"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER XI. ROYDON.

NEXT day, about noon, the young lady, with an embrace, and a little shower of kisses, took a loving farewell of her cousin, stepped into a fly, with her boxes on the roof, and, with a sad heart, began her journey homeward.

It was a good way, some twenty miles and upwards. She had borrowed Miss Max's novel, grew tired of it a dozen times, and resumed it as often, and as she neared home, with the restlessness that accompanies the conclusion of a journey, she threw her book on the opposite cushion, and looked out of the window, greeting, as it were, the familiar objects that in succession presented themselves to view.

Now they are passing the windmill on the little hillock overlooking the road. The day is sultry. There is not a breath to stir its sails, and the great arms stand bare and motionless. Mill and hillock glide backward, and are gone.

The road descends a little. They are between files of old elms. It grows broader; there stands the old village tree, with a rude wooden bench encircling its trunk. The time-honoured tree sails back, and is lost, and quaint old diamond-latticed houses float into view, and pass. Here and there a familiar face is seen at door or window, or peeping from the shade over the hatch; and the girl, from the fly-window, nods and smiles. They are now midway in the quiet little street, but they have not yet reached the home that she loves not.

At the other side are the stained walls of an antique church; the gilded vane, the grey tombstones, spread over the thick emerald grass, and the yew-tree, go slanting off, hurry-scurry, as the fly-wheels whirl, by a wide circuit, through the piers of a great iron gate, which has just given egress to an old-fashioned family coach.

It is going the other way. It does not pass her. It and its liveried footmen are fast getting into perspective under the boughs of the trees that line the road. Through the window of the fly, as it turns, she has a momentary peep.

"Brown and gold," she says, as listlessly she leans back again in her humble conveyance. "The Tinterns. And so here I am, a black sheep, a scamp, and a reprobate, come home again, as curses do!"

There was not much remorse, but a good deal of bitterness in her tone, and the girl yawned, with her finger-tips to her lips, and looked for a moment a little peevish.

There is what is termed technically an "approach" to the house up to which she is driving, a serpentine road, two miles long at least, through a wooded demesne. But, wisely, the old owner of Roydon, when consulting his new lights, and laying out, according to picturesque principles, the modern approach, would not allow them to obliterate or alter the old avenue of the mansion—broad and straight, something more than a quarter of a mile long, with a double line of trees at each side, wide enough apart to admit the entire front of the building.

It is up this broad, straight avenue she is driving now.

A lazy man, with a mind at ease, entering here for the first time, looking down the solemn lines of enormous boughs to the old-world glories that close the perspective, escaping from the vulgar world

of dust and rattle into shorn grass and clear, silent air, and the luxurious and melancholy grandeur of all that surrounds him, might fancy himself in the "delicious land" once visited by the enchanted Sir Jeofry.

In the distance rises a grand Elizabethan structure — broad, florid, built of white stone, yellowed and many-tinted by time. A vague effect fills the eye of pinnacles and bell-mouthed chimneys, and curved and corniced gables, balustrades, a front variously indented and projecting; multitudes of stone-shafted windows, deep-curved scrolls, and heraldic shields and supporters; a broad flight of steps, and then another balustrade running at both sides the whole length of the base. All this rises before her, with its peculiar combination of richness, lightness, and solidity, basking drowsily in the summer sun.

As you approach, you discern a wide court-yard in front, with a second line of balustrade nearer to you.

On the summit of this, here and there, are peacocks sunning themselves, some white, others plumed in their proper gold and purple. They nod their crested heads as they prune their plumage, and hang their long tails to the grass, disturbing the slumbrous air, now and then, with a discordant scream.

As you draw nearer still, before you enter the court, two oblong ponds reveal their spacious waters, at the right and the left; you may hear the shower of the fountains playing in the middle, snowy coronals of water-lilies are floating near their banks, and swans are grandly gliding round and up and down.

Now the homely "fly" is in the court-yard. A great Russian dog lies sunning himself on the dazzling gravel, near the steps, and whacks the ground twice or thrice with his tail, in lazy recognition, as he sees the young lady look from the window of her homely vehicle.

"I suppose that is the way of the world, Bevis," she says; "you know whom to get up for."

Her attention is arrested by a carriage waiting a little way from the steps.

"That's the dean," comments the young lady as she sees that very neat equipage, at the window of which a tall footman, in light blue and gold livery, with flowered hair, is standing. He has just descended the broad flight of steps under the great shield which overhangs the door, and which displays in high relief all the heraldic insignia of that branch of the Vernons. He is delivering a message from Lady Vernon — Barbara Vernon—I give you the christian name of this famous widow at once, as it is mentioned often in the sequel—to an old lady sitting in the carriage.

Old Miss Wyvel, the dean's sister, as usual, with her feet on a pan of hot water, sits in the carriage reading her novel, and nursing her rheumatism, while her brother, the dean, makes his visit, with an apology from her for not coming in.

"We'll not mind Miss Wyvel this time. She'll be all the happier that I don't disturb her, and so shall I."

Another tall footman, seeing who is in the fly, descends the broad steps quickly, and opens the door.

"The Dean of Chartry is here?" inquires the young lady. "How long has he been here?"

"About ten minutes, please, miss."

"Any other visitor?"

"No one, miss, at present, please."

"Where is her ladyship?"

"In the library, please, miss."

"Will you tell somebody, please, to tell my maid that I want her in my room?" said the young lady.

And she ran up the steps lightly, and entered the great hall. It runs back into space, almost into darkness, with oak panelled walls and tall pictures. She turned to the right, where the broad oak staircase ascends.

Up she runs. There are more portraits in this house, one must suppose, than the owners well know what to do with, for you can hardly turn a corner without meeting a gentleman with rosettes in his shoes, a ruff round his neck, and a rapier by his side, or a lady in the toilet of Queen Elizabeth. All ages, indeed, of English costume, from the court of Harry the Eighth down to George the Second, are represented here; and, I suspect, there is now not a soul on earth who could tell you the names of all these magnificos and high dames, who are fain to lurk behind corners, or stand in their frames, with their backs against the walls of galleries, passed, back and forward, by gabbling moderns, who don't care twopence about them or their finery.

Off one of these galleries the young lady enters her own room—stately, comfortable, luxurious—looks around with a good-natured recognition, and has hardly begun to take off her dusty things, and prepare to make her toilet, when her maid passes in through the dressing-room door, smiling.

CHAPTER XII. BARBARA VERNON.

By no means old is this maid. Some six-and-thirty years, perhaps. She has carried Maud in her arms when she was a little thing, and dressed her; sat by her bed and told her fairy-tales in the nursery.

"Welcome home, Miss Maud," smiles Jones.

"And how have you been?" says the young lady, taking her by the hand, and kissing her affectionately on one cheek and the other. "As for me, I've been flourishing. I almost think, old Jones, if I had only had you with me, I should never have come back again."

"La, miss, how you talk!"

"I've been leading a wild, free life. Did you ever see so much dust, Jones, on any human being?"

"Indeed, you are in a pickle, miss. Charles said you came in a fly with one horse. I wonder her ladyship did not send a carriage to Wybourne to meet you."

"Mamma has other things and people to think about," said the young lady, a little bitterly. "But I dare say if I had asked I should have had it; though, indeed, I shouldn't have liked it."

"Your hand's all sunburnt, miss."

"I've been sketching; and I never could sketch with a glove on."

"Well, dear me, it *was* a fancy going in these queer things! Why, I would not be seen in such things myself, miss, much less you. You'd best bundle off that dress, miss, as quick as you can. La! it is thick with dust. Phiew!"

"Help me, Jones, help me." And as she continued her toilet she asked: "Is mamma yet talking of making her usual journey?"

"Not a word, miss, of any one stirring yet. Norris would know. She has not heard nothing."

"The Tinterns' carriage was here to-day—I passed it at the gate. Do you know who called?"

"Mr. Tintern and Mrs. They was here nigh half an hour. Leave them alone for 'aving their eyes about 'em, miss. There ain't a tack druv in the house, or a slate loose, but it's known down at the Grange before it's noticed here."

"I think, Jones, they reckon upon—don't pull my hair." By this time she was sitting in her dressing-gown before the glass, with her dark, golden-brown hair hanging over her shoulders in such profusion, that it seemed incredible how such masses could find growing room in one little head. Jones was brushing out its folds.

"I'm not pulling it, indeed, miss," she protested.

"Yes, you were, Jones. Don't ever contradict me. Has either of my special horrors—Mr. Smelt—he's the clergyman or dissenter, something in black, the sleek fat man that comes so often—has he been here since?"

"He may 'ave, miss; but——"

"But you don't know. Well, the other—Doctor Malkin?"

"Oh, dear yes, miss. He was here, please, on Friday last."

"You're sure?"

"Yes, miss, please. Her ladyship sent for me to the shield room. She only asked whether I could remember for certain, miss, what day you were to return 'ome to Wybourne with Miss Medwyn."

"Well?"

"Well, miss, she had it down in a book, and read it to me, and I said 'twas right. You said early—the seventeenth."

"And did she say anything more?"

"No, please, miss, nothing more. Only she said, 'That's all, you need not wait.'"

"And what about Doctor Malkin?"

"He was showed in, miss, please, just as I was going out. And I heard her order Edward not to let any visitor in; and that was all, please."

"Do you know the name of this place, parish, and county, Jones?" says the young lady, carelessly.

"Well, I ought to by this time, miss," laughs Jones.

"I don't think you do. The name of this place is Bœotia, and it is famous for its dulness, and Doctor Malkin is one of the six inhabitants who can think and talk a little. He is an agreeable man, and—put a pin there—an unpleasant-looking man. I like talking to him; but I think, on the whole, I should not be sorry if he were laid in the Red Sea, as poor nurse Barnwell used to say. What do you think of him?"

"That is a gentleman, Heaven forgive me, I can't abide, miss," answered Jones. "I hate his face. I always feel in low spirits after I see it."

"Well, anything more?" continues Miss Maud. "When are the people coming to hear grandpapa's will read?"

"To-morrow, I believe, miss. But, as yet, Mr. Eccles has not got no orders about it. He said so after dinner in the 'ousekeeper's room yesterday."

"And is there anything going to be—a tea and plum-cake for the school-children, or a meeting of missionaries, or anything of any kind?"

"Nothing, miss, please, as I 'ave heard of, but——"

"You'll knock down that china, Jones."

"What, miss?"

"My ring—my Dresden dancers."

"Oh! The little man and woman with one arm akimbo and the other up. I saw them all the time."

"Well, take great care. I'm sure I shall kill you if you break them. You were going to tell me there is nothing going to be, except something—what is it?"

"Oh! I know; yes, miss, the consecke-ration of the monument in the church. That will be to-morrow evening, miss."

"Oh! Really? Well, that *was* a whim! Give me those ear-rings. No, *not* those—the others; not those either. Don't you see the little ones. Thanks. Yes. I must run down and see mamma, I suppose, though I'm very sure she doesn't care if she did not see my face for a year, or—for ever."

"La, miss! you must not talk like that. Your mamma's a very religious lady—the most so, as every one knows, in the county—I might say in all England—and it's just her way; the same with every one, a little bit high and distant like; but it ain't fit, miss, you should say that."

"No, Jones, we can't agree, mamma and I. Give me that small enamel brooch—the little one with the lady's head set in gold. Thanks. She does not like me"—the young lady was standing before the glass, and I dare say was well pleased, for she looked splendidly handsome—"and the reason is just this, every one else flatters her. You and all the other sneaks. I never do, although I am sometimes a little afraid of her like the rest. I'm nervous, I don't know why; but it's not cowardice. I never flatter her."

"No, miss, it ain't that; it's only you don't try her. You won't go the right way about it."

"There's no use, Jones—you only vex me. I've often felt that I would give the world to throw my arms about her neck and kiss her; but somehow I can't; she won't let me. Perhaps she tries; but she can't love me; and so it always was, as far back as I can remember, and so it will always be, and I've made up my mind to it; it can't be helped."

So Miss Maud Vernon walked along the gallery, and went down the broad stairs, passing many ancestors who stood by, at the right and the left, against the wall, as she did so, and singing low to herself as she went, with a clear and rich voice, an Italian air quite new to the solemn people in the picture-frames, at whom she looked listlessly, thinking neither of them nor of her song as she passed by.

Mr. Tarpey, the groom of the chambers, was fussing with the decorations of the hall as she passed.

"Can you tell me where her ladyship is?" she inquired.

"Her ladyship, I think, is still in the library. Please, shall I see, miss?"

"Don't mind. I'll try myself. Is her ladyship alone?"

"I think so, miss."

He crossed the hall, and opened the second door from the great entrance, which stood wide open, in this sultry weather, by Lady Vernon's command, the two tall footmen, in their blue and gold liveries, keeping guard there.

Maud glanced through the open hall-door as she crossed the hall; she would have been rather pleased to see a carriage approaching; she did not care for a very long interview with her mother; but there was no sign of a visitor in sight.

"Thanks, I'll go alone," she said, dispensing with the escort of Mr. Tarpey; and passing through two spacious rooms, she reached the door of the library. Lady Vernon treated that apartment as her private cabinet, and from her childhood Maud had been accustomed to respect it.

Maud has no liking for the coming interview. She would, now, have liked to put it off, and as she crosses the Turkey carpet that muffles her tread, her step slackens. She stops at the door and raises her hand to knock, but she doesn't knock; she hesitates; she has a great mind to turn back, and wait till her mother sends for her. But, perhaps, that would not do. She has been at home nearly an hour, and it is time she should ask Lady Vernon how she does.

She knocks at the door, and hears a clear voice call "Come in."

She turns the handle accordingly, and steps into a spacious room, hung with gilded leather; the blinds are down, the sun by this time shining on this side of the house, and a mellow, cathedral-like dimness prevails. There are three or four antique bookcases, carved in ponderous relief, through the leaves and scrolls of which are

grinning grotesque and ugly faces, rich with a cynical Gothic fancy, and overhung by fantastic cornices, crowned with the heraldic shield and supporters of the Vernons. They are stored with gilded volumes; portraits hang here, as in other parts of this rich old house, and cold marble busts gleam on pedestals from the corners.

Sitting at a table in the middle of this room is a very handsome woman of forty years or upwards, with skin smooth as ivory, and jet-black hair, divided in the middle, and brought down over her white temples and small pretty ears smoothly in the simple classic fashion, now out of date. Her finely pencilled black eyebrows, and her features with a classic elegance of outline, carry an expression of cold hauteur. Her slight embonpoint becomes her grave but rich dress, which is that of a woman of rank and wealth, by no means indifferent to the impression produced by externals.

This lady, with one handsome foot upon a stool, and a desk before her, is in a leisurely way writing a letter, over which she bends just the least thing in the world. Her pose is decidedly elegant.

The lady glances slightly toward the door. Her large grey eyes, under their long lashes, rest for a moment on her daughter. She does not smile; the pen is still in her fingers. She says, simply, in her clear and rather sweet tones, "Oh, Maud? I will speak to you in a few minutes, when I have put this into its envelope. Won't you sit down?" And so she continues to write.

The young lady flashes back a rather fiery glance in return for this cool welcome, and does not sit down, but walks instead, with a quick step, to the window, pulls the blind aside, and looks out perseveringly.

CHAPTER XIII. MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

Lady Vernon having enclosed and addressed her letter, added it to the little pack of about six others at her left. Then looking up, she said:

"So, you are quite well, Maud, and you arrived at a quarter past three?"

"Quite well, mamma, thanks. I suppose it was about that time; and I hope you are very well."

"I am well, thanks; and I wished to mention that when you, as you told me, fixed the seventeenth for your return to the Hermitage with Maximilla Medwyn, I was under a mistake, and did not see, till too late, that the seventeenth would be Sunday; and I should not have given my sanction to your travelling for pleasure on Sunday. I wished to mention that particularly. I told Maximilla I should be happy to receive her any day this week. Is she coming do you know?"

"She would have come with me this morning, but she had so much to say to her servants, and so many things to arrange, that she could not leave home till after dinner at soonest, so she hopes to be here at ten to-night; and if anything should happen to prevent her, you are to have a note, by post, in the morning."

"She will be in time, at all events, for the bishop's sermon to-morrow," says Lady Vernon. "The monument will be uncovered at five o'clock. The bishop arrives at six. He has to consecrate the new church at Eastover, before he comes here, and then he goes on, after his sermon, to Wardlake, for the evening meeting of the church missions."

Miss Vernon is hardly so much interested in all this as her mother is, although even she recites the programme a little dryly. But dry as is her recital, it is not often that she volunteers so much information to her daughter.

"And what can the bishop have to say about the monument, to lead him so much out of his way, poor old man?"

"The bishop seems to think that his having been the dearest friend that Mr. Howard had on earth, constitutes some little claim upon him," says Lady Vernon, haughtily, in a cold tone, and with her fine grey eyes fixed on her daughter.

"Oh! I did not know," says Maud, a little apologetically.

"No, of course you did not; you seldom do know, or care to know, anything that interests me," says the elder lady, with her fine brows a little higher.

Maud coloured suddenly, with an impatient movement of her head. She was not sitting down, only standing near the table, drumming on it with her finger-tops, and she felt for a moment as if she could have stamped.

She answered, however, without any show of excitement except in her brilliant colour and eyes.

"I did not know, mamma, that this monument to Mr. Howard interested you particularly."

"No, not particularly," said handsome Lady Vernon, sternly, for she was one of those persons who don't brook contradiction, and who interpret discussion as a

contradiction. "Mr. Howard was the best vicar we ever had here, or ever shall have; and, in his way, a benefactor to this parish. The bishop, who admired and loved him, as much as one man could another, suggested that for such a man, in the field of his labours, having lain in his grave more than a score of years unrecorded by a single line, it was time that a monument should be raised. He wished a beautiful one, and so I believe it is. His name is first in the list of subscribers, and it is his idea, and it is he who has taken a lead in it; and, therefore, though interested, I am not particularly interested in the personal degree which your emphasis would imply."

"Well, all I can say is, I'm very unlucky, mamma."

"I think you are unlucky," replied her mother, coldly, turning her head slowly away, and looking at the pendule over the chimney.

"Have you anything to ask me, Maud?" inquired Lady Vernon, after a little interval.

"Nothing, thanks, mamma," said Maud, with her head a little high. "I'm afraid I have bored you coming in when you were busy. But having been away ten days, I thought it would have been wrong, or at least odd, if I had not come to see you to ask you how you were."

"So it would," said Lady Vernon. "Will you touch the bell?"

She did so.

"Well, mamma, I suppose there's nothing more?"

"Nothing, Maud."

Maud's heart swelled with bitterness as she left the room, and shut the door gently.

"No father, no mother, no near relation!" she thought, impetuously. "I love Cousin Max better than fifty such mammas. There are girls who would hate her. But I can't. Why am I cursed with this cruel yearning for her love? And she can't love me—she won't have my love. I think she wishes me to hate her."

When Maud was a little thing, as far back as she could remember, her idea of a "mamma" was an embodiment of power, and something to be afraid of. Seldom seen except when the spirited little girl became unmanageable; then there would be a rustling of silk and a flutter of lace in the nursery, and the handsome figure, the proud still face and large grey eyes were before her. This phantom instantly cowed her. It always looked severe, and never smiled, and its sweet cold tones were dreadful. The child's instinct could see dislike, hidden from maturer observers, in those fine eyes, and never heard a tender note in that harmonious voice.

Miss Maud passed out through the suite of rooms, and encountered Lady Vernon's footman going in to take her letters.

In the hall, serious Mr. Eccles, the gentleman-like butler, was passing upon his business with the quiet importance and gravity of office.

The young lady had a word to say.

"Is any one expected to dinner to-day?"

"Yes, miss—five; the vicar and Mrs. Foljambe; his curate, the Reverend Mr. Doody; and Mr. Puntle and Doctor Malkin. There was an invitation for Captain Bamme; but he is absent on militia business, and it is thought not probable, miss, he will return in time."

Anything was better than a tête-à-tête with Lady Vernon; a situation which Lady Vernon herself seemed to deprecate as strongly as her daughter, for it did not occur usually six times in a year.

POPULAR AMERICAN PHRASES.

In a new country peopled by an old race, with new physical surroundings, new political struggles, and new social ideas, it is natural that new words and phrases, and new metaphors, should creep into the old language. This has occurred in the United States, where the people not only speak the best of English when they please—and sometimes boast of the fact—but superadd, when they are in the humour, a rich and racy vocabulary which is so entirely their own as seldom to be intelligible to Englishmen without an explanation. The old and settled states of New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and generally of the thirteen original colonies which were engaged in the War of Independence, do not coin many new words and phrases in our day, though they sometimes make an effort in that direction. The great mass of the most characteristic and original neologisms come from the South-Western and Western States, which are as yet but sparsely peopled, and in which the settlers have to fight against the wilderness, and often against its inhabitants, both four-footed and two-footed, if they would maintain their ground. These men look upon nature face to face. They confront hardships and difficulties every day of their lives, though only to overcome and subdue

them; and they feel as they do so that they are laying the solid foundations of new empires for their sons and grandsons. A little pride and magniloquence may therefore be forgiven them. The expressions which they invent, and the metaphors which they employ, drawn from their personal experience of men and things, and from the well of their own untutored genius, are not only full of a peculiar humour, but of common sense and worldly wisdom. The words are not always elegant, but they are generally forcible. In the invention of epithets and nicknames for political friends and opponents they are particularly happy. Dr. Webster, the lexicographer, in reference to this peculiarity, very truly says: "We rarely find a new word introduced into the language which is entirely useless. The use of new terms is dictated by necessity or utility; sometimes to express shades of difference in signification, for which the language did not supply a suitable term; sometimes to express a combination of ideas by a single word, which otherwise would require a circumlocution. These benefits, which are often perceived instinctively, as it were, by a nation, recommend such words to common use, till the cavils of critics are silenced by the weight of authority."

I do not propose to discuss the single words which the language owes to the peculiarities and eccentricities of American life, or the vulgarities or diversities of pronunciation which distinguish the English language in America from the English spoken at home (English at home has a plentiful stock of vulgarisms of indigenous growth to answer for to the philologist and grammarian), but the phrases and the metaphors which are purely American, and which are never likely to become naturalised in the Old World. Agriculture, commerce, and politics, all carried on in America under conditions different from those which they present in Great Britain, are the three great sources whence these phrases and metaphors are derived, and each of these show the steady and continually growing and expanding English language in a new light of wit, of humour, or of a development, which may seem vulgar to the present age, but which is likely to fix itself securely into the next, to lead to new developments in its turn, irrespective of the opposition of grammarians and purists, who forget that language is made for man and not man for language.

In a fenced and enclosed country such as England, a direct line between two places, one of which cannot be seen from the other on account of the enclosures, is said to be a line "as the crow flies." In America such a line is called "a bee line," and sometimes an "air line." Bees, after having laden themselves with honey, have been observed always to fly back to the hive in a direct line, which is not always the case with crows in their flight. The phrase is shorter and better than our English equivalent. "Sinners," says Dow in his Lay Sermons, "you are making a bee line from time to eternity, and what you have once passed over you will never pass again." Another quotation shows the humorous aspect of the phrase. "The sweetened whisky I had drank," says the author of the Americans at Home, "made me so powerful thick-legged, that when I started to walk, my track wasn't anything like a bee line."

The swarming of bees has given rise to several phrases that savour of a new country, and of the help that settlers are always ready to afford one another in the backwoods. When a new immigrant arrives in the Far West, the neighbouring settlers, perhaps for twenty or fifty miles distant, unite with their teams, cut down the forest trees, and build him up a log-house in a single day. This swarm of assistance is called "a raising bee." The ladies also have swarms of similar kind, such as "the quilting bees," when the young women assemble, and in an afternoon will make a quilt for the new comers. "Apple bees" take place in the cider-making time, when the neighbours help to gather the apples and prepare them either for drying or for the vat, and make the occasion an excuse for merry-making.

In America all coleopterous insects are called "bugs," where in England they would be called beetles. The word has, consequently, not the offensive sense that it has with us, and the disgusting insect to which it is applied at home has the prefix "bed" to distinguish it from all other coleoptera. The fire-fly, that flits about so picturesquely in the hot summer evenings and nights, is called "the lightning bug." To be called a "big bug" is to be recognised as a person of note or consequence. "Miss Savage is a big bug," says the writer of the Widow Bedott's papers; "she's got more money than almost anybody else in town." Sam Slick in England, talking of a visit to the House of Lords, says, "We'll go to the Lords' House—I don't mean the

Meeting House—but the place where the nobles meet, pick out the big bugs, and see what stuff they are made of." "The free and easy manner in which Sir Robert Peel described some of the big bugs at Moscow has got him into difficulty."—New York Times.

Bunkum, or more properly Buncombe, is a useful word which England has borrowed from America, and which bids fair to be naturalised among us. The origin of the phrase, talking Buncombe, or talking for Buncombe, is related in Wheeler's History of North Carolina. "Several years ago the member in Congress for the district of Buncombe rose to address the House, without any extraordinary gifts either in manner or in matter to interest the audience. Many members arose and left the hall. Very naïvely he told those who remained that they might go also, as he should speak for some time, but was only speaking for Buncombe." The word has also come to signify what is sometimes called bosh. "Our people," says Sam Slick in Human Nature, "talk a great deal of nonsense about emancipation, but they know it's all Buncombe." In England the parliamentary reporters have the power to deprive Buncombe in either House of all its power to reach the place for which it is intended, by the simple plan of refusing to make a note of it. But no such power exists in the United States; and he who speaks for Buncombe, though he cannot oblige the House to listen to him, can compel the official reporters of the House to take down his words, and can compel the Congressional Globe, or the Standard of Washington, to print them at the expense of the country. No wonder that Buncombe is a greater nuisance in America than it is likely to be in England.

"Dead-head" is another phrase which might be advantageously adopted at home. It signifies a person who gets free admission to theatres, concerts, and other places of public amusement, and who procures free passes for railway and steam-boat travelling.

"To be death" on a thing, is to do the thing well, to be a good hand at it; to do anything thoroughly. "Do you know Chunkey? He was raised in Mississippi, and is death on bars (bears)." The quack doctor could not manage the whooping-cough, but he was "death on fits."

"Dyed in the wool," thorough, ingrained, is in vulgar parlance something that will wash and not lose colour; as, "He's an out-and-out good fellow: dyed in the wool." "General Taylor is a democrat dyed in the wool," or a democrat of the Jeffersonian colour.

"To be on the fence," is a political phrase, applied to a man who has not quite made up his mind for which side he will vote, or who will vote according to his interest:

> Every fool knows that a man represents
> Not the fellows that sent him, but those on the fence,
> Impartially ready to jump either side.
>
> LOWELL, The Biglow Papers.

"To give a man fits," or "to give a man Jessie," that is, to punish a man so severely by tongue, or pen, or cow-hide, or the bare fist, as to throw him into a paroxysm of rage and fear. "To give a man particular fits," or "particular Jessie," is the comparative of the original positive, the ne plus ultra of chastisement, mental and physical. "I go in for Bill Sykes, because he runs into our machine; but he mustn't come fooling around my gal, or I'll give him fits." — A Glance at New York, Bartlett.

"Fizzle," to burn dull like wet gunpowder; to make a ridiculous or egregious failure. "To fizzle out," to make a complete failure. "The factious and revolutionary action of the fifteen (senators) has interrupted the regular business of the senate, disgraced the actors, and fizzled out."—Cincinnati Gazette. "You never get tired of a good horse, he doesn't fizzle out." — Sam Slick. "To make a blue fizzle," is to make a melancholy or lugubrious failure.

"To put the foot down," to be very decided in a course of action. The late President Lincoln was continually represented by the Northern papers as "putting his foot down" for the removal of General M'Clellan or General Hooker, or for the abolition of slavery, or for some other object, popular at the time.

"To fly off the handle," to break a promise, suggested by the accident that sometimes occurs to a hatchet or an axe, when the blade flies off and leaves the useless handle in the grasp. "Now and then some of the girls would promise, and then fly off the handle."—Bartlett. The phrase also means to lose temper, and become unreasonably excited to wrath.

"To drive a straight furrow;" a metaphor derived from the plough, signifying to go right about your business, to be truthful and honest, and to indulge in no shams or false pretences.

"To go the big figure," to do things in

a magnificent manner; on a large scale. "To go the whole figure," to go to the fullest extent in a speculation or an enterprise. "Go the whole figure for religious liberty; it has no meaning here where all are free; but it's a cant word and sounds well."—Sam Slick "Our senators go the big figure on oysters and whisky-punch."—Bartlett's Dictionary of Americanisms. "To go the whole hog," or "to go the entire animal," is another vulgarism of the same species which is sometimes heard in England.

"Gone coon," "a gone goose," "a gone gander," "a gone gosling," "a gonner," are varieties of a phrase that was first brought into popularity by the story of a Colonel Scott, a Western hunter, whose aim with the rifle was so unerring, that a racoon (a coon) upon a tree, at which he was going to fire, surrendered at discretion, after a short parley. "Are you Colonel Scott?" "Yes." "The famous Colonel Scott?" "Yes, so people say." "Don't fire, Colonel, I give in, I'm a gone coon!" In the West a hopelessly bad debt is called a "gonner," something that is gone beyond the chance of recovery.

"Good as wheat" is another agricultural phrase, equivalent to the commercial one "as good as gold."

"Sound on the goose," or "all right on the goose," to be true to the principles of a political party. This phrase had its origin in Kansas, during the contentions in that state on the subject of the extension of negro slavery within its limits, and meant adhesion to slavery.

"A hard row to hoe;" an agricultural metaphor for a difficult task. "Gentlemen, I never opposed Andrew Jackson for the sake of popularity. I knew it was 'a hard row to hoe.'"—Colonel Crockett. "To hoe one's own row," to attend to one's own business.

"Hurry up the cakes." During the winter season in America there is a great consumption of buckwheat cakes at breakfast-time at all the great hotels and boarding-houses. They are served hot, and fresh from the kitchen, and eaten with butter and syrup. Men of business, in haste to get breakfast over, make such continual appeals to the waiters to "hurry up the cakes," that the phrase has become the popular synonym to command haste. If a steam-boat is late in starting from the pier or wharf, an impatient passenger will call out, "Now then, captain, hurry up the cakes!" or a linen-draper's assistant, slow in exhibiting his fineries to a lady, is likely to be reminded that he should "hurry up the cakes."

"As big as all out of doors;" anything very large or important. "I will never truckle to any man, though he be as big as all out of doors."—M'Clintock's Tales.

"To keep a stiff upper lip," to remain firm to a purpose, to keep up one's courage. "My friend, don't cry for spilt milk. Keep a stiff upper lip, and all will come right again."—Knickerbocker Magazine.

"Knee high to a mosquito," very small; a phrase often used in speaking of a person whom one has known from infancy. "The lovely Mrs. Smith? Oh, yes, I knew her before she was knee high to a mosquito."

"Log-rolling" and "axe-grinding." These phrases are used in political parlance to signify the action of members of Congress, or of the local legislatures, when they have private purposes in view in their support of public measures; they also describe the personal motives of lawyers and others who introduce bills. When one member says to another, "Vote for my bill, and I'll vote for yours," that is log-rolling; and when a member supports a measure by which he expects to get a place for a friend or a relative, or gain some personal advantage for himself, "he has an axe to grind."

"Pipe-laying" is a political phrase which signifies the practice of procuring fraudulent votes, towards the close of a popular election, in sufficient number to turn the scale. "The result of the Pennsylvania election would not be in the least doubtful if we could be assured of fair play and no pipe-laying."—New York Tribune.

"One horse;" an agricultural phrase, applied to anything small or insignificant, or to any inconsiderable or contemptible person: as a "one-horse town," a "one-horse bank," a "one-horse hotel," a "one-horse lawyer." A clergyman, deprecating the use of such attenuated expressions as "dang it!" "blow it!" "confound it!" described them as "one-horse oaths." The popularity of this phrase led to the coinage of its converse, to describe something that was great and magnificent. "Let us have no one-horse candidate for the Presidency. General Grant is the man. He is a whole team; a horse to spare, and a big dog under the waggon."—New York Herald.

"Savage as a meat axe," to be very angry and violent. "It riled me so, that I just steps up to him, as savage as a meat axe, intending to kick him down-stairs."—Sam Slick, Human Nature.

"To row up Salt River," to court political defeat; "to be rowed up Salt River," to be politically defeated. If the defeat be very overwhelming the unsuccessful party is said to be "rowed up to the very head waters of Salt River."

"To run one's face," to get goods on credit on the strength of your personal appearance. "Any man who can run his face for a card of pens, a quire of paper, and a pair of scissors, may set up for an editor, and by loud, incessant bragging, may secure a considerable patronage."—New York Tribune.

"To shoot your grandmother," to make a great mistake, to be much disappointed, to do what you did not intend; sometimes used in the same sense as the English phrase "to find a mare's nest."

"Sirree, Bob;" an emphatic assent or negative. "Yes, sir!" is the first form; still more emphatic is, "Yes, sirree!" and most emphatic of all, "Yes, sirree, Bob!" In a case before a Baltimore court of justice the attention of the judge was called to a juryman who appeared to be intoxicated. The judge, addressing him, said, "Sir, are you drunk?" The man stood up in a defiant attitude, palpably drunk, and replied, "No, sirree, Bob!" "Well," said the judge, "I fine you ten dollars for disrespectful language to the court—five dollars for the ree and five for the Bob."

"Small potatoes;" any thing or person that is small, contemptible, or petty. "I took to attending the Baptist meeting, because the Presbyterian minister is such small potatoes that it wa'nt edifying to sit under his preaching."—The Widow Bedott. "Give us an honest old soldier for President, and none of your small-potato politicians and pettifogging lawyers."—New York Herald.

"Some pumpkins;" the converse of small potatoes; something great and important. "Franklin was a poor printer's boy, and Washington only a land-surveyor, yet they growed to be some pumpkins."—Sam Slick.

"To stand up to the rack," to be up to the mark or point; to do what is expected of one, or what one has promised. "I began a new campaign at Washington. I had hard work to do; but I stood up to the rack, fodder or no fodder."—Colonel Crockett.

"A surprise party." A party of persons who assemble by previous agreement at the house of one who does not expect them. These surprise parties are generally friendly, and organised for the purpose of presenting a poor clergyman or politician with a testimonial, a purse of money, or gift in kind, to supplement his income. There are surprise parties of a more disagreeable kind, as when a knot of people visit a negro who has had the audacity to make love to or insult a white girl, for the purpose of tarring and feathering, or driving him out of the town, with the menace of death, if he dare to return to it.

"Tall." This word was formerly the recognised slang for the talk of a braggart or a liar, but may be applied in every case where inordinateness, excessiveness, and great magnitude enter into the idea of the speaker. "He is the greatest pedestrian mentioned in the annals of tall walks." "If we don't come out in full force we'll have a tall fight with the gang." "The general found a whole potful of the tallest kind of jewels." "I shall walk tall into varmint and Indians, it's a way I've got."

"Three cheers and a tiger." After the usual three cheers at a convivial or other party, when in England there would be a call for the Kentish fire, or one cheer more, there is in America a call for the "tiger," a growl, like that of a wild animal, in which all the company take part. The "tiger" is very effective for its purpose.

"To take the back track," to recede from a false position after having gone too far; a phrase derived from the life of the hunter and trapper in the back settlements.

"To be up to the hub," to be in a difficulty, as the wheel of a vehicle is when embedded to the centre in bog or mire.

"To wake up the wrong passenger," to make a mistake. It is the practice on board the "long-shore" steamers that make stoppages at all the ferries, villages, and towns on the route, to wake up such of the passengers as have reached their place of destination. Mistakes of course occur on these occasions; hence the phrase and its wider acceptation. Sam Slick, in his Nature and Human Nature, represents a Northern philanthropist condoling with a Southern slave on the miseries of his condition. "Massa," replied the negro, "you have waked up the wrong passenger dis time. I isn't poor. I get plenty to eat and plenty to drink. When I wants money missus give it to me."

"Whole soul'd," to be generous, genuine, noble-minded.

"The slate." The list of people recommended to office by a political party, as a reward for political services, real or

imaginary. "A slate smasher," a president, or high official, who will not give places to the nominees of the party. "Let General Grant be encouraged to smash the slate. He is a great slate-smasher."—Cincinnati Enquirer, March, 1869.

"Clear the skirts," to vindicate the political character, and clear it from taint. "He has not cleared his skirts from sympathy with the truth." "You do not in the least touch the question, nor do you clear the skirts of General Grant and of your party, for the basest treachery to the people."—Letter in the New York Tribune.

Among other similes and metaphors in common use in America, and that differ from those ordinarily heard in England, may be cited: "As out of sorts as a down-stream shad." "I'm as dry as the clerk of a lime-kiln." "As long as a thanksgiving sermon." "As sharp as the little end of nothing." "As slick as greased lightning." "As tight as the bark of a tree." "As wroth as a militia officer on training day." "As useless as whistling psalms to a dead horse." "Thrashing around like a short-tailed bull in fly-time."

Dr. Bartlett's Dictionary of Americanisms, from which many of these words and phrases are quoted, was compiled in 1857-8, and published in 1860. It is a portly volume of five hundred and twenty pages, and contains, besides the undoubted Americanisms, great numbers of Scotch and English local words that are wholly or partially obsolete at home; but have been revived with a new life in the new country to which they have been transplanted. Dr. Bartlett's book will doubtless be extended at an early period, as the last ten years have produced their own crop of words, uninvented at the time his amusing compilation was made. English slang grows fast in our days; but American slang grows infinitely faster, and has the merit of being a great deal more humorous and comic than the English article.

SOLDIERS' BALLADS.

I.

The Battle of Prague.

AN OLD ANONYMOUS BALLAD STILL POPULAR AMONG THE PRUSSIAN SOLDIERS.

[The battle of Prague referred to in this rough old German Hussar ballad was the battle of Prague so well known to generation after generation of young English pianoforte players. It was not, however, fought against the Turks, but took place at the siege of the picturesque capital of Bohemia by Frederick the Great, one of the earliest of that long series of grand robberies which gradually helped to build up Prussia into a compact, powerful, and aggressive kingdom; and at last to turn it, as we have seen, into one of the strongest, most ambitious, and most dangerous of the military powers of Europe. We picture to ourselves some of Ziethen's cavalry shouting their quaint doggerel the night after Leuthen, while old Fritz, stalking past their bivouac fire, gives them a grim stare, with his large round eyes, watching them from under his huge, dingy, cockaded cocked-hat, as the red light for a moment glances on the diamond star on his breast, and on the well-worn hilt of his sword, fatal to so many an Austrian. In that rough song the sublime old scoundrel heard the echo of fresh victories.]

To blockade Prague, that fine old town,
We Prussians one day sat us down.
Our camp it stood us in good stead,
Stored well with powder and with lead.
Our cannon were all laid with care,
And Schwerin was our general there.

Fast rode up our Prince Heinrich then,
Followed by eighty thousand men.
"Now all my army would I give
So my brave Schwerin did but live.
O Fate! O Fate! war's hardest lot,
That Schwerin should so soon be shot."

A trumpeter to Prague we sent
To learn what was the town's intent,
Whether to open or stand out;
But the Bohemians, staunch and stout,
Would never yield their liberty,
Bombarded then the place must be.

Who did this little song indite?
Well, three hussars who came to fight.
With Seidlitz's corps they were drawn up,
And in old Prague they hope to sup.
Hurrah! Wohoop! Victoria!
Old Fritz himself was there, hurrah!

II.

Going into New Quarters.

AN OLD GERMAN MILITARY BALLAD, DATE (PERHAPS THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR), AUTHOR UNKNOWN.

[One likes to think that Tilly's and Wallenstein's brave musketeers may have perhaps chanted this ditty at the gates of Magdeburg the night it was taken, and that our old friend Dugald Dalgetty, passing his horny hand over his long gaunt face and grizzly moustaches, may have thereupon said in Latin of Marischal College to some Swedish friend in trouble: "Marry, these same German rogues love a good stave almost as well as they do plunder, and by St. Andrew in that last charge in truth they broke in on our pikes like so many mad bulls. Even my late master, the great Gustavus himself, would have said 'Bravo' at the onset, and now fighting being thirsty work, more especially when one has been beaten, let's into the town, old comrade, and have a stoup of good Bacarac." "You will? Marry well said, Soldado." "By your right then, forward. There's good wine at the Kaiser Rudolph's—good wine. By your right."]

You people be merry, the soldiers—hurrah!
Singing now greet you jucheira—sa—sa!
  They're from the German land
  As you well understand,
Merrily coming to quarter on you.

Solid good fare and a welcoming face
Are better than banquets in every case.
  Bring us the drink along,
  Landlord join in this song:
Deutschland hoch lebe, hoch leb' der Soldat.

Germans are hearty and always are ready,
Tender to maidens, in battle as steady.
  They love with keen desire
  A kiss, wine, and battle fire,
Words that are truth, and a jovial song.

Maiden beware of your little heart's flight,
Love often comes like a thief in the night.
When daylight sees us go,
Many will say "Ah, no."
Sobbing with sorrow, and tears in their eyes.

For the soldier knows neither of peace nor of rest,
To-day he is here, there to-morrow a guest;
Home and love changing see,
Till to head-quarters we
March when the death drummer beats the roll call.

FROM BRADFORD TO BRINDISI.

IN TWO FLIGHTS. FLIGHT THE SECOND.

On arriving at Munich, I found that, owing to the tardy way in which we had travelled, the train for Ala had started some half an hour previously, and that there was nothing for me to do but to remain until ten o'clock at night, and then travel by the express. I was not sorry for this, for I sadly wanted washing and shaving, to say nothing of a little rest after constant travelling. So as soon as I could thread my way through the immense crowd waiting to receive the bodies of the deceased heroes, I jumped into an open fly, here called an einspanner, and told the driver to take me to the Vier-Jahreszeiten Hotel. During this drive, which was a tolerably long one, I had an opportunity of seeing many of the splendid buildings, and passing through the cheerful and excellent streets of this handsome city. Arriving at the hotel, which deserves the reputation which it has attained of being one of the first in Germany, I was shown into a bright little room on the entresol, the bedroom portion of which was shut away by portières, while the other portion made a most perfect little sitting-room, with its bright white china stove, its comfortable sofa, neat writing-table, and elegant curtains. After my toilet, which included the operations of a barber, who brought back to me reminiscences of German shaving-soap, which I had forgotten for twenty years, I descended to the salle à manger, and ordered breakfast. Such a comfortable, cosey speisesaal; not the great salon where the table d'hôte is held, but a small room, where breakfasts and luncheons, and cheery little unwholesome German suppers are served. We have made some little improvement in England lately in the coffee-rooms of some of our railway hotels, which are now thoroughly comfortable; but even in them there is wanting the air of cosiness which is to be found at the Vier-Jahreszeiten. The portraits of the Queen and of the late Prince Consort are not uncommon on the walls of English hotels; I think I have met with one or two of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and I am certain that the late Duke of Wellington is occasionally represented; but in what English hotels will you find the walls of one of the principal rooms hung with admirably executed engravings of painters and musical composers, with the place of honour over the mantelpiece occupied by the "counterfeit presentments" of two poets? Yet, as I ate my breakfast, I was gazed upon by Mozart and Mendelssohn, by Beethoven and Von Weber, with Goethe and Schiller over the mantelpiece. I doubt whether the mention of the name of Tennyson to the average English waiter would awaken any response, but the square-built, stolid-looking Bavarian who attended on me knew all about Freiligrath, and asked me if I had heard his latest song of the war.

After breakfast, by which time it was about noon, I sallied into the streets of the town to see the shops. Capital shops of all kinds, some splendid cafés, not after the French model, which is open and airy, but after the German, which is closed and steamy; cafés in all of which men are seated behind huge glasses of beer, a few playing dominoes, many reading the papers, nearly all talking about that interminable subject, the war. I notice, too, an extraordinary number of shops for the sale of periodicals, the windows of which are filled with maps of the seat of war, with pictures of the engagements of Wörth and Gravelotte, and of the arrival of the first batch of French prisoners at Munich, but, above all, with caricatures. Of these last the Emperor Napoleon is the hero. A conscientious study of Punch for many years, has proved to me that Mr. Tenniel's pencil is the most admirable reflex of English popular opinion so far as the ex-emperor is concerned. When all went well between the English and French, and the entente cordiale was in full blow, Louis Napoleon always appeared in Mr. Tenniel's cartoon as a middle-aged gentleman of marked, but by no means unpleasant features. But on the first hint of any difficulty occurring between the two nations he became suddenly old, his nose grew into a proboscis of extraordinary dimensions, his stomach swelled, his legs shrunk, and the curls on each of his temples were converted into the "aggerawators" of the ruffian and the jail-bird. But even when Mr. Tenniel was most severe, his sketches were characterised, as must be everything done by that accomplished artist, by refinement and artistic feeling, two creditable qualities

which his German brethren have very decidedly abnegated. Nothing grosser than the caricatures of the emperor and the ex-empress, which I saw publicly exhibited in the windows of the Munich print-shops, can possibly be imagined, and it surely is no excuse to say, as I have seen it said in print since my return, that during war-time excesses of this kind are permissible, and that the sketches of our own Gilray during the French war were equally offensive. General decency, has, thank Heaven, made a vast stride in advance since Gilray's time, and any imitation of the social sketches of that artist would now find, in this country, neither vendor nor purchaser. The omnivorous war literature has even laid hands on our two old friends, Schultze and Müller, so well known to the readers of the Kladderadatsch. I bought a little book called Schultze and Müller auf dem Kriegs Schauplatze, with a coloured frontispiece representing the two heroes driving furiously on a gun-carriage, beneath which a wretched little Napoleon was swinging, crouched in a pickel-haube, and from the preface I learned that:

> Die zwei, die oft mit Friedenswitzen
> Ein loser geist erscheinen liess
> Sie send auch, wo Kanonen blitzen
> Und ziehn mit Deutschland vor Paris.

They are a nice people the Germans, honest, true, and pious, but they are not funny. Anything duller than the adventures of Herren Schultze and Müller it would be difficult to imagine; and even in this little would-be comic pamphlet an unpleasant feeling towards England was discernible.

I wandered about the streets and public gardens until it was time to go to the table d'hôte, and after dinner I retired to my room, and slept until awakened by the waiter's arrival to tell me that the omnibus was at the door. Inside the omnibus was a pretty little lady, surrounded by a number of small parcels, and bags, and bundles of wrappers. Her husband, a stout Frenchman, with the appearance of a commis-voyageur, was smoking a cigar on the hotel steps, and when he had finished it, and not before, he came and asked his wife in a querulous tone whether all their parcels were right. She said she believed so. He was evidently a man of a bilious temperament, as shown by his yellow skin and his close-cut beard, like cotton velvet, and this expression irritated him immensely. "You believe so; how is it that you have not counted them, my wife?" he exclaimed still more querulously than before, and then he made the little woman get out of the omnibus, and go through all the packages one after another. Even then he was not satisfied, but kept up a rumbling fire of complaint all the way to the station, where he left her to look after everything, and consoled himself with a glass of absinthe at the buffet.

We started from Munich at ten o'clock, and about three hours afterwards arrived at Kufstein, where we had to change carriages, and where we remained for nearly an hour in a refreshment-room, which was little better than a cabaret, but where the food and drink, such as they were, were good. Here the French gentleman built his wife into a distant corner behind a wall of packages, and leaving her there proceeded to refresh himself with ham sandwiches and beer. There was an outer division of this restaurant which partook more decidedly of the estaminet character, and in it, for the first time in travelling, I heard a man venture to express some respect for the French people, as distinguished from their emperor, and some pity for them in their misfortune. He was one of the railway guards, and spoke with fluency and feeling, but was compelled to succumb to the howl of execration which greeted him on every side. The French gentleman looked in while this discussion was going on, but withdrew hastily. It had a softening effect on him, for on my return he had handed to his wife over the rampart of packages the fragment of a ham sandwich, and the dregs of a glass of beer.

In the new lot of carriages I had for companions three Italian men and one boy. They were of a lower class than one is accustomed to meet with in first-class compartments, and they did not speak a single word of any language except their own, of which I knew but very few sentences; but they were a cheery, pleasant lot, and we managed to get on tolerably well together. There was an old man, very red in the face, very hooked in the nose, very white in the beard, who would have been a pleasant companion but for the severe bronchial affection under which he laboured, and which led him to go through performances that made one's blood run cold. There was a heavy, middle-aged man, of the street-organ-playing order, very square-jawed, very black-eyed, very olive-complexioned, and there was a young man of the regular tenor type, who might have been Gennaro or

Elvino, or any of the other heroes of song. The boy was fair-haired and frolicsome, and took an immense fancy to me, entertaining me with a great many jests, which I could not understand, but, moreover, with a good deal of pantomime, which I thoroughly appreciated. It began to grow very cold soon after we left Kufstein, and my fellow-travellers, who had no superfluity of wraps, took up the light sleezy green drugget, which covered the bottom of the carriage, and turned it into a grand universal coverlet for themselves. I buried myself in my Ulster, and my sealskin cap, and my Scotch plaid, and we all went to sleep.

I woke at dawn, in time to see some of the best features of the Brenner Pass, over which we were making slow but steady progress. The topmost peaks of the Alps, on which the eternal snow lay glistening, the grand slopes and fells covered with the interminable array of fir-trees, the broad verdant valleys dotted here and there, now with solitary Swiss châlets, now with small white-faced villages, a handful of houses nestling round a quaint little chapel, now with convents standing serene but solitary, and now with châteaux well built and well kept; past gorges, passes, and defiles; through great cuttings, where the light of day, hitherto struggling to appear and to make us warm and cheerful, is cast back and shut out; now winding along the edge of a precipice, looking down on the tiny thread of silvery stream hundreds of feet below us; now skirting the base of overhanging snow-topped cliffs, past every variety of splendidly grand scenery—we make our triumphant way, make it, moreover, seated in a comfortable railway carriage, stretched out at our ease, and with our wraps around us. Those persons who bemoan the cramped inside and the freezing outside of the old mail-coach, the spanking tits, the mendicant coachman and guard, the horrid British dinner swallowed in ten minutes, and the general extortion and misery, will wail over the obliteration of the dirty mule and the foul muleteer, the long wearisome climb, the longer and more wearisome descent, the dangerous corners, the miserable food, the bitter cold, the entire wretchedness of the proceedings. I who, rightly or wrongly, look upon all members of the Alpine Club, and mountain climbers in general, as being more or less mad, am thankful for the establishment of a line of travelling by which I can penetrate into Italy in comfort and security.

The general improvements in continental institutions certainly extend to the custom-house. I perfectly recollect how, twenty years ago, in the then waiting-room at Cologne station, they called out, "Ein hundert und vier," and how I, perfectly ignorant of the German language, had no notion of their vociferations referring to the number one hundred and four on my portmanteau, and how, when they made me comprehend it, they searched it through with ferocity, and slammed it to with vehemence. This time at Cologne, before they had finished asking me whether I had anything to declare, they had chalked my portmanteau, and let it pass. It was the same now at Ala, on the Austro-Italian frontier, where I and the chief of the Italian dogana exchanged many jokes, set off on his side with an amount of rib-poking and back-slapping, in which he seemed greatly to delight.

> Am I in Italy? Is this the Mincius?
> Are those the distant turrets of Verona?
> And shall I sup where Juliet at the masque
> Saw her loved Montague, and now sleeps by him?
> Such questions hourly do I ask myself,
> And not one stone in the cross-way inscribed
> "To Mantua," "To Ferrara," but excites
> Surprise, and doubt, and self-congratulation.

So said Mr. Rogers, poet and banker, and so say I, proser and commercial traveller. The outward aspect of the country certainly would not have told me that I was in Italy, and as for that magnificent sky, that "blue unclouded weather" of which I have heard so much, it had evidently forsaken us for the nonce. I have seen quite as clear skies as this in Hyde Park, and infinitely clearer at Torquay, but there can be no doubt about my being in Italy, and at Verona, for my three Italian fellow-travellers tell me so, and the porter at the station indorses the remark by adding that we here change carriages, and have twenty minutes to stop. So I tumble out on to the platform, and enter the restaurant, and have that particularly nice preparation of filet, which throughout the entire Continent is known by the name of biftek (but which is no more like the peninsula of juicy meat which you get in Fleet-street than I am like Hercules), and wash it down with half a bottle of Capri, a wine of which I have heard in England, but have never yet tried, and which I now find to be a particularly satisfactory drink.

When I rejoin the train I see, for the first time, the Two Gentlemen of Verona, who are both in attendance on one lady. One of these gentlemen is dark and clean-shaved, but for his heavy moustache, and

is generally Mephistophelian; but he is so complaisant, stands so much in the background, and occupies himself so very much with his newspaper, giving way so completely to the other gentleman, that I at once see he is the husband of the lady. The other gentleman is short, fair, full-bearded, and attentive to a degree. He does not like my entrance into the carriage into which Mephistopheles has kindly beckoned me. He looks after the lady's hand-bags and wrappers, and buys for her the prettiest bouquet which the flower-girl in attendance has to offer. In fact, he takes the whole supervision of the lady's comforts upon himself, and only retires just as the train is about to start, when he yields up his position with a good grace, and Mephistopheles glides into it. The lady to whom their attentions are devoted is the first specimen of the Italian donna that I have seen. She has not, however, "the high dama's brow," nor can one quite discover "her heart on her lips, and her soul in her eyes." She is a passably pretty woman, with large, black eyes, of which she makes excellent use on her fellow-travellers. Mephistopheles does not seem to mind; he is deep in the columns of l'Italie, a journal published in Florence, in the French language, which he is good enough to lend me when he has finished with it, and where I read the first news I have seen since leaving home. So on, until we reach Padua, where we have three hours' rest, and where, after a consummation at the restaurant, in which, as there is no reason against it, I, being for the time solitary and celibate, make my first acquaintance with that grand ingredient of Italian cookery—garlic. Here I fall in with two German students on a pleasure trip, who seem to be much more civilised than the German students of my time, and are clean and well informed and enthusiastic. We "do" Padua together in the little time at our disposal, walk through the long arcades, reminding one somewhat of the rows at Chester, look into two or three of the churches, so splendid in the interior, so brick-barn like and unfinished on the outside, and notice a hundred sights new and strange to me; and though I encounter that shovel-hatted priest, whom it is so difficult to get rid of, and who will come back to repeat his "good-night," in the Barber of Seville, I look in vain for the learned Doctor Bellario, who lent his legal trappings to Portia for her masquerade, nor a little later at Ferrara did I come upon any traces of Maffio Orsini and his camerades; nor did I see the ducal palace with the practicable B over its gateway, the removal of which by Signor Mario Gennaro's dagger I had so often witnessed.

I slept at Bologna that night at a magnificent hotel, excellent in every respect, called the Hôtel Brun. It is impossible to do better than go to the Hôtel Brun. A little awe-struck by the magnificent corridor through which I was conducted, a corridor decorated with frescoes, and rather grimly ornamented with marble busts of the Roman emperors, I regained all my courage when inducted to the cheery, comfortable little room allotted to me, and the hotel remains in my memory as a singular example in its every arrangement of the blending of the magnificent and comfortable. I arrived at the railway station next morning to start for Brindisi, with no idea of the honour in store for me; but I soon found that the mission on which I had been despatched by the house had become known, and that not merely was I to travel by special train, but that I was to have the honour of being accompanied by the First Minister of Public Works, who was coming specially to Brindisi to inaugurate the service, the start of which I had been despatched to superintend. The line of rail runs nearly the whole of the way along the shore of the Adriatic, passing Ancona, and other well-known places, and having a lovely undulating country on its other side. Our progress might be considered to some extent a triumphal one, for the news of the advent of the minister had preceded us, and at all the stations at which we stopped we were met by deputations of the townspeople, anxious to look upon this great creature, and, as I afterwards understood, to implore him to commemorate the occasion of his visit by recommending the local magnates for a ribbon or decoration. The "crowning of the edifice" was, however, reserved until the day after our arrival at Brindisi, when a grand banquet was given at the new and yet unfinished hotel, over which the minister presided. Various toasts were proposed, and the speakers were unusually excited, one of them declaring that the two great events of the nineteenth century were the entrance of King Victor Emmanuel into Rome, and the despatch of the Indian mail viâ Brindisi. With this last service the house with which I am connected had something to do. I was accordingly called upon to address the assembly, and at this glorious point in my career I think it best

to take leave of my readers, leaving them to imagine that such magnificent oratory as I have just recorded was infectious.

THE DEFENCE OF SARAGOSSA.

Soon after Murat's cruel street slaughters in Madrid, in May, 1808, half the cities of Spain sprang to arms. Foremost among these was Saragossa, the capital of Arragon.

When the patriots rose against their cruel invaders, the populace deposed Gullielmi, the governor, and Tio Jorge Ibort and his adherents chose as their nominal leader José Palafox, a handsome Arragonese nobleman, "a son of Saragossa," and an officer in the Spanish royal body-guard. Palafox had good advisers. His tutor, Basilio Boggiero, wrote his Spartan proclamations; Santiago Sas, a priest, managed convenient miracles to rouse and sustain the populace; while Tio Jorge and his two peasant lieutenants kept up the fighting, though the defence of the place began, as Southey says, with only two hundred and twenty men, one hundred dollars, sixteen cannon, and a few old muskets. Lefebvre and his nine thousand French arrived on June the 15th, 1808. Had he pushed on at once the place must have fallen; but he paused, and Tio Jorge and his peasants had time to make the town tenable. The inhabitants were brave and superstitious. The houses were little fortresses of solid stone, the streets tortuous and narrow, and adapted for defence. In the skirmishes outside the town Palafox was victorious, and this success roused the courage of Saragossa to the highest point. A small party of daring French cavalry penetrating into the place were cut off to a man. The Spaniards had time to plant some cannon before their gates, and also on the Torero, a hill outside the walls. A French detachment which tried to storm the Portillo gate was repulsed with loss, the Spaniards not staying to load their muskets after the first volley, but closing on the French with their knives and bayonets. Half the detachment being cut to pieces, Lefebvre fell back, losing in the retreat four hundred cavalry and twenty-seven baggage waggons.

But the storm only lulled for a moment. At the end of June the French returned with reinforcements, and reoccupied the key of Saragossa, the Torero, at once, the officer in command, basely flying, leaving behind him the tools of the canal company, which were exactly what the French engineers most needed. But the Spaniards were not easily daunted; they remembered their previous successes, and they believed that the Virgin would drive away the hated Frenchmen from the city she had always cherished. They tore down all their window-curtains, turned them into sand-bags for the batteries, and placed guns, defended by ramparts and trenches, before each of their nine gates. The mud walls of the suburban gardens, and the remains of an old Moorish rampart, furnished points of defence for the stubborn Arragonese, who there found cover from French bullets. Loopholes for muskets, and openings for cannon, were pierced everywhere. Houses that would protect the enemy were pulled down, and olive gardens that would shelter the French tirailleurs were remorselessly rooted up. The women, as brave as the men, formed themselves into parties to relieve the wounded, and to carry water and food to the defenders of the batteries, while the children brought the soldiers the cartridges made by the monks. Foremost among the women was the beautiful Condesa de Burita, who brought wine and provisions to the soldiers, and tended the wounded and dying amid the tremendous fire of shot and shell. Every day sorties were made, and the enemy assailed in the olive woods that surrounded the city. About the last day of June a powder magazine blew up in the centre of the city, and reduced a whole street to ruins. At this moment of confusion the French opened a destructive fire. A sand-bag battery before the Portillo gate received the brunt of the attack. The French, on the Torero side, entered and destroyed the beautiful convent of Santa Engracia. The sand-bag battery at the Portillo gate was several times destroyed by the French guns, and bravely reconstructed under fire. It was at this spot and at this crisis that a heroine appeared. Augustina, the celebrated Maid of Saragossa, was a handsome itinerant lemonade seller, twenty-two years of age. She had arrived with food for the soldiers at the moment when the battery had been swept clear of every defender. The people, daunted by the sight, hung back. The brave woman instantly rushed forward over the dead and dying, and snatching a lighted match from the hand of the dead artilleryman, fired off a twenty-six pounder. Then jumping on the gun, as Wilkie represents her, with dishevelled hair and stormy eyes, she swore to the Virgin never to quit the gun alive while the siege

lasted. The people, encouraged by this woman's almost supernatural daring, rushed back into the deserted battery, opened a tremendous fire, and repulsed the French attack. But the enemy closed in nearer and nearer, as a murderer's hand closes on a victim's throat. Above the city the Ebro was fordable, and below the city the French constructed a bridge. Transporting their cavalry by these means to the opposite bank of the river, they destroyed the flour-mills of the town, and cut off all supplies of food and ammunition. But Palafox and his advisers were energetic and untiring. They ground their corn in horse mills, and set the monks to work at making gunpowder. All the sulphur in the place was carefully collected, the earth in the streets washed to obtain from it saltpetre, and charcoal was made from hemp stalks. Towards the end of July food began to run short, and the hopes of succour began to die away. A defence of forty-six days had exhausted the strength of the defenders. A desperate rush to recover the Torero failed. The French bombardment continued cruel, remorseless, and unintermitting. On the 2nd and 3rd of August, the Grand Hospital, dedicated to the Virgin, and one of the largest in Spain, was burnt with all its sick and wounded. A white flag was hoisted, as it were to implore mercy, but it was made a special mark for the bombs. The soldiers all hastened to the rescue of the sick and of the foundlings, and even women were indefatigable, in spite of shot, shell, and flame. On the 4th of August the French opened a battery on the Santa Engracia quarter, swept away all the mud walls, took the batteries at the gates, turned the guns on the Spaniards, and penetrated to the Corso in the very centre of the town; yet here the resistance was more obstinate than ever. Every house became a fortress, every doorway a barricade, and a scorching fire towards evening drove back the French to Santa Engracia, with a loss of fifteen hundred men and several generals. From the convent that night Lefebvre wrote his stern summons to surrender:

"Head-quarters—Santa Engracia. Capitulation!"

The instant reply of Palafox was equally laconic:

"Head-quarters—Saragossa. War to the knife.—Palafox."

The French now occupied all one side of the Corso; General Verdier watching the fighting and giving orders from the Franciscan convent in the centre. On the other side were the Saragossans, who had thrown up batteries at the openings of all the side streets. The intervening space was soon so heaped up with dead that Palafox, afraid of contagion, pushed forward French prisoners, fastened by ropes, to remove the bodies. At night the most savage sorties were made against the batteries on either side, and there was a great deal of hand-to-hand fighting inside the houses.

At last the end seemed coming. On the 5th of August the ammunition of the Spaniards began to run short, and the people called out to be allowed to attack the enemy with only their knives, when at the very crisis there arrived a providential convoy of provisions and ammunition, escorted by three thousand Swiss guards and Arragonese volunteers, led by Don Francisco Palafox, a brother of the general. The people took fresh heart. At a general council it was now agreed, amid shouts from the people, to fight till all Saragossa was consumed, and then to retire over the Ebro to the suburbs, and defend them till every man had perished.

For eleven days longer the Spaniards fought from street to street, house to house, room to room, wall to wall, roof to roof, till their knives broke, their cartridges were spent, and hundreds died on the point of the French bayonets. During the night of the 12th of August the French batteries were particularly destructive, and when they ceased firing, flames were seen to break out in many buildings that they held. On the morning of the 14th, however, to the astonishment and joy of the people of the tormented city, the enemy's columns were beheld at a distance retreating in dark masses over the plain of the Ebro on the road to Pampeluna. The defeat of Dupont at Baylen had compelled Lefebvre to retire from the all but exhausted city, which, he boasted with truth, he had left "un amas de décombres." According to Ford, who is always severe on Spanish failings, Palafox after this went almost mad with vanity, claimed all the glory to himself, wrote bombastic despatches, and neglected every proper preparation for future defence.

Three months after came Napoleon's revenge. The Spanish heroes routed at Tudela, the French again invested Saragossa, this time attacking both sides, and especially the Jesuit convent on the opposite bank of the Ebro, which the tardy Spaniards, after their way, had neglected

to secure. Four marshals—Lannes, Mortier, Moncey, and Junot—conducted the siege. In spite of the proclamations of Palafox, the old men, women, and children refused to leave the city; but all the French residents were sent out of the place, for fear of treachery, and the nuns were permitted to go to distant convents. The walls had been mounted with one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon. Old and young worked unceasingly at an outer line of defensive works. Large stores of provisions were collected, as well as arms and ammunition. Twenty thousand regular troops, and fifteen thousand armed peasants, were enrolled to form the garrison. Moreover, every house was barricaded, and provided with several weeks' food. The brave Countess de Burita came forward, and this time with three hundred women of all ranks, to tend the wounded, and to carry provisions to the gunners in the batteries. The Maid of Saragossa, too, again came to the front, and took her station beside the old gun at the Portillo gate. A boy of fourteen presented himself as a soldier, and being rejected as too young, mixed with the troops, captured with his own hand a stand of French colours, and, in the sight of the army, carried them into the Church of the Pillar, and laid them as an offering on the altar of the Virgin.

The French army consisted of thirty-five thousand men, and a battering-train from Pampeluna of sixty pieces, while a corps of cavalry, stationed at Fuentes, scoured the country round the besieged town. Suchet's division took the Torero at the first assault, capturing three guns and one hundred prisoners. A brigade of Merle's division also gained a work commanding the sluices of the canal. To Moncey's demand for the capitulation of the place, Palafox replied: "Talk of capitulation when I am dead. If Madrid has surrendered, Madrid has been sold. We know how to die. We in Saragossa are not to be frightened by the horrors of a siege. We have shown that before." The French reply was seven columns of infantry, who bore down on the suburbs like so many battering-rams, winged by a large body of horse. They were met by Brigadier Don Josef Manso, captain of the Royal Guards, and pushed back after a hot fight of five hours. The attack of the reserve was even more tremendous; and the Spaniards wavered, till Palafox and Generals O'Neil and Saint Marc rode up, sword in hand, rallied them, and broke the French, who left four thousand men dead in the streets and fields, and under the garden walls. Two days after, General Gazan attacked the suburb on the left side of the river, but four thousand Spaniards in the woods and gardens, although at first dislodged, eventually repulsed him, with a loss of nearly one thousand men. The French then began a regular investment of the stubborn place, and Moncey fixed his head-quarters on the Torero.

Palafox addressed a proclamation to the people of Madrid, in which he promised, when free himself, to hasten to their deliverance. "The dogs by whom I am beset," he said in the true Spanish manner, "scarcely give me time to wash their blood from my sword; but they will find graves ready for them at Saragossa." In a sally on the last day of the year, the French suffered so much, that Palafox, who knew the value of such playthings, ordered every Spaniard who signalised himself in this affair to wear a red ribbon on his breast. The priests and friars behaved as well as the fighting men. Honour, enthusiasm, and duty animated every heart; but, alas! a more terrible enemy than the French had appeared. Pestilence had broken out.

Junot, released from his duties in Portugal by our disgraceful convention of Cintra, now took the command. The new broom swept clean, and the bombardment immediately began. Its chief fire, directed on Palafox's quarters, destroyed the Court of Audience; and the French carried the monastery of San Josef and the bridge of La Huerba. The shells fell so fast that the priests could not even carry the sacrament to the dying. About this time, Don Francisco Palafox, brother of the governor, and a member of the Supreme Junta, slipped down the Ebro in a boat, and in concert with the Marquis de Lazan, organised bands of guerillas to harass the enemy's communications and cut off his supplies; but Mortier eventually attacked and dispersed these zealous partisans. Lannes, Duke of Montebello, sent by Napoleon to reproach and quicken Junot, as Junot had been sent to quicken Moncey, broke at once through the new wall of the town, and resolved to destroy house by house.

Three companies of miners and eight of sappers prosecuted this work night and day, the Spaniards vainly attempting to countermine them. Meanwhile, the bombardment was unnecessarily and cruelly kept up. In forty-eight hours six thousand shells were thrown into the town, two-

thirds of which were soon in ruins. During the whole siege the French expended seventeen thousand bombs. The powder used by the Spaniards had to be made day by day, and, their shot being expended, they had at last to depend on the French cannon-balls, which they collected and returned. On the 27th of January the French effected their first lodgment, and on the 30th they blew up sixty houses, but every inch of ground was stubbornly contested, and Lascoste, the French commander of artillery, was shot. After forty-two days' bombardment, the fighting continued as hard as ever. The inhabitants of the ruined houses took refuge in the cellars of their friends, and, owing to the overcrowding, typhus fever broke out. The soldiers, exposed to deep snow, with scanty food and too little sleep, perished by hundreds. Famine, also, began to appear; for much of the food had been destroyed by the French miners. Thirty fever hospitals were erected in the city, and as one by one they were removed to fresh places to escape the inhuman bombardment, the fever was spread in every quarter. Horrors on horrors accumulated. From the fever alone about three hundred and fifty half-starved wretches died daily. The hospitals were too small, and the medicines were exhausted. The burying-grounds were choked, and grave-pits had to be dug in the streets, into which the dead were tossed without care or respect. Heaps of putrescent bodies, piled before the churches and waiting interment, were often struck and scattered by shells. But the people did not quail. Still the French gained ground. They carried the monasteries of the Augustines and the Las Monicas, two of the last strongholds. Driven from the breaches, the French sprang mines, and so broke in. The Spaniards fought from pillar to pillar, from chapel to altar. While they fought the roofs fell in, but the people still fought madly among the smoking ruins. On the 1st of February things looked so desperate that the leading patriots proposed a capitulation, but Palafox would not yield. Seventeen days more they fought, but the convents of St. Francisco and Jesus were wrested from them by the French. The suburb on the left of the Ebro was also taken. A tremendous fire from fifty guns cleared the way for the assailing columns. The convent of St. Lazarus was breached, the bridge carried, and one thousand five hundred Spaniards captured as they were retreating into the town. The brave Baron de Versage, who commanded, was killed, but many Spaniards escaped in boats, or by running the gauntlet of the bridge. In the mean time, all went ill with the unhappy town, and Palafox, struck by fever, lay insensible in a vault, Don Pedro Maria Ric presiding over the Junta in his stead. Only sixty-two horses were now left for the cavalry; the rest had died of hunger. Of the infantry only two thousand eight hundred remained fit for service. The ammunition was all but exhausted; and if a shell pierced the roof of the Inquisition, the last manufactory of powder would be destroyed. The fortifications were almost utterly demolished, and there was no cloth or sacking left from which sand-bags could be made. The Junta in vain sent the Duke de Villahermosa to Palafox to try and glean from him if there were any hope of succour from without; but the fever had seized his brain. He could only mutter incoherently. His papers gave no hope. Of the Junta, twenty-six were for capitulation; eight, including Ric, the president, against it; but the minority was allowed to prevail. Marshal Lannes, asked to grant an armistice of three days, refused, and the cruel bombardment continued. On the 20th a desperate sortie was made, but made in vain, to recapture two guns which the enemy had the day before taken. It was dark indeed now over Saragossa. The fifty French guns in the suburbs opened fire on the city, and destroyed all the streets near the quays. The Junta was compelled to test the feelings of the brave people. Two-thirds of the city were in ruins. Thirty thousand (half) of the inhabitants, and five hundred officers, had perished, and from three hundred to four hundred people were daily dying of fever. Saragossa was, in fact, destroyed, and the Spaniards' oath was fulfilled. A flag of truce was sent up to the French head-quarters to arrange the terms of a capitulation. Marshal Lannes, always rough and brutal, was at first disposed to insist on unconditional surrender, but Ric declared that rather than consent to that the last Saragossan would die beneath the ruins of the last house.

It was accordingly conceded that the Spanish troops should march out with the honours of war; that the heroic Palafox should be suffered to retire to any place where he might choose to reside; and that all persons not included in the garrison should be permitted to at once quit the city to avoid the contagion. On the 21st the

forts were delivered up to the French, who began immediately to pillage, "according to their custom," says the historian. In this siege the French had expended, with their seventeen thousand shells, one hundred and sixty thousand pounds of powder. The terms of capitulation were shamefully violated by Lannes. The French committed all sorts of crimes in Saragossa, stripped Palafox even to his shirt, and sent him a prisoner to Vincennes; while two hundred and seventy of the prisoners, who were compelled by famine and disease to follow them into France, they butchered on the road. During this gallant and memorable defence no less than six hundred women and children perished by French bayonet or shot.

The Maid of Saragossa fought as bravely as before. "See, general," she said to Palafox, when she took her former station, "I am here again with my old friend." When her husband fell wounded at her feet she discharged his cannon at the enemy to avenge his fall. She also frequently led the sorties, and, sword in hand, with her cloak wrapped round her, fought daily in the streets. When the city surrendered, Augustina was taken prisoner, but, catching the fever, was removed to the hospital, and thence escaped. Manuella Sanchez, another heroine, less fortunate, was shot through the heart. The poor Countess Burita, after escaping innumerable dangers, died of grief on hearing that her daughter had been killed.

MISS PONSONBY'S COMPANION.

In Twelve Chapters.

CHAPTER V. GUMBOGE FLINGS DOWN THE GAUNTLET.

The first visit to the new patient, memorable as it had proved, had by no means yet developed all its results. An hour or two after her master's return, Lyddy reported that little Susan had been met by George on her way to the post-office, where she was taking a letter from Miss Dampier. She was crying her heart out about the loss of the ten pounds, and the accusations against herself and her mother. George, who was a distant kinsman of hers, had tried to comfort the little maid after his dry, stolid, rough kind of way; but even a short story of some bacon that a woman with lemons stole from George's great precedent, Squire Troughton, at Big Bookham, had failed to clear her mind, she not being, perhaps, logical enough to see the strict analogy of the two cases.

"And I say it's shameful," was honest Lyddy's comment; "a cantankerous old creature, driving her servants about, and fancying every one stealing from her. Shouldn't wonder after all if she's put it away somewhere, and forgotten it. The idea of that good little thing stealing. Why, I would trust her with untold gold. No, it's been what George says—and he sticks to it, George does—that it was one of those women who come about with lemons and cabbage-nets, or one of those flash-looking would-be gentlemen, with bright scarfs and sham jewellery, who come round with finery to tempt poor servant girls; or else one of those shivering tramps, who are always moving their shoulders about as if they'd just been flogged. They'd found some garden door open, and taken the opportunity perhaps of Susan's going out on a message to slip up-stairs and hide under the bed, then stolen the note, and got away."

Poor little Susan! This was her first sorrow, and that is a terrible event in all lives.

Over Tom Cringle's Log, one of the most delightful sea novels in the world, the young doctor had been spending the busy man's pleasant hour before bed, and was now writing to his father, a hearty old doctor down in Devonshire. It was his father's seventy-first birthday, and Frank had much to tell him of his progress and his prospects, that would cheer and delight him. Loading his big china pipe, given him by a chum at Heidelberg, Frank alternately smoked and wrote.

It was half past eleven, and Crampton was getting very sleepy. There was no sound, except now and then the ponderous tramp of a policeman past the window that looked on the street, or the rusty chimes in the old church, that staggered drowsily through an indistinguishable psalm tune. Once there came a wild shriek of tipsy laughter from the door of the Norfolk Arms, probably from some of Gumboge's set, breaking up after a long evening at pool, and then the persistent torpid silence of night swamped the whole Crampton world in a sable deluge of peace and dulness. Once after that two rather thick voices stopped outside the window, and expressed strong but rather inarticulate opinions on the liberal ministry, and the necessity of instantly doing something to save the nation. Then Lethe rolled on again with its silent flood. Tresham was just finishing his long letter with an account of his new and probably profitable patient

(not a word about Lilly Dampier—but why should there have been ?), when there came a silent tap at the window. Dandy, dreaming of rats, leaped up and barked furiously. The tap came again, this time so loud that one of the panes of glass cracked. Tresham had a fine temper, but his blood was effervescent, and this roused him. In a moment he rushed at the shutters, flung down the bar, and threw open the window.

"Who's that?" he cried. "What do you want at this time of night? You'd better take care," with other belligerent threats.

The glowing face of Gumboge confronted him. Gumboge was distinctly tipsy; his very hat was drunk, for it was dinted in front, and brushed with extreme care the wrong and fluffy way. He held a long churchwarden's pipe in his hand, with which he had (obeying a sudden and irrational impulse) tapped at the window of the man whom he considered had injured him. He stared stupidly as the window opened, and addressed the universe generally in a stammering, violent, ejaculatory, maudlin, angry way:

"Shabby — shabby. Wouldn't taksh away pashience — shabby. Wouldn't be mean——"

"Look here," said Tresham. "You drunken scoundrel, if you make that noise here, I'll come out and knock you down. Go home and sleep yourself sober."

"Shelf shober!" echoed Gumboge, in a querulous way, instantly changing to rage. "Are you shober? This for you—d—— you, you stuck up humbug—shober yourself. I want shatisfackshun. What did I do wrong? Shent blishter first shing—man at pike. Next shend to me for steshe-shecope, get steshecope, then don't want it—want pillsh. What are you to do? What is—what are you to do? Yah! shabby."

"Look here," said Tresham, firing up, "if you aren't gone before I unbolt the front door, I'll make you repent it."

People were beginning to look out of the windows.

"Mind this," said Gumboge, plaintively; "I'm going to marry that girl at the old lady's. She's to have all the tin, and I'm not going to be cut out by shabby fellow. If you want to fight, come out!"

Tresham's hot hand was already on the key of the front door, when there was a sound of a low, grim voice, and some one laid quiet but violent hands on Gumboge. Throwing open the front door, Tresham looked out and saw the drunken man with his coat off helpless in the grip of Humphries, the superintendent of police. Always taciturn, imperturbable, and regarding innocent people with an air of suspicious toleration (as if it was very doubtful whether they would not soon pass through his hands), the superintendent, upon whom people stumbled at all hours of the night, for he never seemed fatigued, and was always alert and watchful, called a policeman, who looked like a broken down Roman, in a helmet too large for him, and told him to see Mr. Gumboge home, and not to let him stop anywhere to take anything.

Gumboge growing suddenly sociable, was charmed with the attention.

"Jolly good fellow," he said. "Only my chaff, you know. Let's have glasses round. Come and have a bottle of cham.

Up to any hour of night, my boys,
Up to anything you like, my boys!

Charley Humphries 's a jolly good sort—so says every one. You're Charley—you're Champagne Charley. Ha! ha! Very good. Bear no malice. Tresham, tip us your fist. Don't pull a fellow about, Bobby. Good-night all—jolly fellow!"

The superintendent looked after him with a stern look.

"There's one of his pals stopped him at the Norfolk Arms and wants him to have some more. Come, none of that. See him home, Harvey. That's one of his betting chums from Gypsum—been about here lately; gives a false name, as I think—bad lot. Gentleman rider he calls himself. Pretty gentleman. Billiard sharper, I think—plays a great deal too well."

"By-the-bye, Humphries," said Tresham, "what do you make of that robbery of the ten pounds at Miss Ponsonby's?"

The superintendent looked down in a mysterious way at his massive boots, as if he were looking down a well.

"Can't spell it out yet, sir," was his answer. "Ask me a week from now, perhaps then I may tell you a little more about it. It isn't the little servant-girl, I can see that; I don't think it is the other servant girl, and I don't learn anything yet about any lover. It is not for me to say yet who done it, but I may have my thoughts" (here the superintendent winked at the nearest lamp—a grave wink, but still a wink), "but the note is gone" (here the superintendent gave a sudden, sharp, suspicious look at the moon), "and some one took it. I don't say, mind, he or she, but some one. But I must begin my rounds. Good-night, sir. That gentleman won't disturb you again."

"He'd better not," said Tresham. "By-the-bye, how's that arm of yours, Humphries—stronger? That's right. Good-night, superintendent." And he shut the door and locked it.

"That fellow," thought he, as he blew out the lamp and turned off the gas, "to think of Lilly. Caliban and Miranda. Drunken, idle ruffian. No, it can't be—and yet girls like her—poor, dependent—leap at any offer. She may already have encouraged him."

How audacious, how timid love makes us! How the colours of Hope's rainbow blind men's eyes! Did he remember now his recent taunt at poor Lilly's presumed poverty? Then he pulled out the violets, kissed them musingly, and repeated to himself all that Lilly had said. Mr. Frank Tresham was very far gone indeed.

CHAPTER VI. THE OLD SEAT UNDER THE CHESTNUT.

The spear-shaped chestnut leaves, no longer green and transparent, but dry, brown, and opaque, rustled in the October air. The sunshine dappled the great twisted trunks of the chestnut avenue in Summerdene Park, a mile outside Crampton. Upon the netted bark of one tree a squirrel ran, stopping to look down with his large brown eyes as Lilly's brown eyes looked up at him. The dry leaves rustled under her feet as she walked along, looking at the flying shadows on the great chalk bluff that rose a quarter of a mile to the left above the mill, from whence there came a busy mellow rumble, agreeable to the ear. No blue gleam of kingfishers down the stream, no anchored fleet of water lillies, no blossoming hazels now; the year had no time to trifle, it had grown wiser, and was gloomily meditating over its impending bankruptcy.

In the park the rooks were swirling down or strutting about, glossy in the sunshine, while the quiet, stolid sheep nibbled on, caring as little for any of their vagaries as the world does for the whims of poets. The great white clouds that rolled along the clear blue sky were no bad imitation of those of summer. Yet dead leaves were everywhere rustling, blowing, whirling, scattering, as full of pranks as fairies out for a holiday. All these pleasant sights found pleasant accompaniment in the little harmless, plaintive music of a robin, which, perched on the broken spar of one of the huge old trees that some one who had seen Shakespeare might have planted, sang his simple autumn hymn to cheer the dying year. Every now and then a train shot by along the valley, its great breath discharged in huge puffs of white vapour, that remained a moment apparently solid masses in the air, and then melted away up the hill-side.

On a rough massive seat of plain hewn timber, under one of the largest of the trees that stood on a gentle slope at the end of the avenue, at a little distance from the main body of trees, and commanding a view of the road that led through the park towards Gypsum, Lilly rested for a moment to sketch a chestnut which struck her as more beautiful than the rest. She looked very pretty as she sat there, and perhaps the old brotherhood of trees liked to have her among them, for every now and then bough after bough, as the wind passed over them, seemed to undulate with pleasure, and the big fellow over her let a leaf or two fall on her paper, as if in that way playfully to recognise her presence. It was difficult to say in what the special charm of Lilly consisted, but the trees, we suppose, recognised it, wooden-headed as they were. True her eyes were clear and of great depth of colour; true her hair was of the softest brown, turning golden at the temples; true that a delightful little dimple in her cheek seemed always playing at hide and seek with the rest of her face; her beautifully shaped head was charmingly poised on her shoulders, and a smile like a gleam of sunshine was always playing round her mouth; and yet it was none of these things that specially struck you in Lilly. It was rather the fine, sensitive intelligence in her whole expression, and in every movement, that was the talisman that won you, and that disclosed, without the consciousness of the possessor, that there was a nature more than usually lovable, pure, and womanly.

That morning, though the walk had freshened her blood, and given her a slight glow, which added to her beauty, Lilly's face wore an air of anxiety which was unusual to it. Once or twice she closed the book, in the fly-leaf of which she was sketching, and thought, and her little foot, as she did so, moved uneasily among the rough brown chestnut husks that covered the ground before her like little dead hedgehogs. Was she really, as Mercy had cruelly hinted, beginning to feel the fetters of patronage growing tighter round her wrists, or was she only thinking of that pleasant conversation in the twilight, by the parlour fire? Or had some fresh trouble already——? But in the midst of this reverie Lilly was roused by a little terrier

suddenly darting at her in a fury of noisy recognition, manifesting it by snapping and barking at the leaves, and dashing round in circles. It was Dandy. She looked round—Frank Tresham stood there. Her colour deepened just one tinge of rose as she held out her hand to him. He sat down beside her.

"And you told me you did not draw?"

"You don't call this drawing?"

"Yes I do, and a very pretty sketch too. I only wish it was my book it was enriching. Browning, too! I hope you like his poetry?"

Then she opened the book, and they looked over it together. Now looking over a book in this way is one of the pleasantest things in the world, especially in the April days of love. Not that Lilly was in love, of course not. Nor would Tresham have owned any such absurd impeachment; but still he felt intensely happy sitting there, however much the old rector of Bracken might be grumbling at his delay. A soft warmth, as of sunshine, seemed to come upon his cheek, and the breath of cowslips moved around him, but only for a moment, for Lilly, suddenly aware that their faces were rather near together, in the most natural way possible took the book, and laid it on her lap to pick out a favourite line.

"Is not a quiet evening beautifully painted in this line?" she said.

"Where the pale-coloured end of evening smiles,
Miles on miles.

Is not that charming? Oh, it is so pretty!" And she made a sort of movement of her lips, as if she were kissing the poet, and clapped her hands with a thoroughly innocent and natural delight.

Tresham looked with delight at Lilly's eyes, which sparkled with pleasure, and wished he were a poet. He agreed it was beautiful, and, like an admiring disciple, asked her to show him some other favourite passage. He could have listened all day, but, on the whole, he preferred reading the same page together. Lilly, not knowing even the very elements of coquetry, went on in her own way.

"And this, too," she said; is not this perfect?" and she read the first few lines of Pippa Passes:

"But forth one wavelet then another curled,
Till the whole sunrise not to be suppress
Rose, reddened, and its seething breast
Flickered, grew gold, then overflowed the world.

I don't know whether I should like that or not," she said; "but I do. I seem to see the sunshine rising over the world, and everything rejoicing, and gladsome, and happy, like Pippa herself. It is like beautiful music; it is like beautiful painting, and I feel happier as I read it; for do you know I felt just like that this morning when aunt asked me to go to Summerdene and borrow a book of sermons for her of Miss Henry."

"That mill down there," said Tresham; "do you know what it always reminds me of?"

"No. What?"

"Why of that lovely song of Tennyson's:

It is the miller's daughter,
And she has grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewel
That dances in her ear, &c."

And Tresham repeated the verses with perhaps rather more fervour than was required. "But, unfortunately," he said, "the miller is a miserable forlorn bachelor. There is no beautiful daughter there."

Lilly looked down at her foot, and rolled under it a chestnut husk, that ought to have been proud of such treatment.

They both remained silent for a moment. The most perfect confidence and the pleasantest talk had turned, they neither of them scarcely knew why, to a momentary embarrassment. Then Tresham rose.

"I hear some one clanking my chains," he said, "and calling me back to my slavery. I promised to be at Bracken Rectory by twelve o'clock, and it is now a quarter past. I've got to vaccinate the grandchildren, and George is coming round for me with my dog-cart. I sent him with some medicine to Summerdene. Good-bye, Miss Dampier. I only wish I could pass here every day, and every day find you here feeding on the sunshine like Pippa. Good-bye."

"And I too ought to hurry," said Lilly, laughing. So they shook hands and parted. Lilly did not turn her head, but struck out resolutely on the footpath leading to Summerdene. He watched her pass through the great iron gate, then he whistled Dandy, and walked towards Crampton, for Bracken lay the other side of the town.

He had just got out of the avenue into the main road when he saw two persons, about twenty yards before him, coming from Crampton. One was walking, the other was riding a well-bred horse, which was swathed in the usual yellowish-brown body clothes, striped with black and red, and its eyes peeping conspicuously out of the holes cut for them, like a horse at a masquerade. The man on foot (who was no other than that eminent practitioner, Mr. Gumboge) had a puffy red face, wore a black velvet shooting-jacket, and walked

rather lame, while his companion, a lean, dapper horsey man, with a large gilt horse pin in his scarf, had the air of a groom at a training stable.

Gumboge's eyes were bloodshot, his hair was dry and straggling, his whole appearance parboiled, uncomfortable, untidy, and feebly veneered with his usual vulgar flashiness. If the Duke of Mesopotamia had fallen ill just then the advent of Gumboge might not have struck him favourably.

Gumboge stopped when he and Tresham met, and held out his hand with a sham frankness and obtrusive joviality, which was rather repelling than inviting. "I have, by Jove! to apologise, Tresham," he said, "for knocking you up the other night. Served me right if I'd got a hiding. Awfully screwed. Been keeping it up with a fast lot at Gypsum, and lost a good deal of tin. Down on my luck generally. Coming home broke my mare's knees. You're a good fellow. You won't bear malice, now, will you? All gag of mine, you know, about old Miss Ponsonby. Quite right of you going, of course. Made some infernal mistake about the medicines—jumbled up somehow. And all infernal humbug of mine about the companion" (here he turned and gave his friend a look). "Never exchanged two words with the gal. Not my style at all. I was doosed sorry about the whole affair next day, wasn't I, Joey?"

Joey said Gumboge had been very much cut up indeed.

Tresham shook hands (not with exuberant cordiality, it must be allowed), and said he had forgotten the whole matter. It had put him out for a moment. Then they parted.

"Good fellow, but slow," thought Gumboge. "Why that barmaid at the Eclipse would chaff his head off in ten minutes."

Just as the gate of the chestnut avenue slammed after the precious pair, Tresham heard the man on the horse say to a boy who came up from the direction of Summerdene:

"I say, you boy, did you meet a young lady on the road to Summerdene?"

"Yassur," said the boy; "just beyond the avenue."

The moment he said that, the man stooped down, spoke hurriedly to Gumboge, took off his hat, pulled out a letter, threw it back, then thrust on his hat, and galloped off in the direction indicated.

A pang of some strange feeling, scarcely jealousy, yet not unlike it, shot through Tresham's mind. It must be Lilly the man was riding after with the letter. Who had written that letter? It could not be a proposal from Gumboge, who had just denied any acquaintance with her. "What a fool I am," he said to himself. "I'm not in love with the girl, and yet I am indulging in these fancies. It was not Lilly he was riding after. How could any one have known that Lilly, who hardly ever comes out at all, could be on the Summerdene road that morning — at that hour? I must be in love to be such a madman. No, I'm not in love; and, after all, what does it matter if it was for her?" he added.

Ten minutes after this, just past the cemetery outside Crampton, George caught him up with the trap. Tresham got in, and was silent for a moment.

"Left that medicine at Holsworth's?" he said, when he broke silence.

"Yes, sir."

"By-the-bye, George, did you meet that young lady who is at Miss Ponsonby's on the road?"

"Yes, sir, overtook her just half-way to Summerdene."

"Was she alone?"

"Well, sir, she was talking to a groom, who handed her a letter.

"Do you know the man at all?"

"Know him! Yes, sir, it was Joe Parsons. He used to be at Squire Troughton's stables at Big Bookham. He was a bad lot then, and he's no great account now. Is at the training stables at Gypsum as I've 'eard. He'd forgotten me. Well, at whatever stables he is he'll never set his eyes on stables like Squire Troughton's, I warrant him."

"And even if I did like her," thought Tresham, "what right have I to be jealous? No doubt some young lady friend has written to her for books, tatting patterns, or some nonsense; yet it is odd the man should come here to see her; but perhaps some one told him that she was here. Yes, of course, that's it. What a fool I am!"

So lovers torment themselves, and from the crystal battlements of hope toss themselves into abysses of torture.

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