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

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER XXVIII. INQUIRY.

TURNING into another walk, at her left, she approached the house, and saw Maud looking about her, as she stood in the midst of the scarlet and blue verbenas in the Dutch garden at the side of the Hall.

She signed to the old lady, smiling, as she emerged.

"I have been looking all round for you, and almost repenting I had not gone with you. I really began to think he had run away with you."

"Walked away, you mean; he does everything deliberately. He never ran in his life," replies the old lady.

"Well—well—and——" The young lady stole a quick glance over her shoulder to be sure they were not observed, and lowering her voice very much as they got nearer, she continued eagerly, "and tell me what he said. Did he tell you anything?"

"Well, he thinks he told me nothing, and intended to tell me nothing, but he did tell me a great deal," answered Miss Max, smiling shrewdly, "and I don't know whether you will be glad or sorry, but the upshot is, putting everything together, I am nearly certain that your mamma intends marrying, and that he is strongly against it."

"Really!" exclaimed Maud, stopping short, for they were walking very slowly, side by side.

"He did not say so in so many words, mind, but I can't account for what he said on any other supposition," said Miss Max. "Has not she been very diplomatic? I don't know that any living creature but I suspected what those mysterious excursions could be about. You see Mr. Coke jumped to the same conclusion when I told him the facts. I can't understand that kind of thing. What can be the pleasure of going through life, without a human being to whom you ever tell anything you either feel or intend? But she was always the same. She never trusted any one, as long as I remember her."

Maud listened to all this very thoughtfully.

"Tell me, like a darling, what you collect it from; tell me everything he said," after a considerable silence, Maud asked.

So Maximilla Medwyn repeated her conversation with Mr. Dawe with praiseworthy minuteness.

"What do you think of it?" she asked, in conclusion.

"I think it looks extremely like what you say," Maud replied, looking down thoughtfully.

"And do you like it?"

"I can't say I do. It is not a thing I have much thought about—mamma's marrying; but if she wishes——"

She stopped suddenly, and Maximilla saw, to her surprise, that she was crying.

"Pooh, pooh! my dear child, take care," said Miss Max. "Goodness knows who may see you. I had not an idea you cared so much. When I talked to you before about it you didn't seem to mind."

"I don't know; it didn't seem so likely or so near," she said, making an effort, and drying her eyes hastily. "And really I don't know, as you say, whether I ought to be glad or sorry."

"Well, for the present, we'll put that particular inquiry aside, for I want to tell you that horrid one-eyed man has pursued us, and I saw him at the old well, in the dark walk, just now. We must make out

whether he was at the house. I dare say Jones can find out all about him."

Full of this idea they returned together to the house; but no such person, so far as they could make out, had been there.

Jones, again charged to inquire, failed to discover anything.

"You see he has no business, or even pretence of business, at the house," said Miss Max. "I think he's watching you. It can be for no good purpose; and if I were you, I should tell your mamma."

"Why mamma? I mean, why should I tell any one?" She looked uncomfortably at Miss Medwyn.

"I think your mamma ought to know it, and I think it is better that people should know that you observe it."

Their eyes met for a moment, and were again averted.

"Yes, I think I will go to mamma, and tell her," said the young lady. "Shall I find you here when I come back?"

They were in the hall at the time.

"Yes, I'll wait here," she answered.

Lady Vernon was alone in the library. Maud knocked at the door, and her mother's voice told her to come in.

She did so, and found Lady Vernon writing. She raised her eyes only for a moment, and said, with a cold glance at her daughter:

"Have you anything to say, Maud?"

"Only this. I wished to tell you, mamma, that a very ill-looking, elderly man, who has been following my cousin Max and me from place to place, during the whole of our little excursion, evidently tracking and watching us, for what purpose we can't guess, has turned up, to-day, in the grounds. Maximilla saw him at the Nun's Well, in the dark walk, to-day. He is blind of one eye, and pretends to be travelling for a religious society, and his name is Elihu Lizard."

She paused.

Lady Vernon had resumed her writing, and said, with her eyes on the line her pen was tracing,

"Well?"

"I only wanted to ask, mamma, whether you knew anything of any such person?" said Maud.

"A man blind of one eye, what was he doing?" said Lady Vernon, dropping each word slowly, as she continued her writing.

"Following us from place to place, everywhere we went, and we really grew at last quite frightened and miserable," said the young lady.

"I think, Maud, you should endeavour to be less governed by your imagination. There is no one admitted to Roydon who is not a proper person, and, in all respects, of unexceptionable character. You must know that," said Lady Vernon, looking in her face with a cold stare, "and I don't think, within the precincts of Roydon, that you or Max have anything to fear from the machinations of blind elderly men, and I really have no time to discuss such things just now." And Lady Vernon, with imperious displeasure, turned and wrote her letter diligently.

So Maud turned and left the stately seclusion of that apartment, and returned through the other rooms to the hall, where she found Miss Max.

"I don't think she knows anything about him," said Maud.

"If she does not, that only makes it the more unpleasant," answered the old lady.

And they went out again together for a walk.

The interrogation of Lady Vernon had not resulted, I think, in anything very satisfactory. Maud, however, did not venture to renew it; and in their after rambles in the grounds or the village of Roydon, neither she nor Miss Max encountered any more the ill-favoured apparition of Elihu Lizard.

The monotonous life of Roydon went drowsily on.

At the entreaty of Maud, Miss Medwyn prolonged her stay, which she interrupted only by a visit of a day or half a day, now and then, to a neighbouring house; and so a week or more had flown, when an incident occurred which, in the end, altered, very seriously, the relations of many people in and about Roydon Hall.

CHAPTER XXIX. CAPTAIN VIVIAN.

One evening, Maximilla Medwyn and Maud returned from a drive, just in time to dress for dinner. The sun was setting as they descended from the open carriage and mounted the steps.

Compared with the flaming sky and ruddy sunlight outside, deep was the shadow of the hall as they entered. But Miss Max discerned in that shade the figure of a little man standing in the background.

She stopped for a moment, exclaiming:

"Good gracious! Is this you, Mr. Dawe?"

"How do you do, Miss Medwyn?" replied the small figure, advancing into the reflected glow that entered through the hall-door, and revealing the veritable black

wig and mahogany face of that saturnine humorist.

"I hope you are not going already?" said she. "We have not been out two hours, have we, Maud?"

Thus brought into prominence, Maud greeted the old gentleman, who then made answer to Miss Medwyn.

"I stay till to-morrow or next day."

"Well, that's an improvement on your last visit, short as it is," she replied. "Do you know, I had quite made up my mind that we were never to meet in this world again."

"So much for prescience. We are no witches, Maximilla," observed the little gentleman, dryly.

"Though we should not look the part badly, you and I," she rejoined, with a laugh; "one thing I do predict: you'll meet Mr. Tintern at dinner to-day; you were asking about him, you remember."

"H'm!" he responded, with a roll of his eyes.

And with this brief greeting the ladies went up to their rooms, and Mr. Dawe, more slowly, followed to his.

When Miss Maud returned to the drawing-room, Mr. Tintern, having been at the Wymering Sessions to meet his brother magistrates, had not yet arrived. Lady Vernon had not returned, but a stranger was there.

There was no one in the room, except a young man, rather tall and slight. He had brown hair and slight moustache, and was, if not actually handsome, certainly good-looking, and nothing could be more quiet and gentleman-like than his air and dress.

He had the pallor and general air of languor of an invalid. He appeared about thirty. He was leaning on the chimney-piece, and, I think, was actually looking at himself in the great mirror over it, as Maud came into the room.

It was a little awkward, perhaps, there being no one to introduce him; but, notwithstanding, in a little while they were very cheerfully engaged in conversation, though not exactly of importance or novelty enough to very deeply interest my readers.

They had not been so employed very long, when Lady Vernon appeared.

"Captain Vivian, I must introduce you to my daughter."

Captain Vivian bowed.

"You have never been in this part of the world before?" said Lady Vernon. "I think you said so?"

"No. Coventry, I think, is about the nearest point of any interest I'm acquainted with."

"There is a good deal worth seeing near us; but we can plan all that to-morrow. I only hope our fine weather may continue," said Lady Vernon. "Oh, Mr. Dawe! you came in so quietly, I did not see you. I dare say you knew your old room again. You used to like it long ago, so I have put you into it."

"Thanks. Yes—h'm!" said Mr. Dawe, solemnly, with a mysterious ogle, as if it was a good room to conjure in. "I remember it."

Captain Vivian was talking to Miss Vernon.

"How pale he looks!" Lady Vernon almost whispered to Mr. Dawe, her eyes covertly following the young man's movements. "He is fatigued—he is doing too much. Make him sit down."

Mr. Dawe nodded. He approached the young man and said a few words to him.

"Thank you very much, Mr. Dawe; but I really am not the least fatigued. I have not felt so strong I don't know when."

"Yes; but you *are* fatigued, and you must sit down," said Mr. Dawe, raising his brown hand and laying it on the young man's shoulder with an imperious pressure.

But before he had accomplished his purpose, Mr. Tintern, who had arrived, claimed his attention by playfully taking his disengaged hand, and saying:

"You won't look at me, Mr. Dawe. You are not going to cut your old friend, I hope?"

Mr. Dawe looked round. Tall Mr. Tintern stood before him, with a sort of wintry sunshine in his smile, which was not warm; his false teeth and light eyes were shining coldly on him.

Since they last met, Mr. Tintern's hair has grown almost white, but, as it was always light, this does not alter the character of his countenance, which, however, has grown puffy and wrinkled, with an infinity of fine lines, which indicate nothing bolder or higher, perhaps, than cunning.

Mr. Tintern is one of those pleasant fellows who is always glad to see everybody, and whose hand is always open to shake that of his neighbour; who can smile on people he does not like, as easily as he laughs at jokes he does not understand. For the rest, he parts with his condolences more easily than with his shillings, and taking on himself the entire burden of sympathy, he leaves to others the coarser

enjoyment of relieving suffering by sacrifices of money or trouble.

"I never cut my friends," says Mr. Dawe. "I don't think I have five in the world. That is a luxury for people who have money."

"You have some very good ones, out of the five, in this part of the world, at all events, and I only hope you remember them as well as they remember you," replies Mr. Tintern, with a playful effervescence.

Mr. Dawe makes one of his stiff bows; but they shake hands, and Mr. Tintern holds the hard brown fingers of his "friend" longer in his puffy white hand than Mr. Dawe seems to care for.

"Time flies, Mr. Dawe," says Mr. Tintern, with a little plaintive smile and a shake of the head.

"Yes, sir; and we alter very much," answers Mr. Dawe.

"Not all—not all," says Mr. Tintern, who does not acquiesce in the approaches of senility; "at least I can vouch for you."

And he lays his soft hand caressingly on Mr. Dawe's arm.

"H'm!" says Mr. Dawe.

And the interval that follows hears from him no return of the little flattery.

"We have been considering a good many things to-day after our session; putting our heads together. It will interest Lady Vernon," says Mr. Tintern, cheerfully. "By-the-bye, Lady Vernon, a question is to be submitted to you for your decision, and we so hope you will say 'Yes.' We are thinking, if you approve, of moving for a presentment next assizes, for a short road, only three and a half miles, connecting the two roads from the northern end of Wymering, across by Linton Grange, to meet the Trafford road, about a quarter of a mile at this side of Stanbridge. But it is nearly all Roydon property, I need not tell you, and of course all depends upon you, and we were consulting as to how best to submit it, so as to obtain your sanction and assistance."

"I think something ought to be done," says Lady Vernon. "I said so before, and I shall be very happy to talk with my steward about it, and the surveyor can call here; but I'm not so sure that those are the best points. I shall look at the map to-morrow. I traced the line; I'm nearly certain I did what I thought best. You shall hear from me in time for the assizes."

Miss Max had entered, and Mr. Dawe, in his grim, ungainly way, presented Captain Vivian. You might see that the old lady looked a little inquisitively at him, of course very cautiously, and that something was passing in her mind.

There was not much time, indeed, for speculation, and hardly any for a little talk with this young gentleman, for the whole party in a few minutes went away to the dining-room, where they were all presently much more agreeably employed.

Nothing very worthy of record occurred during dinner, nor after that meal, until the gentlemen had followed the ladies to the drawing-room, and then a little psychological discussion arose over the tea-table.

"I have been reading a novel, Barbara," said Miss Max, "and the heroine is made to fall in love with the hero before he has made a sign, and, for anything she knows, he is quite indifferent. Now it strikes me that I don't remember a case of that kind, and I am collecting opinions. Maud says it is impossible. Mr. Dawe, on the contrary, thinks it quite on the cards. Captain Vivian agrees with Maud that the thing could not be, and now I want to know what you and Mr. Tintern can add for the enlightenment of an old maid in her perplexity?"

Now this question interrupted a dialogue very earnest, and spoken very low, between Lady Vernon and Mr. Tintern, who were sitting quite far enough apart from the others to render their conversation inaudible to the rest of the party. That dialogue had been carried on thus:

"You may suppose what it has been to me," Lady Vernon said, "the suspense and torture of mind, although, possibly, of course, it may never be."

"You have my warmest and deepest sympathy, Lady Vernon; I need not tell you," answered Mr. Tintern, closing his eyes, with a look of proper concern, and a plaintive shake of his head, "and I feel very much honoured, I assure you, by your selecting me for this, I may say, very deplorable confidence; and I shall, I need hardly add, consider it a very sacred trust. But you have, of course, mentioned it to other friends?"

"Only to one, of whose good sense I have a very high opinion indeed," said she.

"Mr. Dawe?" suggested Mr. Tintern.

"Certainly not," said Lady Vernon, with a quick glance towards that solemn little figure. "He is about the last person on earth I should speak to on the subject."

"Oh, I see," murmured Mr. Tintern, deferentially, throwing at the same moment

a vast deal of caution into his countenance; "it is a kind of thing, of course, that requires immense circumspection."

"Yes," replied the lady, "and I intended——" It was at this word that Miss Max's inopportune inquiry broke in.

"I did not hear your question," says Lady Vernon, a little bored by the interruption.

Miss Max repeated it.

"Well, Mr. Tintern, what do you say?" she asked.

"Why, really," said Mr. Tintern, working hard to get up a neat reply, and smiling diligently, "where there is so much fascination of mind or of beauty, or of both, as we often see, in this part of the world, I can hardly fancy, eh?—the lady's being allowed time to be the first to fall in love—ha, ha, ha!—really—upon my honour—and that's my answer."

And he looked as if he thought it was not a bad one.

"And now, Barbara, what do you say?" persisted Miss Max.

"I? I've no opinion upon it," said Lady Vernon, with a little laugh; but a close observer could have discovered anger in her eye. "I will think it over, and, in a day or two, I shall be able to aid you with my valuable opinion."

And she turned again to Mr. Tintern, who asked, glancing at Captain Vivian:

"Mr. Dawe, does he make any stay in the country?"

"I don't know. I shall be very happy to make him stay here as long as I can. Captain Vivian, that young man, is his friend, and, it seems, was his ward, and as he could not leave him—he has been ill, and requires looking after—Mr. Dawe asked me if he might bring him here, and so I make him welcome also."

"A very gentleman-like, nice young fellow he is," said Mr. Tintern.

And so that little talk ended.

Mr. Tintern went his way, and the little party broke up, and the bedroom candles glided along the galleries, and the guests had soon distributed themselves in their quarters.

But that night an odd little incident did occur.

Miss Max had, after her usual little talk with Maud, bid her good-night, and her busy head was now laid on her pillow. The glimmer of a night-light cheered her solitude, and she had just addressed herself seriously to sleep, when an unexpected knock at her door announced a visitor.

She thought it was her maid, and said:

"Do come in, and take whatever you want, and let me be quiet."

But it was not her maid, but Lady Vernon, who came in, with her candle in her hand, and closed the door.

"Ho! Barbara? Well, what is it?" she said, wondering what she could want.

"Are you quite awake?" asked Lady Vernon.

"Perfectly; that is, I was going to settle; but it doesn't matter."

"Well, I shan't detain you long," said Lady Vernon, placing the candle on the table. "I could not sleep without asking you what you meant, for I'm sure you had a meaning, by asking me the question you did to-night."

She spoke a little hurriedly, and her eyes looked extremely angry, but her tones were cold.

"The only question I asked was about first love," began Miss Max.

"Yes; and I ask you what did you mean, for you did mean something, by putting so very odd a question to me?" she replied.

"Mean? What did I mean?" said Miss Max, sitting up straight in a moment, so that her face was at least as well lighted as her visitor's. "I assure you I meant nothing on earth, and I don't know what you mean by putting such a question to me."

The handsome eyes of Lady Vernon were fixed on her doubtfully.

"You used to be frank, Maximilla. Why do you hesitate to speak what is in your mind?" said Lady Vernon, sharply.

"Used to be—I'm always frank. As I told you before, there was nothing in my mind; but I think there's something in yours."

"I only wanted to know if you intended any insinuation, however ridiculous. I fancied there was a significance in your manner, and as I could not comprehend it, I asked you to define, as one doesn't care to have surmises affecting oneself afloat in the mind of a friend, without at least learning what they are."

"I had no surmises of the kind; but you have certainly gone the very way to fill my head with them. What could you have fancied I meant?"

"Suppose I thought that you meant that I had made overtures of marriage to my husband before he had declared himself. That would have been untrue and offensive."

"Such an idea never entered my head—never could have—because I knew all about it as well as you did. That's mere nonsense, my dear child."

"Well, then, there's nothing else you could mean, and so I'm glad I came. I believe it is always best to be a little outspoken, at the risk of a few hot words, than to keep anything in reserve among friends, and you and I are very old friends, Max. Good-night. I have not disturbed you much?"

And she kissed her.

"Not a bit, dear. Good-night, Barbara."

And Lady Vernon disappeared as swiftly as she came, leaving a new problem for Maximilla's active mind to work on.

CHAPTER XXX. A VISIT.

In the morning Lady Vernon was more than usually affectionate when she greeted Miss Max.

When the little party met in the small room that opens into the chapel, where, as we know, Mr. Penrhyn, the secretary, officiated at morning prayers, Lady Vernon actually drew her cousin Maximilla to her and kissed her.

"Making reparation I suppose," thought Maximilla. "But there was no occasion, I was not the least hurt."

And by the suggestion involved in this unusual demonstration, good Miss Max's fancy was started on a wild tour of entertaining conjecture respecting her reserved cousin Barbara, and the possible bearing of that curious question upon the sensibilities of the handsome woman of three-and-forty, who had not yet contracted a single wrinkle or grey hair; and I am sorry to say that the measured intonation of Mr. Penrhyn, the secretary, as he duly read his chapter from the First Book of Chronicles, sounded in her ears faint and far away, as the distant cawing of the rooks.

This morning service was now over, and the little party gathered round the breakfast-table.

Seen in daylight, Captain Vivian looked ill and weak enough. He was not up to the walking, riding, and rough out-door amusements of a country house. That was plain. He must lounge in easy-chairs, or lie his length on a sofa, and be content, for the present, to traverse the country with his handsome but haggard eyes only.

Those eyes are blue, his hair light brown and silken, his moustache soft and golden. It is a Saxon face, and good-looking.

There is no dragoonery or swaggering about this guest; he is simply a well-bred gentlemen, and, in plain clothes, as completely divested of the conventional, soldierly manner, as if he had never stood before a drill-sergeant.

Whether it is a consequence of his illness, I can't say, but he looks a little sad.

In a house now and then so deserted and always so quiet as Roydon, the sojourn of a guest so unexceptionable, and also so agreeable, would have been at any time very welcome.

A little time ago, indeed, Maud might have thought this interruption of their humdrum life pleasanter. She had a good deal now to think of.

"What an inheritance of pictures you have," said Captain Vivian. There is a seat outside the window, and on this the invalid was taking his ease, while Miss Max and Maud Vernon, seated listlessly within, talked with him through the open window. "I think portraits are the most glorious and interesting of all possessions; I mean, of course, family portraits."

"If one could only tell whose portraits they are," said Maud, with a little laugh. "I know about twenty, I think, and, Max, you know nearly forty, don't you? And I don't know who knows the rest. There is a list somewhere; grandpapa made it out, I believe. But they are not all even in that."

"I look round on them with a vague awe." He said: "Artists and sitters, so long dead and gone; I wonder whether their ghosts come back to look at their work again, or to see what they once were like. I envy you all those portraits. Aren't you proud of them, Miss Vernon?"

"I suppose I ought to be," replied Miss Vernon. "I dare say I should be if they were treated with a little more respect. But when one meets one's ancestors peeping from behind doors, shouldering one another for want of room in galleries and in lobbies, hid away in corners or with their backs to the wall half-way up the staircase, they lose something of their dignity, and it becomes a little hard to be proud of them."

"Such long lines of ancestors running so far back into perspective!" said the invalid, languidly. "Think of those who look back without a single lamp to light the past! I knew a man who was well born, his parents both unquestionably of good family, first his mother, then his father died, when he was but two years old," Captain Vivian continued, looking down, as he talked, on the veining of the oak

seat, along which he was idly running his pencil. "His fate was very odd. He found himself with money bequeathed to him by his father, and with a guardian who had hardly known that father, but who, I dare say half from charity, the father being on his death-bed, undertook the office. Of course if my friend's father had lived a little longer, the guardian would have learnt from his own lips all particulars respecting his charge. But his death came too swiftly. There was no mystery intended, of course; the money was in foreign stocks, and was collected and brought to England as the will directed, and neither he nor his guardian know as much as they would wish of the family of either parent. So there he is, quite isolated; a good-natured fellow, I believe. It gives him something to think about; and I assure you it is perfectly true. I was thinking what that poor fellow would give for such a flood of light upon his ancestry as your portraits throw upon yours."

"Perhaps he has made it all out by this time," suggested Miss Max.

"I don't think he has," said Captain Vivian.

"And what is his name?" inquired the old lady.

"Well, I'm afraid I ought not to mention his name," he said, looking up. "It does not trouble him much now, I think, and I dare say it has caused him more pain than it is worth. Here comes a carriage," he said, raising his head. "Your avenue is longer than it appears, it is so wide. What magnificent trees!"

"Who are they, I wonder; the bishop or the dean?" said curious Miss Max.

"It may be the Manwarings. We called there a few days ago," said Maud.

"The liveries look like brown and gold, as well as I can see," said Captain Vivian, who had stood up and was looking down the avenue.

"Oh, it is the Tinterns, then," said Maud.

"Chocolate and gold, yes," assented Miss Max. "I hope so much that charming creature, Miss Tintern, is in the carriage. You'd be charmed with her, Captain Vivian."

"I dare say I should. But I am an awfully dull person at present, and I rather shrink from being presented. Mr. Tintern, from what I saw of him last night, appears to be a good-natured, agreeable man?"

This was thrown out rather in the tone of an inquiry; but Captain Vivian did not wait for an answer; but, instead, slowly moved towards the hall-door, and before the Tinterns' carriage had reached the low balustrade of those ponds on which the swans and water-lilies float, he was in the drawing-room.

"I'm ashamed to say, I'm a little bit tired," said he to Miss Max; and pale and languid he did, indeed, look. "And I think till this little visit is over I'll get into the next room, and look over some of those books of prints. You must not think me very lazy; but if you knew what I was a week ago, you'd think me a Hercules now."

So, slowly, Captain Vivian withdrew to the quieter drawing-room beyond this room, and sat him down before a book in the window, and turned over the pages quietly.

In the mean time, agreeable Mr. Tintern has arrived, and his extremely pretty daughter has come with him.

She and Maud kiss, as young lady friends will, with more or less sincerity, after a long absence.

They make a very pretty contrast, the blonde and the dark beauty, Miss Tintern having golden hair and blue eyes, and Maud Vernon large dark grey eyes and brown hair.

So these young persons begin to talk together, while Lady Vernon and Mr. Tintern converse more gravely, a little way off, on themes that interest them more than flower-shows, fashions, and the coming ball at Wymering. Good Miss Max, who, in spite of her grave years, likes a little bit of frivolity, joins the young people, and has her laugh and gossip with them very cosily.

Having disposed of the Wymering ball, and talked over the statue of Mr. Howard in the church a little, and passed on to some county marriages likely to be, and said a word or two on guipure work, and the fashions, Miss Max said:

"I did not see your flowers at the Grange; I'm told they are perfectly lovely. The shower came on, you know; I was to have seen them."

"Oh, yes, it was so unlucky," says Miss Tintern. "Yes, I think they are very good. Don't you, Maud?"

"Yes, wonderful," answers Maud; "they throw us, I know quite into shade."

"I think you are great florists in this part of the world," says Miss Max. "I thought I was very well myself; but I find I'm a mere nobody among you. You have got, of course, that new Dutch hyacinth. It is so beautiful, and so immense—white,

I mean, and so waxen. What is its name, Maud?"

Maud gave the name of this beautiful monster.

"No; I'm sure we haven't got it," answers Ethel Tintern. "I should have liked so to see it."

"We have one," says Maud, "the last, I think, still in its best looks; they are very late. I saw it in the next room; come and see."

In the histories of a thousand men, I suppose it has not happened six times, possibly in that of ten thousand, not half so often, that a young man should be surprised, in a deep sleep, over a book, by two young ladies so beautiful, and in whose eyes he wished, perhaps, to appear agreeable.

When the young ladies had pushed open the door, they stood for a moment beside it talking, and then, coming in, Maud Vernon pointed out the flower they had come to examine.

And, as they looked, admired, and talked, accidentally her eye lighted on the invalid, as he sat in the window, one hand on his book, his book slanting from his knee, and he with closed eyes and head sunk on his other hand, in a deep sleep. She exchanged a glance with her companion, and a faint smile and a nod.

The young ladies returned to the drawing-room; and when they had left the room a very few seconds, the slumbering invalid, without disturbing his attitude, looked after them curiously from the corner of his now half-opened eye, and listened. Then he turned his chair, so as better to avert his face, and, without stirring, continued to listen.

But they did not return. And as Mr. Tintern proposed lunching at Hartstonge Hall, he and his pretty daughter very soon took their leave, and Captain Vivian watched them quietly from the window, as they got into the open carriage and drove away.

"What a nice girl Ethel Tintern is. I like her so very much," said Miss Max.

"Yes," said Lady Vernon, "but I did not think her looking well, did you?"

"Very pretty, but perhaps a little pale," acquiesced Miss Max.

"Very pale, indeed," says Lady Vernon; "when she was going I was quite struck with it. Did you ever see her before, Mr. Dawe?"

"No," answered that gentleman promptly from the recess of the window, where he was reading a note in his often consulted diary.

"I saw you look at her a good deal, Mr. Dawe," said Maximilla, "and I know you thought her very pretty."

"H'm!" said Mr. Dawe, oracularly.

"And I think she observed your admiration, also, for I saw her eyes follow you about the room whenever she fancied no one was looking, and I think there is more in it than you intend us to understand, and that you are a very profound person."

"It is time I should be," said Mr. Dawe, and the gong began to sound for luncheon as he spoke.

THE CITY OF HONEST IMPOSTURE.

Although the word "shoddy" has now taken a recognised place in the English language, and is received as applicable to, and expressive of, anything which is falsely pretentious, there are comparatively few persons who understand what it means, fewer still who know that shoddy is in itself an honest article of trade, openly manufactured, employing its hundreds of "hands," having its quoted price-list and its recognised head-quarters. These head-quarters are to be found at Batley—a town situate between Leeds and Dewsbury, at a junction where the railway branches off to Birstall. Having recently visited this place, and gone over two of the largest mills, we purpose, from the result of our own observation, and by the aid of an excellent local history, published some years since by Mr. Samuel Jubb, himself one of the largest manufacturers, to give some description of the shoddy trade.

The town of Batley is, like most other manufacturing towns in the district, straggling, bare, blank, uninviting. The few shops are mean and poor, and the eye grows weary of the interminable blank walls of the factories, and the tall chimneys vomiting forth the blackest of smoke, while the ear is assailed by the never-ceasing clatter of the steam-engines. Save at the times when the "hands" are trooping to business or to their homes, the streets are almost deserted. There do not seem to be many private or public conveyances, and the only vehicles in the roadway are the long waggons or trucks used for the conveyance of goods to and from the railway. Yet Batley claims to belong to antiquity, and has documentary evidence of its parish

church having been in existence for almost eight hundred years. It was not, however, until the eighteenth century that it attained even local renown, when it became known as a place engaged in the woollen manufacture, for which it was specially suited, both from its position being centrally situated in the immediate neighbourhood of the great markets of Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield, Halifax, Wakefield, &c., and from its possession of a vast reservoir of water, which is necessary for dyeing, scouring, and other purposes, and which is obtainable by pumping from a level some fifty feet below the surface. At that time the principal employment of the inhabitants of Batley consisted in scribbling and carding wool by manual labour; but the name of the person who first produced rag-wool or shoddy, now the staple of its trade, and the date of its introduction, are neither of them properly authenticated. The first shoddy is, however, supposed to have been produced, in the year 1813, by Mr. Benjamin Law.

On our arrival at Batley, we learned from the station-master the names and addresses of two of the principal mill-owners, and after we had satisfied these gentlemen that we were not secret emissaries of trade rivals anxious to pry into the mysteries of their manufacture, but simply in search of reproducible information, we were received with great courtesy, and conducted through their respective establishments. And the first piece of information afforded us was that the outside world is wrong in its general acceptation of the word "shoddy," and of its entire ignorance of the word "mungo." It may be broadly stated that the preparation made from rags is called shoddy, while that pulled out of old cloth and woollen goods is called mungo. Before the breaking out of the recent war, the principal supply of rags and pieces for the preparation of shoddy and mungo came from Germany and Denmark, in which latter country manufactories for the production of rag-wool have existed for the last forty years. At one time America was a great source of supply to the Batley market; but a prohibitory import tariff has caused the demand almost entirely to cease. Batley is now principally supplied with rags, &c., from the rag-merchants in London and other large English towns, who are themselves the customers of the rag and bottle shops and the marine stores, frequented by the poorest of the population. There is also an immense importation of Australian rags, which are looked upon with great favour, and, by some, preferred to any other. The principal rags sent down by the London dealers are "mixed softs," stockings, white flannels, carpets, and a large quantity of army cuttings, namely, serge, flannel, cloth, clippings of various colours, which being new, sound, of good colour and quality, are highly esteemed. From Scotland come old stockings and old rags, from Germany knitted stockings in grey and white, while Austria, Italy, Turkey, and Russia swell the large list. It is scarcely necessary to remark that Ireland is a very rare and small contributor, as her natives generally keep their rags, and wear them at home. Home and foreign rags all arriving in large bundles, are easily distinguishable by those accustomed to dealing with them from the manner in which they are packed. The prices of these rags vary greatly, ranging from five shillings to one hundred and eighty shillings per hundredweight.

The first process that the rags undergo is that of classification and sorting. This is a far more extensive process than would at first be imagined, as they are classified into a variety of colours and qualities, and yield a great number of distinct sorts, "mixed softs" being, it is said, assorted by some dealers into upwards of twenty different kinds. This sorting, in the mill which we first visited, was carried on in a room nearly sixty yards long; those engaged in the process being principally girls and boys. After sorting, the rags are packed in sacks, which are suspended by ropes to the rafters to the ceiling, while their contents are compressed by the simple process of the boys getting into the sacks and treading the rags down with their feet. The rags are then taken direct to a machine, which in bygone days was known as a "devil," but is now called a "swift," a revolving cylinder containing from ten to fourteen thousand teeth, according as it is coarse or fine, the coarser set swifts being used for the manufacture of what are called "soft" rags—stockings, flannels, carpets, &c.—into shoddy; the finer set for tearing cloth into mungo. These swifts, which perform from six to seven hundred revolutions per minute, are fed by boys, whose business it is to heap with rags the travelling web, which brings layer by layer continually up to the teeth, by which they are at once torn to pieces and ground up. All this is speedily vomited forth in thick fluffy flock, soft, textile, and free from

knots. In the rooms in which these revolving cylinders are at work, the air is laden with light fibrous floating particles, which would bring tears into Professor Tyndall's eyes, and which no doubt tend to the propagation of asthma, which is to a certain extent a common disease among the operatives, who otherwise enjoy average health. The refuse of these rags, after lying to rot, is used for the purpose of manuring the hop-producing districts in Kent and Surrey. Some of it is also re-manufactured into coarser flock for the stuffing of mattresses, couches, &c., while from another portion of the refuse is obtained a chemical substance called prussiate of potash, which has been found to be a valuable agent for dyeing purposes.

The flocks are then gathered together and taken to the mixing house, where, after having been sprinkled with oil, the long fibre and the short fibre are mixed together with a small quantity of wool, according to the quality required. Here a large quantity of shoddy, mixed with a small quantity of wool, forms the stuff which army contractors sell as blankets for the soldiers, and here we were shown a thin sleezy kind of lightish brown stuff, which was under order for exportation to the French and German armies, the Batley manufacturers maintaining a strict impartiality in the execution of the orders given by the contending nations. The oil used in this process is generally olive, rape, and Price's patent.

The wool, as it may now be termed, is next taken to the scribbling machine, whence, passing through a series of rollers, it issues in long thick bands, which are then taken to the carding machine, then to the spindles, in which what we originally saw as short, thick, frizzy flock, is spun into long strong yarn. The yarn is then woven into cloth in power-looms, which are mostly attended to by women.

The next process is called milling, or pulling the goods, an important item in the manufacture, and one for the success of which much skill and care are requisite, its object being to pull the cloth to the required substance, and also to cleanse it. Under this process the cloth is damped, and thumped with huge mallets, and is then taken away to undergo what is known as "raising," which is really the bringing forth of the pile, and which is performed either by machinery known as a raising "gig," or by hand.

In the raising gig the natural production known in the country as "teazles," which look like overgrown acorns covered with sharp, strong bristles, are largely used. These teazles principally come from the East Riding of Yorkshire and from France, the band-raising being performed with small instruments full of fine steel wire teeth. The pile is raised sometimes on one, sometimes on both sides of the cloth; then the goods are all taken to the dye-house, where we saw them, some steeped in enormous vats, some hanging on rollers, while the liquor ran through them. After it has been duly dried, the cloth goes through the next and final process of finishing or dressing; its surface is clipped, and brushed, and hot-pressed by machinery, after which it is ready for the consumer.

It is not too much to say, that no cloth is made without some infusion of shoddy; they will tell you at Batley it would not "work" so well, look so well, or be so much thought of. A great deal of the celebrated West of England cloth is manufactured within ten miles of Bradford, in Yorkshire; and an Ulster coat which we were wearing at the time of our visit, and which we fondly believed to be made of Irish frieze, was inspected and handled by one of our entertainers, who, with a grin, declared it to contain a certain proportion of mungo. Apropos of this word, Mr. Jubb gives us a comic derivation. He declares that one of the dealers of the newly discovered material was endeavouring to push the sale of a small quantity, when a doubt being expressed by the bystanders as to the likelihood of his getting rid of it, the purchaser shouted with emphasis, "It mun go, it mun go," and these words are the origin of the name which it has retained ever since. From the same authority we learn that mungo fluctuates in value more than shoddy; its present price being about fourfold what it was at one period. In the early days of its history the price of London mungo ranged over nine or ten pounds per ton, while about ten years ago, the time of Mr. Jubb's writing, it was thirty-eight pounds per ton; the highest price it had ever reached having been forty-three pounds per ton. The first shoddy sales by public auction commenced about twenty years ago, and were then held at the Dewsbury and Batley railway station, but are now conducted in auction-rooms at Dewsbury. There are usually two sales a week, and the quantity falling under the hammer at each is, on an average, about forty thousand pounds, varying in price from one penny to two shillings and sixpence per pound. The war has been of immense service to the Batley manufacturers, and

they used up all the stock they had on hand, and have been even glad to take back and re-work goods which they had previously returned as condemned.

Wages are good throughout the district. Women and boys engaged in sorting, packing, &c., get ten shillings a week, while in the manufacturing departments the earnings vary from one pound to forty-five shillings. The hands are well spoken of by their employers, and are said to be of the most part thrifty, industrious, and intelligent. There is a local newspaper, and a mechanics' institute. Concerts and entertainments are neither rare nor ill-attended. The manual adulteration in which they are constantly employed does not appear to have affected their moral nature, and a life-long residence in the city of honest imposture seems to have had no ill effects on its inhabitants.

STREET SHOWS.

It was a characteristic trait in the nature of Mr. Jonas Chuzzlewit, when he wished to compliment the young lady he admired, that he should have taken her to see shows, like Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's, the public galleries, and such kindred places as the liberality of the nation had thrown open to the public free of all charge. I think a man of genial disposition, but yet of provident habits, might better this suggestive example, and by exerting some watchfulness and diligence, inexpensively treat his sweetheart to something more entertaining than the great monuments of his country. In fact, by beating up and down the public streets, watching his opportunity, he might show her a whole series of entertainments, almost theatrical in character, and do the whole almost as cheaply as Mr. Chuzzlewit did. Being a diligent patroller of the streets, and not confining my partiality, after the Johnsonian precedent, to Fleet-street—a bad theatrical ground—I have come to the conclusion that there are in the community a vast number of such economical pleasure-seekers, well-dressed and well-kept, who enjoy these open-air exhibitions: but who, when the plate, as at a charity sermon, comes round, skulk away, or let it pass. The latter are far more to be respected; those, I mean, who give a sturdy or surly refusal, as if some principle stood in the way; but there is something almost mean in those genteel publicans who stand afar off, looking carelessly, making believe to be waiting for a friend or a cab, snatching a surreptitious joy, one eye on the show, the other questing nervously the showman's deputy and his plate or bag. This latter officer, I note, seems to be trained specially to entrap such skulkers, for he has an art of coming suddenly round the elbow, as if he had come up through a trap; and I note that the cheap spectators are often so startled by the apparition, that from shame and surprise mixed, the lowest currency token is wrested from them.

I own to respecting the men who are engaged in this profession. Your ordinary performers have their own temple, sacred, as it were—their minds are undisturbed; but these players of the pavement have to look warily, as they play, to a hundred other matters—to the police, the waggon, the brougham, the thief, the mud; they have to pitch their voices against the din and roar of an open thoroughfare, and yet as a general rule their performance is always respectable. If there was anything like a common interest among them, which there is not—and there is no reason why in this point they should differ from other respectable professions—they might combine and produce a grand monster entertainment, which would be of a most piquant and singular character. Supposing that the present writer were commissioned to go forth and make the necessary engagements in a day's march, he thinks he could muster all the shows of any mark or respectability. He has a kindly interest in them, and would know where to find them.

I think I would commence my monster performance with those two gentlemen clothed in very decent black, who wheel about the spring hand-cart with the cage, on which the furry and decorated white cat sits comfortably, in spite of crossings and rough macadamisation, and with the air of luxury of a chancellor on his woolsack. I would know where to look for them—say, at the corner of New Burlington-street. Capital I should say was sunk in the show, for the properties are very elegant and almost costly. I own the canaries excite pity, but they go through their task with a seeming alacrity, which checks compassion. Decent black, putting his hand into the cage, takes out one, slips a cap and coat on him, fastening them by mysterious wires, and sets him on the box of a little carriage, claps another behind as footman, slips the heads of two others into simple wire halters, and away the equipage travels. Sometimes the feathered steeds start without their burden, and decent black gets very angry. Then the little white mouse is brought out, ascends a lofty flag-staff,

and descends more rapidly than he ascended, and then is placed in the mouth of my lord chancellor. I suspect the agony of that moment—to both parties concerned—is something exquisite. The terror of the little creature is too painfully revealed, though there is not much power of expression in a white mouse; but the sort of rueful grin on the chancellor, as he is forced to self-denial of his inclinations, of the summary "decree" which he is longing to make, by foreclosure of his fine tusks, but which he dare not, is really grotesque. We breathe again as the victim scampers away—but at the moment a gruff voice says, "Now this won't do, you know," and the curtain has to come down abruptly. "Force majeure," as the French say, is at hand, stiff, Noah's-arkish. Decent black packs up slowly, and we all disperse sadly.

Next I would look for two gentlemen in fleshings, who have really a handsome chest of awful knives, which can be swallowed or thrown in the air half a dozen at a time, with shining plates, glittering bottles, &c., all laid out in the middle of the road. It seems like a small plate-chest. One is the performer, a rather worn creature, the other a very elderly clown, whose jests make one feel sad, or somehow think of the grave, during the rest of the day. He addresses his friend as "Sir," and speaks of him with an enormous reverence and respect. The trials of these two would excite any one's sympathy. They are very bold in their proceedings, and the daring character of their tricks require a large area. Often, just as everything is ready, the course cleared, the performer girding himself with much ostentation of bracing up his muscles, a great wain comes slowly across the scene of the dazzling exploit, the driver aloft and contemptuous, his wheel barely grazing the plate-chest. There is a suspense, and all is clear again, when a whole train is seen approaching — light market-cart, private brougham, coal waggon, &c. — and the drivers, not insensible to such joys, purposely go as slow as they can. One singular exhibition I witnessed here, which is worth recording. The veteran clown announced that his friend had communicated to him that he would throw up a monster potato, "the hoigth of that 'ere house," and allow it to descend upon his skull, a feat to be performed entirely in compliment to the high-class character of the present audience.

"No, sir?" said the veteran clown, lost in reverie and admiration. "This potato? On your head? Why, sir, it would kill any man!"

A grunt intimates that his friend is quite serious.

The veteran clown looks sadly round. "He *will* do it, then, gentlemen. Do you mean, sir, that you will?" and so on.

What followed was more worthy of admiration than the feat itself. The veteran clown, resigning himself to the stern purpose of his devoted friend, then only thought how to make it as easy as possible to his feelings. Conscientiously he could not allow the sacrifice until a united contribution of at least a shilling fell into the arena. This rather cooled public ardour; it seemed so vast a sum. The arts by which it was raised would have helped him on in the diplomatic profession. He entreated, he spoke with scorn, he made as though he would pack up his effects and go—this when threepence had been subscribed. His friend seemed to oppose him, as *he* would be content to do it from his fine feelings and wish to oblige us.

"No, sir, you shall not. I am ashamed to have to ask such a thing—only sevenpence more!"

This was a fiction, much more was required. Tinkle—chink—twopence more. It only wanted threepence now. We had waited so long, lost so much valuable time—hang the fellow! let us have done—so here goes! After all, to see such a feat was worth a few halfpence. Tell split an apple on his child's head, but this patriot would split one on his own, and without an arrow. When the sum was made up, I blush to say, there were signs of a want of faith in the veteran clown; he seemed to say that it was unreasonable to expect human life to be put in peril for that ridiculous sum. A few pennies more, surely. Loud and angry murmurs were heard, and the denunciations of the crowd became so hostile that he felt he could not push the matter further; so he gave way, and added with a pleasant effrontery, as if he had waived part of the bargain, "that he was sure the gentlemen would make it up to them after they had seen the feat." On this the friend brought himself together; and after many flourishings, sent his potato aloft to a vast height, then, folding his arms, prepared to receive it. Down it came, and, with a most disagreeable crunching sound, descended on his bare forehead, where it was split into a dozen fragments. It was really an unpleasant exhibition, and makes us understand the case of the negro recorded by Mr. Hingston, who, for a small sum, would allow any one to hit his head with a stout cudgel.

It would be easy to find, for our show, our Italian friend with the highly-trained monkey on the high little table, to whom he tosses a gun, with which the creature presents arms, and which, to his own mortal terror, he fires off. A broom is presently flung to this highly-educated animal, with which he sweeps an imaginary crossing with a frantic diligence highly amusing; so, too, with the violin which he fiddles on vigorously, and the cymbals which he beats. There is a monotony, however, in his motions, for the result would seem about the same if he swept with his fiddle-bow, or played with his broom. His master seems a grim personage, and we may suspect the private lessons to be of a very stern character.

The odious, blackened Ethiopians, half-tipsified, with their detestable music, whose congenial haunt is at a tavern door, I would not admit to our show on any terms.

Late disastrous events in France have increased our street attractions vastly, and contributed some rather elaborate entertainments to the thoroughfares. Only this morning the rolling of a drum beaten vigorously by a lady in our genteel thoroughfare, has called every servant-maid to the windows. The drum-beater's husband, or guide and friend, has a large cart with a train of rueful-looking goats, a greyhound, and a poodle, all attached, while a huge white step-ladder, a large globe, with other apparatus, are significant of "highly-trained performing" business. The French proprietor makes stirring speeches over his goats, clears a great space pompously, as if about to review an army, and sets his animals to work. The goats look rueful enough in their gaudy scarlet coats, and stand on bottles with great reluctance, whereas the greyhound, showing the superior intelligence of his race, exhibits alacrity. The most comic portion is the grand final "act," when the whole company ascend one side of the step-ladder and descend the other in a procession of the melancholy description, advancing with a sort of agonised precaution, now halting, now advancing, the proprietor stimulating laggards with voice and whip, the greyhound evidently wishing to clamber over the backs of his nervous friends, who stop the way in front. This exhibition was so attractive that a perfect amphitheatre was gradually formed of carriages and carts, while I am convinced that the receipts must have amounted to a very handsome figure.

These suggestions are offered in a deferential spirit, and I think some recognition of this open-air branch of the profession might be gracefully made by theatrical managers.

REGRETS.

If we had but known, if we had but known,
  Those summer days together,
That one would stand next year alone,
  In the blazing July weather!
Why, we trifled away the golden hours,
  With gladness, and beauty, and calm,
Watching the glory of blossoming flowers,
  Breathing the warm air's balm;
Seeing the children like sunbeams play,
  In the glades of the long cool wood;
Hearing the wild bird's carol gay,
  And the song of the murmuring flood.
Rich gems to Time's pitiless river thrown,
If we had but known, if we had but known!

If we had but known, if we had but known,
  Those winter nights together,
How one would sit by the hearth alone,
  In the next December weather;
Why, we sped those last hours, each for each,
  With music, and games, and talk,
The careless, bright, delicious speech,
  With no doubt or fear to baulk.
Touching on all things, grave and gay,
  With the freedom of two in one,
Yet leaving, as happy people may,
  So much unsaid, undone.
Ah, priceless hours for ever flown,
If we had but known, if we had but known!

If we had but known, if we had but known,
  While yet we stood together,
How a thoughtless look, a slighting tone,
  Would sting and jar for ever!
Cold lies the turf for the burning kiss,
  The cross stands deaf to cries,
Dull, as the wall of silence is,
  Are the grey unanswering skies!
We can never unsay a thing we said,
  While the weary life drags past,
We never can stanch the wound that bled,
  Where a chance stroke struck it last.
Oh, the patient love 'neath the heavy stone,
If we had but known, if we had but known!

If we had but known, if we had but known!
  We had climbed the hill together;
The path before us seemed all our own,
  And the glorious autumn weather.
We had sown: the harvest was there to reap.
  We had worked: lo! the wages ready.
Who was to guess that the last long sleep
  Was closing round one already.
With never a warning, sharp and strong,
  Came the bitter wrench of doom,
And love, and sorrow, and yearning, long
  May wail by the lonely tomb.
Oh, keenest of pangs mid the mourner's moan,
If we had but known, if we had but known!

THE DESCENT OF MAN.

There is one little word, of only two syllables, the adverb "therefore," which has exerted an enormous influence on the human mind. By its aid, almost any crude account can be cooked into plausibility; things, perfectly incredible in themselves, can be made pleasant to the sceptical reader. It prepares the mind for, and

softens, the most startling conclusions. You have only to cite undeniable facts, determine the inference you would draw from them, put "therefore" between the two, and the thing is done. Tenterden steeple was unhappily built, therefore we ought not to be surprised at the existence of the Goodwin Sands.

It has always struck the present writer that the acceptability to be accorded to the Darwinian doctrines entirely depends on the value to be allowed to the Darwinian "therefore"—and in no case more than in the Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex. Many men, many minds; some men will be convinced by arguments which other men hold to be insufficient. There are reasonings which every body admits at once to be conclusive, irresistible; there are other reasonings which, though they may set people thinking, and give rise to grave doubts, fail to carry all before them and to fill the hearer with complete conviction.

There are also ideas which, though felt as a shock when first propounded, by familiarity become simply ludicrous, and may even in the course of time be admitted with a languid half-assent. But truth ought not to be so indolently dallied with. To know the truth, it is worth while to summon our energies to ask, whether the "therefore" proposed to us be really so potent as its apostles maintain. In such matters, each person must judge for himself; and he can often be led to make up his mind by a simple statement, unsupported by any argument whatever. Some such statement shall be attempted here.

The object of Mr. Darwin's latest work is to consider, firstly, whether man, like every other species, is descended from some pre-existing form; secondly, the manner of his development; and thirdly, the value of the differences between the so-called races of men. The high antiquity of man has recently been demonstrated by the labours of a host of eminent men, beginning with M. Boucher de Perthes;* and this is the indispensable basis for understanding his origin. Professor Huxley, in the opinion of most competent judges, has conclusively shown that, in every single visible character, man differs less from the higher apes than those do from the lower members of the same order of Primates. The conclusion that man is the co-descendant with other species of some ancient, lower, and extinct form, is not in any degree new. Lamœrck long ago came to this conclusion, which has lately been maintained by several eminent naturalists and philosophers. Dr. Barrago Francesco published, in 1869, a work bearing in Italian the title of "Man, made in the image of God, was also made in the image of the ape."

It is assumed that he who wishes to decide whether man is the modified descendant of some pre-existing form, would probably first inquire whether man varies, however slightly, in bodily structure and in mental faculties; and if so, whether the variations are transmitted to his offspring, in accordance with the laws which prevail with the lower animals? It might also naturally be inquired whether man, like so many other animals, has given rise to varieties and sub-races, differing but slightly from each other, or to races differing so much that they must be classed as doubtful species? The inquirer would next come to the important point, whether man tends to increase at so rapid a rate, as to lead to occasional severe struggles for existence; and consequently to beneficial variations, whether in body or mind, being preserved, and injurious ones eliminated. Do the races or species of men, whichever term may be applied, encroach on and replace each other, so that some finally become extinct? But those considerations, which must most of them be answered in the affirmative, are set aside for a time, in order to show, first, how far the bodily structure of man shows traces, more or less plain, of his descent from some lower form.

It is notorious that man is constructed on the same general type or model with other mammals. All the bones in his skeleton can be compared with corresponding bones in a monkey, bat, or seal. So it is with his muscles, nerves, blood-vessels, and internal viscera. Man, moreover, is liable to receive from the lower animals, and to communicate to them, certain diseases, as hydrophobia, variola, and glanders; and this fact proves the close similarity of their tissues and blood, both in minute structure and composition, far more plainly than does their comparison under the best microscope, or by the aid of the best chemical analysis. Monkeys are liable to many of the non-contagious diseases to which we are subject—to catarrh, with its usual symptoms, often degenerating into consumption; to apoplexy, inflammation of the bowels, and cataract in the eye. Medicines produce the same effect on them as on us. Many kinds of monkeys have a

* See The Age of Stone, ALL THE YEAR ROUND, First Series, vol. xx., p. 394.

strong taste for tea, coffee, and spirituous liquors; they will also smoke tobacco with pleasure. Strong drink makes them tipsy, with a next day's headache following the excess. An American monkey, after getting drunk on brandy, would never touch it again, and thus was wiser than many men.

Now what do these facts prove? Our "relationship" to them, as Mr. Darwin expresses it, thereby implying our common descent from some primeval monkey ancestor; or simply that brutes have limbs and organs analogous to ours, and are made of flesh and blood? But it is not easy to conceive how they should be otherwise constituted, or of what else they should be made, living as they do on the same earth and in the same media as ourselves, and sustaining their life by breathing, eating, and drinking. Mr. Darwin claims for brutes a brotherhood with man, by the same plea with which Shylock argues for the common nature of Jews and Christians.

"Hath not a brute eyes? Hath not a brute hands (or their analogous substitutes), organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases; healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh (or something like it)? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?"

Animals, to complete the parallel, notoriously indulge in revenge; the elephant especially is known to do so. Many anecdotes, probably true, have been published on the long-delayed and artful revenge of various animals. The accurate Rengger and Brehm state that the American and African monkeys which they kept tame, certainly revenged themselves.

The progress of our embryonic development is adduced as evidence of the orgin of man. The human embryo, at a very early period, can hardly be distinguished from that of other members of the vertebrate kingdom. At a somewhat later period, when the extremities are developed, the feet of lizards and mammals, the wings and feet of birds, no less than the hands and feet of man, all arise from the same fundamental form. It is quite in the later stages of development that the young human being presents marked differences from the young ape. Without question, the early stages of the development of man are identical with those of the animals immediately below him in the scale: without a doubt, in these respects, man is far nearer to the apes than the apes are to the dog. And now for the grand inference. Every individual human being, before actual birth, passes through forms analogous to those of the lower animals; therefore, the whole human race has passed through those inferior forms, until it finally became man. But is the sequitur strictly logical? Is it so inevitable as to admit of no demur?

Of the same value, but no more, are the considerations derived from the presence of rudimentary organs. Not one of the higher animals can be named which does not bear some part in a rudimentary condition; and man forms no exception to the rule. Rudimentary organs are either absolutely useless, or they are of such slight service to their present possessors, that it is denied they could be developed under the conditions which now exist. Rudiments of various muscles have been observed in many parts of the human body; and not a few muscles which are regularly present in some of the lower animals, can occasionally be detected in man in a greatly reduced condition. Every one must have noticed the power which many animals, especially horses, possess of moving or twitching their skin. This is effected by the panniculus carnosus. Remnants of this muscle in an efficient state are found in various parts of our own bodies; for instance, on the forehead, by which the eyebrows are raised.

Some few persons have the power of contracting the superficial muscles on their scalps; and those muscles are in a variable and partially rudimentary condition. M. A. de Candolle knows a family, in which one member, the present head of the family, could, when a youth, pitch several heavy books from his head by the movement of the scalp alone; and he won wagers by performing this feat. His father, uncle, grandfather, and all his three children, possess the same power to the same unusual degree. A distant cousin resides in another part of France, and on being asked whether he possessed the same faculty, immediately exhibited his power. This case offers a good illustration how persistently an absolutely useless faculty may be transmitted.

The muscles which serve to move the external ear, which also belong to the system of the panniculus, are in a rudimentary condition in man; they are also variable in development, or at least in function. Mr. Darwin has seen one man

who could draw his ears forward, and another who could draw them backward; one celebrated medical lecturer (was it not Abernethy?) used to amuse his pupils by exhibiting to them the movements of his ears. It is supposed to be probable that most of us, by often touching our ears, and thus directing our attention toward them, could, by repeated trials, recover some power of movement. But no man possesses the least power of erecting his ears—the one movement which might be of use to him. The ears of the chimpanzee and orang are curiously like those of man, and the keepers in the Zoological Gardens assert that those animals never move or erect them. Why these animals, as well as the progenitors of man, should have lost the power of erecting their ears, we cannot say. It may be that, owing to their arboreal habits and great strength, they were but little exposed to danger, and so during a lengthened period moved their ears but little, and thus gradually lost the power of moving them. This would be a parallel case with that of those large and heavy birds, which from inhabiting oceanic islands have not been exposed to the attacks of beasts of prey, and have consequently lost the power of using their wings for flight. Some monkeys, too, exhibit a peculiar structure—a vestige of formerly pointed ears—which occasionally reappears in man.

It appears as if the posterior molar or wisdom-teeth were tending to become rudimentary in the more civilised races of men. These are rather smaller than the other molars, as is likewise the case with the corresponding teeth in the chimpanzee and orang; and they have only two separate fangs. They do not cut through the gums till about the seventeenth year, and they are much more liable to decay, and are earlier lost, than the other teeth. In the Melanian races, on the other hand, the wisdom-teeth are usually furnished with three separate fangs, and are generally sound. Professor Schaaffhausen accounts for this difference between the races by "the posterior dental portion of the jaw being always shortened" in those that are civilised. This shortening Mr. Darwin attributes to civilised men habitually feeding on soft, cooked food, and thus using their jaws less. It is becoming quite a common practice in the United States to remove some of the molar teeth of children (English parents often do the same with their young folks' incisors) as the jaw does not grow large enough for the perfect development of the normal number.

It is an interesting fact that ancient races of men more frequently present structures which resemble those of the lower animals, than do the modern races. One chief cause seems to be, that ancient races stand somewhat nearer than modern races, in the long line of descent to their romote animal-like progenitors.

In order to understand the existence of rudimentary organs, we have only to suppose that a former progenitor possessed the parts in question in a perfect state, and that, under changed habits of life, they became greatly reduced, either from simple disuse or through the natural selection of those individuals which were least encumbered with a superfluous part.

Thus we can understand how it has come to pass that man and all other vertebrate animals have been constructed on the same general model; why they pass through the same early stages of development; and why they retain certain rudiments in common. Consequently, we ought frankly to admit their community of descent. It is only our natural prejudice, and that arrogance which made our forefathers declare that they were descended from demi-gods, which leads us to demur to this conclusion. But the time, Mr. Darwin predicts, will before long come, when it will be thought wonderful that naturalists, who were well acquainted with the comparative structure and development of man and other mammals, should have believed that each was the work of a separate act of creation.

Mr. Darwin's Comparison of the Mental Powers of Man and the Lower Animals, is more amusing, but not a bit more conclusive, to the present writer, in establishing the development of man from some lower form. It is full of matter to overflowing; but a good many weak arguments, put cumulatively together, do not make one strong argument. Circumstantial evidence as to facts and deeds may carry all before it by its fulness. Circumstantial reasoning is little worth; to be convincing, it must be complete. Logic admits of no half-measures; it either proves all, or nothing at all. Not every reader of the Descent of Man will admit that it has proved all it tries to prove.

That comparison is made solely to show that there is no fundamental difference between man and the higher mammals in their mental faculties. The variability of the faculties in the individuals of the same species, is noted as an important point in his favour. And indeed it is the unanimous opinion of all who have long attended to

animals of many kinds, including birds, that the individuals differ greatly in every mental characteristic.

The lower animals, like man, manifestly feel pleasure and pain, happiness and misery. Happiness is never better exhibited than by young animals, such as puppies, kittens, and lambs, when playing together, like our own children. Even insects play together, as has been described by P. Huber, who saw ants chasing and pretending to bite each other, like so many puppies.

It is a well-established fact that the lower animals are excited by the same emotions as ourselves. Terror acts in the same manner on them as on us, causing the muscles to tremble, the heart to palpitate, and the hair to stand on end. Suspicion, the offspring of fear, is eminently characteristic of most wild animals. Courage and timidity are extremely variable qualities in the individuals of the same species, as is plainly seen in dogs.

We see maternal affection exhibited in the most trifling details; thus Rengger observed an American monkey carefully driving away the flies which plagued her infant; and Duvancel saw a hylobates washing the faces of her young ones in a stream. So intense is the grief of female monkeys for the loss of their young, that it invariably caused the death of certain kinds kept under confinement by Brehm in North Africa. Orphan monkeys were always adopted and carefully guarded by the other monkeys, both male and female. One female baboon had so capacious a heart, that she not only adopted young monkeys of other species, but stole young dogs and cats, which she continually carried about. An adopted kitten scratched this affectionate baboon, who certainly had a sharp intellect; for she was much astonished at being scratched, and immediately examined the kitten's feet, and without more ado bit off the claws. As Whewell has remarked, "Who that reads the touching instances of maternal affection, related so often of the women of all nations, and of the females of all animals, can doubt that the principle of action is the same in the two cases?"

Allowing that the principle of action is the same, does it thence inevitably follow that the ancestry is the same, in the two cases?

Most of the more complex emotions are common to the higher animals and ourselves. Every one has seen how jealous a dog is of his master's affection, if lavished on any other creature; the same fact is observed with monkeys. This shows that animals not only love, but have the desire to be loved. Animals manifestly feel emulation. They love approbation or praise; and a dog carrying a basket for his master exhibits in a high degree self-complacency or pride. A great dog scorns the snarling of a little dog, and this may be called magnanimity. Several observers have stated that monkeys certainly dislike being laughed at; and they sometimes invent imaginary offences. In the Zoological Gardens there was a baboon who always got into a furious rage when his keeper took out a letter or book and read it aloud to him.

Hardly any faculty is more important for the intellectual progress of man than the power of attention. Animals clearly manifest this power, as when a cat watches by a hole and prepares to spring on its prey. Wild animals sometimes become so absorbed when thus engaged, that they may be easily approached. Mr. Bartlett has furnished a curious proof how variable this faculty is in monkeys. A man who trains monkeys to act, used to purchase common kinds from the Zoological Society at the price of five pounds for each; but he offered to give double the price, if he might keep three or four of them for a few days, in order to select from. When asked how he could possibly so soon learn whether a particular monkey would turn out a good actor, he answered that it all depended on their power of attention. If when he was talking and explaining anything to a monkey, its attention was easily distracted, as by a fly on the wall or other trifling object, the case was hopeless. If he tried by punishment to make an inattentive monkey act, it turned sulky. On the other hand, a monkey which carefully attended to him could always be trained.

It is almost superfluous to state that animals have excellent memories for persons and places. A baboon at the Cape of Good Hope recognised Sir Andrew Smith with joy after an absence of nine months. Even ants, as P. Huber has clearly shown, recognised their fellow-ants belonging to the same community after a separation of four months.

Imagination is one of the highest faculties of man. By this faculty he unites, independently of the will, former images and ideas, and thus creates brilliant and novel results. Dreaming gives us the best notion of this power. As Jean Paul Richter says, "The dream is an involuntary art of poetry." As dogs, cats, horses and probably all the

higher animals, even birds (some birds sing in their sleep) have vivid dreams, (and this is shown by their movements and voice), we must admit that they possess some power of imagination.

Reason, it will be admitted, stands at the summit of the faculties of the human mind. Few persons any longer dispute that animals possess some power of reasoning. It is a significant fact that, the more the habits of any particular animal are studied by a naturalist, the more he attributes to reason, and the less to unlearnt instincts. Dr. Hayes in his work on the Open Polar Sea, repeatedly remarks that his dogs, instead of continuing to draw the sledges in a compact body, diverged and separated when they came to thin ice, so that their weight might be more evenly distributed. This was often the first warning and notice which the travellers received that the ice was becoming thin and dangerous.

Mr. Colquhoun winged two wild-ducks, which fell on the opposite side of the stream; his retriever tried to bring over both at once, but could not succeed. She then, though never before known to ruffle a feather, deliberately killed one, brought over the other, and returned for the dead bird.

It has been often said that no animal uses any tool; but the chimpanzee in a state of nature cracks a native fruit, somewhat like a walnut, with a stone. Rengger easily taught an American monkey thus to break open hard palm-nuts, as well as boxes. Another monkey was taught to open the lid of a large box with a stick, and afterwards it used the stick as a lever to move heavy bodies. In the Zoological Gardens, a monkey which had weak teeth, used to break open nuts with a stone; and after using the stone, hid it in the straw, and would not let any other monkey touch it. Here, then, we have the idea of property; but this idea is common to every dog with a bone, and to most or all birds with their nests.

The Duke of Argyll considers that the fashioning of an implement for a special purpose forms an immeasurable gulf between man and the brutes. But Sir J. Lubbock suggests that when primeval man first used flint-stones for any purpose, he would have accidentally splintered them, and would then have used the sharp fragments. From this step, it would be a small one to intentionally break the flints, and not a very wide step to fashion them. In breaking the flints, sparks would have been emitted, and in grinding them, heat would have been evolved: thus the two usual methods of obtaining fire may have originated. The anthromorphous or man-shaped apes, build for themselves temporary platforms on which to take rest and sleep; the orang is known to cover itself at night with the leaves of the pandanus. In these habits Mr. Darwin sees the first steps toward some of the simpler arts; namely, rude architecture and dress, as they arose amongst the early progenitors of man.

Animals possess an approach to language. A Paraguayan monkey, when excited, utters at least six distinct sounds, which excite in other monkeys similar emotions. The sense of beauty has been declared to be peculiar to man. But the bower-birds, by tastefully ornamenting their playing passages with gaily coloured objects, as do certain humming-birds their nests, give evidence that they possess a sense of beauty. Well and good, granting all this, and more, what is the inference? Does similarity of mind and affections necessarily imply community of origin? For that is the grand question at issue. Granting that the difference in mind between man and the higher animals, great as it is, is certainly one of degree and not of kind, is it an inevitable consequence that the possessor of the higher intellect, man, should be an improved descendant of the possessor of the lower intellect, a man-shaped ape? Let the inquirer carefully read the book—it is not hard reading—which is the crowning life-work of an amiable, honest, and most painstaking savant. After reading it, let him ask himself, "Does this clever book impress with the conviction that it gives the true and veritable history of the Origin and Descent of Man?"

IN DANGER IN THE DESERT.

In the spring of 18—, I was intrusted by government with some despatches of the greatest importance, to be carried from Damascus to the English political agent at Bagdad. The journey from Syria to Chaldea was, I knew from experience, a perilous one, whether performed on camel or horse, and with whatever escort; and, even if uninterrupted, would take me six full days. I was an old hand, and had not lived for months among Arab tribes without knowing that Russian spies, French agents, and Turkish robbers (in which compre-

hensive word I include all Turkish officials of whatever rank) would certainly brew me some trouble by the way, if they caught even the faintest inkling of the object of my journey. So I prepared accordingly.

The more poor, wretched, and forlorn a Desert traveller looks, the more likely he is to reach the end of his journey in safety. The Bedouin sees showy dresses, fine horses, and well-filled purses, as far off as the vulture can see a dead gazelle. Thoroughly impressed with this fact, the day before my departure I ferreted out the most dingy rag-shop in the narrowest and dirtiest street of the most filthy quarter of all Damascus. Seated there, cross-legged, beside the one-eyed, hunch-backed proprietor, I wrangled with him for two good hours over a ragged robe, patched with as many colours as Benjamin's garment. For this thing of shreds and patches I paid the enormous sum of twenty piastres, or about half a crown English, and took care to get a formal receipt, flourished in goodly Arabic, the blessing of the pilgrim who kept the stall being thrown into the bargain. In addition I bought an enormous dirty red turban as big as a prize pumpkin, beneath which my long black hair fell down twelve inches long. I took care also to provide myself secretly with two little Derringer revolvers, and I further laid in two pounds of fine snuff, several cases of powder, some quinine, and a large bottle of castor-oil for the use of some Arab workmen employed in the town near Bagdad, to which I was ultimately destined. I next hired three strong camels, and two camel-drivers, trusty Arabs, outlaws from some Desert tribe. My last step was one that may seem a singular one to my readers; but it was well intended, and it proved my salvation. After dusk I went to a Turkish officer whom I had known for years, and, to his infinite astonishment, borrowed a pair of handcuffs. All these arrangements completed, I presented myself before Her Majesty's representative, and from him I received every possible assistance in carrying out the minor arrangements for my dangerous undertaking.

At six A.M., while the city was still only half awake, I, with my two camel-drivers, started for the house of an English lady in the suburbs, who had kindly undertaken to store all my heavier luggage till I returned. This extraordinary woman, the modern Lady Hester Stanhope of Arabia, has been married no fewer than seven times. Her first husband was a well-known English nobleman; the present is an Arab sheik, the chief of a powerful Bedouin tribe between Bagdad and Damascus. Shaking hands with Lady ——, I remounted my camel, and pushed on straight for Tadmor, once Palmyra, the magnificent city of palaces, but now a ruined heap of broken pillars, the abode only of the jackal and the snake. We had scarcely ridden a mile through the palm-groves and corn-fields before a clatter of quick hoofs made me look round, and a sight fitted for a land of romance, mystery, and enchantment met my eyes. The lady I had just left, escorted by a gentleman, who proved to be a Knight of Malta, came galloping after me to guard me half way to Tadmor. It was one of the sudden, generous, and chivalrous caprices of this strange person, whose heart misfortunes and faults had still left warm, kindly, and full of womanly tenderness. Her body-guard was as strange a one as if she had been an enchantress of the times of Al Raschid. It consisted of half a dozen thorough-bred Bedouin colts of the royal race; they were without saddles or bridles, and were playing and skimming round her, like butterflies round a flower. Beautiful creatures, light-footed as deer, playful as monkeys, they chased each other round their mistress, and the moment she called them by name, stood stock-still in a wondering but obedient circle, or came thrusting their noses into her hand for the customary cakes. To some of those pets she had given Arab names, but others were christened, playfully or sarcastically, after English celebrities. Two of the finest of her equine attendants were Palmerston and Pitt, the most ill-tempered and kicking was Ellenborough.

We arrived at night at a village, outside which my servants pitched our tents, which were easily built up with a sheet or two, and a few palm-sticks; and there, like gipsies or Irishmen at a fair, we had our meal and our coffee. Before long the beauty of the lady's escort began to attract attention.

The village being on the outskirts of the Desert, the men were nearly all excellent judges of horse-flesh, and they at once set us down as horse-stealers, on our way to sell our spoil to the Bedouins. In vain we assured them that the colts were not to be sold. Still they kept asking the price of this and that one, and patting and pinching them with a true horse-dealer's unction, believing my strenuous denials to be nothing but the coquetry generally practised by all

dealers on would-be purchasers. At last I quieted my somewhat troublesome friends by getting them in crowds round me, and telling them the latest news from Europe, and assuring them, to their infinite delight, that the Turkish government would not last long.

I need scarcely say that for the lamb we eat, the dates we needed, the milk, honey, and the corn for the camels and horses, we paid as liberally and as scrupulously as if we had been in Europe. This seems a foolish fact to mention, but in that Syrian village such a proceeding was by no means a matter of course. So little, indeed, a matter of course, that the whole village was roused by the news of such justice and generosity. A great surprise awaited us, which impressed this astonishment sufficiently upon us. After supper, in the cool of the evening, I was sitting at my door, when I heard in the distance drums and dervish flutes approaching; presently, behind a crowd of excited Arabs, waving sticks and swords, came a litter borne by six people, and on the litter, like a prisoner on a stretcher, lay a very old white-bearded man, the sheik of the village. He was fourscore and ten he told me, and he had never before known any traveller who came there to pay for anything he took. He had, therefore, ordered his servants to carry him before he died, to see the wonderful man who paid his way, so that he (the sheik) might give him his blessing, and then return home and depart in peace.

The old man spoke well and wisely. He had reflected much, though all his life confined to so narrow a sphere. He said to me, with much pathos: "I have seen nothing in this world but wickedness. The Turks seize all we have in the name of Allah and the sultan. I am very old, fourscore and ten, nearly blind, and dying fast, yet I would make them bring me here to see the man who paid for what he and his horses and camels wanted, for I never saw a man before who really feared Allah and showed justice to his fellow-man." He was certain I could not be a Turk, he knew I was not an Arab — of what nation was I?

I replied, smiling, that I found it difficult to tell him, for I was born in Ireland, educated in Rome, and brought up in England.

He replied, that England must be a glorious country, where, though a woman governed, every one could obtain justice. "Here we," said he with a sigh, "poor wretches, on the frontier of the Desert, in a land of barbarism, although living between two of the most ancient cities of the East, are slaves from our birth to our grave. We are governed in the name of the sultan, and we are robbed in his name. The Turks reduce us to beggary and our children to shame. There is no redress. Old and respected as I am," added the old sheik, "if I were to dare to petition at Damascus or Bagdad against any acts of injustice, in three days the village would be razed to the ground, and I should, perhaps, be beaten to death, in spite of all the men I could arm. Yes," said the old man, his eyes lighting up with almost youthful fire, "it will be a happy day for Syria when the Russian legions cross the frontier, and summon us all to rise, for the Turks are only fit to be slaves, and the day of their fall must come."

The next morning at daybreak I fired a pistol as a signal for starting. Lady —— was asleep, surrounded by her horses, her tent-door guarded by the gallant Maltese chevalier, who carried a drawn sword in his hand. My first proceeding was to wash my face with water in which a lemon had been squeezed, the best of all precautions, next to the dry Desert air, against ophthalmia. After breakfast I supplied myself and my two camel-drivers with sufficient bread, water, grain, cheese, and dates for six days. We were soon ready to leave the village for all the dangers of the lonely, melancholy waste, that has known no change since the Creation. But already my enemies were on my track. Two Turks, French and Russian spies, accompanied by a renegade Arab, had made their appearance in the village, and changing their horses for camels, pushed on for the Desert, to give notice, as I afterwards found to my cost, of my approach. I suspected them, but I merely exchanged the ordinary Oriental salutations as they passed and said nothing. Off they strode, and disappeared in the burning sunshine.

At eight o'clock I parted from Lady ——, and proceeeded on my way, my faithful compass my only guide. We soon left behind us the village, our camels starting at the rate of about three miles an hour, which they quickened, as they acquired confidence and a knowledge of the ground, to about four miles an hour. At the third hour we turned off the right track, about five miles to the right, in order, if possible, to overtake the spies, or at least to elude the

vigilance of others who might be behind us. About five o'clock all habitations of man, all green or golden patches of sesame, millet, or oats began to disappear, and half an hour before sundown we reached the outskirts of the actual Desert, by no means a mere plain of sand, but a grey ocean, with moss and thorny shrubs that seemed to float upon its surface.

That I may not appear to exaggerate in the smallest degree the dangers into which I really fell, I must here explain to my readers that the trusty servants whom Lady —— had recommended to me were not outlaws in a bad sense. The Bedouins expel men from their tribes for the violation of their most trifling laws. They would expel an Arab, for instance, for contracting himself to a daughter of the tribe without her father's consent, or a a youth who, discontented with a promised dowry, contracted himself to another maiden. His life being in danger for these not very tremendous sins, a man so compromised generally takes refuge in flight. It is this reason why there are so many Arabs now living in stone houses on the shores of the Persian Gulf, who have abandoned the customs of the race of Ishmael.

Of this class of more or less harmless Bedouin outlaws, Damascus contains some thousands. But the worst robbers and murderers in the Desert are the outlaws of the outlaws, rascals expelled from the stationary Arabs, who then turn wild and ride forth into the Desert to live by bloodshed and murder. The real Bedouin, born and bred in the Desert, is seldom cruel except to the Turk, and then only in retaliation for old cruelties, or to satisfy old grudges.

After pushing three miles in the straight course to Tadmor, I turned about a mile from my course and settled for the night, making holes about three feet deep, according to the Desert custom, for the fires, so that our pursuers, if there were any, should not see the flame by night. We set up our tents with spears, as the night air in the Desert, even in summer, is cold, especially when the wind is blowing from the Persian Gulf. The night dews also are very heavy. We then "hobbled" our camels, took some food, and went to sleep. After four hours' rest we started again, and continued without interruption till noon the next day; we then again alighted, prepared our fires to enjoy our usual coffee, having first fed our camels, and given them a bottle of English beer each, from a small stock I had brought with me from Beyrout. After two hours' rest we proceeded about three miles, till we reached a broad tract of damp sand, stretching for a space of about twenty miles long and twenty broad. Certain that I should find running water, I got off my camel and dug my spear down a depth of about nine feet, but no water would come, though the moisture clearly enough proved that it was to be found at no great distance.

At first, to my surprise I saw no animals here, where I should have expected gazelles to be numerous, but after a few minutes a large hawk flashed between my camel and that of one of my Arabs. At the same moment I heard a hare screaming like a child. The female hawk was up in the air, about fifty yards over head, watching the prey, ready to swoop down if it cowered, or to turn it back to its pursuing mate. The poor frightened hare, seeing death near, scuttled into a hole in the sand for protection; but, poor thing, she was out of the frying-pan into the fire, for she reappeared in a moment, and fell dead close by me. She had been bitten by a snake. In an instant I was off my camel digging up the hole with my spear, and soon secured the snake in a bag, thinking it might be of some use to me hereafter. I firmly believe my poor Arabs thought me mad for troubling myself at all about either hare or snake. Very soon after this things began to look black, for we came on fresh camel tracks, both in front of us and to the right of us. The spies had been too quick for me. The tracks were fresh, although the wind was blowing, a sure proof that they were not far before us, probably on their way to the wells at a Slebi station, so I pushed on, as once at the wells, no one dare molest us.

These Slebis are a mysterious people, and no one has yet discovered from whom they are descended. In fact, they are neither Bedouins, Turks, nor Jews. There are none of the lost tribes among them. They are neither Mahomedans nor devil worshippers, but worship the one God. They neither rob nor plunder, but dwell in stationary tents, possess vast flocks of white and black sheep, and seldom fight, except, occasionally, among themselves. These good people are most hospitable, and devote their lives to maintaining the wells for the use of travellers. The only wants of these simple-hearted people are grass and water. They have no chiefs. They are the missionaries of the Desert, a brother-

hood self-organised to relieve distressed travellers, especially Europeans.

We spent the night with these worthy people, whom even robbers will not molest, and after filling our bags with water and grain for the camels, at three o'clock in the morning we steered straight for Bagdad. We rode on unmolested, and neither saw nor heard anything of the spies or of our pursuers. We were not, however, to escape, and we had not gone far before we came upon fresh tracks in the sand. Our enemies were just ahead. Another moment, and they would be upon us. There was great need of caution. I at once ordered my men to strike off a mile to the right. We then halted, threw down our camels, gagged them with blankets, tied their legs, and raised a circular heap of sand round them to hide them from any watchful enemy. We took some food, and gave our camels corn, and a half ration of water: having slept a couple of hours, we now turned back to the wells, where we had been the night before, and from there steered straight for Koubisseh, the frontier town.

We had not been half an hour on the new road before we heard a savage cry, more like the howl of a flock of pursuing wolves than the shout of men, and horsemen appeared bearing down on all sides of us. It was the war-cry of Bedouin robbers, who had been hired to intercept us. There were twelve of them, as savage and diabolical cut-throats as ever hemp was grown for. My men seized their double-barrel guns and were eager for resistance. Three or four of the rascals shot, the rest might fly, and besides, our first bullets expended, we had still our spears. But this was not in the plan of my campaign. I was on a mission, as I well knew, of peace, and I was resolved not to shed blood except at the last extremity. Now was the time for the handcuffs. I had my strategy ready to overcome the difficulty. Quickly I told my men to lock the handcuffs on me, and represent to the robbers that I was a mad soldier whom they were ordered to take home to his friends at Bombay viâ Bagdad. My men were faithful and prompt. They did as I told them. In a moment the thieves dashed up, brandishing their spears. They instantly noticed me, naturally enough, for I was dancing an insane hornpipe, and asked eagerly why I was manacled. My men said, "Don't be afraid, it is a madman we are taking to Bassorah, and he would kill himself if he was not in handcuffs." They then gathered round me, as if I were a new sort of animal, and asked me if I spoke Arabic. My men, with pardonable mendacity, replied they did not know, on which I began jabbering nonsense in Arabic, and begged the robbers, as good fellows, to take my irons off and keep me from those camel-drivers, who had deprived me of liberty for no reason at all. The robbers at once took me for a madman. "Ragh el Allah!" (God's own holy man), they call an insane person, and they fear and reverence such unfortunate men as specially inspired by Heaven, though not always with intelligible prophecies. The chief, a murderer from his boyhood I was sure, called for the key of the handcuffs. "Quick!" he said; "you rascals take off the irons from the Lord's own man." Then threatening my men, who pretended to be reluctant, the thieves all dismounted, and sat down to examine my saddle-bags to see what they could find there worth carrying off. The robber sheik, a hideous rascal, more like an ogre than a man, with a flat nose, huge mouth, and staring, bloodshot eyes, was the first to rummage. The first thing he pulled out was a frieze coat of mine. They had no tents, and it was often cold camping in the Desert. The sheik at once fell in love with this old friend of mine. He had no patience to study how it should be worn, and at once drove his legs through the sleeves, in which they wedged fast. The tails he flung over his shoulder with a puzzled look at his admiring and envious followers. I could not help roaring with laughter, his gestures of discomfort were so irresistible. Knowing that no one would touch the madman, I got behind the entangled sheik, and pushed him over; then, with a yell, I ran at one or two others, thin slight fellows, I could almost have thrown over my head, and pushed them down. The rest only laughed at my gambols, and at the discomfiture of their angry comrades. The sheik tried harder than ever to adopt himself to his new costume, and floundered about like a man in a sack race.

"What do you call this robe?" he cried out, angrily, to me. "I can't get my legs in it or out of it. I never could ride about the Desert here, Hadji, in this; it is only fit for a priest, and you see I can't walk in it either. Here, Achmet, bring your knife and cut me out."

Achmet, a great hairy giant of a Kurd, produced a most bloodthirsty huge knife, ripped open the sleeves of my poor frieze coat, and liberated the bewildered sheik.

"You don't mean to tell me," he said, "people in England ride about in such things as that?"

I assured him they did, and then rolled on the ground, laughing at his mistake.

"What it is to be a fool!" said the spearmen to each other, pitying me. "Thank God we are not the favoured of Heaven! Allah be praised! Let's see, sheik, what else is in the bags."

I then implored them to give me the handcuffs, for fear the men who were with me should get hold of them again, and I promised them my blessing, which was worth two camels, adding, in Irish, just to relieve my feelings, "Success to all honest men, and the nearest gallows for all rogues." When I had got hold of my handcuffs, and had hidden them safely away, the thieves made me sit down with them in a circle, and explain to them the contents of my own saddle-bags.

"Mille diaoul," thought I, "if you trust to me, you shall learn all about them, bad cess to ye."

The first thing they pulled out was my big bottle of castor-oil, which the sheik held admiringly up till the fat liquid gurgled inside.

"What's this, Hadji?" he said, with eyes gloating upon the oily liqueur.

I kept my face, and replied humbly, "Beled Franghi" (white honey from Europe).

The wretches' cruel eyes glistened. Every lean brown hand was at once stretched towards the transparent bottle. They held a council as to which was to have the first draught. By a sublime effort of self-denial, the sheik at last divined that it was only respectful that I should begin. Yes, I had the rascals now. I declined, saying I had been drinking rather too much of it lately, but I drew the cork for the chief, and passed him the bottle. He was bent on a good gulp, and his mouth opened in anticipation like a young shark's. After a deep draught, he passed the bottle on to the one next him in the circle round the fire. It was getting dark, and the thieves were too eager for their turns to look at their companions or to utter a word. There was no remark till the last man had drained the bottle; then the sheik began to curse and spit, and the others then spit and cursed worse than he did.

"Do you call that honey from Europe?" said one.

"It is not even sweet," said a second.

"It is accursed, most accursed," groaned the deeply-compromised sheik. He would not forget that honey for six months.

"What bees those must be!" moaned Achmet; "if I had them I'd thrash them to death. Come, let's try the other things," and he began to experimentally munch one of my candles, which he hardly appreciated, though at first he shouted:

"By Allah, here is mutton fat!"

But the others eat away with more approval. Then the chief shouted for coffee, and honoured my sanctity by giving me the first basinful. They now prepared for sleep, but my revenge was not yet complete.

I had still something in store for them, as they lay rolled up in front of the camels. I remembered I had powder stowed away, which the robbers had not yet found. I went to my servants and told them to get sticks, and run and beat the nearest bushes, declaring they had seen a snake six feet long. They at once raised a shout. The robbers instantly leaped up and took their spears to help in the search. I took advantage of the moment. I dug a hole and buried under the sand six tins, with several pounds of powder in each. In a few minutes the men came back, declaring they could not find the snake, and began to relight their fire. They then laid themselves down in the Bedouin way in their goat-skins, with their feet to the flame and their faces to Mecca. I called my servants away, and removing to a respectful distance from the fire, watched patiently for the effect of my small gunpowder plot. My servants knew nothing of what I had done. For twenty minutes the fire burned cheerfully in the centre of the ring of sleepers. Then came an explosion such as the Bedouins had never before heard or seen; it came like a volcano and earthquake combined, with a roar and rush of fire, a storm of embers tearing up the sand for six feet round where it burst, driving the sleepers here and there, as if a shell had broken to pieces in the midst. The robbers flew in all directions shouting and screaming, or falling on their faces before the supposed fire from heaven, praying Allah to avert the deserved punishment that had fallen on their heads for plundering a poor holy madman. I ran after them laughing, asking what was the matter, as I had heard nothing. "Not heard it!" said the men, who were plastered all over with clay; "why there was a noise ten thousand times louder than the loudest thunder, and the flame sprang out at us like fiery snakes ten

feet long." They then knelt all round me, struck their foreheads to the ground, and prayed my forgiveness, promising in the name of the Holy Prophet, never again to molest God's most holy man. To end all this I had to give the infernal rogues my blessing a second time all round.

They now agreed to take me to the nearest Slebi well on the road between Medina and Bagdad. On our way we crossed the bed of a brook. Now every tribe in the Desert has its own cipher, secret mark, or emblem, and its own flag. Lagging behind at this point I got off my camel. I wrote my name in full in Arabic, with words indicating that I was in the hands of robbers, and had gone on a certain route. I had once lived among the El Defir, a powerful tribe in this neighbourhood, and I knew well that if any of their horsemen or scouts passed that ford within the twenty-four hours, they would instantly set their spearmen on my track.

When my worthy captors arrived at the Slebi station, they never said a word to those good people about having robbed me. They merely said that I was a poor forsaken madman whom they had found wandering in the Desert, and they suggested that any food and protection afforded me would as certainly bring a speedy blessing on the heads of the hospitable Slebis as it had done on their own. The Slebis, who show toleration to all, and do not merely talk of it, and who are Christians in actions, though not in words, at once prepared a meal for the ill-favoured rascals, whom they no doubt more than half guessed to be lying robbers and murderers. They made a huge bowl of porridge for us, and I was placed at the head of the circle on a bag of meal, the seat of honour. The tent in which we were seated was one of a row of black camel's-hair tents which opened one into the other, and would hold at least two hundred persons. Before our meal was half over, a Slebi rushed into the tent screaming:

"We are lost, the El Defir are coming down on us like locusts. Their army is close at hand; they are going to attack us." It was my tribe; they had seen what I had written. I looked at the robbers, their gibbet faces were perfectly livid. They felt already the camel's-hair rope pressing their weasands. The chief dropped his spoon. Between Achmet's blubber lips the porridge smoked unswallowed. Five minutes after, nearly a thousand mounted spearmen had surrounded our tent, and were calling out for the robbers, and for Hadji el Hur, whom the thieves had made prisoner. Another moment the black curtain of the tent-door was lifted, and the chieftainess strode in. It was the daughter of the sheik, who, in the absence of her father was governing the tribe, and gloried in this opportunity of doing me a service. I shall never forget the bewilderment and horror painted on the faces of the robbers as they stared from her to me. I recovered my senses with extraordinary rapidity.

"Behold!" she cried to the swarthy men who surrounded her, "behold a member of your own tribe. This is Hadji el Hur, who is a prince of Europe"—prince, indeed!—"and Allah has sent me here to save him. Hang those robbers at once. Bind them hand and foot. We have long wanted these men, for they are of the race of Satan."

The frightened wretches threw themselves grovelling down and kissed my feet. "Save our lives, Hadji," they cried, "we did you no harm."

"No," I said, "Leila, there shall be no blood shed. I am here on a mission of mercy and peace. Forgive these wretches. Remember that your tribe also plunder and prey. In future let these accursed rogues be merciful to poor travellers, as I have been to them. Perhaps before they die they may repent of their misdeeds, and show charity to those more miserable than themselves. Take away their camels, get them two asses to carry water, and let them tramp over the Desert on foot till they can find some refuge, and pray for the day to come when no Desert tribe shall rob or hinder the inoffensive traveller."

Off on their somewhat hopeless pilgrimage trudged the robbers, and in half an hour my tribe had pitched their tents. Lambs were killed—we ate, sang, and danced, "so, merrily, three days of Thalaba went by." At the end of that holiday we mounted our camels, the friendly tribe escorting me two hundred miles towards Bagdad—which city I eventually reached in perfect health and safety.

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