universal philanthropy, which Cobden—"

"Peste!" replied the illustrious nobleman, "what the deuce do we care for the opinions of Monsieur Tonson, or any of your low manufacturers? By my honour, Dunshunner, I am afraid you are losing your head. Don't you know, my dear fellow, that all great revolutions spring from us, the men of genius? It is we who are the true rousers of the people; we, the poets and romancers, who are the source of all legitimate power. Witness Voltaire, Rousseau, De Beranger, and—I may say it without any imputation of vanity—-the Marquis Davy de la Pailleterie!"

"Yours is a new theory!" said I, musingly.

"New! Pray pardon me--it is as old as literature itself! No revolution can be effectual unless it has the fine arts for its basis. Simple as I stand here, I demand no more time than a month to wrap Europe in universal war."

"You don't say so seriously?"

"On my honour."

"Give me leave to doubt it."

"Should you like a proof?"

"Not on so great a scale, certainly. I am afraid the results would be too serious to justify the experiment."
"Ah, bah! You are a philanthropist. What are a few thousand lives compared with the triumph of mind?"

"Not much to you, perhaps, but certainly something to the owners. But come, my dear friend, you are jesting. You don't mean to insinuate that you possess any such power?"

"I do indeed."

"But the means? Granting that you have the power--and all Europe acknowledges the extraordinary faculties of the author of Monte-Christo--some time would be required for their development. You cannot hope to inoculate the mind of a nation in a moment."

"I did not say a moment--I said a month."

"And dare I ask your recipe?"

"A very simple one. Two romances, each in ten volumes, and a couple of melodramas."

"What! of your own?"

"Of mine," replied the Marquis de la Pailleterie.

"I wish to heaven that I knew how you set about it. I have heard G. P. R. James backed for a volume a-month, but this sinks him into utter insignificance."

"There is no difficulty in explaining it. He writes,--I never do."

"You never write?"

"Never."

"Then how the mischief do you manage?"

"I compose. Since I met you, I have composed and dictated a whole chapter of the Memoirs of a Physician!"

"Dictated?"

"To be sure. It is already written down, and will be circulated throughout Paris to-morrow."

"Monsieur le Marquis--have I the honour to hold an interview with Satan?"
"Mon cher, vous me flattez beaucoup! I have not thought it necessary to intrust my experiences to the sympathising bosom of M. Frederic Soulie."

"Have you a familiar spirit, then?" said I, casting a suspicious glance towards the poodle, then vigorously engaged in hunting through its woolly fleece.

The Marquis smiled.

"The ingenuity of your supposition, my dear friend, deserves a specific answer. I have indeed a familiar spirit--that is, I am possessed of a confidant, ready at all times, though absent, to chronicle my thoughts, and to express, in corresponding words, the spontaneous emotions of my soul. Nay, you need not start. The art is an innocent one, and its practice, though divulged, would not expose me in any way to the censures of the church."

"You pique my curiosity strangely!"

"Well, then, listen. For some years I have paid the utmost attention to the science of animal magnetism, an art which undoubtedly lay at the foundation of the ancient Chaldean lore, and which, though now revived, has been debased by the artifices and quackery of knaves. I need not go into details. After long search, I have succeeded in finding a being which, in its dormant or spiritual state, has an entire affinity with my own. When awake, you would suppose Leontine Deschappelles to be a mere ordinary though rather interesting female, endowed certainly with a miraculous sensibility for music, but not otherwise in any way remarkable. But, when asleep, she becomes as it were the counterpart or reflex of myself. Every thought which passes through my bosom simultaneously arises in hers. I do not need even to utter the words. By some miraculous process, these present themselves as vividly to her as if I had bestowed the utmost labour upon composition. I have but to throw her into a magnetic sleep, and my literary product for the day is secured. I go forth through Paris, mingle in society, appear idle and insouciant; and yet all the while the ideal personages of my tale are passing over the mirror of my mind, and performing their allotted duty. I have reached such perfection in the art, that I can compose two or even three romances at once. I return towards evening, and then I find Leontine, pale indeed and exhausted, but with a vast pile of manuscript before her, which contains the faithful transcript of my thoughts. Now, perhaps, you will cease to wonder at an apparent fertility, which, I am aware, has challenged the admiration and astonishment of Europe."

All this was uttered by Monte-Christo with such exemplary gravity, that I stood perfectly confounded. If true, it was indeed the solution of the greatest literary problem of the age; but I could hardly suppress the idea that he was making me the victim of a hoax.

"And whereabouts does she dwell, this Demoiselle Leontine?" said I.

"At my house," he replied; "she is my adopted child. Poor Leontine! sometimes when I look at her wasted cheek, I feel a pang of regret to think that she is paying so dear for a celebrity which must be immortal. But it is the fate of genius, my friend, and all of us must submit!"
As the Marquis uttered this sentiment with a pathetic sigh, I could not refrain from glancing at his manly and athletic proportions. Certainly there was no appearance of over-fatigue or lassitude there. He looked the very incarnation of good cheer, and had contrived to avert from his own person all vestige of those calamities which he was pleased so feelingly to deplore. He might have been exhibited at the *Trois Freres* as a splendid result of their nutritive and culinary system.

"You doubt me still, I see," said De la Pailleterie. "Well, I cannot wonder at it. Such things, I know, sound strange in the apprehension of you incredulous islanders. But I will even give you a proof, Dunshunner, which is more than I would do to any other man--for I cannot forget the service you rendered me long ago at the Isle de Bourbon. You see this little instrument,--put it to your ear. I shall summon Leontine to speak, and the sound of her reply will be conveyed to you through that silver tube, which is in strict *rapport* with her magnetic constitution."

So saying, he placed in my hand a miniature silver trumpet, beautifully wrought, which I immediately placed to my ear.

Monte-Christo drew himself up to his full height, fixed his fine eyes earnestly upon vacuity, made several passes upwards with his hand, and then said,

"My friend, do you hear me? If so, answer."

Immediately, and to my unexpected surprise, there thrilled through the silver tube a whisper of miraculous sweetness.

"Great master! I listen--I obey!"

"May St Mungo, St Mirren, St Rollox, and all the other western saints, have me in their keeping!" cried I. "Heard ever mortal man aught like this?"

"Hush--be silent!" said the Marquis, "or you may destroy the spell. Leontine, have you concluded the chapter?"

"I have," said the voice; "shall I read the last sentences?"

"Do," replied the adept, who seemed to hear the response simultaneously with myself, by intuition.

The voice went on: "At this moment the door of the apartment opened, and Chon rushed into the room. 'Well, my little sister, how goes it?' said the Countess. 'Bad.' 'Indeed!' 'It is but too true.' 'De Noailles?' 'No.' 'Ha! D'Aiguillon?' 'You deceive yourself.' 'Who then?' 'Philip de Taverney, the Chevalier Maison-Rouge! 'Ha!' cried the Countess, 'then I am lost!' and she sank senseless upon the cushions."

"Well done, Leontine!" exclaimed De la Pailleterie; "that is the seventh chapter I have composed since morning. Are you fatigued, my child?"
"Very--very weary," replied the voice, in a melancholy cadence.

"You shall have rest soon. Come hither. Do you see me?"

"Ah! you are very cruel!"

"I understand. Cease to be fatigued--I will it!"

"Ah! thanks, thanks!"

"Do you see me now?"

"I do. Oh, how handsome!"

The Marquis caressed his whiskers.

"Where am I?"

"At the corner of the Place de la Concorde, near the Tuileries' gardens. Ah, you naughty man, you have been smoking!"

"Who is with me?"

"A poodle-dog," replied the voice. "What a pretty creature! he is just snapping at a fly. Come here, poor fellow!"

The poodle gave an unearthly yell, and rushed between the legs of Monte-Christo, thereby nearly capsizing that extraordinary magician.

"That will do, my dear Marquis," said I, returning him the trumpet. "I am now perfectly convinced of the truth of your assertions, and can no longer wonder at the marvellous fertility of your pen--I beg pardon--of your invention. Pray, do not trouble your fair friend any further upon my account. I have heard quite enough to satisfy me that I am in the presence of the most remarkable man in Europe."

"Pooh! this is a mere bagatelle. Any man might do the same, with a slight smattering of the occult sciences. But we were talking, if I recollect right, about moral influence and power. I maintain that the authors of romance and melodrama are the true masters of the age: you, on the contrary, believe in free-trade and the jargon of political economy. Is it not so?"

"True. We started from that point."

"Well, then, would you like to see a revolution?"
"Not on my account, my dear Marquis. I own the interest of the spectacle, but it demands too great a sacrifice."

"Not at all. In fact, I have made up my mind for a bouleversement this spring, as I seriously believe it would tend very much to the respectability of France. It must come sooner or later. Louis Philippe is well up in years, and it cannot make much difference to him. Besides, I am tired of Guizot. He gives himself airs as an historian which are absolutely insufferable, and France can submit to it no longer. The only doubt I entertain is, whether this ought to be a new ministry, or an entire dynastical change."

"You are the best judge. For my own part, having no interest in the matter further than curiosity, a change of ministers would satisfy me."

"Ay, but there are considerations beyond that. Much may be said upon both sides. There is danger certainly in organic changes, at the same time we must work out by all means our full and legitimate freedom. What would you do in such a case of perplexity?"

Victor Hugo's simple and romantic method of deciding between hostile opinions, as exemplified in his valuable drama of Lucrece Borgia, at once occurred to me.

"Are you quite serious," said I, "in wishing to effect a change of some kind?"

"I am," said the Marquis, "as resolute as Prometheus on the Caucasus."

"Then suppose we toss for it; and so leave the question of a new cabinet or dynasty entirely to the arbitration of fate?"

"A good and a pious idea!" replied the Marquis de la Pailleterie. "Here is a five-franc piece. I shall toss, and you shall call."

Up went the dollar, big with the fate of France, twirling in the evening air.

"Heads for a new ministry!" cried I, and the coin fell chinking on the gravel. We both rushed up.

"It is tails!" said the Marquis devoutly. "Destiny! Thou hast willed it, and I am but thine instrument. Farewell, my friend; in ten days you shall hear more of this. Meantime, I must be busy. Poor Leontine! thou hast a heavy task before thee!"

"If you are going homewards," said I, "permit me to accompany you so far. Our way lies together."

"Not so," replied the Marquis thoughtfully. "I dine to-day at Vefour's, and in the evening I must attend the Theatre de la Porte St Martin. I am never so much alone as in the midst of excitement. O France, France! what do I not endure for thee!"
So saying, Monte-Christo extended his hand, which I wrung affectionately within my own. I felt proud of the link which bound me to so high and elevated a being.

"Ah, my friend!" said I, "ah, my friend! there is yet time to pause. Would it not be wiser and better to forego this enterprise altogether?"

"You forget," replied the other solemnly. "Destiny has willed it. Go, let us each fulfil our destiny!"

So saying, this remarkable man tucked the poodle under his arm, and in a few moments was lost to my view amidst the avenues of the garden of the Tuileries.
Several days elapsed, during which Paris maintained its customary tranquillity. The eye of a stranger could have observed very little alteration in the demeanour of the populace; and even in the salons there was no strong surmise of any coming event of importance. In the capital of France one looks for a revolution as quietly as the people of England await the advent of "the coming man." The event is always prophesied--sometimes apparently upon the eve of being fulfilled; but the failures are so numerous as to prevent inordinate disappointment. In the Chamber there were some growlings about the Reform banquet, and the usual vague threats if any attempt should be made to coerce the liberties of the people; but these demonstrations had been so often repeated, that nobody had faith in any serious or critical result.

Little Thiers, to be sure, blustered; and Odillon Barrot assumed pompous airs, and tried to look like a Roman citizen at our small patriotic cosmopolitan reunions; but I never could believe that either of them was thoroughly in earnest. We all know the game that is played in Britain, where the doors of the ministerial cabinet are constructed on the principle of a Dutch clock. When it is fair weather, the ambitious figure of Lord John Russell is seen mounting guard on the outside--when it threatens to blow, the small sentry retires, and makes way for the Tamworth grenadier. Just so was it in Paris. Guizot, if wheeled from his perch, was expected to be replaced by the smarter and more enterprising Thiers, and slumbrous Duchatel by the broad-chested and beetle-browed Barrot.

At the same time I could not altogether shut my eyes to the more active state of the press. I do not mean to aver that the mere political articles exhibited more than their usual vigour; but throughout the whole literature of the day there ran an under-current of revolutionary feeling which betokened wonderful unanimity. Less than usual was said about Marengo, Austerlitz, or even the three glorious days of July. The minds of men were directed further back, to a period when the Republic was all in all, when France stood isolated among the nations, great in crime, and drunken with her new-won freedom. The lapse of half a century is enough to throw a sort of halo around the memory of the veriest villain and assassin. We have seen Dick Turpin and Jack Sheppard exhumed from their graves to be made the heroes of modern romance; and the same alchemy was now applied to the honoured ashes of Anacharsis Clootz, and other patriots of the Reign of Terror.

All this was done very insidiously, and, I must say, with consummate skill. Six or seven simultaneous romances reminded the public of its former immunity from rule, and about as many melodramas denounced utter perdition to tyranny. I liked the fun. Man is by nature a revolutionary animal, especially when he has nothing to lose; and it is needless to remark that a very small portion indeed of my capital was invested in the foreign funds.

I saw little of my friend the Marquis, beyond meeting him at the usual promenades, and bowing to him at the theatres, where he never failed to present himself. A casual observer would have thought that De la Pailleterie had no other earthly vocation than to perambulate Paris as a mere votary of pleasure. Once
or twice, however, towards evening, I encountered him in his uniform of the National Guard, with fire in his eye, haste in his step, and a settled deliberation on his forehead; and I could not help, as I gazed upon him, feeling transported backwards to the period of Athos, Porthos, and Aramis.

At length I received the expected billet, and on the appointed evening rendered myself punctually at his house. The rooms were already more than half filled by the company.

"Are the Ides of March come?" said I, pressing the proffered hand of Monte-Christo.

"Come--but not yet over," he replied. "You have seen the new play which has produced such a marked sensation?"

"I have. Wonderful production! Whose is it?"

A mysterious smile played upon the lip of my friend.

"Come," said he, "let me introduce you to a countryman, a sympathiser; one who, like you, is desirous that our poor country should participate in the blessings of the British loom. Mr Hutton Bagsby--Mr Dunshunner."

Bagsby was a punchy man, with a bald head, and a nose which betokened his habitual addiction to the fiery grape of Portugal.

"Servant, sir!" said he. "Understand you're a free-trader, supporter of Cobden's principles, and inclined to go the whole hog. Glad to see a man of common understanding here. Damme, sir, when I speak to these French fellows about calico, they begin to talk about fraternity; which, as I take it, means eating frogs, for I don't pretend to understand their outlandish gibberish."

"Every nation has its hobby, you know, Mr Bagsby," I replied. "We consider ourselves more practical than the French, and stick to the main chance; they, on the other hand, are occupied with social grievances, and what they call the rights of labour."

"Rights of labour!" exclaimed Bagsby. "Hanged if I think labour has got any rights at all. Blow all protection! say I. Look after the interests of the middle classes, and let capital have its swing. As for those confounded working fellows, who cares about them? We don't, I can answer for it. When I was in the League, we wanted to bring corn down, in order to get work cheaper; and, now that we've got it, do you think we will stand any rubbish about rights? These French fellows are a poor set; they don't understand sound commercial principles."

"Ha! Lamoriciere!" said our host, accosting a general officer who just then entered the apartment; "how goes it? Any result from to-day's demonstration at the Chamber?"
"Ma foi! I should say there is. The banquets are forbidden. There is a talk about impeaching ministers; and, in the mean time, the artillery-waggons are rumbling through the streets in scores."

"Then our old friend Macaire is likely to make a stand?"

"It is quite possible that the respectable gentleman may try it," said the commandant, regaling himself with a pinch. "By the way, the National Guard must turn out to-morrow early. The rappel will be beat by daybreak. There is a stir already in the Boulevards; and, as I drove here, I saw the people in thousands reading the evening journals by torch-light."

"Such is liberty!" exclaimed a little gentleman, who had been listening eagerly to the General. "Such is liberty! she holds her bivouac at nightfall by the torch of reason; and, on the morrow, the dawn is red with the brightness of the sun of Austerlitz!"

A loud hum of applause followed the enunciation of this touching sentiment.

"Our friend is great to-night," whispered Monte-Chrîsto; "and he may be greater to-morrow. If Louis Philippe yields, he may be prime-minister--if firing begins, I have a shrewd notion he won't be anywhere. Ah, Monsieur Albert! welcome from Cannes. We have been expecting you for some time, and you have arrived not a moment too soon!"

The individual thus accosted was of middle height, advanced age, and very plainly dressed. He wore a rusty grey surtout, trousers of plaid check, and the lower part of his countenance was buried in the folds of a black cravat. The features were remarkable; and, somehow or other, I thought that I had seen them before. The small grey eyes rolled restlessly beneath their shaggy pent-house; the cheek-bones were remarkably prominent; a deep furrow was cut on either side of the mouth; and the nose, which was of singular conformation, seemed endowed with spontaneous life, and performed a series of extraordinary mechanical revolutions. Altogether, the appearance of the man impressed me with the idea of strong, ill-regulated energy, and of that restless activity which is emphatically the mother of mischief.

Monsieur Albert did not seem very desirous of courting attention. He rather winked than replied to our host, threw a suspicious look at Bagsby, who was staring him in the face, honoured me with a survey, and then edged away into the crowd. I felt rather curious to know something more about him.

"Pray, my dear Marquis," said I, "who may this Monsieur Albert be?"

"Albert! Is it possible that you do not--but I forget. I can only tell you, mon cher, that this Monsieur Albert is a very remarkable man, and will be heard of hereafter among the ranks of the people. You seem to suspect a mystery? Well, well! There are mysteries in all great dramas, such as that which is now going on around us; so for the present you must be content to know my friend as simple Albert, ouvrier."
"Hanged if I haven't seen that fellow in the black choker before!" said Mr Bagsby; "or, at all events, I've seen his double. I say, Mr Dunshunner, who is the chap that came in just now?"

"I really cannot tell, Mr Bagsby. Monte-Christo calls him simply Mr Albert, a workman."

"That's their fraternity, I suppose! If I thought he was an operative, I'd be off in the twinkling of a billy-roller. But it's all a hoax. Do you know, I think he's very like a certain noble--"

Here an aide-de-camp, booted and spurred, dashed into the apartment.

"General! you are wanted immediately: the emeute has begun, half Paris is rushing to arms, and they are singing the Marseillaise through the streets!"

"Anything else?" said the General, who, with inimitable sang froid, was sipping a tumbler of orgeat.

"Guizot has resigned."

"Bravo!" cried the little gentleman above referred to--and he cut a caper that might have done credit to Vestris. "Bravo! there is some chance for capable men now."

"I was told," continued the aide-de-camp, "as I came along, that Count Mole had been sent for."

"Mole! bah! an imbecile!" muttered the diminutive statesman. "It was not worth a revolution to produce such a miserable result."

"And what say the people?" asked our host.

"Cela ne suffit pas!"

"Ah, les bons citoyens! Ah! les Braves garçons! Je les connais!" And here the candidate for office executed a playful pirouette.

"Nevertheless," said Lamoriciere, "we must do our duty."

"Which is?" interrupted De la Pailleterie.

"To see the play played out, at all events," replied the military patriot; "and therefore, messieurs, I have the honour to wish you all a very good evening."

"But stop, General," cried two or three voices: "what would you advise us to do?"

"In the first place, gentlemen," replied the warrior, and his words were listened to with the deepest attention, "I would recommend you, as the streets are in a disturbed state, to see the ladies home. That
duty performed, you will probably be guided by your own sagacity and tastes. The National Guard will, of course, muster at their quarters. Gentlemen who are of an architectural genius will probably be gratified by an opportunity of inspecting several barricades in different parts of the city; and I have always observed, that behind a wall of this description there is little danger from a passing bullet. Others, who are fond of fireworks, may possibly find an opportunity of improving themselves in the pyrotechnic art. But I detain you, gentlemen, I fear unjustifiably; and as I observe that the firing has begun, I have the honour once more to renew my salutations."

And in fact a sharp fusillade was heard without, towards the conclusion of the General's harangue. The whole party was thrown into confusion; several ladies showed symptoms of fainting, and were incontinently received in the arms of their respective cavaliers.

The aspiring statesman had disappeared. Whether he got under a sofa, or up the chimney, I do not know, but he vanished utterly from my eyes. Monte-Christo was in a prodigious state of excitement.

"I have kept my word, you see," he said: "this may be misconstrued in history, but I call upon you to bear witness that the revolution was a triumph of genius. O France!" continued he, filling his pocket with macaroons, "the hour of thine emancipation has come!"

Observing a middle-aged lady making towards the door without male escort, I thought it incumbent upon me to tender my services, in compliance with the suggestions of the gallant Lamoriciere. I was a good deal obstructed, however, by Mr Hutton Bagsby, who, in extreme alarm, was cleaving to the skirts of my garments.

"Can I be of the slightest assistance in offering my escort to madame?" said I with a respectful bow.

The lady looked at me with unfeigned surprise.

"Monsieur mistakes, I believe," said she quietly. "Perhaps he thinks I carry a fan. Look here"--and she exhibited the butt of an enormous horse-pistol. "The authoress of Lelia knows well how to command respect for herself."

"George Sand!" I exclaimed in amazement.

"The same, Monsieur; who will be happy to meet you this evening at an early hour, behind the barricade of the Rue Montmartre."

"O good Lord!" cried Mr Hutton Bagsby, "here is a precious kettle of fish! They are firing out yonder like mad; they'll be breaking into the houses next, and we'll all be murdered to a man."

"Do not be alarmed, Mr Bagsby; this is a mere political revolution. The people have no animosity whatever to strangers."
"Haven't they? I wish you had seen the way the waiter looked this morning at my dressing-case. They'd tie me up to the lamp-post at once for the sake of my watch and seals! And I don't know a single word of their bloody language. I wish the leaders of the League had been hanged before they sent me here."

"What! then you are here upon a mission?"

"Yes, I'm a delegate, as they call it. O Lord, I wish somebody would take me home!"

"Where do you reside, Mr Bagsby?"

"I don't know the name of the street, and the man who brought me here has just gone away with a gun! Oh dear! what shall I do?"

I really felt considerably embarrassed. By this time Monte-Christo and most of his guests had departed, and I knew no one to whom I could consign the unfortunate and terrified free-trader. I sincerely pitied poor Bagsby, who was eminently unfitted for this sort of work; and was just about to offer him an asylum in my own apartments, when I felt my shoulder touched, and, turning round, recognised the intelligent though sarcastic features of Albert the ouvrier.

"You are both English?" he said in a perfectly pure dialect. "Eh bien, I like the English, and I wish they understood us better. You are in difficulties. Well, I will assist. Come with me. You may depend upon the honour of a member of the Institute. Workman as I am, I have some influence here. Come--is it a bargain? Only one caution, gentlemen: remember where you are, and that the watchwords for the night are fraternite, egalite! You comprehend? Let us lose no time, but follow me."

So saying, he strode to the door. Bagsby said not a word, but clutched my arm. But as we descended the staircase, he muttered in my ear as well as the chattering of his teeth would allow:--

"It is him--I am perfectly certain! Who on earth would have believed this! O Lord Harry!"
CHAPTER III.

THE BARRICADES.

The streets were in a state of wild commotion. Everywhere we encountered crowds of truculent working fellows, dressed in blouses, and armed with muskets, who were pressing towards the Boulevards. Sometimes they passed us in hurried groups; at other times the way was intercepted by a regular procession bearing torches, and singing the war-hymn of Marseilles. Those who judge of the physical powers of the French people by the specimens they usually encounter in the streets of Paris, are certain to form an erroneous estimate. A more powerful and athletic race than the workmen is scarcely to be found in Europe; and it was not, I confess, without a certain sensation of terror, that I found myself launched into the midst of this wild and uncontrollable mob, whose furious gestures testified to their excitement, and whose brawny arms were bared, and ready for the work of slaughter.

Considering the immense military force which was known to be stationed in and around Paris, it seemed to me quite miraculous that no effective demonstration had been made. Possibly the troops might be drawn up in some of the wider streets or squares, but hitherto we had encountered none. Several bodies of the National Guard, it is true, occasionally went by; but these did not seem to be considered as part of the military force, nor did they take any active steps towards the quelling of the disturbance. At times, however, the sound of distant firing warned us that the struggle had begun.

Poor Bagsby clung to my arm in a perfect paroxysm of fear. I had cautioned him, as we went out, on no account to open his lips, or to make any remarks which might serve to betray his origin. The creature was quite docile, and followed in the footsteps of Monsieur Albert like a lamb. That mysterious personage strode boldly forward, chuckling to himself as he went, and certainly exhibited a profound knowledge of the topography of Paris. Once or twice we were stopped and questioned; but a few cabalistic words from our leader solved all difficulties, and we were allowed to proceed amidst general and vociferous applause.

At length, as we approached the termination of a long and narrow street, we heard a tremendous shouting, and the unmistakable sounds of conflict.

"Here come the Municipal Guards!" cried M. Albert, quickly. "These fellows fight like demons, and have no regard for the persons of the people. Follow me, gentlemen, this way, and speedily, if you do not wish to be sliced like blanc-mange!"

With these words the ouvrier dived into a dark lane, and we lost no time in following his example. I had no idea whatever of our locality, but it seemed evident that we were in one of the worst quarters of Paris. Every lamp in the lane had been broken, so that we could form no opinion of its character from vision. It was, however, ankle-deep of mud--a circumstance by no means likely to prolong the existence of my glazed boots. Altogether, I did not like the situation; and had it not been for the guarantee as to M. Albert's respectability, implied from his acquaintance with Monte-Christo, I think I should have preferred trusting myself to the tender mercies of the Municipal Guard. As for poor Bagsby, his teeth
were going like castanets.

"You seem cold, sir," said Albert, in a deep and husky voice, as we reached a part of the lane apparently fenced in by dead walls. "This is a wild night for a Manchester weaver to be wandering in the streets of Paris!"

"O Lord! you know me, then?" groaned Bagsby, with a piteous accent.

"Know you? ha, ha!" replied the other, with the laugh of the third ruffian in a melodrama; "who does not know citizen Bagsby, the delegate--Bagsby, the great champion of the League--Bagsby, the millionaire!"

"It's not time, upon my soul!" cried Bagsby; "I am nothing of the kind. I haven't a hundred pounds in the world that I can properly call my own."

"The world wrongs you, then," said Albert; "and, to say the truth, you keep up the delusion by carrying so much bullion about you. I should say, now, that the chain round your neck must be worth some fifty louis."

Bagsby made no reply, but clutched my arm with the grasp of a cockatoo.

"This is a very dreary place," continued Albert, in a tone that might have emanated from a sepulchre. "Last winter three men were robbed and murdered in this very passage. There is a conduit to the Seine below, and I saw the bodies next morning in the Morgue, with their throats cut from ear to ear!"

From a slight interjectional sound, I concluded that Bagsby was praying.

"These," said the ouvrier, "are the walls of a slaughter-house: on the other side is the shed where they ordinarily keep the guillotine. Have you seen that implement yet, Mr Bagsby?"

"Mercy on us, no!" groaned the delegate. "Oh, Mr Albert, whoever you are, do take us out of this place, or I am sure I shall lose my reason! If you want my watch, say so at once, and, upon my word, you are heartily welcome."

"Harkye, sirrah," said Monsieur Albert: "I have more than half a mind to leave you here all night for your consummate impertinence. I knew you from the very first to be a thorough poltroon; but I shall find a proper means of chastising you. Come along, sir; we are past the lane now, and at a place where your hands may be better employed for the liberties of the people than your head ever was in inventing task-work at home."

We now emerged into an open court, lighted by a solitary lamp. It was apparently deserted, but on a low whistle from Monsieur Albert, some twenty or thirty individuals in blouses rushed forth from the doorways and surrounded us. I own I did not feel remarkably comfortable at the moment; for although
it was clear to me that our guide had merely been amusing himself at the expense of Bagsby, the apparition of his confederates was rather sudden and startling. As for Bagsby, he evidently expected no better fate than an immediate conduct to the block.

"You come late, mon capitaine," said a bloused veteran, armed with a mattock. "They have the start of us already in the Rue des Petits Champs."

"Never mind, grognard! we are early enough for the ball," said M. Albert. "Have you everything ready as I desired?"

"All ready--spades, levers, pickaxes, and the rest."

"Arms?"

"Enough to serve our purpose, and we shall soon have more. But who are these with you?"

"Fraternisers--two bold Englishmen, who are ready to die for freedom!"

"Vivent les Anglais, et a bas les tyrans!" shouted the blouses.

"This citizen," continued Albert, indicating the unhappy Bagsby, "is a Cobdenist and a delegate. He has sworn to remain at the barricades until the last shot is fired, and to plant the red banner of the emancipated people upon its summit. His soul is thirsting for fraternity. Brothers! open to him your arms."

Hereupon a regular scramble took place for the carcass of Mr Hutton Bagsby. Never surely was so much love lavished upon any human creature. Patriot after patriot bestowed on him the full-flavoured hug of fraternity, and he emerged from their grasp very much in the tattered condition of a scarecrow.

"Give the citizen delegate a blouse and a pickaxe," quoth Albert, "and then for the barricade. You have your orders--execute them. Up with the pavement, down with the trees; fling over every omnibus and cab that comes in your way, and fight to the last drop of your blood for France and her freedom. Away!"

With a tremendous shout the patriots rushed off, hurrying Bagsby along with them. The unfortunate man offered no resistance, but the agony depicted on his face might have melted the heart of a millstone.

Albert remained silent until the group were out of sight, and then burst into a peal of laughter.

"That little man," said he, "will gather some useful experiences to-night that may last him as long as he lives. As for you, Mr Dunshunner, whose name and person are well known to me, I presume you have no ambition to engage in any such architectural constructions?"
I modestly acknowledged my aversion to practical masonry.

"Well, then," said the ouvrier, "I suppose you are perfectly competent to take care of yourself. There will be good fun in the streets, if you choose to run the risk of seeing it; at the same time there is safety in stone walls. 'Gad, I think this will astonish plain John! There's nothing like it in his Lives of the Chancellors. I don't want, however, to see our friend the delegate absolutely sacrificed. Will you do me the favour to inquire for him to-morrow at the barricade down there? I will answer for it that he does not make his escape before then; and now for Ledru Rollin!"

With these words, and a friendly nod, the eccentric artisan departed, at a pace which showed how little his activity had been impaired by years. Filled with painful and conflicting thoughts, I followed the course of another street which led me to the Rue Rivoli.

Here I had a capital opportunity of witnessing the progress of the revolution. The street was crowded with the people shouting, yelling, and huzzaing; and a large body of the National Guard, drawn up immediately in front of me, seemed to be in high favour. Indeed, I was not surprised at this, on discovering that the officer in command was no less a person than my illustrious friend De la Pailleterie. He looked as warlike as a Lybian lion, though it was impossible to comprehend what particular section of the community were the objects of his sublime anger. Indeed, it was rather difficult to know what the gentlemen in blouses wanted. Some were shouting for reform, as if that were a tangible article which could be handed them from a window; others demanded the abdication of ministers--rather unreasonably, I thought, since at that moment there was no vestige of a ministry in France; whilst the most practical section of the mob was clamorous for the head of Guizot. Presently the shakos and bright bayonets of a large detachment of infantry were seen approaching, amidst vehement cries of "Vive la Ligne!" They marched up to the National Guard, who still maintained their ranks. The leading officer looked puzzled.

"Who are these?" he said, pointing with his sword to the Guard.

"I have the honour to inform Monsieur," said Monte-Christo, stepping forward, "that these are the second legion of the National Guard!"

"Vive la Garde Nationale!" cried the officer.

"Vive la Ligne!" reciprocated the Marquis.

Both gentlemen then saluted, and interchanged snuff-boxes, amidst tremendous cheering from the populace.

"And who are these?" continued the officer, pointing to the blouses on the pavement.

"These are the people," replied Monte-Christo.
"They must disperse. My orders are peremptory," said the regular.

"The National Guard will protect them. Monsieur, respect the people!"

"They must disperse," repeated the officer.

"They shall not," replied Monte-Christo.

The moment was critical.

"In that case," replied the officer, after a pause, "I shall best fulfil my duty by wishing Monsieur a good evening."

"You are a brave fellow!" cried the Marquis, sheathing his sabre; and in a moment the warriors were locked in a brotherly embrace.

The effect was electric and instantaneous. "Let us all fraternise!" was the cry; and regulars, nationals, and blouses, rushed into each others’ arms. The union was complete. Jacob and Esau coalesced without the formality of an explanation. Ammunition was handed over by the troops without the slightest scruple, and in return many bottles of vin ordinaire were produced for the refreshment of the military. No man who witnessed that scene could have any doubt as to the final result of the movement.

Presently, however, a smart fusillade was heard to the right. The cry arose, "They are assassinating the people! to the barricades! to the barricades!" and the whole multitude swept vehemently forward towards the place of contest. Unfortunately, in my anxiety to behold the rencontre in which my friend bore so distinguished a part, I had pressed a little further forwards than was prudent, and I now found myself in the midst of an infuriated gang of workmen, and urged irresistibly onwards to the nearest barricade.

"Thou hast no arms, comrade!" cried a gigantic butcher, who strode beside me armed with an enormous axe; "here--take this;" and he thrust a sabre into my hand; "take this, and strike home for la Patrie!"

I muttered my acknowledgments for the gift, and tried to look as like a patriot as possible.

"Tete de Robespierre!" cried another. "This is better than paying taxes! A bas la Garde Municipale! a bas tous les tyrans!"

"Tete de Brissot!" exclaimed I, in return, thinking it no unwise plan to invoke the Manes of some of the earlier heroes. This was a slight mistake.

"Quoi? Girondin?" cried the butcher, with a ferocious scowl.

"Non; corps de Marat!" I shouted.
"Bon! embrasse-moi donc, camarade!" said the butcher, and so we reached the barricade.

Here the game was going on in earnest. The barricade had been thrown up hastily and imperfectly, and a considerable body of the Municipal Guard—who, by the way, behaved throughout with much intrepidity—was attempting to dislodge the rioters. In fact, they had almost succeeded. Some ten of the insurgents, who were perched upon the top of the pile, had been shot down, and no one seemed anxious to supply their place on that bad eminence. In vain my friend the butcher waved his axe, and shouted, "En avant!" A considerable number of voices, indeed, took up the cry, but a remarkable reluctance was exhibited in setting the salutary example. A few minutes more, and the passage would have been cleared; when all of a sudden, from the interior of a cabriolet, which formed a sort of parapet to the embankment, emerged a ghastly figure, streaming with gore, and grasping the drapeau rouge. I never was more petrified in my life—the man—there could be no doubt of the man—it was Hutton Bagsby!

For a moment he stood gazing upon the tossing multitude beneath. There was a brief pause, and even the soldiers, awed by his intrepidity, forbore to fire. At last, however, they raised their muskets; when, with a hoarse scream, Bagsby leaped from the barricade, and alighted uninjured on the street. Had Mars descended in person to lead the insurrection, he could not have done better.

"Ah, le brave Anglais! Ah, le depute intrepide! A la rescousse!" was the cry, and a torrent of human beings rushed headlong over the barricade.

No power on earth could have resisted that terrific charge. The Municipal Guards were scattered like chaff before the wind; some were cut down, and others escaped under cover of the ranks of the Nationals. Like the rest, I had leaped the embankment; but not being anxious to distinguish myself in single combat, I paused at the spot where Bagsby had fallen. There I found the illustrious delegate stretched upon the ground, still grasping the glorious colours. I stooped down and examined the body, but I could discover no wound. The blood that stained his forehead was evidently not his own.

I loosened his neckcloth to give him air, but still there were no signs of animation. A crowd soon gathered around us—the victors were returning from the combat.

"He will never fight more!" said the author of the Mysteries of Paris, whom I now recognised among the combatants. "He has led us on for the last time to victory! Alas for the adopted child of France! Un vrai heros! II est mort sur le champ de bataille! Messieurs, I propose that we decree for our departed comrade the honours of a public funeral!"
"How do you feel yourself to-day, Mr Bagsby?" said I, as I entered the apartment of that heroic individual on the following morning; "you made a very close shave of it, I can tell you. Eugene Sue wanted to have you stretched upon a shutter, and carried in procession as a victim through all the streets of Paris."

"Victim indeed!" replied Bagsby, manipulating the small of his back, "I've been quite enough victimised already. Hanged if I don't get that villain Albert impeached when I reach England, that's all! I worked among them with the pickaxe till my arms were nearly broken, and the only thanks I got was to be shot at like a popinjay."

"Nay, Mr Bagsby, you have covered yourself with glory. Every one says that but for you the barricade would inevitably have been carried."

"They might have carried it to the infernal regions for aught that I cared," replied Bagsby. "Catch me fraternising again with any of them; a disreputable set of scoundrels with never a shirt to their back."

"You forget, my dear sir," said I: "Mr Cobden is of opinion that they are the most affectionate and domesticated people on the face of the earth."

"Did Cobden say that?" cried Bagsby: "then he's a greater humbug than I took him to be, and that is saying not a little. He'll never get another testimonial out of me, I can tell you. But pray, how did I come here?"

"Why, you were just about to be treated to a public funeral, when very fortunately you exhibited some symptoms of resuscitation, and a couple of hairy patriots carried you to my lodgings. Your exertions had been too much for you. I must confess, Mr Bagsby, I had no idea that you were so bloodthirsty a personage."

"Me bloodthirsty!" cried Bagsby: "Lord bless you! I am like to faint whenever I cut myself in shaving. Guns and swords are my perfect abomination, and I don't think I could bring myself to fire at a sparrow."

"Come, come! you do yourself injustice. I shall never forget the brilliant manner in which you charged down the barricade."

"All I can tell you is, that I was deucedly glad to hide myself in one of the empty coaches. But when a bullet came splash through the panel within two inches of my ear, I found the place was getting too hot to hold me, and scrambled out. I had covered myself with one of their red rags by way of concealment, and I suppose I brought it out with me. As to jumping down, you will allow it was full time to do that,
when fifty fellows were taking a deliberate aim with their guns."

"You are too modest, Mr Bagsby; and, notwithstanding all your disclaimers, you have gained a niche in history as a hero. But come; this may be a busy day, and it is already late. Do you think you can manage any breakfast?"

"I'll try," said Bagsby; and, to do him justice, he did.

Our meal concluded, I proposed a ramble, in order to ascertain the progress of events, of which both of us were thoroughly ignorant. Bagsby, however, was extremely adverse to leaving the house. He had a strong impression that he would be again kidnapped, and pressed into active service; in which case he affirmed that he would incontinently give up the ghost.

"Can't you stay comfortably here," said he, "and let's have a little bottled porter? These foreign chaps can surely fight their own battles without you or me; and that leads me to ask if you know the cause of all this disturbance. Hanged if I understand anything about it!"

"I believe it mainly proceeds from the King having forbidden some of the deputies to dine together in public."

"You don't say so!" cried Bagsby: "what an old fool he must be! Blowed if I wouldn't have taken the chair in person, and sent them twelve dozen of champagne to drink my health."

"Kings, Mr Bagsby, are rarely endowed with a large proportion of such sagacity as yours. But really we must go forth and look a little about us. It is past mid-day, and I cannot hear any firing. You may rely upon it that the contest has been settled in one way or another--either the people have been appeased, or, what is more likely, the troops have sided with them. We must endeavour to obtain some information."

"You may do as you like," said Bagsby, "but my mind is made up. I'm off for Havre this blessed afternoon."

"My dear sir, you cannot. No passports can be obtained just now, and the mob has taken up the railroads."

"What an idiot I was ever to come here!" groaned Bagsby. "Mercy on me! must I continue in this den of thieves, whether I will or no?"

"I am afraid there is no alternative. But you judge the Parisians too hastily, Mr Bagsby. I perceive they have respected your watch."

"Ay, but you heard what that chap said about the slaughter-house lane. I declare he almost frightened me into fits. But where are you going?"
"Out, to be sure. If you choose to remain--"

"Not I. Who knows but they may take a fancy to seek for me here, and carry me away again! I won't part with the only Englishman I know in Paris, though I think it would be more sensible to remain quietly where we are."

We threw ourselves into the stream of people which was rapidly setting in towards the Tuileries. Great events seemed to have happened, or at all events to be on the eve of completion. The troops were nowhere to be seen. They had vanished from the city like magic.

"Bon jour, Citoyen Bagsby," said a harsh voice, immediately behind us. "I hear high accounts of your valour yesterday at the barricades. Allow me to congratulate you on your first revolutionary experiment."

I turned round, and encountered the sarcastic smile of M. Albert the ouvrier. He was rather better dressed than on the previous evening, and had a tricolored sash bound around his waist. With him was a crowd of persons evidently in attendance.

"Should you like, Mr Bagsby, to enter the service of the Republic? for such, I have the honour to inform you, France is now," continued the ouvrier. "We shall need a few practical heads--"

"Oh dear! I knew what it would all come to!" groaned Bagsby.

"Don't misapprehend me--I mean heads to assist us in our new commercial arrangements. Now, as free-trade has succeeded so remarkably well in Britain, perhaps you would not object to communicate some of your experiences to M. Cremieux, who is now my colleague?"

"Your colleague, M. Albert?" said I.

"Exactly so. I have the honour to be one of the members of the Provisional Government of France."

"Am I in my senses or not?" muttered Bagsby. "Oh, sir, whoever you are, do be a good fellow for once, and let me get home! I promise you, I shall not say a word about this business on the other side of the Channel."

"Far be it from me to lay any restraint upon your freedom of speech, Mr Bagsby. So, then, I conclude you refuse? Well, be it so. After all, I daresay Cremieux will get on very well without you."

"But pray, M. Albert--one word," said I. "You mentioned a republic--"

"I did. It has been established for an hour. Louis Philippe has abdicated, and in all probability is by this time half a league beyond the barrier. The Duchess of Orleans came down with her son to the Chamber of Deputies, and I really believe there would have been a regency; for the gallantry of France was
moved, and Barrot was determined on the point. Little Ledru Rollin, however, saved us from half
measures. Rollin is a clever fellow, with the soul of a Robespierre; and, seeing how matters were likely
to go, he quietly slipped to the door, and admitted a select number of our friends from the barricades.
That put a stop to the talking. You have no idea how quiet gentlemen become in the presence of a mob
with loaded muskets. Their hearts failed them; the deputies gradually withdrew, and a republic was
proclaimed by the sovereign will of the people. I am just on my way to the Hotel de Ville, to assist in
consolidating the government."

"Bon voyage, M. Albert!"

"Oh, we shall do it, sure enough! But here we are near the Tuileries. Perhaps, gentlemen, you would
like to enjoy the amusements which are going on yonder, and to drink prosperity to the new Republic in
a glass of Louis Philippe's old Clos Vougeot. If so, do not let me detain you. Adieu!" And, with a
spasmodic twitch of his nose, the eccentric ouvrier departed.

"Well! what things one does see abroad, to be sure!" said Bagsby: "I recollect him quite well at the time
of the Reform Bill--"

"Hush, my dear Bagsby!" said I, "this is not the moment nor the place for any reminiscences of the
kind."

Certainly the aspect of what was going forward in front of the Tuileries was enough to drive all minor
memories from the head of any man. A huge bonfire was blazing in the midst of the Square opposite
the Place du Carrousel, and several thousands of the populace were dancing round it like demons. It
was fed by the royal carriages, the furniture of the state-rooms, and every combustible article which
could in any way be identified with the fallen dynasty. The windows of the palace were flung open, and
hangings, curtains, and tapestries of silk and golden tissue, were pitched into the square amidst shouts
of glee that would have broken the heart of an upholsterer. It was the utter recklessness of destruction.
Yet, with all this, there was a certain appearance of honesty preserved. The people might destroy to any
amount they pleased, but they were not permitted to appropriate. The man who smashed a mirror or
shattered a costly vase into flinders was a patriot,—he who helped himself to an inkstand was
denounced as an ignominious thief. I saw one poor devil, whose famished appearance bore miserable
testimony to his poverty, arrested and searched; a pair of paste buckles was found upon him, and he was
immediately conducted to the gardens, and shot by a couple of gentlemen who, five minutes before, had
deliberately slit some valuable pictures into ribbons! Every moment the crowd was receiving accession
from without, and the bonfire materials from within. At last, amidst tremendous acclamations, the
throne itself was catapulted into the square, and the last symbol of royalty reduced to a heap of ashes.

The whole scene was so extremely uninviting that I regretted having come so far, and suggested to
Bagsby the propriety of an immediate retreat. This, however, was not so easy. Several of the citizens
who were now dancing democratic polkas round the embers, had been very active partisans at the
barricade on the evening before, and, as ill-luck would have it, recognised their revivified champion.
"Trois mille rognons!" exclaimed my revolutionary friend the butcher; "here's the brave little Englishman that led us on so gallantly against the Municipal Guard! How is it with thee, my fire-eater, my stout swaller of bullets? Art thou sad that there is no more work for thee to do? Cheer up, citizen! we shall be at the frontiers before long; and then who knows but the Republic may reward thee with the baton of a marshal of France!"

"Plus de marechaux!" cried a truculent chiffonier, who was truculently picking a marrow-bone with his knife. "Such fellows are worth nothing except to betray the people. I waited to have a shot at old Soult yesterday, but the rascal would not show face!"

"Never mind him, citizen," said the butcher, "we all know Pere Pomme-de-terre. But thou lookest pale! Art thirsty? Come with me, and I will show thee where old Macaire keeps his cellar. France will not grudge a flask to so brave a patriot as thyself."

"Ay, ay! to the cellar--to the cellar!" exclaimed some fifty voices.

"Silence, mes enfants!" cried the butcher, who evidently had already reconnoitred the interior of the subterranean vaults. "Let us do all things in order. As Citizen Lamartine remarked, let virtue go hand in hand with liberty, and let us apply ourselves seriously to the consummation of this great work. We have now an opportunity of fraternising with the world. We see amongst us an Englishman who last night devoted his tremendous energies to France. We thought he had fallen, and were about to give him public honours. Let us not be more unmindful of the living than the dead. Here he stands, and I now propose that he be carried on the shoulders of the people to the royal--peste!--I mean the republican cellar, and that we there drink to the confusion of all rank, and the union of all nations in the bonds of universal brotherhood!"

"Agreed! agreed!" shouted the mob; and for the second time Bagsby underwent the ceremony of entire fraternisation. He was then hoisted upon the shoulders of some half-dozen patriots, notwithstanding a melancholy howl, by which he intended to express disapprobation of the whole proceeding. I was pressed into the service as interpreter, and took care to attribute his disclaimer solely to an excess of modesty.

"Thou also wert at the barricade last night," said the butcher. "Thou, too, hast struck a blow for France. Come along. Let us cement with wine the fraternity that originated in blood!"

So saying, he laid hold of my arm, and we all rushed towards the Tuileries. I would have given a trifle to have been lodged at that moment in the filthiest tenement of the Cowcaddens; but anything like resistance was of course utterly out of the question. In we thronged, a tumultuous rabble of men and women, through the portal of the Kings of France, across the halls, and along the galleries, all of them bearing already lamentable marks of violence, outrage, and desecration. Here was a picture of Louis Philippe, a masterpiece by Horace Vernet, literally riddled with balls; there a statue of some prince, decapitated by the blow of a hammer; and in another place the fragments of a magnificent vase, which had been the gift of an emperor. Crowds of people were sitting or lying in the state apartments, eating,
drinking, smoking, and singing obscene ditties, or wantonly but deliberately pursuing the work of
dismemberment. And but a few hours before, this had been the palace of the King of the Barricades!

Down we went to the cellars, which by this time were tolerably clear, as most of the previous visitors
had preferred the plan of enjoying the abstracted fluid in the upper and loftier apartments. But such was
not the view of Monsieur Destripes the butcher, or of his friend Pomme-de-terre. These experienced
bacchanals preferred remaining at headquarters, on the principle that the seance ought to be declared
permanent. Bagsby, as the individual least competent to enforce order, was called to the chair, and
seated upon a kilderkin of Bordeaux, with a spigot as the emblem of authority. Then began a scene of
brutal and undisguised revelry. Casks were tapped for a single sample, and their contents allowed to run
out in streams upon the floor. Bottles were smashed in consequence of the exceeding scarcity of
cork-screws, and the finest vintage of the Cote d'Or and of Champagne were poured like water down
throats hitherto unconscious of any such generous beverage.

I need not dwell upon what followed--indeed I could not possibly do justice to the eloquence of M.
Pomme-de-terre, or the accomplishments of several poissardes, who had accompanied us in our
expedition, and now favoured us with sundry erotic ditties, popular in the Faubourg St Antoine. With
these ladies Bagsby seemed very popular; indeed, they had formed themselves into a sort of body-guard
around his person.

Sick of the whole scene, I availed myself of the first opportunity to escape from that tainted
atmosphere; and, after traversing most of the state apartments and several corridors, I found myself in a
part of the palace which had evidently been occupied by some of those who were now fleeing as exiles
towards a foreign land. The hand of the spoiler also had been here, but he was gone. It was a miserable
thing to witness the desolation of these apartments. The bed whereon a princess had lain the night
before, was now tossed and tumbled by some rude ruffian, the curtains were torn down, the
gardes-de-robe broken open, and a hundred articles of female apparel and luxury were scattered
carelessly upon the floor. The setting sun of February gleamed through the broken windows, and
rendered the heartless work of spoliation more distinct and apparent. I picked up one handkerchief, still
wet, it might be with tears, and on the corner of it was embroidered a royal cypher.

I, who was not an insurgent, almost felt that, in penetrating through these rooms, I was doing violence
to the sanctity of misfortune. Where, on the coming night, might rest the head of her who, a few hours
before, had lain upon that pillow of down? For the shelter of what obscure and stifling hut might she be
forced to exchange the noble ceiling of a palace? This much I had gathered, that all the royal family had
not succeeded in making their escape. Some of the ladies had been seen, with no protectors by their
side, shrieking in the midst of the crowd; but the cry of woe was that day too general to attract attention,
and it seemed that the older chivalry of France had passed away. Where was the husband at the hour
when the wife was struggling in that rout of terror?

I turned into a side-passage, and opened another door. It was a small room which apparently had
escaped observation. Everything here bore token of the purity of feminine taste. The little bed was
untouched: there were flowers in the window, a breviary upon the table, and a crucifix suspended on
the wall. The poor young inmate of this place had been also summoned from her sanctuary, never more to enter it again. As I came in, a little bird in a cage raised a loud twittering, and began to beat itself against the wires. The seed-box was empty, and the last drop of water had been finished. In a revolution such as this, it is the fate of favourites to be neglected.

The poor thing was perishing of hunger. I had no food to give it, but I opened the cage and the window, and set it free. With a shrill note of joy, it darted off to the trees, happier than its mistress, now thrown upon the mercy of a rude and selfish world. I looked down upon the scene beneath. The river was flowing tranquilly to the sea; the first breezes of spring were moving through the trees, just beginning to burgeon and expand; the sun was sinking amidst the golden clouds tranquilly--no sign in heaven or earth betokened that on that day a mighty monarchy had fallen. The roar of Paris was hushed; the work of desolation was over; and on the morrow, its first day would dawn upon the infant Republic.

"May Heaven shelter the unfortunate!" I exclaimed; "and may my native land be long preserved from the visitation of a calamity like this!"
CHAPTER V.

TWO PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENTS.

I awoke upon the morrow impressed with that strange sensation which is so apt to occur after the first night's repose in a new and unfamiliar locality. I could not for some time remember where I was. The events of the two last days beset me like the recollections of an unhealthy dream, produced by the agency of opiates; and it was with difficulty I could persuade myself that I had passed the night beneath the roof of the famous Tuileries.

"After all," thought I, "the event may be an interesting, but it is by no means an unusual one, in this transitory world of ours. Louis XVI., Napoleon, Charles X., Louis Philippe, and Dunshunner, have by turns occupied the palace, and none of them have had the good fortune to leave it in perpetuity to their issue. Since abdication is the order of the day, I shall even follow the example of my royal predecessors, and bolt with as much expedition as possible; for, to say the truth, I am getting tired of this turmoil, and I think, with Sir Kenneth of Scotland, that the waters of the Clyde would sound pleasant and grateful in mine ear."

A very slight toilet sufficed for the occasion, and I sallied forth with the full intention of making my immediate escape. This was not so easy. I encountered no one in the corridors, but as I opened the door of the Salle des Trophees, a din of many voices burst upon my ears. A number of persons occupied the hall, apparently engaged in the discussion of an extempore breakfast. To my infinite disgust, I recognised my quondam acquaintances of the cellar.

"Aha! thou art still here then, citizen?" cried Monsieur Destripes, who was inflicting huge gashes upon a ham, filched, no doubt, from the royal buttery. "By my faith, we thought thou hadst given us the slip. Never mind--we are not likely to part soon; so sit thee down and partake of our republican cheer."

"I am afraid," said I, "that business requires my presence elsewhere."

"Let it keep till it cool then," replied the other. "Suffice it to say, that no man quits this hall till the whole of us march out en masse. Say I right, brother Pomme-de-terre?"

"Just so," replied the chiffonier, tossing off his draught from an ornament of Venetian glass. "We have built up a second barricade, and have sworn never to surrender."

"How is this, gentlemen?" said I.

"You must know, sir," replied a meagre-looking personage, whom I afterwards ascertained to be a barber, "that the liberty of the people is not yet secure. Last night, when we were in the cellar, a large body of the National Guard came, by orders of the Provisional Government, and ejected the whole of our compatriots from the upper stories of the Tuileries. This we hold to be a clear infraction of the charter, for all public buildings are declared to be the property of the people. Fortunately we escaped
their notice, but being determined to reassert the rights of France, we have barricaded the staircase which leads to this hall, and are resolved to maintain our post."

"Bravely spoken, old Saigne-du-nez!" cried the butcher; "and a jollier company you won't find anywhere. Here are ladies for society, wine for the drinking, provisions to last us a week; and what would you wish for more? Cent mille haches! I doubt if Louis Philippe is enjoying himself half so much."

"But really gentlemen--" 

"Sacre, no mutiny!" cried the butcher; "don't we know that the sovereign will of the people must be respected? There is thy friend there, as happy as may be; go round and profit by his example."

Sure enough I discovered poor Bagsby extended in a corner of the hall. The orgies of last evening were sufficient to account for his haggard countenance and blood-shot eyes, but hardly for the multitudinous oaths which he ejaculated from time to time. Beside him sat a bloated poissarde, who was evidently enamoured of his person, and tended him with all that devotion which is the characteristic of the gentler sex. As it was beyond the power of either to hold any intelligible conversation, the lady contrived to supply its place by a system of endearing pantomime. Sometimes she patted Bagsby on the cheek, then chirruped as a girl might do when coaxing a bird to open its mouth, and occasionally endeavoured to insinuate morsels of garlic and meat between his lips.

"Oh, Mr Dunshunner! save me from this hag!" muttered Bagsby. "I have such a splitting headache, and she will insist on poisoning me with her confounded trash! Faugh, how she smells of eels! O dear! oh dear! is there no way of getting out? The barricades and the fighting are nothing compared to this!"

"I am afraid, Mr Bagsby," said I, "there is no remedy but patience. Our friends here seem quite determined to hold out, and I am afraid that they would use little ceremony, did we make any show of resistance."

"I know that well enough!" said Bagsby; "they wanted to hang me last night, because I made a run to the door: only, the women would not let them. What do you want, you old harridan? I wish you would take your fingers from my neck!"

"Ce cher bourgeois!" murmured the poissarde: "c'est un mechent drole, mais assez joli!"

"Upon my word, Mr Bagsby, I think you have reason to congratulate yourself on your conquest. At all events, don't make enemies of the women; for, heaven knows, we are in a very ticklish situation, and I don't like the looks of several of those fellows."

"If ever I get home again," said Bagsby, "I'll renounce my errors, turn Tory, go regularly to church, and pray for the Queen. I've had enough of liberty to last me the rest of my natural lifetime. But, I say, my dear friend, couldn't you just rid me of this woman for half an hour or so? You will find her a nice
chatty sort of person; only, I don't quite comprehend what she says."

"Utterly impossible, Mr Bagsby! See, they are about something now. Our friend the barber is rising to speak."

"Citizens!" said Saigne-du-nez, speaking as from a tribune, over the back of an arm-chair--"Citizens! we are placed by the despotism of our rulers in an embarrassing position. We, the people, who have won the palace and driven forth the despot and his race, are now ordered to evacuate the field of our glory, by men who have usurped the charter, and who pretend to interpret the law. I declare the sublime truth, that, with the revolution, all laws, human and divine, have perished! (Immense applause.)

"Citizens! isolated as we are by this base decree from the great body of the people, it becomes us to constitute a separate government for ourselves. Order must be maintained, but such order as shall strike terror into the breasts of our enemies. France has been assailed through us, and we must vindicate her freedom. Amongst us are many patriots, able and willing to sustain the toils of government; and I now propose that we proceed to elect a provisional ministry."

The motion was carried by acclamation, and the orator proceeded:

"Citizens! amongst our numbers there is one man who has filled the most lofty situations. I allude to Citizen Jupiter Potard. Actor in a hundred revolutions, he has ever maintained the sublime demeanour of a patriot of the Reign of Terror. Three generations have regarded him as a model, and I now call upon him to assume the place and dignity of our President."

Jupiter Potard, a very fine-looking old man, with a beard about a yard long,--who was really a model, inasmuch as he had sat in that capacity for the last thirty years to the artists of Paris,--was then conducted, amidst general applause, to a chair at the head of the table. Jupiter, I am compelled to add, seemed rather inebriated; but as he did not attempt to make any speeches, that circumstance did not operate as a disqualification.

The remainder of the administration was speedily formed. Destripes became Minister of the Interior; Pomme-de-terre received the Portfolio of Justice. A gentleman, who rejoiced in the sobriquet of Gratte-les-rues, was made Minister of War. Saigne-du-nez appointed himself to the Financial Department, and I was unanimously voted the Minister of Foreign Affairs. These were the principal offices of the Republic, and to us the functions of government were confided. Bagsby, at the request of the poissardes, received the honorary title of Minister of Marine.

A separate table was ordered for our accommodation; and our first decree, countersigned by the Minister of the Interior, was an order for a fresh subsidy from the wine-cellar.

Here a sentry, who had been stationed at a window, announced the approach of a detachment of the National Guard.
"Citizen Minister of War!" said Saigne-du-nez, who, without any scruple, had usurped the functions of poor old Jupiter Potard, "this is your business. It is my opinion that the provisional government cannot receive a deputation of this kind. Let them announce their intentions at the barricade without."

Gratte-les-rues, a huge ruffian with a squint, straightway shouldered his musket and left the room. In a few minutes he returned with a paper, which he cast upon the table.

"A decree from the Hotel de Ville," he said.

"Is it your pleasure, citizen colleagues, that this document should now be read?" asked Saigne-du-nez.

All assented, and, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, the following document was placed in my hands. It was listened to with profound attention.

"Unity is the soul of the French nation; it forms its grandeur, its power, and its glory; through unity we have triumphed, and the rights of the people have been vindicated.

"Impressed with these high and exalted sentiments, and overflowing with that fraternity which is the life-blood of our social system, the Provisional Government decrees:--

"I. That the Tuileries, now denominated the Hopital des Invalides Civiles, shall be immediately evacuated by the citizens who have so bravely wrested it from the tyrant.

"II. That each patriot, on leaving it, shall receive from the public treasury the sum of five francs, or an equivalent in coupons.

"III. The Minister of the Interior is charged with the execution of this decree.

"Liberte--Fraternite--Egalite.

(Signed) DUPONT (de l'Eure). LEDRU-ROLLIN. LAMARTINE. CREMIEUX. GARNIER-PAGES. LOUIS BLANC. ARAGO. MARRAST. MARIE. FLOCON. ALBERT (ouvrier)."

"Sang de Mirabeau!" cried Destripes, when I had finished the perusal of this document, "do they take us for fools! Five francs indeed! This is the value which these aristocrats place upon the blood of the people! Citizen colleagues, I propose that the messenger be admitted, and immediately flung out of the window!"

"And I second the motion," said Pomme-de-terre.

"Nay, citizens!" cried Saigne-du-nez,--"no violence. I agree that we cannot entertain the offer, but this is a case for negotiation. Let the Minister of Foreign Affairs draw up a protocol in reply."
In consequence of this suggestion I set to work, and in a few minutes produced the following manifesto, which may find a place in some subsequent collection of treaties:

"France is free. The rights of every Frenchman, having been gained by himself, are sacred and inviolable; the rights of property are abrogated.

"Indivisibility is a fundamental principle of the nation. It applies peculiarly to public works. That which the nation gave, the nation now resumes.

"We protest against foreign aggression. Satisfied with our own triumph, we shall remain tranquil. We do not ask possession of the Hotel de Ville, but we are prepared to maintain our righteous occupation of the Tuileries.

"Impressed with these high and exalted sentiments, the Provisional Government of the Tuileries decrees--

"I. That it is inexpedient to lessen the glory of France, by intrusting the charge of the Tuileries to any other hands save those of the brave citizens who have so nobly captured it.

"II. That the Provisional Government does not recognise coupons as a national medium of exchange.

"III. The Minister of Foreign Affairs is charged with the execution of this decree.

"Mort aux tyrans!

(Signed) POTARD. POMME-DE-TERRE. DUNSHUNNER. GRATTE-LES-RUES. SAIGNE-DU-NEZ. DESTRIPES. BAGSBY (tisserand)."

This document was unanimously adopted as the true exponent of our sentiments; and I was highly complimented by my colleagues on my diplomatic ability. I took occasion, however, to fold up the following note along with the despatch:

"If Citizen Albert has any regard for his English friends, he will immediately communicate their situation to the citizen Monte-Christo. Here, affairs look very ill. The public tranquillity depends entirely upon the supply of liquor."

This business being settled, we occupied ourselves with more industrial duties. The finance was easily disposed of. There were but four francs, six sous, leviable among the whole community; but Gratte-les-rues, with instinctive acuteness, had discovered the watch and chain of the unfortunate Minister of Marine, and these were instantly seized and confiscated as public property.

On investigation we found that the larder was but indifferently supplied. Due allowance being made for the inordinate appetite of the poissardes, of whom there were no less than ten in our company, it was
calculated that our stock of food could not last for more than a couple of days. On the other hand, there was a superabundance of wine.

We then proceeded to adjust a scheme for the future regulation of labour throughout France; but I do not think that I need trouble my readers with the detail. It did not differ materially from that propounded by M. Louis Blanc, and the substance of it might shortly be stated as--three days’ wage for half-a-day’s labour. It was also decreed, that all servants should receive, in addition to their wages, a proportion of their masters' profits.

After some hours of legislation, not altogether harmonious--for Destripes, being baulked in a proposition to fire the palace, threatened to string up old Jupiter Potard to the chandelier, and was only prevented from doing so by the blunderbuss of Saigne-du-nez--we grew weary of labour, and the orgies commenced anew. I have neither patience nor stomach to enter into a description of the scene that was there and then enacted. In charity to the human race, let me hope that such a spectacle may never again be witnessed in the heart of a Christian city.

Poor Bagsby suffered fearfully. The affection of the poissarde had gradually augmented to a species of insanity, and she never left him for a moment. The unhappy man was dragged out by her to every dance; she gloat on him like an ogress surveying a plump and pursy pilgrim; and at the close of each set she demanded the fraternal salute. He tried to escape from his persecutor by dodging round the furniture; but it was of no use. She followed him as a ferret follows a rabbit through all the intricacies of his warren, and invariably succeeded in capturing her booty in a corner.

At length night came, and with it silence. One by one the revellers had fallen asleep, some still clutching the bottle, which they had plied with unabated vigour so long as sensibility remained, and the broad calm moon looked on reproachfully through the windows of that desecrated hall. There was peace in heaven, but on earth--oh, what madness and pollution!

I was lying wrapped up in some old tapestry, meditating very seriously upon my present precarious situation, when I observed a figure moving amidst the mass of sleepers. The company around was of such a nature, that unpleasant suspicions naturally occurred to my mind, and I continued to watch the apparition until the moonlight shone upon it, when I recognised Bagsby. This poor fellow was a sad incubus upon my motions; for although I had no earthly tie towards him, I could not help feeling that in some measure I had been instrumental in placing him in his present dilemma, and I had resolved not to escape without making him the partner of my flight. I was very curious to know the object of his present movements, for the stealthy manner in which he glided through the hall betokened some unusual purpose. I was not long left in doubt. From behind a large screen he drew forth a coil of cord, formerly attached to the curtain, but latterly indicated by Destripes as the implement for Potard's apotheosis; and approaching a window, he proceeded to attach one end of it very deliberately to a staple. He then gave a cautious glance around, as if to be certain that no one was watching him, and began to undo the fastenings of the window. A new gleam of hope dawned upon me. I was about to rise and move to his assistance, when another figure glided rapidly through the moonshine. In an instant Bagsby was clutched by the throat, and a low voice hissed out--
"Ah traitre! monstre! polisson! tu veux donc fuir?"

It was the poissarde. Nothing on earth is so wakeful as a jealous woman. She had suspected the designs of the wretched Minister of Marine, and counterfeited sleep only to detect him in the act of escaping.

Not a moment was to be lost. I knew that if this woman gave the alarm, Bagsby would inevitably be hanged with his own rope, and I stole towards the couple, in order to effect, if possible, a reconciliation.

"Ah, citizen, is it thou?" said the poissarde more loudly than was at all convenient. "Here is thy fellow trying to play me a pretty trick! Perfidious monster! was this what thou meant by all thy professions of love?"

"For heaven's sake, take the woman off, or she will strangle me!" muttered Bagsby.

"Pray, hush! my dear madam, hush!" said I, "or you may wake some of our friends."

"What care I?" said the poissarde; "let them wake, and I will denounce the villain who has dared to trifle with my affections!"

"Nay, but consider the consequences!" said I. "Do, pray, be silent for one moment. Bagsby, this is a bad business!"

"You need not tell me that," groaned Bagsby.

"Your life depends upon this woman, and you must appease her somehow."

"I'll agree to anything," said the terrified Minister of Marine.

"Yes! I will be avenged!" cried the poissarde; "I will have his heart's blood, since he has dared to deceive me. How! is this the way they treat a daughter of the people?"

"Citoyenne!" I said, "you are wrong--utterly wrong. Believe me, he loves you passionately. What proof do you desire?"

"Let him marry me to-morrow," said the poissarde, "in this very room, or I shall immediately raise the alarm."

I tried to mitigate the sentence, but the poissarde was perfectly obdurate.

"Bagsby, there is no help for it!" said I. "We are in the midst of a revolution, and must go along with it. She insists upon you marrying her to-morrow. The alternative is instant death."

"I'll do it," said Bagsby, quietly; "anything is better than being murdered in cold blood."
The countenance of the poissarde brightened.

"Aha!" said she, taking the submissive Bagsby by the ear, "so thou art to be my republican husband after all, coquin? Come along. I shall take care that thou dost not escape again to-night, and to-morrow I shall keep thee for ever!"

So saying, she conducted her captive to the other end of the hall.
CHAPTER VI.

A REPUBLICAN WEDDING.

"This is great news!" said Destripes, as we mustered round the revolutionary breakfast table. "Hast heard, citizen? Our colleague the Minister of Marine is about to contract an alliance with a daughter of the people. Corbleu! There is no such sport as a regular republican marriage!"

"In my early days," said Jupiter Potard, "we had them very frequently. The way was, to tie two young aristocrats together, and throw them into the Seine. How poor dear Carrier used to laugh at the fun! Oh, my friends! we shall never see such merry times again."

"Come, don't be down-hearted, old fellow!" cried Destripes. "We never can tell what is before us. I don't despair of seeing something yet which might make the ghost of Collot d'Herbois rub its hands with ecstasy. But to our present work. Let us get over the business of the day, and then celebrate the wedding with a roaring festival."

"But where are we to find a priest?" asked Saigne-du-nez. "I question whether any of our fraternity has ever taken orders."

"Priest!" cried Destripes ferociously. "Is this an age of superstition? I tell thee, Saigne-du-nez, that if any such fellow were here, he should presently be dangling from the ceiling! What better priest would'st thou have than our venerable friend Potard?"

"Ay, ay!" said Pomme-de-terre, "Potard will do the work famously. I'll warrant me, with that long beard of his, he has sate for a high-priest ere now. But look at Citoyenne Corbeille, how fond she seems of her bargain. Ventrebleu! our colleague is sure to be a happy man!"

Whatever happiness might be in store for Bagsby hereafter, there was no appearance of it just then. He sate beside his bride like a criminal on the morning of his execution; and such efforts as he did make to respond to her attentions were rueful and ludicrous in the extreme.

Breakfast over, we proceeded to council; but as we had no deputations to receive, and no fresh arrangements to make, our sitting was rather brief. Bagsby, in order, as I supposed, to gain time, entreated me to broach the topics of free-trade and unrestricted international exchange; but recent events had driven the doctrines of Manchester from my head, and somewhat shaken my belief in the infallibility of the prophets of the League. Besides, I doubted very much whether our Provisional Ministry cared one farthing for duties upon calico and linen, neither of these being articles in which they were wont exorbitantly to indulge; and I perfectly understood the danger of appearing over tedious upon any subject in a society so strangely constituted. I therefore turned a deaf ear to the prayers of Bagsby, and refused to enlighten the council at the risk of the integrity of my neck. No reply whatever had been made by the authorities without, to our communication of the previous day.
One o'clock was the hour appointed by the Provisional Government for the nuptial ceremony, which was to be performed with great solemnity. About twelve the bride, accompanied by three other poissardes, retired, in order to select from the stores of the palace a costume befitting the occasion. In the mean time, I had great difficulty in keeping up the courage of Bagsby,--indeed, he was only manageable through the medium of doses of brandy. At times he would burst out into a paroxysm of passion, and execrate collectively and individually the whole body of the Manchester League, who had sent him upon this unfortunate mission to Paris. This profanity over, he would burst into tears, bewail his wretched lot, and apostrophise a certain buxom widow, who seemed to dwell somewhere in the neighbourhood of Macclesfield. As for the French, the outpourings from the vial of his wrath upon that devoted nation were most awful and unchristian. The plagues of Egypt were a joke to the torments which he invoked upon their heads; and I felt intensely thankful that not one of our companions understood a syllable of English, else the grave would inevitably have been the bridal couch of the Bagsby.

It now became my duty to see the bridegroom properly attired; for which purpose, with permission of our colleagues, I conducted Bagsby to a neighbouring room, where a full suit of uniform, perhaps the property of Louis Philippe, had been laid out.

"Come now, Mr Bagsby," said I, observing that he was about to renew his lamentations, "we have had quite enough of this. You have brought it upon yourself. Had you warned me of your design last night, it is quite possible that both of us might have escaped; but you chose to essay the adventure single-handed, and, having failed, you must stand by the consequences. After all, what is it? Merely marriage, a thing which almost every man must undergo at least once in his lifetime."

"Oh! but such a woman--such a she-devil rather!" groaned Bagsby. "I shouldn't be the least surprised if she bites as bad as a crocodile. How can I ever take such a monster home, and introduce her to my friends?"

"I see no occasion for that, my good fellow. Why not stay here and become a naturalised Frenchman?"

"Here? I'd as soon think of staying in a lunatic asylum! Indeed I may be in one soon enough, for flesh and blood can't stand this kind of torture long. But I say," continued he, a ray of hope flashing across his countenance, "they surely can't make it a real marriage after all. Hanged if any one of these blackguards is a clergyman; and even if he was, they haven't got a special license."

"Don't deceive yourself, Mr Bagsby," said I; "marriage in France is a mere social contract, and can be established by witnesses, of whom there will be but too many present."

"Then I say they are an infernal set of incarnate pestiferous heathens! What! marry a man whether he will or not, and out of church! It's enough to draw down a judgment upon the land."

"You forget, Mr Bagsby. You need not marry unless you choose; it is a mere question of selection between a wedding and an execution,--between the lady and a certain rope, which, I can assure you,
Monsieur Destripes, or his friend Gratte-les-rues, will have no hesitation in handling. Indeed, from significant symptoms, I conclude that their fingers are itching for some such practice."

"They are indeed two horrid-looking blackguards!" said Bagsby dolefully. "I wish I had pluck enough to be hanged: after all, it could not be much worse than marriage. And yet I don't know. There may be some means of getting a divorce, or she may drink herself to death, for, between you and me, she seems awfully addicted to the use of ardent spirits."

"Fie! Mr Bagsby; how can you talk so of your bride upon the wedding-day! Be quick! get into those trousers, and never mind the fit. It may be dangerous to keep them waiting long; and, under present circumstances, it would be prudent to abstain from trying the temper of the lady too severely."

"I never thought to be married this way!" sighed Bagsby, putting on the military coat, which, being stiff with embroidery, and twice too big for him, stuck out like an enormous cuirass. "If my poor old mother could see me now, getting into the cast-off clothes of some outlandish Frenchman--"

"She would admire you exceedingly, I am sure. Do you know, you look quite warlike with these epaulets! Come now--on with the sash, take another thimbleful of brandy, and then to the altar like a man!"

"I daresay you mean well, Mr Dunshunner; but I have listened to more pleasant conversation. I say--what is to prevent my getting up the chimney?"

"Mere madness! The moment you are missed they will fire up it. Believe me, you have not a chance of escape; so the sooner you resign yourself to your inevitable destiny the better."

Here a loud knocking was heard at the door.

"Citizen Minister of Marine, art thou ready?" cried the voice of Pomme-de-terre. "Thy bride is waiting for thee, the altar is decked, and Pere Potard in his robes of office!"

"Come, then," said I, seizing Bagsby by the arm. "Take courage, man! In ten minutes it will all be over."

Our colleagues had not been idle in the interim. At one end of the hall they had built up an extempore altar covered with a carpet, behind which stood Jupiter Potard, arrayed in a royal mantle of crimson velvet, which very possibly in former days might have decorated the shoulders of Napoleon. Indeed the imperial eagle was worked upon it in gold, and it had been abstracted from one of the numerous repositories of the palace. Jupiter, with his long beard and fine sloping forehead, looked the perfect image of a pontiff, and might have been appropriately drawn as a principal figure in a picture of the marriage of Heliogabalus.
Gratte-les-rues and Pomme-de-terre, being of bellicose temperament, had encased themselves in suits of armour, and stood, like two champions of antiquity, on each side of the venerable prelate. Destripes, who had accepted the office of temporary father to Demoiselle Corbeille, appeared as a patriot of the Reign of Terror. His brawny chest was bare; his shirt sleeves rolled up to the shoulder; and in his belt was stuck the axe, a fitting emblem alike of his principles and his profession.

At his right hand stood the bride, bedizened with brocade and finery. From what antiquated lumber-chest they had fished out her apparel, it would be utterly in vain to inquire. One thing was clear, that the former occupant of the robes had been decidedly inferior in girth to the blooming poissarde, since it was now necessary to fasten them across the bosom by a curious network of tape. I am afraid I have done injustice to this lady, for really, on the present occasion, she did not look superlatively hideous. She was a woman of about forty-five, strong-built, with an immense development of foot and ankle, and arms of masculine proportion. Yet she had a pair of decidedly fine black eyes, betokening perhaps little of maiden modesty, but flashing with love and triumph; a *nez retrousse*, which, but for its perpetual redness, might have given a piquant expression to her countenance; a large mouth, and a set of prodigious teeth, which, to say the truth, were enough to justify the apprehensions of the bridegroom.

"Silence!" cried Jupiter Potard as we entered; "let the present august solemnity be conducted as befits the sovereignty of the people! Citizen Saigne-du-nez, advance!"

Saigne-du-nez was clad in a black frock, I suppose to represent a notary. He came forward:--

"In the name of the French nation, one and indivisible, I demand the celebration of the nuptials of Citizen Hutton Bagsby, adopted child of France, and Provisional Minister of her Marine in the department of the Tuileries, and of Citoyenne Cephyse Corbeille, poissarde, and daughter of the people."

"Is there any one here to gainsay the marriage?" asked Jupiter.

There was no reply.

"Then, in the name of the French nation, I decree that the ceremony shall proceed. Citizen Minister of Marine, are you willing to take this woman as your lawful wife?"

A cold sweat stood upon the brow of Bagsby, his knees knocked together, and he leaned the whole weight of his body upon my arm, as I interpreted to him the demand of Jupiter.

"Say anything you like," muttered he; "it will all come to the same thing at last!"

"The citizen consents, most venerable President."

"Then nothing remains but to put the same question to the citoyenne," said Potard. "Who appears as the father of the bride?"
"Chute de la Bastille! that do I," cried Destripes.

"Citizen Destripes, do you of your own free will and accord--"

Here a thundering rap was heard at the door.

"What is that?" cried Destripes, starting back. "Some one has passed the barricade!"

"In the name of the Provisional Government!" cried a loud voice. The door was flung open, and to my inexpressible joy, I beheld the Count of Monte-Christo, backed by a large detachment of the National Guard.

"Treason! treachery!" shouted Destripes. "Ah, villain, thou hast neglected thy post!" and he fetched a tremendous blow with his axe at the head of Gratte-les-rues. It was fortunate for that chief that his helmet was of excellent temper, otherwise he must have been cloven to the chin. As it was, he staggered backwards and fell.

The National Guard immediately presented their muskets.

"I have the honour to inform the citizens," said Monte-Christo, "that I have imperative orders to fire if the slightest resistance is made. Monsieur, therefore, will have the goodness immediately to lay down that axe."

Destripes glared on him for a moment, as though he meditated a rush, but the steady attitude of the National Guard involuntarily subdued him.

"This is freedom!" he exclaimed, flinging away his weapon. "This is what we fought for at the barricades! Always deceived--always sold by the aristocrats! But the day may come when I shall hold a tight reckoning with thee, my master, or I am not the nephew of the citizen Samson!"

"Pray, may I ask the meaning of this extraordinary scene?" said Monte-Christo, gazing in astonishment at the motley group before him. "Is it the intention of the gentlemen to institute a Crusade, or have we lighted by chance upon an assemblage of the chivalry of Malta?"

"Neither," I replied. "The fact is, that just as you came in we were engaged in celebrating a republican marriage."

"Far be it from me to interfere with domestic or connubial arrangements!" replied the polite Monte-Christo. "Let the marriage go on, by all means; I shall be delighted to witness it, and we can proceed to business thereafter."

"You will see no marriage here, I can tell you!" cried Bagsby, who at the first symptom of relief had taken shelter under the shadow of the Marquis. "I put myself under your protection; and, by Jove, if you
"What is this?" cried Monte-Chrsto. "Do I see Monsieur Bagsby in a general's uniform? Why, my good sir, you have become a naturalised Frenchman indeed! The nation has a claim upon you."

"The nation will find it very difficult to get it settled then!" said Bagsby. "But I want to get out. I say, can't I get away?"

"Certainly. There is nothing to prevent you. But I am rather curious to hear about this marriage."

"Why," said I, "the truth is, my dear Marquis, that the subject is rather a delicate one for our friend. He has just been officiating in the capacity of bridegroom."

"You amaze me!" said Monte-Chrsto; "and which, may I ask, is the fair lady?"

Here Demoiselle Cephyse came forward.

"Citizen officer," she said, "I want my husband!"

"You hear, Monsieur Bagsby?" said Monte-Chrsto, in intense enjoyment of the scene. "The lady says she has a claim upon you."

"It's all a lie!" shouted Bagsby. "I've got nothing to say to the woman. I hate and abhor her!"

"Monstre!" shrieked the poissarde, judging of Bagsby's ungallant repudiation rather from his gestures than his words. And she sprang towards him with the extended talons of a tigress. Bagsby, however, was this time too nimble for her, and took refuge behind the ranks of the National Guard, who were literally in convulsions of laughter.

"I will have thee, though, polisson!" cried the exasperated bride. "I will have thee, though I were to follow thee to the end of the world! Thou hast consented to be my husband, little tisserand, and I never will give thee up."

"Keep her off! good, dear soldiers," cried Bagsby: "pray, keep her off! I shall be murdered and torn to pieces if she gets hold of me! Oh, Mr Dunshunner! do tell them to protect me with their bayonets."

"Be under no alarm, Mr Bagsby," said Monte-Chrsto; "you are now under the protection of the National Guard. But to business. Which of the citizens assembled is spokesman here?"

"I am the president!" hiccupped Jupiter Potard, who, throughout the morning, had been unremitting in his attentions to the bottle.
"Then, you will understand that, by orders of the Provisional Government, all must evacuate the palace within a quarter of an hour."

"Louis Philippe had seventeen years of it," replied Jupiter Potard. "I won't abdicate a minute sooner!"

"And I," said Pomme-de-terre, "expect a handsome pension for my pains."

"Or at least," said Saigne-du-nez, "we must have permission to gut the interior."

"You have done quite enough mischief already," said Monte-Christo; "so prepare to move. My orders are quite peremptory, and I shall execute them to the letter!"

"Come along, then, citizens!" cried Destripes. "I always knew what would come of it, if these rascally bourgeoisie got the upper hand of the workmen. They are all black aristocrats in their hearts. But, by the head of Robespierre, thou shalt find that thy government is not settled yet, and there shall be more blood before we let them trample down the rights of the people!"

So saying, the democratic butcher strode from the apartment, followed by the rest of the Provisional Government and their adherents, each retaining the garb which he had chosen to wear in honour of the nuptials of Bagsby. The poissarde lingered for a moment, eyeing her faithless betrothed as he stood in the midst of the Guard, like a lioness robbed of her cub; and then, with a cry of wrath, and a gesture of menace, she rushed after her companions.

"Thank Heaven!" cried Bagsby, dropping on his knees, "the bitterest hour of my whole existence is over!"
CHAPTER VII.

ADIEU, SWEET FRANCE!

"And so you received the message from M. Albert?" said I to Monte-Christo, as we walked together to the Hotel de Ville.

"I did; and to say the truth, I was rather apprehensive about you. Revolutions are all very well; but it is a frightful thing when the dregs of the population get the upper hand."

"I am glad to hear you acknowledge so much. For my part, Marquis, having seen one revolution, I never wish to witness another."

"We could not possibly avoid it," said Monte-Christo. "It was a mere question of time. No one doubts that a revolutionary spirit may be carried too far."

"Can't you contrive to write it down?" said I.

"Unfortunately, the majority of gentlemen with whom you have lately been associating, are not strongly addicted to letters. I question whether M. Destripes has even read La Tour de Nesle."

"If he had," said I, "it must have tended very greatly to his moral improvement. But how is it with the Provisional Government?"

"Faith, I must own they are rather in a critical position. Had it not been for Lamartine--who, I must confess, is a noble fellow, and a man of undaunted courage--they would have been torn to pieces long ago. Hitherto they have managed tolerably by means of the National Guard; but the atmosphere is charged with thunder. Here we are, however, at the Hotel de Ville."

Not the least curious of the revolutionary scenes of Paris was the aspect of the seat of government. At the moment I reached it, many thousands of the lower orders were assembled in front, and one of the Provisional Government, I believe Louis Blanc, was haranguing them from a window. Immense crowds were likewise gathered round the entrance. These consisted of the deputations, who were doing their very best to exhaust the physical energies, and distract the mental powers, of the men who had undertaken the perilous task of government.

Under conduct of my friend, I made my way to the room where the mysterious ouvrier was performing his part of the onerous duty. He greeted me with a brief nod and a grim smile, but did not pretermit his paternal functions.

The body which occupied his attention at this crisis of the commonwealth, was a musical deputation, which craved sweet counsel regarding some matter of crotchets or of bars. It is not the first time that music has been heard in the midst of stirring events. Nero took a fancy to fiddle when Rome was
blazing around him.

I could not but admire the gravity with which Albert listened to the somewhat elaborate address, and the dexterity with which he contrived to blend the subjects of pipes and patriotism.

"Citizens!" he said, "the Provisional Government are deeply impressed with the importance of the views which you advocate. Republican institutions cannot hope to exist without music, for to the sound of music even the spheres themselves revolve in the mighty and illimitable expanse of ether.

"At this crisis your suggestions become doubly valuable. I have listened to them with emotions which I would struggle in vain to express. Oh, that we may see the day when, with a glorious nation as an orchestra, the psalm of universal freedom may rise in a swell of triumphant jubilee!

"And it will come! Rely upon us. Return to your homes. Cherish fraternity and music. Meantime we shall work without intermission for your sake. Harmony is our sole object: believe me that, in reconstituted France, there shall be nothing but perfect harmony."

The deputation withdrew in tears; and another entered to state certain grievances touching the manufacture of steel beads. I need not say that in this, as in several other instances, the ouvrier comported himself like an eminent member of the Society of Universal Knowledge.

"That's the last of them, praise be to Mumbo Jumbo!" said he, as the representatives of the shoe-blacks departed. "Faith, this is work hard enough to kill a horse. So, Mr Dunshunner! you have been getting up a counter-revolution at the Tuileries, I see. How are Monsieur Potard and all the rest of your colleagues?"

"I am afraid they are finally expelled from paradise," said I.

"Serve them right! a parcel of democratic scum. And what has become of Citizen Bagsby?"

"I have sent him to my hotel. He was in reality very near becoming an actual child of France." And I told the story of the nuptials, at which the ouvrier nearly split himself with laughter.

"And now, Mr Dunshunner," said he, "may I ask the nature of your plans?"

"These may depend a good deal upon your advice," said I.

"I never give advice," replied the ouvrier with a nasal twitch. "Sometimes it is rather dangerous. But tell me--what would you think of the state of the British government, if Earl Grey at a cabinet-council were to threaten to call in the mob, and if Lord Johnny Russell prevented him by clapping a pistol to his ear."

"I should think very badly of it indeed," said I.
"Or if Incapability Wood should threaten, in the event of the populace appearing, to produce from the Earl's pocket a surreptitious order on the Treasury for something like twelve thousand pounds?"

"Worse still."

"Well, then; I don't think you'll find that sort of thing going on in London, at all events."

"Have you any commands for the other side of the Channel?"

"Oh, then, you are determined to leave? Well, perhaps upon the whole it is your wisest plan. But do not you regret having evacuated the Tuileries?"

"Indeed, I do not. Nevertheless, Monsieur Albert, it may yet be occupied by one of my family."

"C'est bien possible. You are a clever race. What began with a Clovis, may well end with a Dunshunner."

And so, with a cordial pressure of the hand, we parted.

"Monte-Christo," I said, as that very evening I bundled Bagsby into a fiacre on our way to the railroad station--"Monte-Christo, my good fellow, let me give you a slight piece of advice, which it would be well if all of our craft and calling would keep in memory, THINK TWICE BEFORE YOU WRITE UP ANOTHER REVOLUTION."

CAPTAIN PATON'S LAMENT.

BY JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART.

[MAGA. SEPTEMBER 1819.]

1.

Touch once more a sober measure, And let punch and tears be shed, For a prince of good old fellows, That, alack-a-day! is dead; For a prince of worthy fellows, And a pretty man also, That has left the Saltmarket In sorrow, grief, and woe. Oh! we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no mo!

2.

His waistcoat, coat, and breeches, Were all cut off the same web, Of a beautiful snuff-colour, Or a modest genty drab; The blue stripe in his stocking Round his neat slim leg did go, And his ruffles of the cambric fine They were whiter than the snow. Oh! we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no mo!

3.
His hair was curled in order, at the rising of the sun, in comely rows and buckles smart, that about his ears did run; and before there was a toupee, that some inches up did grow, and behind there was a long queue that did o'er his shoulders flow. Oh! we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no mo!

4.

And whenever we forgathered, he took off his wee three-cockit, and he proffered you his snuff-box, which he drew from his side pocket, and on Burdett or Buonaparte, he would make a remark or so, and then along the plainstones like a provost he would go. Oh! we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no mo!

5.

In dirty days he picked well his footsteps with his rattan, oh! you ne'er could see the least speck on the shoes of Captain Paton; and on entering the coffee-room about two, all men did know, they would see him with his courier in the middle of the row. Oh! we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no mo!

6.

Now and then upon a Sunday he invited me to dine, on a herring and a mutton-chop which his maid dressed very fine; there was also a little malmsey, and a bottle of bordeaux, which between me and the captain passed nimbly to and fro. Oh! I ne'er shall take pot-luck with Captain Paton no mo!

7.

Or if a bowl was mentioned, the captain he would ring, and bid Nelly run to the west-port. And a stoup of water bring; then would he mix the genuine stuff, as they made it long ago, with limes that on his property in trinidad did grow. Oh! we ne'er shall taste the like of captain Paton's punch no mo!

8.

And then all the time he would discourse so sensible and courteous, perhaps talking of last sermon he had heard from Dr Porteous, or some little bit of scandal about Mrs so and so, which he scarce could credit, having heard the con but not the pro. Oh! we ne'er shall hear the like of Captain Paton no mo!

9.

Or when the candles were brought forth, and the night was fairly setting in, he would tell some fine old stories about Minden-field or dettingen-- how he fought with a French major, and despatched him at a blow, while his blood ran out like water on the soft grass below. Oh! we ne'er shall hear the like of Captain Paton no mo!
10.

But at last the Captain sickened And grew worse from day to day. And all missed him in the Coffee-room From which now he stayed away; On Sabbaths, too, the Wee Kirk Made a melancholy show, All for wanting of the presence Of our venerable beau. Oh! we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no mo!

11.

And in spite of all that Cleghorn And Corkindale could do, It was plain from twenty symptoms That death was in his view; So the Captain made his test'ment, And submitted to his foe, And we layed him by the Rams-horn Kirk-- 'Tis the way we all must go. Oh! we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no mo!

12.

Join all in chorus, jolly boys, And let punch and tears be shed, For this prince of good old fellows, That, alack-a-day! is dead; For this prince of worthy fellows, And a pretty man also, That has left the Saltmarket In sorrow, grief, and woe! For it ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no mo!

THE VILLAGE DOCTOR.

BY THE LATE COUNTESS D'ARBOUVILLE.

[MAGA. MAY 1849.]

"What is that?" exclaimed several persons assembled in the dining-room of the chateau of Burcy.

The Countess of Moncar had just inherited, from a distant and slightly regretted relation, an ancient chateau which she had never seen, although it was at barely fifteen leagues from her habitual summer residence. One of the most elegant and admired women in Paris, Madame de Moncar was but moderately attached to the country. Quitting the capital at the end of June, to return thither early in October, she usually took with her some of the companions of her winter gaieties, and a few young men, selected amongst her most assiduous partners. Madame de Moncar was married to a man much older than herself, who did not always protect her by his presence. Without abusing the great liberty she enjoyed, she was gracefully coquettish, elegantly frivolous, pleased with trifles--with a compliment, an amiable word, an hour's triumph--loving a ball for the pleasure of adorning herself, fond of admiration, and not sorry to inspire love. When some grave old aunt ventured a sage remonstrance--"Mon Dieu!" she replied; "do let me laugh and take life gaily. It is far less dangerous than to listen in solitude to the beating of one's heart. For my part, I do not know if I even have a heart!" She spoke the truth, and really was uncertain upon that point. Desirous to remain so, she thought it prudent to leave herself no time for reflection.
One fine morning in September, the countess and her guests set out for the unknown chateau, intending to pass the day there. A cross road, reputed practicable, was to reduce the journey to twelve leagues. The cross road proved execrable: the travellers lost their way in the forest; a carriage broke down; in short, it was not till mid-day that the party, much fatigued, and but moderately gratified by the picturesque beauties of the scenery, reached the chateau of Burcy, whose aspect was scarcely such as to console them for the annoyances of the journey. It was a large sombre building with dingy walls. In its front a garden, then out of cultivation, descended from terrace to terrace; for the chateau, built upon the slope of a wooded hill, had no level ground in its vicinity. On all sides it was hemmed in by mountains, the trees upon which sprang up amidst rocks, and had a dark and gloomy foliage that saddened the eyesight. Man's neglect added to the natural wild disorder of the scene. Madame de Moncar stood motionless and disconcerted upon the threshold of her newly-acquired mansion.

"This is very unlike a party of pleasure," said she; "I could weep at sight of this dismal abode. Nevertheless here are noble trees, lofty rocks, a roaring cataract; doubtless, there is a certain beauty in all that; but it is of too grave an order for my humour," added she with a smile. "Let us go in and view the interior."

The hungry guests, eager to see if the cook, who had been sent forward upon the previous day, as an advanced guard, had safely arrived, willingly assented. Having obtained the agreeable certainty that breakfast would soon be upon the table, they rambled through the chateau. The old-fashioned furniture with tattered coverings, the arm-chairs with three legs, the tottering tables, the discordant sounds of a piano, which for a good score of years had not felt a finger, afforded abundant food for jest and merriment. Gaiety returned. Instead of grumbling at the inconveniences of this uncomfortable mansion, it was agreed to laugh at everything. Moreover, for these young and idle persons, the expedition was a sort of event, an almost perilous campaign, whose originality appealed to the imagination. A faggot was lighted beneath the wide chimney of the drawing-room; but clouds of smoke were the result, and the company took refuge in the pleasure-grounds. The aspect of the gardens was strange enough: the stone-benches were covered with moss; the walls of the terraces, crumbling in many places, left space between their ill-joined stones for the growth of numerous wild plants, which sprung out erect and lofty, or trailed with flexible grace towards the earth. The walks were overgrown and obliterated by grass; the parterres, reserved for garden-flowers, were invaded by wild ones, which grow wherever the heavens afford a drop of water and a ray of sun; the insipid bear-bine enveloped and stifled in its envious embrace the beauteous rose of Provence; the blackberry mingled its acrid fruits with the red clusters of the currant-bush; ferns, wild mint with its faint perfume, thistles with their thorny crowns, grew beside a few forgotten lilies. When the company entered the enclosure, numbers of the smaller animals, alarmed at the unaccustomed intrusion, darted into the long grass, and the startled birds flew chirping from branch to branch. Silence, for many years the undisturbed tenant of this peaceful spot, fled at the sound of human voices and of joyous laughter. The solitude was appreciated by none--none grew pensive under its influence; it was recklessly broken and profaned. The conversation ran upon the gay evenings of the past season, and was interspersed with amiable allusions, expressive looks, covert compliments, with all the thousand nothings, in short, resorted to by persons desirous to please each other, but who have not yet acquired the right to be serious.
The steward, after long search for a breakfast-bell along the dilapidated walls of the chateau, at last made up his mind to shout from the steps that the meal was ready—the half-smile with which he accompanied the announcement, proving that, like his betters, he resigned himself for one day to a deviation from his habits of etiquette and propriety. Soon a merry party surrounded the board. The gloom of the chateau, its desert site and uncheery aspect, were all forgotten; the conversation was general and well sustained; the health of the lady of the castle—the fairy whose presence converted the crazy old edifice into an enchanted palace, was drunk by all present. Suddenly all eyes were turned to the windows of the dining-room.

"What is that?" exclaimed several of the guests.

A small carriage of green wicker-work, with great wheels as high as the body of the vehicle, passed before the windows, and stopped at the door. It was drawn by a grey horse, short and punchy, whose eyes seemed in danger from the shafts, which, from their point of junction with the carriage, sloped obliquely upwards. The hood of the little cabriolet was brought forward, concealing its contents, with the exception of two arms covered with the sleeves of a blue blouse, and of a whip which fluttered about the ears of the grey horse.

"Mon Dieu!" exclaimed Madame de Moncar, "I forgot to tell you I was obliged to invite the village doctor to breakfast. The old man was formerly of some service to my uncle's family, and I have seen him once or twice. Be not alarmed at the addition to our party: he is very taciturn. After a few civil words, we may forget his presence; besides, I do not suppose he will remain very long."

At this moment the dining-room door opened, and Dr Barnaby entered. He was a little old man, feeble and insignificant-looking, of calm and gentle countenance. His grey hairs were collected into a queue, according to a bygone fashion; a dash of powder whitened his temples, and extended to his furrowed brow. He wore a black coat, and steel buckles to his breeches. Over one arm hung a riding-coat of brown taffety. In the opposite hand he carried his hat and a thick cane. His whole appearance proved that he had taken unusual pains with his toilet; but his black stockings and coat were stained with mud, as if the poor old man had fallen into a ditch. He paused at the door, astonished at the presence of so many persons. For an instant a tinge of embarrassment appeared upon his face; but recovering himself, he silently saluted the company. The strange manner of his entrance gave the guests a violent inclination to laugh, which they repressed more or less successfully. Madame de Moncar alone, in her character of mistress of the house, and incapable of failing in politeness, perfectly preserved her gravity.

"Dear me, doctor! have you had an overturn?" was her first inquiry.

Before replying, Dr Barnaby glanced at all these young people in the midst of whom he found himself, and, simple and artless though his physiognomy was, he could not but guess the cause of their hilarity. He replied quietly:
"I have not been overturned. A poor carter fell under the wheels of his vehicle; I was passing, and I helped him up." And the doctor took possession of a chair left vacant for him at the table. Unfolding his napkin, he passed a corner through the button-hole of his coat, and spread out the rest over his waistcoat and knees. At these preparations, smiles hovered upon the lips of many of the guests, and a whisper or two broke the silence; but this time the doctor did not raise his eyes. Perhaps he observed nothing.

"Is there much sickness in the village?" inquired Madame de Moncar, whilst they were helping the new-comer.

"Yes, madam, a good deal."

"This is an unhealthy neighbourhood?"

"No, madam."

"But the sickness. What causes it?"

"The heat of the sun in harvest time and the cold and wet of winter."

One of the guests, affecting great gravity, joined in the conversation.

"So that in this healthy district, sir, people are ill all the year round?"

The doctor raised his little grey eyes to the speaker's face, looked at him, hesitated, and seemed either to check or to seek a reply. Madame de Moncar kindly came to his relief.

"I know," she said, "that you are here the guardian genius of all who suffer."

"Oh, you are too good," replied the old man, apparently much engrossed with the slice of pasty upon his plate. Then the gay party left Dr Barnaby to himself, and the conversation flowed in its previous channel. If any notice was taken of the peaceable old man, it was in the form of some slight sarcasm, which, mingled with other discourse, would pass, it was thought, unperceived by its object. Not that these young men and women were generally otherwise than polite and kind-hearted; but upon that day the journey, the breakfast, the merriment and slight excitement that had attended all the events of the morning, had brought on a sort of heedless gaiety and communicative mockery, which rendered them pitiless to the victim whom chance had thrown in their way. The doctor continued quietly to eat, without looking up, or uttering a word, or seeming to hear one; they voted him deaf and dumb, and he was no restraint upon the conversation.

When the guests rose from table, Dr Barnaby took a step or two backwards, and allowed each man to select the lady he wished to take into the drawing-room. One of Madame de Moncar's friends remaining without a cavalier, the village doctor timidly advanced, and offered her his hand--not his arm. His fingers scarcely touched hers as he proceeded, his body slightly bent in sign of respect, with measured
steps towards the drawing-room. Fresh smiles greeted his entrance, but not a cloud appeared upon the placid countenance of the old man, who was now declared blind, as well as deaf and dumb. Quitting his companion, Dr Barnaby selected the smallest, humblest-looking chair in the room, placed it in a corner, at some distance from everybody else, put his stick between his knees, crossed his hands upon the knob, and rested his chin upon his hands. In this meditative attitude he remained silent, and from time to time his eyes closed, as if a gentle slumber, which he neither invoked nor repelled, were stealing over him.

"Madame de Moncar!" cried one of the guests, "I presume it is not your intention to inhabit this ruin in a desert?"

"Certainly I have no such project. But here are lofty trees and wild woods. M. de Moncar may very likely be tempted to pass a few weeks here in the shooting season."

"In that case you must pull down and rebuild; clear, alter, and improve!"

"Let us make a plan!" cried the young countess. "Let us mark out the future garden of my domains."

It was decreed that this party of pleasure should be unsuccessful. At that moment a heavy cloud burst, and a close fine rain began to fall. Impossible to leave the house.

"How very vexatious!" cried Madame de Moncar. "What shall we do with ourselves? The horses require several hours' rest. It will evidently be a wet afternoon. For a week to come, the grass, which overgrows everything, will not be dry enough to walk upon; all the strings of the piano are broken; there is not a book within ten leagues. This room is wretchedly dismal. What can we do with ourselves?"

The party, lately so joyous, was gradually losing its gaiety. The blithe laugh and arch whisper were succeeded by dull silence. The guests sauntered to the windows and examined the sky, but the sky remained dark and cloud-laden. Their hopes of a walk were completely blighted. They established themselves as comfortably as they could upon the old chairs and settees, and tried to revive the conversation; but there are thoughts which, like flowers, require a little sun, and which will not flourish under a bleak sky. All these young heads appeared to droop, oppressed by the storm, like the poplars in the garden, which bowed their tops at the will of the wind. A tedious hour dragged by.

The lady of the castle, a little disheartened by the failure of her party of pleasure, leaned languidly upon a window-sill, and gazed vaguely at the prospect without.

"There," said she--"yonder, upon the hill, is a white cottage that must come down: it hides the view."

"The white cottage!" cried the doctor. For upwards of an hour Dr Barnaby had been mute and motionless upon his chair. Mirth and weariness, sun and rain, had succeeded each other without eliciting a syllable from his lips. His presence was forgotten by everybody: every eye turned quickly upon him when he uttered these three words--"The white cottage!"
"What interest do you take in it, doctor?" asked the countess.

"Mon Dieu, madame! Pray forget that I spoke. The cottage will come down, undoubtedly, since such is your good pleasure."

"But why should you regret the old shed?"

"I--Mon Dieu! it was inhabited by persons I loved--and--"

"And they think of returning to it, doctor?"

"They are long since dead, madam; they died when I was young!" And the old man gazed mournfully at the white cottage, which rose amongst the trees upon the hill-side, like a daisy in a green field. There was a brief silence.

"Madam," said one of the guests in a low voice to Madame de Moncar, "there is mystery here. Observe the melancholy of our Esculapius. Some pathetic drama has been enacted in yonder house; a tale of love, perhaps. Ask the doctor to tell it us."

"Yes, yes!" was murmured on all sides, "a tale, a story! And should it prove of little interest, at any rate the narrator will divert us."

"Not so, gentlemen," replied Madame de Moncar, in the same suppressed voice. "If I ask Dr Barnaby to tell us the history of the white cottage, it is on the express condition that no one laughs." All having promised to be serious and well-behaved, Madame de Moncar approached the old man. "Doctor," said she, seating herself beside him, "that house, I plainly see, is connected with some reminiscence of former days, stored preciously in your memory. Will you tell it us? I should be grieved to cause you a regret which it is in my power to spare you; the house shall remain, if you tell me why you love it."

Dr Barnaby seemed surprised, and remained silent. The countess drew still nearer to him. "Dear doctor!" said she, "see what wretched weather; how dreary everything looks. You are the senior of us all; tell us a tale. Make us forget rain, and fog, and cold."

Dr Barnaby looked at the countess with great astonishment.

"There is no tale," he said. "What occurred in the cottage is very simple, and has no interest but for me, who loved the young people; strangers would not call it a tale. And I am unaccustomed to speak before many listeners. Besides, what I should tell you is sad, and you came to amuse yourselves." And again the doctor rested his chin upon his stick.

"Dear doctor," resumed the countess, "the white cottage shall stand, if you say why you love it."
The old man appeared somewhat moved; he crossed and uncrossed his legs; took out his snuff-box, returned it to his pocket without opening it; then, looking at the countess—"You will not pull it down?" he said, indicating with his thin and tremulous hand the habitation visible at the horizon.

"I promise you I will not."

"Well, so be it; I will do that much for them; I will save the house in which they were happy."

"Ladies," continued the old man, "I am but a poor speaker; but I believe that even the least eloquent succeed in making themselves understood when they tell what they have seen. This story, I warn you beforehand, is not gay. To dance and to sing, people send for a musician; they call in the physician when they suffer, and are near to death."

A circle was formed round Dr Barnaby, who, his hands still crossed upon his cane, quietly commenced the following narrative, to an audience prepared beforehand to smile at his discourse.

"It was a long time ago, when I was young--for, I, too, have been young! Youth is a fortune that belongs to all the world--to the poor as well as to the rich--but which abides with none. I had just passed my examination; I had taken my physician's degree, and I returned to my village to exercise my wonderful talents, well convinced that, thanks to me, men would now cease to die.

"My village is not far from here. From the little window of my room, I behold yonder white house upon the opposite side to that you now discern. You certainly would not find my village handsome. In my eyes, it was superb; I was born there, and I loved it. We all see with our own eyes the things we love. God suffers us to be sometimes a little blind; for He well knows that in this lower world a clear sight is not always profitable. To me, then, this neighbourhood appeared smiling and pleasant, and I lived happily. The white cottage alone, each morning when I opened my shutters, impressed me disagreeably: it was always closed, still and sad like a forsaken thing. Never had I seen its windows open and shut, or its door ajar; never had I known its inhospitable garden-gate give passage to human being. Your uncle, madam, who had no occasion for a cottage so near his chateau, sought to let it; but the rent was rather higher than anybody here was rich enough to give. It remained empty, therefore, whilst in the hamlet every window exhibited two or three children's faces peering through the branches of gillyflower at the first noise in the street. But one morning, on getting up, I was quite astonished to see a long ladder resting against the cottage wall; a painter was painting the window-shutters green, whilst a maid-servant polished the panes, and a gardener hoed the flower-beds.

"'All the better,' said I to myself; 'a good roof like that, which covers no one, is so much lost.'

"From day to day the house improved in appearance. Pots of flowers veiled the nudity of the walls; the parterres were planted, the walks weeded and gravelled, and muslin curtains, white as snow, shone in the sun-rays. One day a post-chaise rattled through the village, and drove up to the little house. Who were the strangers? None knew, and all desired to learn. For a long time nothing transpired without of what passed within the dwelling. The rose-trees bloomed, and the fresh-laid lawn grew verdant; still
nothing was known. Many were the commentaries upon the mystery. They were adventurers concealing themselves--they were a young man and his mistress--in short, everything was guessed except the truth. The truth is so simple, that one does not always think of it; once the mind is in movement, it seeks to the right and to the left, and often forgets to look straight before it. The mystery gave me little concern. No matter who is there, thought I; they are human, therefore they will not be long without suffering, and then they will send for me. I waited patiently.

"At last one morning a messenger came from Mr William Meredith, to request me to call upon him. I put on my best coat, and, endeavouring to assume a gravity suitable to my profession, I traversed the village, not without some little pride at my importance. That day many envied me. The villagers stood at their doors to see me pass. 'He is going to the white cottage!' they said; whilst I, avoiding all appearance of haste and vulgar curiosity, walked deliberately, nodding to my peasant neighbours. 'Good-day, my friends,' I said; 'I will see you by-and-by; this morning I am busy.' And thus I reached the hill-side.

"On entering the sitting-room of the mysterious house, the scene I beheld rejoiced my eyesight. Everything was so simple and elegant. Flowers, the chief ornament of the apartment, were so tastefully arranged, that gold would not better have embellished the modest interior. White muslin was at the windows, white calico on the chairs--that was all; but there were roses, and jessamine, and flowers of all kinds, as in a garden. The light was softened by the curtains, the atmosphere was fragrant; and a young girl or woman, fair and fresh as all that surrounded her, reclined upon a sofa, and welcomed me with a smile. A handsome young man, seated near her upon an ottoman, rose when the servant announced Dr Barnaby.

"'Sir,' said he, with a strong foreign accent, 'I have heard so much of your skill that I expected to see an old man.'

"'I have studied diligently, sir,' I replied. 'I am deeply impressed with the importance and responsibility of my calling; you may confide in me.'

"'Tis well," he said. 'I recommend my wife to your best care. Her present state demands advice and precaution. She was born in a distant land: for my sake she has quitted family and friends. I can bring but my affection to her aid, for I am without experience. I reckon upon you, sir. If possible, preserve her from all suffering.'

"As he spoke, the young man fixed upon his wife a look so full of love, that the large blue eyes of the beautiful foreigner glistened with tears of gratitude. She dropped the tiny cap she was embroidering, and her two hands clasped the hand of her husband. I looked at them, and I ought to have found their lot enviable, but somehow or other, the contrary was the case. I felt sad; I could not tell why. I had often seen persons weep, of whom I said--They are happy! I saw William Meredith and his wife smile, and I could not help thinking they had much sorrow. I seated myself near my charming patient. Never have I seen anything so lovely as that sweet face, shaded by long ringlets of fair hair.
"What is your age, madam?"

"Seventeen."

"Is the climate of your native country very different from ours?"

"I was born in America—at New Orleans. Oh! the sun is far brighter than here."

"Doubtless she feared she had uttered a regret, for she added—

"But every country is beautiful when one is in one's husband's house, with him, and awaiting his child!"

"Her gaze sought that of William Meredith: then, in a tongue I did not understand, she spoke a few words which sounded so soft that they must have been words of love.

"After a short visit I took my leave, promising to return. I did return, and, at the end of two months, I was almost the friend of this young couple. Mr and Mrs Meredith were not selfish in their happiness; they found time to think of others. They saw that to the poor village doctor, whose sole society was that of peasants, those days were festivals upon which he passed an hour in hearing the language of cities. They encouraged me to frequent them—talked to me of their travels, and soon, with the prompt confidence characterising youth, they told me their story. It was the girl-wife who spoke:—

"Doctor,' she said, 'yonder, beyond the seas, I have father, sisters, family, friends, whom I long loved, until the day when I loved William. But then I shut my heart to those who repulsed my lover. William's father forbade him to wed me, because he was too noble for the daughter of an American planter. My father forbade me to love William, because he was too proud to give his daughter to a man whose family refused her a welcome. They tried to separate us; but we loved each other. Long did we weep and supplicate, and implore the pity of those to whom we owed obedience; they remained inflexible, and we loved! Doctor, did you ever love? I would you had, that you might be indulgent to us. We were secretly married, and we fled to France. Oh how beautiful the ocean appeared in those early days of our affection! The sea was hospitable to the fugitives. Wanderers upon the waves, we passed happy days in the shadow of our vessel's sails, anticipating pardon from our friends, and dreaming a bright future. Alas! we were too sanguine. They pursued us; and, upon pretext of some irregularity of form in our clandestine marriage, William's family cruelly thought to separate us. We found concealment in the midst of these mountains and forests. Under a name which is not ours, we live unknown. My father has not forgiven—he has cursed me! That is the reason, doctor, why I cannot always smile, even with my dear William by my side.'

"How those two loved each other! Never have I seen a being more completely wrapped up in another than was Eva Meredith in her husband! Whatever her occupation, she always so placed herself, that, on raising her eyes, she had William before them. She never read but in the book he was reading. Her head against his shoulder, her eyes followed the lines on which William's eyes were fixed; she wished the same thoughts to strike them at the same moment; and, when I crossed the garden to reach their door, I
smiled to see upon the gravel the trace of Eva's little foot always close to the mark of William's boot. What a difference between the deserted old house you see yonder, and the pretty dwelling of my young friends! What sweet flowers covered the walls! What bright nosegays decked the tables! How many charming books were there, full of tales of love that resembled their love! How gay the birds that sang around them! How good it was to live there, and to be loved a little by those who loved each other so much! But those are right who say that happy days are not long upon this earth, and that, in respect of happiness, God gives but a little at a time.

"One morning Eva Meredith appeared to suffer. I questioned her with all the interest I felt for her. She answered me abruptly.

"'Do not feel my pulse, doctor,' she said; 'it is my heart that beats too quick. Think me childish if you will, but I am sad this morning. William is going away. He is going to the town beyond the mountain, to receive money.'

"'And when will he return?' inquired I, gently.

"She smiled, almost blushed, and then, with a look that seemed to say, Do not laugh at me, she replied, 'This evening!'

"Notwithstanding her imploring glance, I could not repress a smile. Just then a servant brought Mr Meredith's horse to the door. Eva rose from her seat, went out into the garden, approached the horse, and, whilst stroking his mane, bowed her head upon the animal's neck, perhaps to conceal the tear that fell from her eyes. William came out, threw himself lightly into the saddle, and gently raised his wife's head.

"'Silly girl!' said he, with love in his eyes and voice. And he kissed her brow.

"'William, we have never yet been so many hours apart!'

"Mr Meredith stooped his head towards that of Eva, and imprinted a second kiss upon her beautiful golden hair; then he touched his horse's flank with the spur, and set off at a gallop. I am convinced that he, too, was a little moved. Nothing is so contagious as the weakness of those we love; tears summon tears, and it is no very laudable courage that keeps our eyes dry by the side of a weeping friend. I turned my steps homeward, and, once more in my cottage, I set myself to meditate on the happiness of loving. I asked myself if an Eva would ever cheer my poor dwelling. I did not think of examining whether I were worthy to be loved. When we behold two beings thus devoted to each other, we easily discern that it is not for good and various reasons that they love so well; they love because it is necessary, inevitable; they love on account of their own hearts, not of those of others. Well, I thought how I might seek and find a heart that had need to love, just as, in my morning walks, I might have thought to meet, by the road-side, some flower of sweet perfume. Thus did I muse, although it is perhaps a wrong feeling which makes us, at sight of others' bliss, deplore the happiness we do not ourselves possess. Is not a little envy there? and if joy could be stolen like gold, should we not then be near a larceny?
"The day passed, and I had just completed my frugal supper, when I received a message from Mrs Meredith, begging me to visit her. In five minutes I was at the door of the white cottage. I found Eva, still alone, seated on a sofa, without work or book, pale and trembling. 'Come, doctor, come,' said she, in her soft voice; 'I can remain alone no longer; see how late it is!--he should have been home two hours ago, and has not yet returned!"

"I was surprised at Mr Meredith's prolonged absence; but, to comfort his wife, I replied quietly, 'How can we tell the time necessary to transact his business? They may have made him wait; the notary was perhaps absent. There were papers to draw up and sign.'

"'Ah, doctor, I was sure you would find words of consolation! I needed to hear some one tell me that it is foolish to tremble thus! Gracious heaven, how long the day has been! Doctor, are there really persons who live alone? Do they not die immediately, as if robbed of half the atmosphere essential to life? But there is eight o'clock!' Eight o'clock was indeed striking. I could not imagine why William was not back. At all hazards I said to Mrs Meredith, 'Madam, the sun is hardly set; it is still daylight, and the evening is beautiful; come and visit your flowers. If we walk down the road, we shall doubtless meet your husband.'

"She took my arm, and we walked towards the gate of the little garden. I endeavoured to turn her attention to surrounding objects. At first she replied, as a child obeys. But I felt that her thoughts went not with her words. Her anxious gaze was fixed upon the little green gate, which had remained open since William's departure. Leaning upon the paling, she suffered me to talk on, smiling from time to time, by way of thanks; for, as the evening wore away, she lacked courage to answer me. Grey tints succeeded the red sunset, foreshadowing the arrival of night. Gloom gathered around us. The road, hitherto visible like a white line winding through the forest, disappeared in the dark shade of the lofty trees, and the village clock struck nine. Eva started. I myself felt every stroke vibrate upon my heart. I pitied the poor woman's uneasiness.

"'Remember, madam,' I replied (she had not spoken, but I answered the anxiety visible in her features), 'remember that Mr Meredith must return at a walk; the roads through the forest are not in a state to admit fast riding.' I said this to encourage her; but the truth is, I knew not how to explain William's absence. Knowing the distance, I also knew that I could have gone twice to the town and back since his departure. The evening dew began to penetrate our clothes, and especially Eva's thin muslin dress. Again I drew her arm through mine and led her towards the house. She followed unresistingly; her gentle nature was submissive even in affliction. She walked slowly, her head bowed, her eyes fixed on the tracks left by the gallop of her husband's horse. How melancholy it was, that evening walk, still without William! In vain we listened: there reigned around us the profound stillness of a summer night in the country. How greatly does a feeling of uneasiness increase under such circumstances. We entered the house. Eva seated herself on the sofa, her hands clasped upon her knees, her head sunk upon her bosom. There was a lamp on the chimney-piece, whose light fell full upon her face. I shall never forget its suffering expression. She was pale, very pale--her brow and cheeks exactly the same colour; her hair, relaxed by the night-damp, fell in disorder upon her shoulders. Tears filled her eyes, and the quivering of her colourless lips showed how violent was the effort by which she avoided shedding
them. She was so young that her face resembled that of a child forbidden to cry.

"I was greatly troubled, and knew not what to say or how to look. Suddenly I remembered (it was a doctor's thought) that Eva, engrossed by her uneasiness, had taken nothing since morning, and her situation rendered it imprudent to prolong this fast. At my first reference to the subject she raised her eyes to mine with a reproachful expression, and the motion of her eyelids caused two tears to flow down her cheeks.

"'For your child's sake, madam,' said I.

"'Ah, you are right!' she murmured, and she passed into the dining-room; but there the little table was laid for two, and at that moment this trifle so saddened me as to deprive me of speech and motion. My increasing uneasiness rendered me quite awkward; I had not the wit to say what I did not think. The silence was prolonged; 'and yet,' said I to myself, 'I am here to console her; she sent for me for that purpose. There must be fifty ways of explaining this delay--let me find one.' I sought, and sought--and still I remained silent, inwardly cursing the poverty of invention of a poor village doctor. Eva, her head resting on her hand, forgot to eat. Suddenly she turned to me and burst out sobbing.

"'Ah, doctor!' she exclaimed, 'I see plainly that you too are uneasy.'

"'Not so, madam--indeed not so,' replied I, speaking at random. 'Why should I be uneasy? He has doubtless dined with the notary. The roads are safe, and no one knows that he went for money.'

"I had inadvertently revealed one of my secret causes of uneasiness. I knew that a band of foreign reapers had that morning passed through the village, on their way to a neighbouring department.

"Eva uttered a cry.

"'Robbers! robbers!' she exclaimed. 'I never thought of that danger.'

"'But, madam, I only mention it to tell you it does not exist.'

"'Oh! the thought struck you, doctor, because you thought the misfortune possible! William, my own William! why did you leave me?' cried she, weeping bitterly.

"I was in despair at my blunder, and I felt my eyes fill with tears. My distress gave me an idea.

"'Mrs Meredith,' I said, 'I cannot see you torment yourself thus, and remain by your side unable to console you. I will go and seek your husband; I will follow at random one of the paths through the forest; I will search everywhere and shout his name, and go, if necessary, to the town itself.'

"'Oh, thanks, thanks, kind friend!' cried Eva Meredith, 'take the gardener with you and the servant; search in all directions!'"
"We hurried back into the drawing-room, and Eva rang quickly and repeatedly. All the inhabitants of the cottage opened at the same time the different doors of the apartment. 'Follow Dr Barnaby,' cried Mrs Meredith.

"At that moment a horse's gallop was distinctly heard upon the gravel of the garden. Eva uttered a cry of happiness that went home to every heart. Never shall I forget the divine expression of joy that illumined her face, still inundated with tears. She and I, we flew to the house-door. The moon, passing from behind a cloud, threw her full light upon a riderless and foam-covered horse, whose bridle dragged upon the ground, and whose dusty flanks were galled by the empty stirrups. A second cry, this time of intensest horror, burst from Eva's breast; then she turned towards me, her eyes fixed, her mouth half open, her arms hanging powerless.

"The servants were in consternation.

"'Get torches, my friends!' cried I, 'and follow me! Madam, we shall soon return, I hope, and your husband with us. He has received some slight hurt, a strained ankle, perhaps. Keep up your courage. We will soon be back.'

"'I go with you!' murmured Eva Meredith in a choking voice.

"'Impossible!' I cried. 'We must go fast, perhaps far, and in your state--it would be risking your life, and that of your child--'

"'I go with you!' repeated Eva.

"Then did I feel how cruel was this poor woman's isolation! Had a father, a mother been there, they would have ordered her to stay, they would have retained her by force; but she was alone upon the earth, and to all my hurried entreaties she still replied in a hollow voice: 'I go with you!'

"We set out. The moon was again darkened by dense clouds; there was light neither in the heavens nor on the earth. The uncertain radiance of our torches barely showed us the path. A servant went in front, lowering his torch to the right and to the left, to illumine the ditches and bushes bordering the road. Behind him Mrs Meredith, the gardener, and myself, followed with our eyes the stream of light. From time to time we raised our voices and called Mr Meredith. After us a stifled sob murmured the name of William, as if a heart had reckoned on the instinct of love to hear its tears better than our shouts. We reached the forest. Rain began to fall, and the drops pattered upon the foliage with a mournful noise, as if everything around us wept. Eva's thin dress was soon soaked with the cold flood. The water streamed from her hair over her face. She bruised her feet against the stones of the road, and repeatedly stumbled and fell upon her knees; but she rose again with the energy of despair, and pushed forwards. It was agonising to behold her. I scarcely dared look at her, lest I should see her fall dead before my eyes. At last--we were moving in silence, fatigued and discouraged--Mrs Meredith pushed us suddenly aside, sprang forward and plunged into the bushes. We followed her, and, upon raising the torches-- alas! she was on her knees beside the body of William, who was stretched motionless upon the ground, his eyes
glazed and his brow covered with blood which flowed from a wound in the left temple.

"Doctor?" said Eva to me. That one word expressed--'Does William live?'

"I stooped and felt the pulse of William Meredith; I placed my hand on his heart and remained silent. Eva still gazed at me; but, when my silence was prolonged, I saw her bend, waver, and then, without word or cry, fall senseless upon her husband's corpse.

"But, ladies," said Dr Barnaby, turning to his audience, "the sun shines again; you can go out now. Let us leave this sad story where it is."

Madame de Moncar approached the old physician. "Doctor," said she, "I implore you to continue; only look at us, and you will not doubt the interest with which we listen."

There were no more smiles of mockery upon the young faces that surrounded the village doctor. In some of their eyes he might even distinguish the glistening of tears. He resumed his narrative.

"Mrs Meredith was carried home, and remained for several hours senseless upon her bed. I felt it at once a duty and a cruelty to use every effort to recall her to life. I dreaded the agonising scenes that would follow this state of immobility. I remained beside the poor woman, bathing her temples with fresh water, and awaiting with anxiety the sad and yet the happy moment of returning consciousness. I was mistaken in my anticipations, for I had never witnessed great grief. Eva half opened her eyes and immediately closed them again; no tear escaped from beneath their lids. She remained cold, motionless, silent; and, but for the heart which again throbbed beneath my hand, I should have deemed her dead. Sad is it to behold a sorrow which one feels is beyond consolation! Silence, I thought, seemed like a want of pity for this unfortunate creature: on the other hand, verbal condolence was a mockery of so mighty a grief. I had found no words to calm her uneasiness; could I hope to be more eloquent in the hour of her great suffering? I took the safest course, that of profound silence. I will remain here, I thought, and minister to the physical sufferings, as is my duty; but I will be mute and passive, even as a faithful dog would lie down at her feet. My mind once made up, I felt calmer; I let her live a life which resembled death. After a few hours, however, I put a spoonful of a potion to her lips. Eva slowly averted her head. In a few moments I again offered her the drug.

"Drink, madam,' I said, gently touching her lips with the spoon. They remained closed.

"Madam, your child!' I persisted in a low voice.

"Eva opened her eyes, raised herself with effort upon her elbow, swallowed the medicine, and fell back upon her pillow.

"I must wait,' she murmured, 'till another life is detached from mine!'
"Thenceforward Mrs Meredith spoke no more, but she mechanically followed all my prescriptions. Stretched upon her bed of suffering, she seemed constantly to sleep; but at whatever moment I said to her, even in my lowest whisper, 'Drink this,' she instantly obeyed; thus proving to me that the soul kept its weary watch in that motionless body, without a single instant of oblivion and repose.

"There were none beside myself to attend to the interment of William. Nothing positive was ever known as to the cause of his death. The sum he was to bring from the town was not found upon him; perhaps he had been robbed and murdered; perhaps the money, which was in notes, had fallen from his pocket when he was thrown from his horse, and, as it was some time before any thought of seeking it, the heavy rain and trampled mud might account for its disappearance. A fruitless investigation was made and soon dropped. I endeavoured to learn from Eva Meredith if her family, or that of her husband, should not be written to. I had difficulty in obtaining an answer. At last she gave me to understand that I had merely to inform their agent, who would do whatever was needful. I hoped that, at least from England, some communication would arrive, decisive of this poor creature's future lot. But no; day followed day, and none seemed to know that the widow of William Meredith lived in utter isolation, in a poor French village. To endeavour to bring back Eva to the sense of her existence, I urged her to leave her bed. Upon the morrow I found her up, dressed in black; but she was the ghost of the beautiful Eva Meredith. Her hair was parted in bands upon her pale forehead, and she sat near a window, motionless as she had lain in bed.

"I passed long silent evenings with her, a book in my hand for apparent occupation. Each day, on my arrival, I addressed to her a few words of sympathy. She replied by a thankful look; then we remained silent. I waited an opportunity to open a conversation; but my awkwardness and my respect for her grief prevented my finding one, or suffered it to escape when it occurred. Little by little I grew accustomed to this mute intercourse; and, besides, what could I have said to her? My chief object was to prevent her feeling quite alone in the world; and, obscure as was the prop remaining, it still was something. I went to see her merely that my presence might say, 'I am here.'

"It was a singular epoch in my life, and had a great influence on my future existence. Had I not shown so much regret at the threatened destruction of the white cottage, I would hurry to the conclusion of this narrative. But you have insisted upon knowing why that building is hallowed to me, and I must tell you therefore what I have thought and felt beneath its humble roof. Forgive me, ladies, if my words are grave. It is good for youth to be sometimes a little saddened; it has so much time before it to laugh and to forget.

"The son of a rich peasant, I was sent to Paris to complete my studies. During four years passed in that great city, I retained the awkwardness of my manners, the simplicity of my language, but I rapidly lost the ingenuousness of my sentiments. I returned to these mountains, almost learned, but almost incredulous in all those points of faith which enable a man to pass his life contentedly beneath a thatched roof, in the society of his wife and children, without caring to look beyond the cross above the village cemetery.
"Whilst contemplating the love of William and of Eva, I had reverted to my former simple 
peasant-nature. I began to dream of a virtuous, affectionate wife, diligent and frugal, embellishing my 
house by her care and order. I saw myself proud of the gentle severity of her features, revealing to all 
the chaste and faithful spouse. Very different were these reveries from those that haunted me at Paris 
after joyous evenings spent with my comrades. Suddenly, horrible calamity descended like a 
thunderbolt upon Eva Meredith. This time I was slower to appreciate the lesson I daily received. Eva 
sat constantly at the window, her sad gaze fixed upon the heavens. The attitude, common in persons of 
meditative mood, attracted my attention but little. Her persistence in it at last struck me. My book open 
upon my knees, I looked at Mrs Meredith; and well assured she would not detect my gaze, I examined 
her attentively. She still gazed at the sky--my eyes followed the direction of hers. 'Ah,' I said to myself 
with a half smile, 'she thinks to rejoin him there!' Then I resumed my book, thinking how fortunate it 
was for the weakness of women that such thoughts came to the relief of their sorrows.

"I have already told you that my student's life had put evil thoughts into my head. Every day, however, 
I saw Eva in the same attitude, and every day my reflections were recalled to the same subject. Little by 
little I came to think her dream a good one, and to regret I could not credit its reality. The soul, heaven, 
ETernal life, all that the old priest had formerly taught me, glided through my imagination as I sat at 
eventide before the open window. 'The doctrine of the old cure,' I said to myself, 'was more comforting 
than the cold realities science has revealed to me.' Then I looked at Eva, who still looked to heaven, 
whilst the bells of the village church sounded sweetly in the distance, and the rays of the setting sun 
made the steeple cross glitter against the sky. I often returned to sit opposite the poor widow, 
persevering in her grief as in her holy hopes.

"What!' I thought, 'can so much love address itself to a few particles of dust, already mingled with the 
mould; are all these sighs wasted on empty air? William departed in the freshness of his age, his 
affections yet vivid, his heart in its early bloom. She loved him but a year, one little year--and is all 
over for her? Above our heads is there nothing but void? Love--that sentiment so strong within us--is it 
but a flame placed in the obscure prison of our body, where it shines, burns, and is finally extinguished 
by the fall of the frail wall surrounding it? Is a little dust all that remains of our loves, and hopes, and 
passions--of all that moves, agitates, and exalts us?'

"There was deep silence in the recesses of my soul. I had ceased to think. I was as if slumbering 
between what I no longer denied, and what I did not yet believe. At last, one night, when Eva joined her 
hands to pray, beneath the most beautiful starlit sky possible to behold, I know not how it was, but I 
found my hands also clasped, and my lips opened to murmur a prayer. Then, by a happy chance, and 
for the first time, Eva Meredith looked round, as if a secret instinct had whispered her that my soul 
harmonised with hers.

"'Thanks,' said she, holding out her hand, 'keep him in your memory, and pray for him sometimes.'

"'Oh, madam!' I exclaimed, 'may we all meet again in a better world, whether our lives have been long 
or short, happy or full of trial.'"
"'His immortal soul looks down upon us!' she replied in a grave voice, whilst her gaze, at once sad and bright, reverted to the star-spangled heavens.

"Since that evening, when performing the duties of my profession, I have often witnessed death; but never without speaking to the sorrowing survivors a few consoling words on a better life than this one; and those words were words of conviction.

"At last, a month after these incidents, Eva Meredith gave birth to a son. When they brought her her child,--'William!' exclaimed the poor widow; and tears, soothing tears too long denied to her grief, escaped in torrents from her eyes. The child bore that much-loved name of William, and a little cradle was placed close to the mother's bed. Then Eva's gaze, long directed to heaven, returned earthwards. She looked to her child now, as she had previously looked to her God. She bent over him to seek his father's features. Providence had permitted an exact resemblance between William and the son he was fated not to see. A great change occurred around us. Eva, who had consented to live until her child's existence was detached from hers, was now, I could plainly see, willing to live on, because she felt that this little being needed the protection of her love. She passed the days and evenings seated beside his cradle; and when I went to see her, oh! then she questioned me as to what she should do for him, she explained what he had suffered, and asked what could be done to save him from pain. For her child she feared the heat of a ray of sun, the chill of the lightest breeze. Bending over him, she shielded him with her body, and warmed him with her kisses. One day, I almost thought I saw her smile at him. But she never would sing, whilst rocking his cradle, to lull him to sleep; she called one of her women, and said, 'Sing to my son that he may sleep.' Then she listened, letting her tears flow softly upon little William's brow. Poor child! he was handsome, gentle, easy to rear. But, as if his mother's sorrow had affected him even before his birth, the child was melancholy: he seldom cried, but he never smiled: he was quiet; and at that age quiet seems to denote suffering. I fancied that all the tears shed over the cradle froze that poor little soul. I would fain have seen William's arms twined caressingly round his mother's neck. I would have had him return the kisses lavished upon him. 'But what am I thinking about?' I then said to myself; 'is it reasonable to expect that a little creature, not yet a year upon the earth, should understand that it is sent hither to love and console this woman?'

"It was, I assure you, a touching sight to behold this young mother, pale, feeble, and who had once renounced existence, clinging again to life for the sake of a little child which could not even say 'Thanks, dear mother!' What a marvel is the human heart! Of how small a thing it makes much! Give it but a grain of sand, and it elevates a mountain; at its latest throb show it but an atom to love, and again its pulses revive; it stops for good only when all is void around it, and when even the shadow of its affections has vanished from the earth!

"Time rolled on, and I received a letter from an uncle, my sole surviving relative. My uncle, a member of the faculty of Montpellier, summoned me to his side, to complete in that learned town my initiation into the secrets of my art. This letter, in form an invitation, was in fact an order. I had to set out. One morning, my heart big when I thought of the isolation in which I left the widow and the orphan, I repaired to the white cottage to take leave of Eva Meredith. I know not whether an additional shade of sadness came over her features when I told her I was about to make a long absence. Since the death of
William Meredith such profound melancholy dwelt upon her countenance that a smile would have been the sole perceptible variation: sadness was always there.

"'You leave us?' she exclaimed; 'your care is so useful to my child!'

"The poor lonely woman forgot to regret the departure of her last friend; the mother lamented the loss of the physician useful to her son. I did not complain. To be useful is the sweet recompense of the devoted.

"'Adieu!' she said, holding out her hand. 'Wherever you go, may God bless you; and should it be His will to afflict you, may He at least afford you the sympathy of a heart compassionate as your own.'

"I bowed over the hand of Eva Meredith; and I departed, deeply moved.

"The child was in the garden in front of the house, lying upon the grass, in the sun. I took him in my arms and kissed him repeatedly; I looked at him long, attentively, sadly, and a tear started to my eyes. 'Oh, no, no! I must be mistaken!' I murmured, and I hurried from the white cottage."

"Good heavens, doctor!" simultaneously exclaimed all Dr Barnaby's audience, "what did you apprehend?"

"Suffer me to finish my story my own way," replied the village doctor; "everything shall be told in its turn. I relate these events in the order in which they occurred.

"On my arrival at Montpellier, I was exceedingly well received by my uncle; who declared, however, that he could neither lodge nor feed me, nor lend me money, and that as a stranger, without a name, I must not hope for a patient in a town so full of celebrated physicians.

"'Then I will return to my village, uncle,' replied I.

"'By no means!' was his answer. 'I have got you a lucrative and respectable situation. An old Englishman, rich, gouty, and restless, wishes to have a doctor to live with him, an intelligent young man who will take charge of his health under the superintendence of an older physician. I have proposed you--you have been accepted; let us go to him.'

"We betook ourselves immediately to the residence of Lord James Kysington, a large and handsome house, full of servants, where, after waiting some time, first in the anteroom, and then in the parlours, we were at last ushered into the presence of the noble invalid. Seated in a large arm-chair was an old man of cold and severe aspect, whose white hair contrasted oddly with his eyebrows, still of a jet black. He was tall and thin, as far as I could judge through the folds of a large cloth coat, made like a dressing-gown. His hands disappeared under his cuffs, and his feet were wrapped in the skin of a white bear. A number of medicine vials were upon a table beside him.
"My lord, this is my nephew, Dr Barnaby."

"Lord Kysington bowed--that is to say, he looked at me, and made a scarcely perceptible movement with his head.

"He is well versed in his profession, and I doubt not that his care will be most beneficial to your lordship."

"A second movement of the head was the sole reply vouchsafed.

"Moreover,' continued my relation, 'having had a tolerably good education, he can read to your lordship, or write under your dictation.'

"I shall be obliged to him,' replied Lord Kysington, breaking silence at last, and then closing his eyes, either from fatigue, or as a hint that the conversation was to drop. I glanced around me. Near the window sat a lady, very elegantly dressed, who continued her embroidery without once raising her eyes, as if we were not worthy her notice. Upon the carpet at her feet a little boy amused himself with toys. The lady, although young, did not at first strike me as pretty--because she had black hair and eyes; and to be pretty, according to my notion, was to be fair, like Eva Meredith; and, moreover, in my inexperience, I held beauty impossible without a certain air of goodness. It was long before I could admit the beauty of this woman, whose brow was haughty, her look disdainful, and her mouth unsmiling. Like Lord Kysington, she was tall, thin, rather pale. In character they were too much alike to suit each other well. Formal and taciturn, they lived together without affection, almost without converse. The child, too, had been taught silence; he walked on tiptoe, and at the least noise a severe look from his mother or from Lord Kysington changed him into a statue.

"It was too late to return to my village; but it is never too late to regret what one has loved and lost. My heart ached when I thought of my cottage, my valley, my liberty.

"What I learned concerning the cheerless family I had entered was as follows:--Lord James Kysington had come to Montpellier for his health, deteriorated by the climate of India. Second son of the Duke of Kysington, and a lord only by courtesy, he owed to talent and not to inheritance his fortune and his political position in the House of Commons. Lady Mary was the wife of his youngest brother; and Lord James, free to dispose of his fortune, had named her son his heir.

"Towards me his lordship was most punctiliously polite. A bow thanked me for every service I rendered him. I read aloud for hours together, uninterrupted either by the sombre old man, whom I put to sleep, or by the young woman, who did not listen to me, or by the child, who trembled in his uncle's presence. I had never led so melancholy a life, and yet, as you know, ladies, the little white cottage had long ceased to be gay; but the silence of misfortune implies reflections that words are insufficient to express. One feels the life of the soul under the stillness of the body. In my new abode it was the silence of a void."
"One day that Lord James dozed and Lady Mary was engrossed with embroidery, little Harry climbed upon my knee, as I sat apart at the farther end of the room, and began to question me with the artless curiosity of his age. In my turn, and without reflecting on what I said, I questioned him concerning his family."

"'Have you any brothers or sisters?' I inquired.

"'I have a very pretty little sister.'

"'What is her name?' asked I, absently, glancing at the newspaper in my hand.

"'She has a beautiful name. Guess it, Doctor.'

"I know not what I was thinking about. In my village I had heard none but the names of peasants, hardly applicable to Lady Mary's daughter. Mrs Meredith was the only lady I had known, and the child repeating, 'Guess, guess!' I replied at random,

"'Eva, perhaps?'

"We were speaking very low; but when the name of Eva escaped my lips, Lord James opened his eyes quickly, and raised himself in his chair, Lady Mary dropped her needle and turned sharply towards me. I was confounded at the effect I had produced; I looked alternately at Lord James and at Lady Mary, without daring to utter another word. Some minutes passed: Lord James again let his head fall back and closed his eyes, Lady Mary resumed her needle, Harry and I ceased our conversation. I reflected for some time upon this strange incident, until at last, all around me having sunk into the usual monotonous calm, I rose to leave the room. Lady Mary pushed away her embroidery frame, passed before me, and made me a sign to follow. When we were both in another room she shut the door, and raising her head, with the imperious air which was the most habitual expression of her features: 'Dr Barnaby,' said she, 'be so good as never again to pronounce the name that just now escaped your lips. It is a name Lord James Kysington must not hear.' She bowed slightly, and re-entered her brother-in-law's apartment.

"Thoughts innumerable crowded upon my mind. This Eva, whose name was not to be spoken, could it be Eva Meredith? Was she Lord Kysington's daughter-in-law? Was I in the house of William's father? I hoped, but still I doubted; for, after all, if there was but one Eva in the world for me, in England the name was, doubtless, by no means uncommon. But the thought that I was perhaps with the family of Eva Meredith, living with the woman who robbed the widow and the orphan of their inheritance, this thought was present to me by day and by night. In my dreams I beheld the return of Eva and her son to the paternal residence, in consequence of the pardon I had implored and obtained for them. But when I raised my eyes, the cold impassible physiognomy of Lord Kysington froze all the hopes of my heart. I applied myself to the examination of that countenance as if I had never before seen it; I analysed its features and lines to find a trace of sensibility. I sought the heart I so gladly would have touched. Alas! I found it not. But I had so good a cause that I was not to be discouraged. 'Pshaw!' I said to myself, 'what matters the expression of the face? why heed the external envelope? May not the darkest coffer
contain bright gold? Must all that is within us reveal itself at a glance? Does not every man of the world learn to separate his mind and his thoughts from the habitual expression of his countenance?"

"I resolved to clear up my doubts, but how to do so was the difficulty. Impossible to question Lady Mary or Lord James; the servants were French, and had but lately come to the house. An English valet-de-chambre had just been despatched to London on a confidential mission. I directed my investigations to Lord James Kysington. The severe expression of his countenance ceased to intimidate me. I said to myself, 'When the forester meets with a tree apparently dead, he strikes his axe into the trunk to see whether sap does not still survive beneath the withered bark; in like manner will I strike at the heart, and see whether life be not somewhere hidden.' And I only waited an opportunity.

"To await an opportunity with impatience is to accelerate its coming. Instead of depending on circumstances we subjugate them. One night Lord James sent for me. He was in pain. After administering the necessary remedies, I remained by his bedside, to watch their effect. The room was dark; a single wax candle showed the outline of objects, without illuminating them. The pale and noble head of Lord James was thrown back upon his pillow. His eyes were shut, according to his custom when suffering, as if he concentrated his moral energies within him. He never complained, but lay stretched out in his bed, straight and motionless as a king's statue upon a marble tomb. In general he got somebody to read to him, hoping either to distract his thoughts from his pains, or to be lulled to sleep by the monotonous sound.

"Upon that night he made sign to me with his meagre hand to take a book and read, but I sought one in vain; books and newspapers had all been removed to the drawing-room; the doors were locked, and unless I rang and aroused the house, a book was not to be had. Lord James made a gesture of impatience, then one of resignation, and beckoned me to resume my seat by his side. We remained for some time without speaking, almost in darkness, the silence broken only by the ticking of the clock. Sleep came not. Suddenly Lord James opened his eyes.

"'Speak to me,' he said. 'Tell me something; whatever you like.'

"His eyes closed, and he waited. My heart beat violently. The moment had come.

"'My lord,' said I, 'I greatly fear I know nothing that will interest your lordship. I can speak but of myself, of the events of my life,—and the history of the great ones of the earth were necessary to fix your attention. What can a peasant have to say, who has lived contented with little, in obscurity and repose? I have scarcely quitted my village, my lord. It is a pretty mountain hamlet, where even those not born there might well be pleased to dwell. Near it is a country house, which I have known inhabited by rich people, who could have left it if they liked, but who remained, because the woods were thick, the paths bordered with flowers, the streams bright and rapid in their rocky beds. Alas! they were two in that house—and soon a poor woman was there alone, until the birth of her son. My lord, she is a countrywoman of yours, an Englishwoman, of beauty such as is seldom seen either in England or in France; good as, besides her, only the angels in heaven can be! She had just completed her eighteenth year when I left her, fatherless, motherless, and already widowed of an adored husband; she is feeble,
delicate, almost ill, and yet she must live;—who would protect that little child? Oh! my lord, there are very unhappy beings in this world! To be unhappy in middle life or old age is doubtless sad, but still you have pleasant memories of the past to remind you that you have had your day, your share, your happiness; but to weep before you are eighteen is far sadder, for nothing can bring back the dead, and the future is dim with tears. Poor creature! We see a beggar by the road-side suffering from cold and hunger, and we give him alms, and look upon him without pain, because it is in our power to relieve him; but this unhappy, broken-hearted woman, the only relief to give her would be to love her—and none are there to bestow that alms upon her!

"Ah! my lord, if you knew what a fine young man her husband was!—hardly three-and-twenty; a noble countenance, a lofty brow—like your own, intelligent and proud; dark-blue eyes, rather pensive, rather sad. I knew why they were sad. He loved his father and his native land, and he was doomed to exile from both! And how good and graceful was his smile! Ah! how he would have smiled at his little child, had he lived long enough to see it. He loved it even before it was born: he took pleasure in looking at the cradle that awaited it. Poor, poor young man!—I saw him on a stormy night, in the dark forest, stretched upon the wet earth, motionless, lifeless, his garments covered with mud, his temples shattered, blood escaping in torrents from his wound. I saw—alas! I saw William—'

"You saw my son's death!" cried Lord James, raising himself like a spectre in the midst of his pillows, and fixing me with eyes so distended and piercing, that I started back alarmed. But notwithstanding the darkness, I thought I saw a tear moisten the old man's eyelids.

"My lord,' I replied, 'I was present at your son's death, and at the birth of his child!'

"There was an instant's silence. Lord James looked steadfastly at me. At last he made a movement; his trembling hand sought mine, pressed it, then his fingers relaxed their grasp, and he fell back upon the bed.

"Enough sir, enough; I suffer, I need repose. Leave me.'

"I bowed, and retired.

"Before I was out of the room, Lord James had relapsed into his habitual position; into silence and immobility.

"I will not detail to you my numerous and respectful representations to Lord James Kysington, his indecision and secret anxiety, and how at last his paternal love, awakened by the details of the horrible catastrophe, his pride of race, revived by the hope of leaving an heir to his name, triumphed over his bitter resentment. Three months after the scene I have described, I awaited, on the threshold of the house at Montpellier, the arrival of Eva Meredith and her son, summoned to their family and to the resumption of all their rights. It was a proud and happy day for me.
"Lady Mary, perfect mistress of herself, had concealed her joy when family dissensions had made her son heir to her wealthy brother. Still better did she conceal her regret and anger when Eva Meredith, or rather Eva Kysington, was reconciled with her father-in-law. Not a cloud appeared upon Lady Mary's marble forehead. But beneath this external calm how many evil passions fermented!

"When the carriage of Eva Meredith (I will still give her that name) entered the courtyard of the house, I was there to receive her. Eva held out her hand--'Thanks, thanks, my friend!' she murmured. She wiped the tears that trembled in her eyes, and taking her boy, now three years old, and of great beauty, by the hand, she entered her new abode. 'I am afraid,' she said. She was still the weak woman, broken by affliction, pale, sad, and beautiful, incredulous of earthly hopes, but firm in heavenly faith. I walked by her side; and as she ascended the steps, her gentle countenance bedewed with tears, her slender and feeble form inclined towards the balustrade, her extended arm assisting the child, who walked still more slowly than herself, Lady Mary and her son appeared at the door. Lady Mary wore a brown velvet dress, rich bracelets encircled her arms, a slender gold chain bound her brow, which in truth was of those on which a diadem sits well. She advanced with an assured step, her head high, her glance full of pride. Such was the first meeting of the two mothers.

"'You are welcome, madam,' said Lady Mary, bowing to Eva Meredith.

"Eva tried to smile, and answered by a few affectionate words. How could she forbode hatred, she who only knew love? We proceeded to Lord James's room. Mrs Meredith, scarcely able to support herself, entered first, took a few steps, and knelt beside her father-in-law's arm-chair. Taking her child in her arms, she placed him on Lord James Kysington's knee.

"'His son!' she said. Then the poor woman wept and was silent.

"Long did Lord James gaze upon the child. As he gradually recognised the features of the son he had lost, his eyes became moist, and their expression affectionate. There came a moment when, forgetting his age, lapse of time, and past misfortune, he dreamed himself back to the happy day when he first pressed his infant son to his heart. 'William, William!' he murmured. 'My daughter!' added he, extending his hand to Eva Meredith.

"My eyes filled with tears. Eva had a family, a protector, a fortune. I was happy; doubtless that was why I wept.

"The child remained quiet upon his grandfather's knees, and showed neither pleasure nor fear.

"'Will you love me?' said the old man.

"The child raised its head, but did not answer.

"'Do you hear? I will be your father.'
"'I will be your father,' the child gently repeated.

"'Excuse him,' said his mother; 'he has always been alone. He is very young; the presence of many persons intimidates him. By-and-by, my lord, he will better understand your kind words.'

"But I looked at the child; I examined him in silence; I recalled my former gloomy apprehensions. Alas! those apprehensions now became a certainty; the terrible shock experienced by Eva Meredith during her pregnancy had had fatal consequences for her child, and a mother only, in her youth, her love, and her inexperience, could have remained so long ignorant of her misfortune.

"At the same time with myself Lady Mary looked at the child. I shall never forget the expression of her countenance. She stood erect, and the piercing gaze she fixed upon little William seemed to read his very soul. As she gazed, her eyes sparkled, her mouth was half-opened as by a smile--she breathed short and thick, like one oppressed by great and sudden joy. She looked, looked--hope, doubt, expectation, replaced each other on her face. At last her hatred was clear-sighted, an internal cry of triumph burst from her heart, but was checked ere it reached her lips. She drew herself up, let fall a disdainful glance upon Eva, her vanquished enemy, and resumed her usual calm.

"Lord James, fatigued by the emotions of the day, dismissed us, and remained alone all the evening.

"Upon the morrow, after an agitated night, when I entered Lord James's room, all the family were already assembled around him, and Lady Mary had little William on her knees: it was the tiger clutching its prey.

"'What a beautiful child!' she said. 'See, my lord, these fair and silken locks! how brilliant they are in the sunshine! But, dear Eva, is your son always so silent? does he never exhibit the vivacity and gaiety of his age?'

"'He is always sad,' replied Mrs Meredith. 'Alas! with me he could hardly learn to laugh.'

"'We will try to amuse and cheer him,' said Lady Mary. 'Come, my dear child, kiss your grandfather! hold out your arms, and tell him you love him.'

"William did not stir.

"'Do you not know how? Harry, my love, kiss your uncle, and set your cousin a good example.'

"Harry jumped upon Lord James's knees, threw both arms round his neck, and said, 'I love you, dear uncle!'

"'Now it is your turn, my dear William,' said Lady Mary.

"William stirred not, and did not even look at his grandfather.
"A tear coursed down Eva Meredith's cheek.

"'Tis my fault,' she said. 'I have brought up my child badly.' And, taking William upon her lap, her tears fell upon his face: he felt them not, but slumbered upon his mother's heavy heart.

"Try to make William less shy,' said Lord James to his daughter-in-law.

"I will try,' replied Eva, in her submissive tones, like those of an obedient child. 'I will try; and perhaps I shall succeed, if Lady Mary will kindly tell me how she rendered her son so happy and so gay.' Then the disconsolate mother looked at Harry, who was at play near his uncle's chair, and her eyes reverted to her poor sleeping child. 'He suffered even before his birth,' she murmured; 'we have both been very unhappy! but I will try to weep no more, that William may be cheerful like other children.'

"Two days elapsed, two painful days, full of secret trouble and ill-concealed uneasiness. Lord James's brow was care-laden; at times his look questioned me. I averted my eyes to avoid answering. On the morning of the third day, Lady Mary came into the room with a number of play-things for the children. Harry seized a sword, and ran about the room, shouting for joy. William remained motionless, holding in his little hand the toys that were given to him, but not attempting to use them; he did not even look at them.

"Here, my lord,' said Lady Mary to her brother, 'give this book to your grandson; perhaps his attention will be roused by the pictures it contains.' And she led William to Lord James. The child was passive; he walked, stopped, and remained like a statue where he was placed. Lord James opened the book. All eyes turned towards the group formed by the old man and his grandson. Lord James was gloomy, silent, severe; he slowly turned several pages, stopping at every picture, and looking at William, whose vacant gaze was not directed to the book. Lord James turned a few more pages; then his hand ceased to move; the book fell from his knees to the ground, and an irksome silence reigned in the apartment. Lady Mary approached me, bent forward as if to whisper in my ear, and in a voice loud enough to be heard by all--

"The child is an idiot, doctor!' she said.

"A shriek answered her. Eva started up as if she had received a blow; and seizing her son, whom she pressed convulsively to her breast--

"Idiot!' she exclaimed, her indignant glance flashing, for the first time, with a vivid brilliance; 'idiot!' she repeated, 'because he has been unhappy all his life, because he has seen but tears since his eyes first opened! because he knows not how to play like your son, who has always had joy around him! Ah! madam, you insult misfortune! Come, my child!' cried Eva, all in tears. "Come, let us leave these pitiless hearts, that find none but cruel words to console our misery!'

"And the unhappy mother carried off her boy to her apartment. I followed. She set William down, and knelt before the little child. 'My son! my son!' she cried.
"William went close to her, and rested his head on his mother's shoulder.

"'Doctor!' cried Eva, 'he loves me--you see he does! He comes when I call him; he kisses me! His caresses have sufficed for my tranquillity--for my sad happiness! My God! was it not then enough? Speak to me, my son; reassure me! Find a consoling word, a single word for your despairing mother! Till now I have asked nothing of you but to remind me of your father, and leave me silence to weep. To-day, William, you must give me words! See you not my tears--my terror? Dear child, so beautiful, so like your father, speak, speak to me!'

"Alas! alas! the child remained motionless, without sign of fear or intelligence; a smile only, a smile horrible to behold, flitted across his features. Eva hid her face in both hands, and remained kneeling upon the ground. For a long time no noise was heard save the sound of her sobs. Then I prayed heaven to inspire me with consoling thoughts, such as might give a ray of hope to this poor mother. I spoke of the future, of expected cure, of change possible--even probable. But hope is no friend to falsehood. Where she does not exist her phantom cannot penetrate. A terrible blow, a mortal one, had been struck, and Eva Meredith saw all the truth.

"From that day forwards, only one child was to be seen each morning in Lord James Kysington's room. Two women came thither, but only one of them seemed to live--the other was silent as the tomb. One said, 'My son!' the other never spoke of her child; one carried her head high, the other bowed hers upon her breast, the better to hide her tears; one was blooming and brilliant, the other pale and a mourner. The struggle was at an end. Lady Mary triumphed. It was cruel how they let Harry play before Eva Meredith's eyes. Careless of her anguish, they brought him to repeat his lessons in his uncle's presence; they vaunted his progress. The ambitious mother calculated everything to consolidate her success; and, whilst abounding in honeyed words and feigned consolation, she tortured Eva Meredith's heart each moment in the day. Lord James, smitten in his dearest hopes, had resumed the cold impassibility which I now saw formed the foundation of his character. Strictly courteous to his daughter-in-law, he had no word of affection for her: only as the mother of his grandson could the daughter of the American planter find a place in his heart. And he considered the child as no longer in existence. Lord James Kysington was more gloomy and taciturn than ever, regretting, perhaps, to have yielded to my importunities, and to have ruffled his old age by a painful and profitless emotion.

"A year elapsed; then a sad day came, when Lord James sent for Eva Meredith, and signed to her to be seated beside his arm-chair.

"'Listen to me, madam,' he said, 'listen with courage. I will act frankly with you, and conceal nothing. I am old and ill, and must arrange my affairs. The task is painful both for you and for me. I will not refer to my anger at my son's marriage; your misfortune disarmed me--I called you to my side, and I desired to behold and to love in your son William, the heir of my fortune, the pivot of my dreams of future ambition. Alas! madam, fate was cruel to us! My son's widow and orphan shall have all that can insure them an honourable existence; but, sole master of a fortune due to my own exertions, I adopt my nephew, and look upon him henceforward as my sole heir. I am about to return to London, whither my affairs call me. Come with me, madam--my house is yours--I shall be happy to see you there.'
"Eva (she afterwards told me so) felt, for the first time, her despondency replaced by courage. She had the strength that is given by a noble pride: she raised her head, and her brow, less haughty than that of Lady Mary, wore all the dignity of misfortune.

"'Go, my lord,' she answered, 'go; I shall not accompany you. I will not witness the usurpation of my son's rights! You are in haste to condemn, my lord. Who can foresee the future! You are in haste to despair of the mercy of God!'

"'The future,' replied Lord James, 'at my age, is bounded by the passing day. What I would be certain to do I must do at once and without delay.'

"'Act as you think proper,' replied Eva. 'I return to the dwelling where I was happy with my husband. I return thither with your grandson, William Kysington; of that name, his sole inheritance, you cannot deprive him; and though the world should know it but by reading it on his tomb, your name, my lord, is the name of my son!'

"A week later, Eva Meredith descended the stairs of the hotel, holding her son by the hand, as she had done when she had entered this fatal house. Lady Mary was a little behind her, a few steps higher up: the numerous servants, sad and silent, beheld with regret the departure of the gentle creature thus driven from the paternal roof. When she quitted this abode, Eva quitted the only beings she knew upon the earth, the only persons whose pity she had a right to claim--the world was before her, an immense wilderness. It was Hagar going forth into the desert."

"This is horrible, doctor!" cried Dr Barnaby's audience. "Is it possible there are persons so utterly unhappy? What! you witnessed all this yourself?"

"I have not yet told you all," replied the village doctor; "let me get to the end.

"Shortly after Eva Meredith's departure, Lord James went to London. Once more my own master, I gave up all idea of further study; I had enough learning for my village, and in haste I returned thither. Once more I sat opposite to Eva in the little white house, as I had done two years before. But how greatly had intervening events increased her misfortune! We no longer dared talk of the future, that unknown moment of which we all have so great need, and without which our present joys appear too feeble, and our misfortunes too great.

"Never did I witness grief nobler in its simplicity, calmer in its intensity, than that of Eva Meredith. She forgot not to pray to the God who chastened her. For her, God was the being in whose hands are the springs of hope, when earthly hopes are extinct. Her look of faith remained fixed upon her child's brow, as if awaiting the arrival of the soul her prayers invoked. I cannot describe the courageous patience of that mother speaking to her son, who listened without understanding. I cannot tell you all the treasures of love, of thought, of ingenious narrative she displayed before that torpid intelligence, which repeated, like an echo, the last of her gentle words. She explained to him heaven, God, the angels; she endeavoured to make him pray, and joined his hands, but she could not make him raise his eyes to
heaven. In all possible shapes she tried to give him the first lessons of childhood; she read to him, spoke to him, placed pictures before his eyes--had recourse to music as a substitute for words. One day making a terrible effort, she told William the story of his father's death; she hoped, expected a tear. The child fell asleep whilst yet she spoke: tears were shed, but they fell from the eyes of Eva Meredith.

"Thus did she exhaust herself by vain efforts, by a persevering struggle. That she might not cease to hope, she continued to toil; but to William's eyes pictures were merely colours; to his ears words were but noise. The child, however, grew in stature and in beauty. One who had seen him but for an instant would have taken the immobility of his countenance for placidity. But that prolonged and continued calm, that absence of all grief, of all tears, had a strange and sad effect upon us. Suffering must indeed be inherent in our nature, since William's eternal smile made every one say, 'The poor idiot!' Mothers know not the happiness concealed in the tears of their child. A tear is a regret, a desire, a fear; it is life, in short, which begins to be understood. Alas! William was content with everything. All day long he seemed to sleep with his eyes open; anger, weariness, impatience, were alike unknown to him. He had but one instinct: he knew his mother--he even loved her. He took pleasure in resting on her knees, on her shoulder; he kissed her. When I kept him long away from her, he manifested a sort of anxiety. I took him back to his mother; he showed no joy, but he was again tranquil. This tenderness, this faint glimmering of William's heart, was Eva's life. It gave her strength to strive, to hope, to wait. If her words were not understood, at least her kisses were! How often she took her son's head in her hands and kissed his forehead, as long and fervently as if she hoped her love would warm and vivify his frozen soul! How often did she dream a miracle whilst clasping her son in her arms, and pressing his still heart to her burning bosom! Often she lingered at night in the village church. (Eva Meredith was of a Roman Catholic family.) Kneeling upon the cold stone before the Virgin's altar, she invoked the marble statue of Mary, holding her child in her arms, 'O virgin!' she said, 'my boy is inanimate as that image of thy Son! Ask of God a soul for my child!'

"She was charitable to all the poor children of the village, giving them bread and clothes, and saying to them, 'Pray for him.' She consoled afflicted mothers, in the secret hope that consolation would come at last to her. She dried the tears of others, to enjoy the belief that one day she also should cease to weep. In all the country round, she was loved, blessed, venerated. She knew it, and she offered up to Heaven, not with pride but with hope, the blessings of the unfortunate in exchange for the recovery of her son. She loved to watch William's sleep; then he was handsome and like other children. For an instant, for a second perhaps, she forgot; and whilst contemplating those regular features, those golden locks, those long lashes which threw their shadow on his rose-tinted cheek, she felt a mother's joy, almost a mother's pride. God has moments of mercy even for those He has condemned to suffer.

"Thus passed the first years of William's childhood. He attained the age of eight years. Then a sad change, which could not escape my attentive observation, occurred in Eva Meredith. Either that her son's growth made his want of intelligence more striking, or that she was like a workman who has laboured all day, and sinks at eve beneath the load of toil, Eva ceased to hope; her soul seemed to abandon the task undertaken, and to recoil with weariness upon itself, asking only resignation. She laid aside the books, the engravings, the music, all the means, in short, that she had called to her aid; she grew silent and desponding; only, if that were possible, she was more affectionate than ever to her son.
As she lost hope in his cure, she felt the more strongly that her child had but her in the world; and she asked a miracle of her heart--an increase of the love she bore him. She became her son's servant--his slave; her whole thoughts were concentrated in his wellbeing. If she felt cold, she sought a warmer covering for William; was she hungry, it was for William she gathered the fruits of her garden; did she suffer from fatigue, for him she selected the easiest chair and the softest cushions; she attended to her own sensations only to guess those of her son. She still displayed activity, though she no longer harboured hope.

"When William was eleven years old, the last phase of Eva Meredith's existence began. Remarkably tall and strong for his age, he ceased to need that hourly care required by early childhood: he was no longer the infant sleeping on his mother's knees; he walked alone in the garden; he rode on horseback with me, and accompanied me in my distant visits; in short, the bird, although wingless, left the nest. His misfortune was in no way shocking or painful to behold. He was of exceeding beauty, silent, unnaturally calm--his eyes expressing nothing but repose: he was not awkward, or disagreeable, or importunate: it was a mind sleeping beside yours, asking no question, making no reply. The incessant maternal care which had served to occupy Mrs Meredith, and to divert her mind from dwelling on her sorrows, became unnecessary, and she resumed her seat at the window, whence she beheld the village and the church-steeple--at that same window where she had so long wept her husband. Hope and occupation successively failed her, and nothing was left her but to wait and watch, by day and by night, like the lamp that ever burns beneath cathedral vaults.

"But her forces were exhausted. In the midst of this grief which had returned to its starting-point, to silence and immobility, after having in vain essayed exertion, courage, hope, Eva Meredith fell into a decline. In spite of all the resources of my art, I beheld her grow weak and thin. How apply a remedy, when the sickness is of the soul?"'

"The poor foreigner! she needed her native sun and a little happiness to warm her; but the ray of sun and the ray of joy were alike wanting. It was long before she perceived her danger, because she thought not of herself; but when at last she was unable to leave her arm-chair, she was compelled to understand. I will not describe to you all her anguish at the thought of leaving William without a guide, without friend or protector--of leaving him alone in the midst of strangers, he who needed to be cherished and led by the hand like a child. Oh, how she struggled for life! with what avidity she swallowed the potions I prepared! how many times she tried to believe in a cure, whilst all the time the disease progressed! Then she kept William more at home,--she could no longer bear to lose sight of him.

"Remain with me,' she said; and William, always content near his mother, seated himself at her feet. She looked at him long, until a flood of tears prevented her distinguishing his gentle countenance; then she drew him still nearer to her, and pressed him to her heart. 'Oh!' she exclaimed, in a kind of delirium, 'if my soul, on leaving my body, might become the soul of my child, how happy should I be to die!' No sufferings could make her wholly despair of divine mercy, and when all human possibility disappeared, this loving heart had gentle dreams out of which it reconstructed hopes. But how sad it was, alas! to see the poor mother slowly perishing before the eyes of her son, of a son who understood not death, and who smiled when she embraced him.
"'He will not regret me,' she said: 'he will not weep: he will not remember.' And she remained motionless, in mute contemplation of her child. Her hand then sometimes sought mine: 'You love him, dear doctor?' she murmured.

"'I will never quit him,' replied I, 'so long as he has no better friends than myself.' God in heaven, and the poor village doctor upon earth, were the two guardians to whom she confided her son.

"Faith is a great thing! This woman, widowed, disinherited, dying, an idiot child at her side, was yet saved from that utter despair which brings blasphemy to the lips of death. An invisible friend was near her, on whom she seemed to rest, listening sometimes to holy words, which she alone could hear.

"One morning she sent for me early. She had been unable to get up. With her wan, transparent hand she showed me a sheet of paper on which a few lines were written.

"'Doctor,' she said, in her gentlest tones, 'I have not strength to continue; finish this letter!'

"I read as follows:--

"'My Lord,--I write to you for the last time. Whilst health is restored to your old age, I suffer and am about to die. I leave your grandson, William Kysington, without a protector. My Lord, this last letter is to recall him to your memory; I ask for him a place in your heart rather than a share of your fortune. Of all the things of this world, he has understood but one--his mother's love; and now she must leave him for ever! Love him, my Lord,--love is the only sentiment he can comprehend.'

"She could write no more. I added:--

"'Mrs William Kysington has but few days to live. What are Lord James Kysington's orders with respect to the child who bears his name?'

"This letter was sent to London, and we waited. Eva kept her bed. William, seated near her, held her hand in his: his mother smiled sadly upon him, whilst I, at the other side of the bed, prepared potions to assuage her pains. Again she began to talk to her son, as if no longer despairing that, after her death, some of her words might recur to his memory. She gave the child all the advice, all the instructions she would have given to an intelligent being. Then she turned to me--'Who knows, doctor,' she said, 'one day, perhaps, he will find my words at the bottom of his heart!'

"Three more weeks elapsed. Death approached, and submissive as was the Christian soul of Eva, she yet felt the anguish of separation and the solemn awe of the future. The village priest came to see her, and when he left her I met him and took his hand.

"'You will pray for her,' I said.

"'I have entreated her to pray for me!' was his reply.
"It was Eva Meredith's last day. The sun had set: the window, near which she so long had sat, was open: she could see from her bed the landscape she had loved. She held her son in her arms and kissed his face and hair, weeping sadly. 'Poor child! what will become of you? Oh!' she said, with tender earnestness, 'listen to me, William:--I am dying! Your father is dead also; you are alone; you must pray to the Lord. I bequeath you to Him who watches over the sparrow upon the house-top; He will shield the orphan. Dear child, look at me! listen to me! Try to understand that I die, that one day you may remember me!' And the poor mother, unable to speak longer, still found strength to embrace her child.

"At that moment an unaccustomed noise reached my ears. The wheels of a carriage grated upon the gravel of the garden drive. I ran to the door. Lord James Kysington and Lady Mary entered the house.

"'I got your letter,' said Lord James. 'I was setting out for Italy, and it was not much off my road to come myself and settle the future destiny of William Meredith: so here I am. Mrs William----?'

"'Mrs William Kysington still lives, my lord,' I replied.

"It was with a painful sensation that I saw this calm, cold, austere man approach Eva's chamber, followed by the haughty woman who came to witness what for her was a happy event--the death of her former rival! They entered the modest little room, so different from the sumptuous apartments of their Montpellier hotel. They drew near the bed, beneath whose white curtains Eva, pale but still beautiful, held her son upon her heart. They stood, one on the right, the other on the left of that couch of suffering, without finding a word of affection to console the poor woman who looked up at them. They barely gave utterance to a few formal and unmeaning phrases. Averting their eyes from the painful spectacle of death, and persuading themselves that Eva Meredith neither saw nor heard, they passively awaited her spirit's departure--their countenances not even feigning an expression of condolence or regret. Eva fixed her dying gaze upon them, and sudden terror seized the heart which had almost ceased to throb. She comprehended, for the first time, the secret sentiments of Lady Mary, the profound indifference and egotism of Lord James; she understood at last that they were enemies rather than protectors of her son. Despair and terror portrayed themselves on her pallid face. She made no attempt to soften those soulless beings. By a convulsive movement she drew William still closer to her heart, and, collecting her last strength--

"'My child, my poor child!' she cried, 'you have no support upon earth; but God above is good. My God! succour my child!'

"With this cry of love, with this supreme prayer, she breathed out her life: her arms opened, her lips were motionless on William's cheek. Since she no longer embraced her son, there could be no doubt she was dead--dead before the eyes of those who to the very last had refused to comfort her affliction--dead without giving Lady Mary the uneasiness of hearing her plead the cause of her son--dead, leaving her a complete and decided victory.

"There was a moment of solemn silence: none moved or spoke. Death makes an impression upon the haughtiest. Lady Mary and Lord James Kysington kneeled beside their victim's bed. In a few minutes
Lord James arose. 'Take the child from his mother's room,' he said, 'and come with me, doctor; I will explain to you my intentions respecting him.'

"For two hours William had been resting on the shoulder of Eva Meredith, his heart against her heart, his lips pressed to hers, receiving her kisses and her tears. I approached him, and, without expending useless words, I endeavoured to raise and lead him from the room; but he resisted, and his arms clasped his mother more closely. This resistance, the first the poor child had ever offered to living creature, touched my very soul. On my renewing the attempt, however, William yielded; he made a movement and turned towards me, and I saw his beautiful countenance suffused with tears. Until that day, William had never wept. I was greatly startled and moved, and I let the child throw himself again upon his mother's corpse.

"'Take him away,' said Lord James.

"'My lord,' I exclaimed, 'he weeps! Ah, check not his tears!'

"I bent over the child, and heard him sob.

"'William! dear William!' I cried, anxiously taking his hand, 'why do you weep, William?'

"For the second time he turned his head towards me; then, with a gentle look, full of sorrow, 'My mother is dead,' he replied.

"I have not words to tell you what I felt. William's eyes were now intelligent: his tears were sad and significant; and his voice was broken as when the heart suffers. I uttered a cry; I almost knelt down beside Eva's bed.

"'Ah! you were right, Eva!' I exclaimed, 'not to despair of the mercy of God!'

"Lord James himself had started. Lady Mary was as pale as Eva.

"'Mother! mother!' cried William, in tones that filled my heart with joy; and then, repeating the words of Eva Meredith--those words which she had so truly said he would find at the bottom of his heart--the child exclaimed aloud,

"'I am dying, my son. Your father is dead; you are alone upon the earth; you must pray to the Lord!'

"I pressed gently with my hand upon William's shoulder; he obeyed the impulse, knelt down, joined his trembling hands--this time it was of his own accord--and, raising to heaven a look full of life and feeling: 'My God! have pity on me!' he murmured.

"I took Eva's cold hand. 'Oh mother! mother of many sorrows!' I exclaimed, 'can you hear your child? do you behold him from above? Be happy! your son is saved!'"
"Dead at Lady Mary's feet, Eva made her rival tremble; for it was not I who led William from the room, it was Lord James Kysington who carried out his grandson in his arms.

"I have little to add, ladies. William recovered his reason and departed with Lord James. Reinstated in his rights, he was subsequently his grandfather's sole heir. Science has recorded a few rare instances of intelligence revived by a violent moral shock. Thus does the fact I have related find a natural explanation. But the simple women of the village, who had attended Eva Meredith during her illness, and had heard her fervent prayers, were convinced that, even as she had asked of Heaven, the soul of the mother had passed into the body of the child.

"She was so good,' said they, 'that God could refuse her nothing.' This artless belief took firm root in the country. No one mourned Mrs Meredith as dead.

"She still lives,' said the people of the hamlet: 'speak to her son, and she will answer you.'

"And when Lord William Kysington, in possession of his grandfather's property, sent each year abundant alms to the village that had witnessed his birth and his mother's death, the poor folks exclaimed--'There is Mrs Meredith's kind soul thinking of us still! Ah, when she goes to heaven, it will be great pity for poor people!'

"We do not strew flowers upon her tomb, but upon the steps of the altar of the Virgin, where she so often prayed to Mary to send a soul to her son. When bearing thither their wreaths of wild blossoms, the villagers say to each other--'When she prayed so fervently, the good Virgin answered her softly: "I will give thy soul to thy child!"'

"The cure has suffered our peasants to retain this touching superstition; and I myself, when Lord William came to see me, when he fixed upon me his eyes, so like his mother's--when his voice, which had a well-known accent, said, as Mrs Meredith was wont to say, 'Dear Doctor, I thank you!' Then--smile, ladies, if you will--I wept, and I believed, like all the village, that Eva Meredith was before me.

"She, whose existence was but a long series of sorrows, has left behind her a sweet, consoling memory, which has nothing painful for those who loved her.

"In thinking of her we think of the mercy of God, and those who have hope in their hearts, hope with the greater confidence.

"But it is very late, ladies--your carriages are at the door. Pardon this long story: at my age it is difficult to be concise in speaking of the events of one's youth. Forgive the old man for having made you smile when he arrived, and weep before he departed."

These last words were spoken in the kindest and most paternal tone, whilst a half-smile glided across Dr Barnaby's lips. All his auditors now crowded round him, eager to express their thanks. But Dr
Barnaby got up, made straight for his riding-coat of brown taffety, which hung across a chair back, and, whilst one of the young men helped him to put it on--"Farewell, gentlemen; farewell, ladies," said the village doctor. "My chaise is ready; it is dark, the road is bad; good-night: I must be gone."

When Dr Barnaby was installed in his cabriolet of green wicker-work, and the little grey cob, tickled by the whip, was about to set off, Madame de Moncar stepped quickly forward, and leaning towards the doctor, whilst she placed one foot on the step of his vehicle, she said, in a low voice--

"Doctor, I make you a present of the white cottage, and I will have it fitted up as it was when you loved Eva Meredith!"

Then she ran back into the house. The carriages and the green chaise departed in different directions.

A SINGULAR LETTER FROM SOUTHERN AFRICA

COMMUNICATED BY MR HOGG, THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

[MAGA. NOVEMBER 1829.]

My dear friend,--In my last I related to you all the circumstances of our settlement here, and the prospect that we had of a peaceful and pleasant habitation. In truth, it is a fine country, and inhabited by a fine race of people, for the Kousies, as far as I have seen of them, are a simple and ingenuous race, and Captain Johnstone having insured the friendship and protection of their chief, we lived in the most perfect harmony with them, trafficking with them for oxen, for which we gave them iron and copper in exchange, the former being held in high estimation by them. But alas! sir, such a fate has befallen to me since I wrote you last, as I am sure never fell to the lot of a human being. And I am now going to relate to you one of those stories which, were it to occur in a romance, would be reckoned quite out of nature, and beyond all bounds of probability, so true is it that there are many things in heaven and earth that are not dreamed of in our philosophy.

You knew my Agnes from her childhood--you were at our wedding at Beattock, and cannot but remember what an amiable and lovely girl she then was. I thought so, and so did you--at least you said you never had as bonny a bride on your knee. But you will hardly believe that her beauty was then nothing in comparison with what it became afterwards; and when she was going about our new settlement with our little boy in her arms, I have often fancied that I never saw as lovely a human being.

Be that as it may, the chief Karoo came to me one day with his interpreter, whom he caused to make a long palaver about his power, and dominion, and virtues, and his great desire to do much good. The language of this fellow being a mixture of Kaffre, High Dutch, and English, was peculiarly ludicrous, and most of all so when he concluded with expressing his lord's desire to have my wife to be his own, and to give me in exchange for her four oxen, the best that I could choose from his herd!
As he made the proposal in presence of my wife, she was so much tickled with the absurdity of the proposed barter, and the manner in which it was expressed, that she laughed immoderately. Karoo, thinking she was delighted with it, eyed her with a look that surpasses all description, and then caused his interpreter make another palaver to her concerning all the good things she was to enjoy, one of which was, that she was to ride upon an ox whose horns were tipped with gold. I thanked the great Karoo for his kind intentions, but declared my incapability to part with my wife, for that we were one flesh and blood, and nothing could separate us but death. He could comprehend no such tie as this. All men sold their wives and daughters as they listed, I was told,—for that the women were the sole property of the men. He had bought many women from the Tambookies, that were virgins, and had never given above two cows for any of them; and because he desired to have my wife, he had offered me as much for her as would purchase four of the best wives in all the two countries, and that therefore I was bound to give her up to him. And when I told him finally that nothing on earth could induce me to part with her, he seemed offended, bit his thumb, knitted his brows, and studied long in silence, always casting glances at Agnes of great pathos and languishment, which were perfectly irresistible, and ultimately he struck his spear's head in the ground, and offered me ten cows and a bull for my wife, and a choice virgin to boot. When this proffer was likewise declined, he smiled in derision, telling me I was the son of foolishness, and that he foretold I should repent it. Three times he went over this, and then went away in high dudgeon. Will you, sir, believe, or will any person alive believe, that it was possible I could live to repent this?

My William was at this time about eleven months old, but was still at the breast, as I could never prevail on his lovely mother to wean him; and at the very time of which I am speaking, our little settlement was invaded one night by a tribe of those large baboons called ourang-outangs, pongs, or wild men of the woods, who did great mischief to our fruits, yams, and carrots. From that time we kept a great number of guns loaded, and set a watch; and at length the depredators were again discovered. We sallied out upon them in a body, not without alarm, for they are powerful and vindictive animals, and our guns were only loaded with common shot. They fled at the first sight of us, and that with such swiftness that we might as well have tried to catch deers, but we got one close fire at them, and doubtless wounded a number of them, as their course was traced with blood. We pursued them as far as the Keys river, which they swam, and we lost them.

Among all the depredators, there was none fell but one youngling, which I lifted in my arms, when it looked so pitifully, and cried so like a child, that my heart bled for it. A large monster, more than six feet high, perceiving that he had lost his cub, returned brandishing a huge club, and grinning at me. I wanted to restore the abominable brat, for I could not bear the thought of killing it, it was so like a human creature; but before I could do this, several shots had been fired by my companions at the hideous monster, which caused him once more to take to his heels; but turning oft as he fled, he made threatening gestures at me. A Kousi servant that we had, finished the cub, and I caused it to be buried.

The very morning after that but one, Agnes and her black maid were milking our few cows upon the green: I was in the garden, and William was toddling about pulling flowers, when, all at once, the women were alarmed by the sight of a tremendous ourang-outang issuing from our house, which they had just left. They seem to have been struck dumb and senseless with amazement, for not one of them
uttered a sound, until the monster, springing forward in one moment, snatched up the child and made off with him. Instead of coming to me, the women pursued the animal with the child, not knowing, I believe, what they were doing. The fearful shrieks which they uttered alarmed me, and I ran to the milking-green, thinking the cows had fallen on the women, as the cattle of that district are ticklish for pushing when any way hurt or irritated. Before I reached the green where the cows stood, the ourang-outang was fully half a mile gone, and only the poor feeble exhausted women running screaming after him. For a good while I could not conceive what was the matter, but having my spade in my hand I followed spontaneously in the same direction. Before I overtook the women, I heard the agonised cries of my dear boy, my darling William, in the paws of that horrible monster. There is no sensation of which the human heart is capable that can at all be compared with the horror which at that dreadful moment seized on mine. My sinews lost their tension, and my whole frame became lax and powerless. I believe I ran faster than usual, but then I fell every minute, and as I passed Agnes she fell into a fit. Kela-kal, the black girl, with an astonishing presence of mind, had gone off at a tangent, without orders, or without being once missed, to warn the rest of the settlers, which she did with all expedition. I pursued on, breathless, and altogether unnerved with agony; but, alas! I rather lost than gained ground.

I think if I had been fairly started, that through desperation I could have overtaken the monster, but the hopelessness of success rendered me feeble. The truth is, that he did not make great speed, not nearly the speed these animals are wont to make, for he was greatly encumbered with the child. You perhaps do not understand the nature of these animals--neither do I: but they have this peculiarity, that when they are walking leisurely or running down-hill, they walk upright like a human being; but when hard pressed on level ground, or up-hill, they use their long arms as fore-legs, and then run with inconceivable swiftness. When flying with their own young, the greater part of them will run nearly twice as fast as an ordinary man, for the cubs cling to them with both feet and hands, but as my poor William shrunk from the monster's touch, he was obliged to embrace him closely with one paw, and run on three, and still in that manner he outran me. O may never earthly parent be engaged in such a heartrending pursuit! Keeping still his distance before me, he reached the Keys river, and there the last gleam of hope closed on me, for I could not swim, while the ourang-outang, with much acuteness, threw the child across his shoulders, held him by the feet with one paw, and with the other three stemmed the river, though then in flood, with amazing rapidity. It was at this dreadful moment that my beloved babe got his eyes on me as I ran across the plain towards him, and I saw him holding up his little hands in the midst of the foaming flood, and crying out, "Pa! pa! pa!" which he seemed to utter with a sort of desperate joy at seeing me approach.

Alas! that sight was the last, for in two minutes thereafter the monster vanished, with my dear child, in the jungles and woods beyond the river, and then my course was stayed, for to have thrown myself in, would only have been committing suicide, and leaving a destitute widow in a foreign land. I had therefore no other resource but to throw myself down, and pour out my soul in lamentation and prayer to God. From this state of hapless misery I was quickly aroused by the sight of twelve of my countrymen coming full speed across the plain on my track. They were all armed and stripped for the pursuit, and four of them, some of whom you know--Adam Johnstone, Adam Haliday, Peter Carruthers, and Joseph Nicholson--being excellent swimmers, plunged at once into the river and swam across,
though not without both difficulty and danger, and without loss of time continued the pursuit.

The remainder of us, nine in number, were obliged to go half a day's journey up the river, to a place
called Shekah, where the Tambookies dragged us over on a hurdle; and we there procured a Kousi, who
had a hound, which he pretended could follow the track of an ourang-outang over the whole world.
Urged on by a sort of forlorn and desperate hope, we kept at a running pace the whole afternoon; and at
the fall of night came up with Peter Carruthers, who had lost the other three. A singular adventure had
befallen to himself. He and his companions had agreed to keep within call of each other; but as he
advanced, he conceived he heard the voice of a child crying behind him to the right, on which he turned
off in that direction, but heard no more of the wail. As he was searching, however, he perceived an
ourang-outang steal from a thicket, which, nevertheless, it seemed loth to leave. When he pursued it, it
fled slowly, as with intent to entice him in pursuit from the spot; but when he turned towards the
thicket, it immediately followed. Peter was armed with a pistol and rapier; but his pistol and powder
had been rendered useless by swimming the river, and he had nothing to depend on but his rapier. The
creature at first was afraid of the pistol, and kept aloof; but seeing no fire issue from it, it came nigher
and nigher, and seemed determined to have a scuffle with Carruthers for the possession of the thicket.
At length it shook its head, grinning with disdain, and motioned him to fling the pistol away as of no
use; it then went and brought two great clubs, of which it gave him the choice, to fight with it. There
was something so bold, and at the same time so generous, in this, that Peter took one as if apparently
accepting the challenge; but that moment he pulled out his gleaming rapier, and ran at the hideous
brute, which frightened it so much that it uttered two or three loud grunts like a hog, and scampered off;
but soon turning, it threw the club at Peter with such a certain aim that it had very nigh killed him.

He saw no more of the animal that night; but when we found Carruthers, he was still lingering about the
spot, persuaded that my child was there, and that, if in life, he would soon hear his cries. We watched
the thicket all night, and at the very darkest hour, judge of my trepidation when I heard the cries of a
child in the thicket, almost close by me, and well could distinguish that the cries proceeded from the
mouth of my own dear William—from that sweet and comely mouth which I had often kissed a hundred
times in a day. We all rushed spontaneously into the thicket, and all towards the same point; but,
strange to relate, we only ran against one another, and found nothing besides. I cried on my boy's name,
but all was again silent, and we heard no more. He only uttered three cries, and then we all heard
distinctly that his crying was stopped by something stuffed into his mouth. I still wonder how I retained
my reason, for certainly no parent had ever such a trial to undergo. Before day, we heard some
movement in the thicket, and though heard by us all at the same time, each of us took it for one of our
companions moving about; and it was not till long after the sun was up, that we at length discovered a
bed up among the thick branches of a tree, and not above twelve feet from the ground; but the
occupants had escaped, and no doubt remained but that they were now far beyond our reach. This was
the most grievous and heartbreaking miss of all; and I could not help giving vent to my grief in
excessive weeping, while all my companions were deeply affected with my overpowering sorrow.

We then tried the dog, and by him we learned the way the fliers had taken; but that was all, for as the
day grew warm, he lost all traces whatever. We searched over all the country for many days, but could
find no traces of my dear boy, either dead or alive; and at length were obliged to return home weary and
broken-hearted. To describe the state of my poor Agnes is impossible. It may be conceived, but can never be expressed. But I must haste on with my narrative, for I have yet a great deal to communicate.

About three months after this sad calamity, one evening, on returning home from my labour, my Agnes was missing, and neither her maid-servant, nor one of all the settlers, could give the least account of her. My suspicions fell instantly on the Kousi chief, Karoo, for I knew that he had been in our vicinity hunting, and remembered his threat. This was the most grievous stroke of all, and in order to do all for the preservation of my dear wife that lay in my power, I and three of my companions set out and travelled night and day till we came to the chief's headquarters. I have not time to describe all the fooleries and difficulties we had to encounter; suffice it, that Karoo denied the deed, but still in such a manner that my suspicions were confirmed. I threatened him terribly with the vengeance of his friend Captain Johnstone, and the English army at the Cape, saying I would burn him and all his wives and his people with fire. He wept out of fear and vexation, and offered me the choice of his wives, or any two of them, showing me a great number of them, many of whom he recommended for their great beauty and fatness; and I believe he would have given me any number if I would have gone away satisfied. But the language of the interpreter being in a great measure unintelligible, we all deemed that he said repeatedly that Karoo would not give the lady up.

What was I now to do? We had not force in our own small settlement to compel Karoo to restore her; and I was therefore obliged to buy a trained ox, on which I rode all the way to the next British settlement, for there are no horses in that country. There I found Captain Johnstone with three companies of the 72d, watching the inroads of the savage Boshesmen. He was greatly irritated at Karoo, and despatched Lieutenant M'Kenzie and fifty men along with me to chastise the aggressor. When the chief saw the Highlanders, he was terrified out of his wits; but nevertheless, not knowing what else to do, he prepared for resistance, after once more proffering me the choice of his wives. Just when we were on the eve of commencing a war, which must have been ruinous to our settlement, a black servant of Adam Johnstone's came to me, and said that I ought not to fight and kill his good chief, for that he had not the white woman. I was astonished, and asked the Kaffre what he meant, when he told me that he himself saw my wife carried across the river by a band of pongos (ourang-outangs), but he had always kept it a secret, for fear of giving me distress, as they were too far gone for pursuit when he beheld them. He said they had her bound, and were carrying her gently on their arms, but she was either dead or in a swoon, for she was not crying, and her long hair was hanging down.

I had kept up under every calamity till then, but these news fairly upset my reason. I fell a-blaspheming, and accused the Almighty of injustice for laying such fearful judgments on me. May He in mercy forgive me, for I knew not what I said; but had I not been deprived of reason I could not have outlived such a catastrophe as this; and whenever it recurs to my remembrance, it will make my blood run chill till the day of my death. A whole year passed over my head like one confused dream; another came, and during the greater part of it my mind was very unsettled; but at length I began to indulge in long fits of weeping, till by degrees I awakened to a full sense of all my misery, and often exclaimed that there was no sorrow like my sorrow. I lingered on about the settlement, not having power to leave the spot where I had once been so happy with those I loved, and all my companions joined in the cultivation of
my fields and garden, in hopes that I would become resigned to the will of the Lord and the judgments of His providence.

About the beginning of last year a strange piece of intelligence reached our settlement. It was said that two maids of Kamboo had been out on the mountains of Norroweldt gathering fruits, where they had seen a pongo taller than any Kousi, and that this pongo had a beautiful white boy with him, for whom he was gathering the choicest fruits, and the boy was gambolling and playing around him, and leaping on his shoulders.

This was a piece of intelligence so extraordinary, and so much out of the common course of events, that every one of the settlers agreed that it could not be a forgery, and that it behoved us immediately to look after it. We applied to Karoo for assistance, who had a great number of slaves from that country, much attached to him, who knew the language of the place whither we were going, and all the passes of the country. He complied readily with our request, giving us an able and intelligent guide, with as many of his people as we chose. We raised in all fifty Malays and Kousies; nine British soldiers, and every one of the settlers that could bear arms, went with us, so that we had in all nearly a hundred men, the blacks being armed with pikes, and all the rest with swords, guns, and pistols. We journeyed for a whole week, travelling much by night, and resting in the shade by day, and at last we came to the secluded district of which we were in search, and in which we found a temporary village, or camp, of one of these independent inland tribes. They were in great alarm at our approach, and were apparently preparing for a vigorous resistance; but on our guide going up to them, who was one of their own tribe, and explaining our views, they received us joyfully, and proffered their assistance.

From this people we got the heart-stirring intelligence, that a whole colony of pongos had taken possession of that country, and would soon be masters of it all; for that the Great Spirit had sent them a queen from the country beyond the sun, to teach them to speak, and work, and go to war; and that she had the entire power over them, and would not suffer them to hurt any person who did not offer offence to them; that they knew all she said to them, and answered her, and lived in houses and kindled fires like other people, and likewise fought rank and file. That they had taken one of the maidens of their own tribe to wait upon the queen's child; but because the girl wept, the queen caused them to set her at liberty.

I was now rent between hope and terror--hope that this was my own wife and child, and terror that they would be rent in pieces by the savage monsters rather than given up. Of this last, the Lockos (the name of this wandering tribe) assured us, we needed not to entertain any apprehensions, for that they would, every one of them, die rather than wrong a hair of their queen's head. But that it behoved us instantly to surround them; for if they once came to understand that we were in pursuit, they would make their escape, and then the whole world would not turn or detain them.

Accordingly, that very night, being joined by the Lockos, we surrounded the colony by an extensive circle, and continuing to close as we advanced. By the break of day we had them closely surrounded. The monsters flew to arms at the word of command, nothing daunted, forming a close circle round their camp and queen, the strongest of the males being placed outermost, and the females inmost, but all
armed alike, and all having the same demure and melancholy faces. The circle being so close that I
could not see inside, I went with the nine red-coats to the top of a cliff that in some degree overlooked
the encampment, in order that, if my Agnes really was there, she might understand who was near her.
Still I could not discover what was within, but I called her name aloud several times, and in about five
minutes after that, the whole circle of tremendous brutal warriors flung away their arms and retired
backward, leaving an open space for me to approach their queen.

In the most dreadful trepidation I entered between the hideous files, being well guarded by soldiers on
either hand, and followed by the rest of the settlers; and there I indeed beheld my wife, my beloved
Agnes, standing ready to receive me, with little William in her right hand, and a beautiful chubby
daughter in her left, about two years old, and the very image of her mother. Conceive, if you can, sir,
such a meeting! Were there ever a husband and wife met in such circumstances before? Never since the
creation of the world! The two children looked healthy and beautiful, with their fur aprons, but it struck
me at first that my beloved was much altered: it was only, however, caused by her internal commotion,
by feelings which overpowered her grateful heart, against which nature could not bear up, for on my
first embrace she fainted in my arms, which kept us all in suspension and confusion for a long space.
The children fled from us, crying for their mother, and took shelter with their friends the pongos, who
seemed in great amazement, and part of them began to withdraw as if to hide themselves.

As soon as Agnes was somewhat restored, I proposed that we should withdraw from the camp of her
savage colony; but she refused, and told me that she behoved to part with her protectors on good terms,
and that she must depart without any appearance of compulsion, which they might resent; and we
actually rested ourselves during the heat of the day in the shades erected by those savage inhabitants of
the forest. My wife went to her hoard of provisions, and distributed to every one of the pongos his share
of fruit, succulent herbs, and roots, which they ate with great composure. It was a curious scene,
something like what I had seen in a menagerie; and there was my little William, serving out food to the
young ourang-outangs, cuffing them and ordering them, in the broad Annandale dialect, to do this, that,
and the other thing; and they were not only obedient, but seemed flattered by his notice and correction.
We were then presented with delicious fruits, but I had no heart to partake, being impatient to have my
family away from the midst of this brutal society; for as long as we were there, I could not conceive
them safe or fairly in my own power.

Agnes then stood up and made a speech to her subjects, accompanying her expressions with violent
motions and contortions to make them understand her meaning. They understood it perfectly; for when
they heard that she and her children were to leave them, they set up such a jabbering of lamentation as
British ears never heard. Many of them came cowering and fawning before her, and she laid her hand
on their heads; many, too, of the young ones came running, and lifting the children's hands, they put
them on their own heads. We then formed a close circle round Agnes and the children, to the exclusion
of the pongos that still followed behind, howling and lamenting; and that night we lodged in the camp
of the Lockos, placing a triple guard round my family, of which there stood great need. We durst not
travel by night, but we contrived two covered hurdles, in which we carried Agnes and the children, and
for three days a considerable body of the tallest and strongest of the ourang-outangs attended our steps,
and some of them came to us fearlessly every day, as she said, to see if she was well, and if we were not
hurting her.

We reached our own settlement one day sooner than we took in marching eastward; but then I durst not remain for a night, but getting into a vessel, I sailed straight for the Cape, having first made over all my goods and chattels to my countrymen, who are to send me down value here in corn and fruit; and here I am, living with my Agnes and our two children, at a little wigwam about five miles from Cape Town.

My Agnes's part of the story is the most extraordinary of all. But here I must needs be concise, giving only a short and general outline of her adventures; for among dumb animals, whose signals and grimaces were so liable to misinterpretation, much must have been left to her own conjecture. The creatures' motives for stealing and detaining her appeared to have been as follows:--

These animals remain always in distinct tribes, and are perfectly subordinate to a chief or ruler, and his secondary chiefs. For their expedition to rob our gardens, they had brought their sovereign's sole heir along with them, as they never leave any of the royal family behind them, for fear of a surprisal. It was this royal cub which we killed, and the queen his mother having been distractedly inconsolable for the loss of her darling, the old monarch had set out by night to try if possible to recover it; and on not finding it, he seized on my boy in its place, carried him home in safety to his queen, and gave her him to nurse! She did so. Yes, she positively did nurse him at her breast for three months, and never child throve better than he did. By that time he was beginning to walk, and aim at speech, by imitating every voice he heard, whether of beast or bird; and it had struck the monsters as a great loss that they had no means of teaching their young sovereign to speak, at which art he seemed so apt. This led to the scheme of stealing his own mother to be his instructor, which they effected in the most masterly style, binding and gagging her in her own house, and carrying her from a populous hamlet in the fair forenoon, without having been discovered. Their expertness, and the rapidity of their motions, Agnes described as inconceivable by those who had never witnessed them. They showed every sort of tenderness and kindness by the way, proffering her plenty of fruit and water; but she gave herself totally up to despair, till, behold! she was introduced to her own little William, plump, thriving, and as merry as a cricket, gambolling away among his brutal compeers, for many of whom he had conceived a great affection;--but then they far outgrew him, while others as fast overtook him in size.

Agnes immediately took her boy under her tuition, and was soon given to understand that her will was to be the sole law of the community; and all the while that they detained her, they never refused her in aught save to take her home again. Our little daughter she had named Beatrice, after her maternal grandmother. She was born six months and six days after Agnes's abstraction. She spoke highly of the pongs, of their docility, generosity, warmth of affection to their mates and young ones, and of their irresistible strength. She conceived that, however, to have been a tribe greatly superior to all others of the race, for she never could regard them in any other light than as dumb human creatures. I confess that I had the same sort of feeling while in their settlement, for many of the young females in particular were much comelier than negro savages whom I have often seen, and they laughed, smiled, and cried very much like human creatures. At my wife's injunctions, or from her example, they all wore aprons: and the females had let the hair of their heads grow long. It was glossy black, and neither curled nor woolly, and on the whole, I cannot help having a lingering affection for the creatures. They would make
the most docile, powerful, and affectionate of all slaves; but they come very soon to their growth, and are but shortlived, in that way approximating to the rest of the brute creation. They live entirely on fruits, roots, and vegetables, and taste no animal food whatever.

I asked Agnes much of the civility of their manner to her, and she always describes it as respectful and uniform. For a while she never thought herself quite safe when near the queen, but the dislike of the latter to her arose entirely out of her boundless affection for the boy. No mother could possibly be fonder of her own offspring than this affectionate creature was of William, and she was jealous of his mother for taking him from her, and causing him instantly to be weaned. But then the chief never once left the two queens by themselves; they had always a guard day and night.

I have no objection to the publication of these adventures in Britain, though I know they will not obtain credit; but I should not like that the incidents reached the "Sidney Gazette," as I intend emigrating to that country as soon as I receive value for the stock I left at the settlement, for I have a feeling that my family is scarcely safe as long as I am on any part of the coast of Africa. And for the sake of my rising family, I have an aversion at its being known that they were bred among creatures that must still be conceived to be of the brute creation. Do not write till you hear from me again; and believe me ever, your old affectionate friend,

WM. MITCHELL.

VANDER CREEK, NEAR CAPE TOWN, Oct. 1, 1826.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE:

In the story "The Village Doctor," the use of double and single quotes was partially omitted, and inconsistent with the balance of the book; this has been corrected. Other than this, only minor changes have been made to correct typesetters' errors; otherwise, every effort has been made to remain true to the authors' words and intent.

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