The World's Greatest Books — Volume 04 — Fiction eBook

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An Egyptian Princess

Georg Moritz Ebers, a great Orientalist and Egyptologist, was born in Berlin on March 1, 1837, received his first instruction at Keilhau in Thuringen, then attended a college at Quedlinburg, and finally took up the study of law at Goettingen University. In 1858, when his feet became lame, he abandoned this study, and took up philology and archaeology. After 1859 he devoted himself almost exclusively to Egyptology. Having recovered from his long illness, he visited the most important European museums, and in 1869 he travelled to Egypt, Nubia, and Arabia. On his return he took the chair of Egyptology at Leipzig University. He went back to Egypt in 1872, and discovered, besides many other important inscriptions, the famous papyrus which bears his name. “An Egyptian Princess” is his first important novel, written during his illness, and published in 1864. It has gone through numerous editions, and has been translated into most European languages. It was followed by several other similar works of fiction, of which “Serapis” achieved wide popularity. Ebers died on August 7, 1898.

I.—The Royal Bride

A cavalcade of dazzling splendour was moving along the high road towards Babylon. The embassy sent by Cambyses, the mighty King of the East, had accomplished its mission, and now Nitetis, the daughter of Amasis, King of Egypt, was on the way to meet her future spouse. At the head of the sumptuous escort were Bartja, Cambyses’ handsome golden-haired younger brother; his kinsman Darius; Croesus, the dethroned King of Lydia, and his son Gyges; Prexaspes, the king’s ambassador, and Zopyrus, the son of Megabyzus, a Persian noble.

A few miles before the gates of Babylon they perceived a troop of horsemen galloping towards them. Cambyses himself came to honour his bride. His pale face, framed by an immense black beard, expressed great power and unbounded pride. Deep pallor and bright colour flitted by turns across the face of Nitetis, as his fiery eyes fixed her with a piercing gaze. Then he waved a welcome, sprang from his horse, shook Croesus by the hand, and asked him to act as interpreter. “She is beautiful and pleases me well,” said the king. And Nitetis, who had begun to learn the language of her new home on the long journey, blushed deeply and began softly in broken Persian, “Blessed be the gods, who have caused me to find favour in thine eyes.”

Cambyses was delighted with her desire to win his approbation and with her industry and intellect, so different from the indolence and idleness of the Persian women in his harem. His wonder and satisfaction increased when, after recommending her to obey the orders of Boges, the eunuch, who was head over the house of women, she reminded him that she was a king’s daughter, bound to obey the commands of her lord, but unable to bow to a venal servant.

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Her pride found an echo in his own haughty disposition. “You have spoken well. A separate dwelling shall be appointed you. I, and no one else, will prescribe your rules of life and conduct. Tell me now, how my messengers pleased you and your countrymen?”

“Who could know the noble Croesus without loving him? Who could fail to admire the beauty of the young heroes, your friends, and especially of your handsome brother Bartja? The Egyptians have no love for strangers, but he won all hearts.”

At these words the king’s brows darkened, he struck his horse so that the creature reared, and then, turning it quickly round, he galloped towards Babylon. He decided in his mind to give Bartja the command of an expedition against the Tapuri, and to make him marry Rosana, the daughter of a Persian noble. He also determined to make Nitetis his real queen and adviser. She was to be to him what his mother Kassandane had been to Cyrus, his great father. Not even Phaedime, his favourite wife, had occupied such a position. And as for Bartja, “he had better take care,” he murmured, “or he shall know the fate that awaits the man who dares to cross my path.”

II.—The Plot

According to Persian custom a year had to pass before Nitetis could become Cambyses’ lawful wife, but, conscious of his despotic power, he had decided to reduce this term to a few months. Meanwhile, he only saw the fair Egyptian in the presence of his blind mother or of his sister Atossa, both of whom became Nitetis’ devoted friends. Meanwhile, Boges, the eunuch, sank in public estimation, since it was known that Cambyses had ceased to visit the harem, and he began to conspire with Phaedime as to the best way of ruining Nitetis, who had come to love Cambyses with ever growing passion.

The Egyptian princess’s happiness was seriously disturbed by the arrival of a letter from her mother, which brought her naught but sad news. Her father, Amasis, had been struck with blindness on the very day she had reached Babylon; and her frail twin-sister Tachot, after falling into a violent fever, was wasting away for love of Bartja, whose beauty had captured her heart at the time of his mission in Sais. His name had been even on her lips in her delirium, and the only hope for her was to see him again.

Nitetis’ whole happiness was destroyed in one moment. She wept and sighed, until she fell asleep from sheer exhaustion. When her maid Mandane came to put a last touch to her dress for the banquet, she found her sleeping, and as there was ample time she went out into the garden, where she met the eunuch Boges. He was the bearer of good news. Mandane had been brought up with the children of a Magian, one of whom was now the high-priest Oropastes. Love had sprung up between her and his handsome brother Gaumata; and Oropastes, who had ambitious schemes, had sent his brother to Rhagae and procured her a situation at court, so that they might forget one another.

And now Gaumata had come and begged her to meet him next evening in the hanging gardens. Mandane consented after a hard struggle.

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Boges hurried away with malicious pleasure in the near success of his scheme. He met one of the gardeners, whom he promised to bring some of the nobles to inspect a special kind of blue lily, in which the gardener took great pride. He then hurried to the harem, to make sure that the king's wives should look their best, and insisted upon Phaedime painting her face white, and putting on a simple, dark dress without ornament, except the chain given her by Cambyses on her marriage, to arouse the pity of the Achaemenidae, to which family she herself belonged.

The eunuch's cunning scheme succeeded but too well. At the end of the great banquet Bartja, to whom Cambyses had promised to grant a favour on his victorious return from the war, confessed to him his love for Sappho, a charming and cultured Greek maiden of noble descent, whom he wished to make his wife. Cambyses was delighted at this proof of the injustice of his jealous suspicions, and announced aloud that Bartja would in a few days depart to bring home a bride. At these words Nitetis, thinking of her poor sister's misery, fainted.

Cambyses sprang up pale as death; his lips trembled and his fist was clenched. Nitetis looked at him imploringly, but he commanded Boges to take the women back to their apartments. "Sleep well, Egyptian, and pray to the gods to give you the power of dissembling your feelings. Here, give me wine; but taste it well, for to-day, for the first time, I fear poison. Do you hear, Egyptian? Yes, all the poison, as well as the medicine, comes from Egypt."

Boges gave strict orders that nobody—not even the queen-mother or Croesus—was to have access to the hanging gardens, whither he had conducted Nitetis. Cambyses, meanwhile, continued the drinking bout, thinking the while of punishment for the false woman. Bartja could have had no share in her perfidy, or he would have killed him on the spot; but he would send him away. And Nitetis should be handed to Boges, to be made the servant of his concubines and thus to atone for her crimes.

When the king left the hall, Boges, who had slipped out before him, intercepted one of the gardener's boys with a letter for Prince Bartja. The boy refused to hand it over, as Nitetis had instructed him to hand it only to the prince; and on Cambyses' approach the boy fell on his knees, touching the ground with his forehead. Cambyses snatched the papyrus roll from his hand, and stamped furiously on the ground at seeing that the letter was written in Greek, which he could not read. He went to his own apartments, followed by Boges, whom he instructed to keep a strict watch over the Egyptian and the hanging gardens. "If a single human being or a message reach her without my knowledge, your life will be the forfeit."

Boges, pleading a burning fever, begged that Kandaules, the Lydian captain of eunuchs, who was true as gold and inflexibly severe, should relieve him on the morrow. On the king's consent, he begged furthermore that Oropastes, Croesus, and three other nobles

should be allowed to witness the opening of the blue lily in the hanging gardens. Kandaules would see that they enter into no communication with the Egyptian.

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“Kandaules must keep his eyes open, if he values his own life—go!”

III.—Conflicting Evidence

The hunt was over, and Bartja, who had invited his bosom friends, Darius, Gyges, Zopyrus, and Croesus, to drink a parting-cup with him, sat with the first three in the bower of the royal gardens. They talked long of love, of their ambitions, of the influence of stars on human destinies, when Croesus rapidly approached the arbour. When he beheld Bartja, he stood transfixed, then whispered to him, “Unhappy boy, you are still here? Fly for your life! The whip-bearers are close on my heels.”

“What do you mean?”

“Fly, I tell you, even if your visit to the hanging gardens was innocently meant. You know Cambyses’ violent temper. You know his jealousy of you; and your visit to the Egyptian to-night....”

“My visit? I have never left this garden!”

“Don’t add a lie to your offense. Save yourself, quickly.”

“I speak the truth, and I shall remain.”

“You are infatuated. We saw you in the hanging-gardens not an hour ago.”

Bartja appealed to his friends, who confirmed on oath the truth of his assertion; and before Croesus could arrive at a solution of the mystery, the soldiers had arrived, led by an officer who had served under Bartja. He had orders to arrest everybody found in the suspect’s company, but at the risk of his life urged Bartja to escape the king’s fury. His men would blindly follow his command. But Bartja steadfastly refused. He was innocent, and knew that Cambyses, though hasty, was not unjust.

Two hours later Bartja and his friends stood before the king who had just recovered from an epileptic fit. A few hours earlier he would have killed Bartja with his own hands. Now he was ready to lend an ear to both sides. Boges first related that he was with the Achaemenidae, looking at the blue lily, and called Kandaules to inquire if everything was in order. On being told that Nitetis had not tasted food or drink all day, he sent Kandaules to fetch a physician. It was then that he saw Bartja by the princess’s window. She herself came out of the sleep-room. Croesus called to Bartja, and the two figures disappeared behind a cypress. He went to search the house and found Nitetis lying unconscious on a couch. Hystaspes and the other nobles confirmed the eunuch’s words, and even Croesus had to admit their substantial truth, but added that they must have been deceived by some remarkable likeness—at which Boges grew pale.

Bartja's friends were equally definite in their evidence for the accused. Cambyses looked first on the one, then on the other party of these strange witnesses. Then Bartja begged permission to speak.

"A son of Cyrus," he said, "would rather die than lie. I confess no judge was ever placed in so perplexing a position. But were the entire Persian nation to rise up against you, and swear that Cambyses had committed an evil deed, and you were to say, 'I did not commit it,' I, Bartja, would give all Persia the lie and exclaim, 'Ye are all false witnesses! A son of Cyrus cannot allow his mouth to deal in lies.' I swear to you that I am innocent. I have not once set foot in the hanging gardens since my return."

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Cambyses' looks grew milder on hearing these words, and when Oropastes suggested that an evil spirit must have taken Bartja's form to ruin him, he nodded assent and stretched out his hand towards Bartja. At this moment a staff-bearer came in and gave the king a dagger found by a eunuch under Nitetis' window. Cambyses examined it, dashed the dagger violently to the ground, and shrieked, "This is your dagger! At last you are convicted, you liar! Ah, you are feeling in your girdle! You may well turn pale, your dagger is gone! Seize him, put on his fetters! He shall be strangled to-morrow! Away with you, you perjured villains! They shall all die to-morrow! And the Egyptian—-at noon she shall be flogged through the streets. Then I'll——"

But here he was stopped by another fit of epilepsy, and sank down in convulsions.

The fate of the unfortunates was sealed when, afterwards, Cambyses made Croesus read to him Nitetis' Greek letter to Bartja.

"Nitetis, daughter of Amasis of Egypt, to Bartja, son of the great Cyrus.

"I have something important to tell you; I can tell it to no one but yourself. To-morrow I hope to meet you in your mother's rooms. It lies in your power to comfort a sad and loving heart, and to give it one happy moment before death. I repeat that I must see you soon."

Croesus, who tried to intercede on behalf of the condemned, was sentenced to share their fate. In his heart even he was now convinced of Bartja's guilt, and of the perjury of his own son and of Darius.

IV.—The Unexpected Witness

Nitetis had passed many a wretched hour since the great banquet. All day long she was kept in strict seclusion, and in the twilight Boges came to her to tell her jeeringly that her letter had fallen into the king's hand, and that its bearer had been executed. The princess swooned away, and Boges carried her to her sleeping-room, the door of which he barred carefully. When, later, Mandane left her lover Gaumata, the maid hurried into her mistress's room, found her in a faint, and used every remedy to restore her to consciousness.

Then Boges came with two eunuchs, loaded the princess's arms with fetters, and gave vent to his long-nourished spite, telling her of the awful fate that was in store for her. Nitetis resolved to swallow a poisonous ointment for the complexion directly the executioner should draw near her. Then, in spite of her fetters, she managed to write to Cambyses, to assure him once more of her love and to explain her innocence. "I commit this crime against myself, Cambyses, to save you from doing a disgraceful deed."

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Meanwhile, Boges, after exciting Phaedime's curiosity by many vague hints, divulged to her the nature of his infamous scheme. When Gaumata had come to Babylon for the New Year's festival, Boges had discovered his remarkable likeness to Bartja. He knew of his love for Mandane, gained his confidence, and arranged the nocturnal meeting under Nitetis' bedroom window. In return he exacted the promise of the lover's immediate departure after the meeting. He helped him to escape through a trap-door. To get Bartja out of the way, he had induced a Greek merchant to dispatch a letter to the prince, asking him, in the name of her he loved best, to come alone in the evening to the first station outside the Euphrates gate. Unfortunately, the messenger managed the matter clumsily, and apparently gave the letter to Gaumata. But to counteract Bartja's proof of innocence, Boges had managed to get hold of his dagger, which was conclusive evidence. And now Nitetis was sentenced to be set astride upon an ass and led through the streets of Babylon. As for Gaumata, three men were lying in wait for him to throw him into the Euphrates before he could get back to Rhagae. Phaedime joined in Boges' laughter, and hung a heavy jewel-studded chain round his neck.

* * * * *

A few hours only were wanted for the time fixed for Nitetis' disgrace, and the streets of Babylon were thronged with a dense crowd of sightseers, when a small caravan approached the Bel gate. In the first carriage was a fine, handsome man of about fifty, of commanding aspect, and dressed as a Persian courtier. With difficulty the driver cleared a passage through the crowd. "Make way for us! The royal post has no time to lose, and I am driving some one who will make you repent every minute's delay." They arrived at the palace, and the stranger's insistence succeeded in gaining admission to the king. The Greek—for such the stranger had declared himself—affirmed that he could prove the condemned men's innocence.

"Call him in!" exclaimed Cambyses. "But if he wants to deceive me, let him remember that where the head of a son of Cyrus is about to fall, a Greek head has but very little chance." The Greek's calm and noble manner impressed Cambyses favourably, and his hostility was entirely overcome when the stranger revealed to him that he was Phanes, the famous commander of the Greek mercenaries in Egypt, and that he had come to offer his service to Cambyses.

Phanes now related how, on approaching Babylon by the royal post, just before midnight, they heard some cries of distress, and found three fierce-looking fellows dragging a youth towards the river; how with his Greek war-cry he had rushed on the murderers, slain one of them, and put the others to flight; and how he discovered—so he thought—the youth to be none other but Bartja, whom he had met at the Egyptian court.

They took him to the nearest station, bled him, and bound up his wounds. When he regained consciousness, he told them his name was Gaumata. Then he was seized by fever, during which he constantly spoke of the hanging gardens and of his Mandane.

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“Set the prisoners free, my king. I will answer for it with my own head, that Bartja was not in the hanging gardens.”

The king was surprised at this speech, but not angry. Phanes then advised him to send for Oropastes and Mandane, whose examination elicited the full truth. Boges, who was also sent for, had disappeared. Cambyses had all the prisoners set free, gave Phanes his hand to kiss—a rare honour—and, greater honour still, invited him to eat at the king’s table. Then he went to the rooms of his mother, who had sent for him.

Nitetis had been carried insensible to the queen-mother’s apartments. When she opened her eyes, her head was resting on the blind queen’s lap, she felt Atossa’s warm kisses on her forehead, and Cambyses was standing by her side. She gazed around, and smiled as she recognised them one by one. She raised herself with difficulty. “How could you believe such a thing of me, my king?” she asked. There was no reproach in her tone, but deep sadness; Cambyses replied, “Forgive me.”

Nitetis then gave them the letter she had received from her mother, which would explain all, and begged them not to scorn her poor sister. “When an Egyptian girl once loves, she cannot forget. But I feel so frightened. The end must be near. That horrible man, Boges, read me the fearful sentence, and it was that which forced the poison into my hand.”

The physician rushed forward. “I thought so! She has taken a poison which results in certain death. She is lost!”

On hearing this, the king exclaimed in anguish, “She *shall* live; it is my will! Summon all the physicians in Babylon. Assemble the priests. She is not to die! She must live! I am the king, and I command it!”

Nitetis opened her eyes as if endeavouring to obey her lord. She looked upon her lover, who was pressing his burning lips to her right hand. She murmured, with a smile, “Oh, this great happiness!” Then she closed her eyes and was seized with fever.

* * * * *

All efforts to save Nitetis’ life were fruitless. Cambyses fell into the deepest gloom, and wanted action, war, to dispel his sad thoughts. Phanes gave him the pretext. As commander of the Greek mercenaries in Egypt, he had enjoyed Amasis’ confidence. He alone, with the high-priest, shared Amasis’ secret about the birth of Nitetus, who was not the daughter of Amasis, but of Hophra, his predecessor, whose throne Amasis had usurped. When, owing to the intrigues of Psamtik, Amasis’ son, Phanes fell into disgrace and had to fly for his life, his little son was seized and cruelly murdered by his persecutors. Phanes had sworn revenge. He now persuaded Cambyses to wage war upon Egypt, and to claim Amasis’ throne as the husband of Hophra’s daughter.

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The rest is known to all students of history—how Cambyses, with the help of Phanes, defeated Psamtik's host at Pelusium and took possession of the whole Egyptian Empire; how, given more and more to drink and fearful excesses, he set up a rule of untold terror, had his brother Bartja murdered in another fit of jealousy, and finally suffered defeat at the hands of the Ethiopians. They will also know how, on his death, Gaumata, the "pseudo-Smerdis" of the Greeks, was urged by his ambitious brother, Oropastes, to seize the throne by impersonating the dead Bartja; how, finally, the pretender was defeated and had to pay for his attempt with his life; and how Persia rose again to unity and greatness under the rule of the noble Darius, Bartja's faithful kinsman and friend.

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MARIA EDGEWORTH

Belinda

Maria Edgeworth was born at Black Bourton, Oxfordshire, England, Jan. 1, 1767, and eleven years later her father removed to Ireland and settled on his own estate at Edgeworthstown. "Belinda," published in 1801, is Maria Edgeworth's one early example of a novel not placed in Irish surroundings, but dealing with fashionable life. Issued just a year after the appearance of her first Irish tale, "Castle Rackrent," it betrays entirely the influence of the novelist's autocratic and eccentric father, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, with whom the daughter had been previously collaborating. No one could be less suited than he to advise about fiction, yet to his daughter his advice was almost the equivalent of a command. The story is interesting as an example of literary workmanship outside of the scenes in which special success had been achieved. Miss Edgeworth died at Edgeworthstown on May 22, 1849.

I.—A Match-Maker's Handicap

Mrs. Stanhope, a well-bred woman, accomplished in the art of rising in the world, had, with but a small fortune, contrived to live in the highest company. She prided herself upon having established half a dozen nieces most happily—that is to say, upon having married them to men of fortunes far superior to their own. One niece still remained unmarried, Belinda Portman, of whom she determined to get rid with all convenient expedition; but finding that, owing to declining health, she could not go out with her as much as she wished, she succeeded in fastening her upon the fashionable Lady Delacour for a winter in London.

"Nothing, to my mind, can be more miserable than the situation of a poor girl who fails in her matrimonial expectations (as many do merely from not beginning to speculate in time)," she wrote from Bath. "She finds herself at five or six-and-thirty a burden to her

friends, destitute of the means of rendering herself independent—for the girls I speak of never think of *learning* to play cards—*de trop* in society, yet obliged to hang upon all her acquaintances, who wish her in

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heaven, because she is unqualified to make the *expected* return for civilities, having no home—I mean no establishment, no house, *etc*.—fit for the reception of company of certain rank. My dearest Belinda, may this never be your case. I have sent your bracelet to you by Mr. Clarence Hervey, an acquaintance of Lady Delacour, an uncommonly pleasant young man, highly connected, a wit and a gallant, and having a fine independent fortune; so, my dear Belinda, I make it a point—look well when he is introduced to you, and remember that nobody *can* look well without taking some pains to please."

Belinda had been charmed by Lady Delacour, who was the most agreeable, the most fascinating person she had ever beheld; and to be a visitor at her house was a delightful privilege. But, a short time after her arrival, she began to see through the thin veil with which politeness covers domestic misery. Abroad, Lady Delacour appeared all spirit, life, and good humour; at home, listless, fretful, and melancholy, a prey to thoughts, seemingly, of the most painful nature.

The first time Belinda saw his lordship he was dead drunk in the arms of two footmen; his lady, who had just returned from Ranelagh, passed him on the stairs with the utmost contempt.

"Don't look so shocked and amazed, Belinda. Don't look so *new*, child. This funeral of my lord's intellects is to me a nightly ceremony; or," said her ladyship, looking at her watch and yawning, "I believe I should say a daily ceremony—six o'clock, I protest!"

The next morning Clarence Hervey called, and Belinda found him a most uncommonly pleasant young man. Lord Delacour was jealous of him; but although he would have started with horror at the idea of disturbing the peace of a family, in that family, he said, there was no peace to disturb. Consequently, he visited her ladyship every day, and every day viewed Belinda with increasing admiration, and with increasing dread of being taken in to marry a niece of that "catch-matchmaker," as Mrs. Stanhope was known amongst the men of his acquaintance.

Under the guise of a tragic muse—in which character Lady Delacour had pretended she was going to a masquerade—Belinda heard his true sentiments with regard to her.

"You don't believe I go to Lady Delacour's to look for a wife? Do you think I'm an idiot? Do you think I could be taken in by one of the Stanhope school?" he said to the facetious friends who rallied him on his attachment. "Do you think I don't see as plainly as any of you that Belinda Portman is a composition of art and affectation?"

"Melpomene, hast thou forgot thyself to warble?" asked Lady Delacour, tripping towards them as the comic muse.

“I am not very well,” whispered Miss Portman. “Could we get away?”

“Do see if you can find any of my people!” cried Lady Delacour to Clarence Hervey, who had followed them downstairs.

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“Lady Delacour, the comic muse!” exclaimed he. “I had thought——”

“No matter what you thought!” interrupted her ladyship. “Let my carriage draw up, and put this lady into it!” And he obeyed without uttering a syllable.

“Dry up your tears, *keep on your mask*, and elbow your way through the crowd,” she said, when she had heard Belinda’s story. “If you stop to be civil and ‘hope I don’t hurt ye,’ you will be trod underfoot.”

She insisted on driving to the Pantheon instead of going home, but to Belinda the night seemed long and dull. The masquerade had no charm to keep her thoughts from the conversation that had given her so much pain.

II.—Fashion and Fortitude

“How happy you are, Lady Delacour!” she said, when they got into the carriage to go home. “How happy to have such an amazing flow of spirits!”

And then she learnt the reason of her ladyship’s strange unevenness of temper. She was dying of an incurable complaint, which she kept hidden from all the world except her maid, Marriott, who attended on her in a mysterious cabinet full of medicines and linen rags, the door of which she had hitherto kept locked.

“You are shocked, Belinda,” said she, “but as yet you have seen nothing. Look here!” And baring one half of her bosom, she revealed a hideous spectacle.

“Am I humbled? Am I wretched enough?” she asked. “No matter. I will die as I have lived, the envy and admiration of the world. Promise—swear to me that you will never reveal what you have seen to-night!” And Belinda promised not only that, but to remain with her as long as ever she wished.

Belinda’s quiet avoidance of Clarence Hervey made him begin to believe that she might not be “a compound of art and affectation,” and he was mortified to find that, though she joined with ease and dignity in the general conversation with the others, her manner to him was grave and reserved. To divert her, he declared he was convinced he was as well able to manage a hoop as any woman in England, except Lady Delacour; accordingly he was dressed by Marriott, and made his *entree* with very composed assurance and grace, being introduced as the Countess de Pomenars to the purblind dowager, Lady Boucher, who had come to call. He managed his part well, speaking French and broken English, until Lady Delacour dexterously let down Belinda’s beautiful tresses, and, calling the French lady to admire *la belle chevelure,* artfully let fall her comb.

Totally forgetting his hoop and his character, he stooped to pick it up, and lost his wager by knocking over a music-stand. He would have liked a lock of her hair, but she refused

with a modest, graceful dignity; she was glad she had done so later when a tress of hair dropped from his pocket-book, and his confusion showed her he was extremely interested about the person to whom it belonged.

During her absence from the room Clarence entreated Lady Delacour to make his peace with her. She consented on condition that he found her a pair of horses from Tattersall's, on which Belinda, she said, had secretly set her heart. He was vexed to find Belinda had so little delicacy, and relapsed into his former opinion of Mrs. Stanhope's niece, addressing her with the air of a man of gallantry, who thought his peace had been cheaply made.

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The horses ran away with Lady Delacour, injuring her ankle, and on her being brought home by Clarence, Lord Delacour wished to enter the locked cabinet for *arque-busade.* On being denied entrance, he seized the key, believing a lover of hers was concealed there, until Belinda sprang forward and took it from him, leaving them to believe what they would.

This circumstance was afterwards explained by Dr. X——, a mutual friend, and Hervey was so much charmed with Belinda that he would have gone to her at once—only that he had undertaken the reformation of Lady Delacour.

III.—An Unexpected Suitor

In the meantime, after spending a morning in tasting wines, and thinking that, although he had never learned to swim, some recollection he had of an essay on swimming would ensure his safety, he betted his friends a hundred guineas that he would swim to a certain point, and flinging himself into the Serpentine, would have drowned before their eyes but for the help of Mr. Percival. The breach caused by this affair induced Sir Philip Baddely, a gentleman who always supplied “each vacuity of sense” with an oath, to endeavour to cut him out by proposing to Belinda.

“Damme, you’re ten times handsomer than the finest woman I ever saw, for, damme, I didn’t know what it was to be in love then,” he said, heaving an audible sigh. “I’ll trouble you for Mrs. Stanhope’s direction, Miss Portman; I believe, to do the thing in style, I ought to write to her before I speak to you.”

Belinda looked at him in astonishment, and then, finding he was in earnest, assured him it was not in her power to encourage his addresses, although she was fully sensible of the honour he had done her.

“Confusion seize me!” cried he, starting up, “if it isn’t the most extraordinary thing I ever heard! Is it to Sir Philip Baddely’s fortune—L15,000 a year—you object, or to his family, or to his person? Oh, curse it!” said he, changing his tone, “you’re only quizzing me to see how I should look—you do it too well, you little coquette!”

Belinda again assured him she was entirely in earnest, and that she was incapable of the sort of coquetry which he ascribed to her. To punish her for this rejection he spread the report of Hervey’s entanglement with a beautiful girl named Virginia, whose picture he had sent to an exhibition. He also roused Lady Delacour’s jealousy into the belief that Belinda meant to marry her husband, the viscount, after her death.

In her efforts to bring husband and wife together, Belinda had forgotten that jealousy could exist without love, and a letter from Mrs. Stanhope, exaggerating the scandalous reports in the hope of forcing her niece to marry Sir Philip Baddely, shocked her so

much that when Lady Delacour quarrelled with her, she accepted an invitation from Lady Anne Percival, and went there at once.

There she became acquainted with Mr. Percival's ward, Augustus Vincent, a Creole, about two-and-twenty, tall and remarkably handsome, with striking manners and an engaging person, who fixed his favourable attention on her. The Percivals would have wished her to marry him, but she still thought too much of Clarence Hervey to consent, although she believed he had some engagement with the lovely Virginia.

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IV.—Explanation and Reconciliation

Quite unexpectedly a summons came from Lady Delacour, and Belinda returned to her at once, to find her so seriously ill that she persuaded her at last to consent to an operation, and inform her husband of the dangerous disease from which she was suffering. He believed from her preamble that she was about to confess her love for another man; he tried to stop her with an emotion and energy he had never shown until now.

“I am not sufficiently master of myself. I once loved you too well to hear such a stroke. Say no more—trust me with no such secret! you have said enough—too much. I forgive you, that is all I can do; but we must part, Lady Delacour!” said he, breaking from her with agony expressed in his countenance.

“The man has a heart, a soul, I protest! You knew him better that I did, Miss Portman. Nay, you are not gone yet, my lord! You really love me, I find.”

“No, no, no!” cried he vehemently. “Weak as you take me to be, Lady Delacour, I am incapable of loving a woman who has disgraced me, disgraced herself, her—” His utterance failed.

“Oh, Lady Delacour,” cried Belinda, “how can you trifle in this manner?”

“I meant not,” said her ladyship, “to trifle; I am satisfied. My lord, I can give you the most irrefragable proof that whatever may have been the apparent levity of my conduct, you have had no serious cause for jealousy. But the proof will shock, disgust you. Have you courage to know more? Then follow me.”

He followed her. Belinda heard the boudoir door unlocked. In a few minutes they returned. Grief and horror and pity were painted on Lord Delacour’s countenance as he passed hastily out of the room.

“My dearest friend, I have taken your advice; would to heaven I had taken it sooner!” said Lady Delacour. “I have revealed to Lord Delacour my real situation. Poor man, he was shocked beyond expression. The moment his foolish jealousy was extinguished, his love for me revived in full.”

Lady Delacour awaited the operation with the utmost fortitude; but, to everyone’s joy, it was found there was no necessity for it; she had been deceived by a villainous quack, who knew too well how to make a wound hideous and painful, and had continued her delusion for his own advantage.

Meanwhile, Belinda having permitted Mr. Vincent to address her, he was being given a fair trial whether he could win her love. They had heard reports of Clarence Hervey’s speedy marriage with an heiress, Miss Hartley, and found them confirmed by a letter

Lady Delacour received from him. Some years ago he had formed the romantic idea of educating a wife for himself, and having found a beautiful, artless girl in the New Forest, he had taken her under his care on the death of her grandmother.

She felt herself bound in honour and gratitude to him when her fortune changed, and she was acknowledged by her father, Mr. Hartley, who had long been searching for her, and who had traced her at last by the picture Clarence Hervey had caused to be exhibited.

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With the utmost magnanimity, Hervey, although he saw a successful rival for Belinda's hand in Augustus Vincent, rescued him from ruin at the gaming-table, and induced him to promise never to gamble again.

"I was determined Belinda's husband should be my friend. I have succeeded beyond my hopes," he said.

But Vincent's love of play had decided Belinda at last. She refused him finally in a letter which she confessed she found difficult to write, but which she sent because she had promised she would not hold him in suspense once she had made her decision.

After this Virginia Hartley confessed to her attachment for one Captain Sunderland, and Clarence was free to avow his passion for Belinda.

"And what is Miss Portman to believe," cried one of Belinda's friends, "when she has seen you on the very eve of marriage with another lady?"

"The strongest merit I can plead with such a woman as Miss Portman," he replied, "is that I was ready to sacrifice my own happiness to a sense of duty."

* * * * *

Castle Rackrent

"Castle Rackrent" was published anonymously in 1800. It was not only the first of Miss Edgeworth's novels,—it is in many respects her best work. Later came "The Absentee," "Belinda," "Helen," the "Tales of Fashionable Life," and the "Moral Tales." Sir Walter Scott wrote that reading these stories of Irish peasant life made him feel "that something might be tempted for my own country of the same kind as that which Miss Edgeworth so fortunately achieved for Ireland," something that would procure for his own countrymen "sympathy for their virtues and indulgence for their foibles." As a study of Irish fidelity in the person of Old Thady, the steward who tells the story of "Castle Rackrent," the book is a masterpiece.

I.—Sir Patrick and Sir Murtagh

Having, out of friendship for the family, undertaken to publish the memoirs of the Rackrent family, I think it my duty to say a few words concerning myself first. My real name is Thady Quirk, though in the family I've always been known as "Honest Thady"; afterwards, I remember to hear them calling me "Old Thady," and now I've come to "Poor Thady." To look at me you would hardly think poor Thady was the father of Attorney Quirk; he is a high gentleman, and having better than fifteen hundred a year, landed estate, looks down upon honest Thady. But I wash my hands of his doings, and as I lived so will I die, true and loyal to the family.

I ought to bless that day when Sir Tallyhoo Rackrent lost a fine hunter and his life, all in one day's hunt, for the estate came straight into *the* family, upon one condition, that Sir Patrick O'Shaughlin (whose driver my grandfather was) should, by Act of Parliament, take the surname and arms of Rackrent.

Now it was the world could see what was in Sir Patrick. He gave the finest entertainments ever was heard of in the country; not a man could stand after supper but Sir Patrick himself. He had his house, from one year's end to another, as full of company as it would hold; and this went on, I can't tell you how long.

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But one year, on his birthday, just as the company rose to drink his health, he fell down in a sort of fit, and in the morning it was all over with poor Sir Patrick.

Never did any gentleman die more beloved by rich and poor. All the gentlemen in the three counties came to his funeral; and happy the man who could get but a sight of the hearse!

Just as they were passing through his own town the body was seized for debt! Little gain had the creditors!

First and foremost, they had the curses of the country, and Sir Murtagh, the new heir, refused to pay a shilling on account of the insult to his father's body; in which he was countenanced by all the gentlemen of property of his acquaintance. He did not take at all after the old gentleman. The cellars were never filled, and no open house; even the tenants were sent away without their whiskey. I was ashamed myself, but put it all down to my lady; she was of the family of the Skinflints. I must say, she made the best of wives, being a notable, stirring woman, and looking close to everything. 'Tis surprising how cheap my lady got things done! What with fear of driving for rent, and Sir Murtagh's lawsuits, the tenants were kept in such good order they never came near Castle Rackrent without a present of something or other—nothing too much or too little for my lady. And Sir Murtagh taught 'em all, as he said, the law of landlord and tenant. No man ever loved the law as he did.

Out of the forty-nine suits he had, he never lost one, but seventeen.

Though he and my lady were much of a mind in most things, there was a deal of sparring and jarring between them. In a dispute about an abatement one day, my lady would have the last word, and Sir Murtagh grew mad. I was within hearing—he spoke so loud, all the kitchen was out on the stairs. All on a sudden he stopped, and my lady, too. Sir Murtagh, in his passion, had broken a blood-vessel. My lady sent for five physicians; but Sir Murtagh died. She had a fine jointure settled upon her, and took herself away, to the great joy of the tenantry.

II.—Sir Kit and his Wife

Then the house was all hurry-scurry, preparing for my new master, Sir Murtagh's younger brother, a dashing young officer. He came before I knew where I was, with another spark with him, and horses and dogs, and servants, and harum-scarum called for everything, as if he were in a public-house. I walk slow, and hate a bustle, and if it had not been for my pipe and tobacco, should, I verily believe, have broke my heart for poor Sir Murtagh.

But one morning my new master caught sight of me. “And is that Old Thady?” says he. I loved him from that day to this, his voice was so like the family, and I never saw a finer figure of a man.

A fine life we should have led had he stayed among us, God bless him! But, the sporting season over, he grew tired of the place, and was off in a whirlwind to town. A circular letter came next post from the new agent to say he must remit L500 to the master at Bath within a fortnight—bad news for the poor tenants. Sir Kit Rackrent, my new master, left it all to the agent, and now not a week without a call for money. Rents must be paid to the day, and afore—old tenants turned out, anything for the ready penny.

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The agent was always very civil to me, and took a deal of notice of my son Jason, who, though he be my son, was a good scholar from his birth, and a very cute lad. Seeing he was a good clerk, the agent gave him the rent accounts to copy, which he did for nothing at first, being always proud to serve the family.

By-and-by, a good farm fell vacant, and my son put in a proposal for it. Why not? The master, knowing no more of the land than a child unborn, wrote over, leaving it to the agent, and he must send over L200 by return post. So my son's proposal was just the thing, and he a good tenant, and he got a promise of abatement after the first year for advancing the half-year's rent to make up the L200, and my master was satisfied. The agent told us then, as a great secret, that Sir Kit was a little too fond of play.

At last, at Christmas, the agent wrote he could raise no more money, anyhow, and desired to resign the agency. My son, Jason, who had corresponded privately with Sir Kit, was requested to take over the accounts forthwith. His honour also condescended to tell us he was going to be married in a fortnight to the grandest heiress in England, and had immediate occasion for L200 for travelling expenses home to Castle Rackrent, where he intended to be early next month. We soon saw his marriage in the paper, and news came of him and his bride being in Dublin on their way home. We had bonfires all over the country, expecting them all day, and were just thinking of giving them up for the night, when the carriage came thundering up. I got the first sight of the bride, and greatly shocked I was, for she was little better than a blackamoor. "You're kindly welcome, my lady," I says; but neither spoke a word, nor did he so much as hand her up the steps.

I concluded she could not speak English, and was from foreign parts, so I left her to herself, and went down to the servants' hall to learn something about her. Sir Kit's own man told us, at last, that she might well be a great fortune, for she was a Jewess, by all accounts. I had never seen any of that tribe before, and could only gather that she could not abide pork nor sausages, and went neither to church nor mass. "Mercy upon his honour's poor soul," thought I. But when, after this, strange gentleman's servants came and began to talk about the bride, I took care to put the best foot foremost, and passed her for a nabob.

I saw plain enough, next morning, how things were between Sir Kit and his lady, though they went arm-in-arm to look at the building.

"Old Thady, how do you do?" says my master, just as he used to do, but I could see he was not well pleased, and my heart was in my mouth as I walked after them.

There were no balls, no dinners, no doings. Sir Kit's gentleman told me it was all my lady's fault, because she was so obstinate about the cross.

"What cross?" says I. "Is it about her being a heretic?"

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“Oh, no such matter,” says he. “My master does not mind about her heresies, but her diamond cross. She’s thousands of English pounds concealed in her diamonds, which she as good as promised to give to my master before they married; but now she won’t part with any of them, and must take the consequences.”

One morning, his honour says to me, “Thady, buy me a pig,” and that was the first breaking out of my lady’s troubles when the sausages were ordered. My lady went down to the kitchen herself, and desired never more to see them on her table. The cook took her part, but the master made it a principle to have the sausages; so, for fear of her place, she gave in, and from that day forward, always sausages or pig-meat in one form or other went up to table; upon which my lady shut herself up in her own room, and my master turned the key in the door, and kept it ever after in his pocket. We none of us saw her, or heard her speak for seven years after; he carried her dinner in himself.

Then his honour had a deal of company, and was as gay and gallant as before he was married. The country, to be sure, talked and wondered, but nobody cared to ask impertinent questions, my master being a famous shot. His character was so well known that he lived in peace and quiet ever after, and was a great favourite with the ladies; so that, when he gave out that my lady was now skin and bone, and could not live through the winter, there were no less than three ladies at daggers drawn, as his gentleman swore, at the balls, for Sir Kit for their partner. I could not but think them bewitched, but it was not known how my lady’s fortune was settled, nor how the estate was all mortgaged, and bonds out against him, for he was never cured of his gaming tricks; but that was the only fault he had, God bless him!

Then it was given out, by mistake, that my lady was dead, and the three ladies showed their brothers Sir Kit’s letters, and claimed his promises. His honour said he was willing to meet any man who questioned his conduct, and the ladies must settle among themselves who was to be his second, while his first was alive, to his mortification and theirs. He met the first lady’s brother, and shot him; next day called out the second, whose wooden leg stuck fast in the ploughed land, so Sir Kit, with great candour, fired over his head, whereupon they shook hands cordially, and went home together to dinner.

To establish his sister’s reputation this gentleman went out as Sir Kit’s second next day, when he met the last of his adversaries. He had just hit the toothpick out of his enemy’s hand, when he received a ball in a vital part, and was brought home speechless in a hand-barrow. We got the key out of his pocket at once, and my son Jason ran to release her ladyship. She would not believe but that it was some new trick till she saw the men bringing Sir Kit up the avenue. There was no life in him, and he was “waked” the same night.

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The country was all in an uproar about him, and his murderer would have been hanged surely, but he prudently withdrew to the Continent.

My lady got surprisingly well, and no sooner was it known that Sir Kit was dead than all the country came round in a body, as it were, to set her free. But she had taken an unaccountable prejudice against the country, and was not easy, but when she was packing up to leave us, I considered her quite as a foreigner, and no longer part of the family. Her diamond cross was at the bottom of it all; and it was a shame for her, being his wife, not to have given it up to him when he condescended to ask for it so often, especially when he made it no secret he had married her for her money.

III.—Sir Condy

The new heir, Sir Conolly, commonly called Sir Condy, was the most universally beloved man I ever saw or heard of. He was ever my white-headed boy, when he used to live in a small but slated house at the end of the avenue, before he went to college. He had little fortune of his own, and a deal of money was spent on his education. Many of the tenants secretly advanced him cash upon his promising bargains of leases, and lawful interest should he ever come into the estate. So that when he did succeed, he could not command a penny of his first year's income. My son Jason, who was now agent, explained matters to Sir Condy, who, not willing to take his affairs in his own hands, or even to look them in the face, gave my son a bargain of some acres at a reasonable rent to pay him for his many years' service in the family gratis.

There was a hunting-lodge convenient to my son's land that he had his eye upon, but Sir Condy talked of letting it to his friend Captain Moneygawl, with whom he had become very friendly, and whose sister, Miss Isabella, fell over head and ears in love with my master the first time he went there to dinner.

But Sir Condy was at a terrible nonplus, for he had no liking for Miss Isabella. To his mind, little Judy McQuirk, daughter to a sister's son of mine, was worth twenty of her. But her father had locked her in her room and forbidden her to think of him, which raised his spirit; and I could see him growing more and more in the mind to carry Miss Isabella off to Scotland, as she desired. And I had wished her joy, a week after, on her return with my poor master. Lucky for her she had a few thousands of her own, for her father would not give her a farthing. My master and my lady set out in great style, and it was reported that her father had undertaken to pay all Sir Condy's debts; and, of course, all the tradesmen gave him fresh credit, and everything went on smack smooth. I was proud to see Castle Rackrent again in all its glory. She went on as if she had a mint of money; and all Sir Condy asked—God bless him!—was to live in peace and quiet, and have his whiskey punch at night. But my lady's few thousands could not last for ever. Things in a twelve-month or so came to such a pass that there was no going on any longer.

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Well, my son Jason put in a word about the lodge, and Sir Condy was fain to take the purchase-money to settle matters, for there were two writs come down against him to the sheriff, who was no friend of his. Then there came a general election, and Sir Condy was called upon by all his friends to stand candidate; they would do all the business, and it should not cost him a penny.

There was open house then at Castle Rackrent, and grand dinners, and all the gentlemen drinking success to Sir Condy till they were carried off. The election day came, and a glorious day it was. I thought I should have died with joy in the street when I saw my poor master chaired, and the crowd following him up and down. But a stranger man in the crowd gets me to introduce him to my son Jason, and little did I guess his meaning. He gets a list of my master's debts from him, and goes round and buys them up, and so got to be sole creditor over all, and must needs have an execution against the master's goods and furniture.

After the election shoals of people came from all parts, claiming to have obliged him with votes, and to remind him of promises he never made. Worst of all, the gentlemen who had managed everything and subscribed by hundreds very genteelly forgot to pay, and it was all left at my master's door. All he could do to content 'em was to take himself off to Dublin, where my lady had taken a house fitting for a member of parliament.

Soon my son Jason said, "Sir Condy must look out for another agent. If my lady had the Bank of Ireland to spend, it would all go in one winter."

I could scarcely believe my own old eyes when I saw my son's name joined in the *custodian*, that the villain who got the list of debts brought down in the spring; but he said it would make it easier for Sir Condy.

IV.—The Last of the Rackrents

When Sir Condy and his lady came down in June, he was pleased to take me aside to complain of my son and other matters; not one unkind word of my lady, but he wondered that her relations would do nothing for them in their great distress. He did not take anything long to heart; let it be as it might this night, it was all out of his head before he went to bed. Next morning my lady had a letter from her relations, and asked to be allowed to go back to them. He fell back as if he was shot, but after a minute said she had his full consent, for what could she do at Castle Rackrent with an execution coming down? Next morning she set off for Mount Juliet.

Then everything was seized by the gripers, my son Jason, to his shame be it spoken, among them. On the evening Sir Condy had appointed to settle all, when he sees the sight of bills and loads of papers on the table, he says to Jason, "Can't you now just sit down here and give me a clear view of the balance, you know, which is all I need be

talking about? Thady, do just step out, and see they are bringing the things for the punch." When I came back Jason was pointing to the balance, a terrible sight for my poor master.

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“A—h! Hold your hand!” cries my master. “Where in the wide world am I to find hundreds, let alone thousands?”

“There’s but one way,” says Jason. “Sure, can’t you sell, though at a loss? Sure, you can sell, and I’ve a purchaser ready for you.”

“Have you so?” says Sir Condy. Then, colouring up a good deal, he tells Jason of L500 a year he had settled upon my lady, at which Jason was indeed mad; but, with much ado, agreed to a compromise. “And how much am I going to sell? The lands of O’Shaughlin’s town, and the lands of”—just reading to himself—“oh, murder, Jason! Surely you won’t put this in—castle, stables, and appurtenances of Castle Rackrent?”

“Oh, murder!” says I. “This is too bad, Jason.”

“Why so?” says Jason. “When it’s all mine, and a great deal more, all lawfully mine, was I to push for it?”

But I took no heed, for I was grieved and sick at heart for my poor master, and couldn’t but speak.

“Here’s the punch,” says Jason, for the door opened.

So my master starts up in his chair, and Jason uncorks the whiskey. Well, I was in great hopes when I saw him making the punch, and my master taking a glass; but Jason put it back when he saw him going to fill again, saying, “No, Sir Condy; let us settle all before we go deeper into the punch-bowl. You’ve only to sign,” says Jason, putting the pen to him.

“Take all, and be content,” said my master. So he signed, and the man who brought the punch witnessed, for I was crying like a child.

So I went out to the street door, and the neighbours’ children left their play to come to see what ailed me; and I told them all. When they heard Sir Condy was going to leave Castle Rackrent for good and all, they set up such a whillaluh as brought all their parents round the doors in great anger against Jason. I was frightened, and went back to warn my son. He grew quite pale and asked Sir Condy what he’d best do.

“I’ll tell you,” says Sir Condy, laughing to see his fright. “Finish your glass first, then let’s go to the window, and I’ll tell them—or you shall, if you please—that I’m going to the lodge for change of air for my health, and by my own desire, for the rest of my days.”

“Do so,” says Jason, who never meant it to be so, but could not refuse at such a time.

So the very next day he sets off to the lodge, and I along with him. There was great bemoaning all through the town, which I stayed to witness. He was in his bed, and very

low, when I got there, and complained of a great pain about his heart; but I, knowing the nature of him from a boy, took my pipe and began telling him how he was beloved and regretted in the country. And it did him a great deal of good to hear it.

There was a great horn at the lodge that used to belong to the celebrated Sir Patrick, who was reported to have drunk the full of it without stopping to draw breath, which no other man, afore or since, could do.

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One night Sir Condy was drinking with the excise-man and the gauger, and wagered that he could do it. Says he, “Your hand is steadier than mine, Old Thady; fill you the horn for me.” And so, wishing his honour success, I did. He swallowed it down and dropped like one shot. We put him to bed, and for five days the fever came and went, and came and went. On the sixth he says, knowing me very well, “I’m in a burning pain all withinside of me, Thady.” I could not speak. “Brought to this by drink,” says he. “Where are all the friends? Gone, hey? Ay, Sir Condy has been a fool all his days,” said he, and died. He had but a very poor funeral, after all.

* * * * *

GEORGE ELIOT

Adam Bede

Mary Ann Evans ("George Eliot”) was born Nov. 22, 1819, at South Farm, Arbury, Warwickshire, England, where her father was agent on the Newdigate estate. In her youth, she was adept at butter-making and similar rural work, but she found time to master Italian and German. Her first important literary work was the translation of Strauss’s “Life of Jesus” in 1844, and shortly after her father’s death in 1849 she was writing in the “Westminster Review.” It was not until 1856 that George Eliot settled down to the writing of novels. “Scenes from Clerical Life” first appeared serially in “Blackwood’s Magazine” during 1857 and 1858; “Adam Bede,” the first and most popular of her long stories, in 1859. In May, 1880, eighteen months after the death of her friend George Henry Lewes (see PHILOSOPHY, Vol. XIV), George Eliot married Mr. J. W. Cross. She died on December 22 in the same year. With all her sense of humour there is a note of sadness in George Eliot’s novels. She deals with ordinary, everyday people, and describes their joys and sorrows. In “Adam Bede,” as in most of her work, the novelist drew from the ample stores of her early life in the Midlands, while the plot is unfolded with singular simplicity, purity, and power.

I.—The Two Brothers

In the roomy workshop of Mr. Jonathan Burge, carpenter and builder, in the village of Hayslope, on the eighteenth of June, 1799, five workmen were busy upon doors and window-frames.

The tallest of the five was a large-boned, muscular man, nearly six feet high. The sleeve rolled up above the elbow showed an arm that was likely to win the prize for feats of strength; yet the long, supple hand, with its broad finger tips, looked ready for works of skill. In his tall stalwartness Adam Bede was a Saxon, and justified his name. The face was large and roughly hewn, and when in repose had no other beauty than such as belongs to an expression of good-humoured, honest intelligence.

It is clear at a glance that the next workman is Adam's brother. He is nearly as tall; he has the same type of features. But Seth's broad shoulders have a slight stoop, and his glance, instead of being keen, is confiding and benignant.

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The idle tramps always felt sure they could get a copper from Seth; they scarcely ever spoke to Adam.

At six o'clock the men stopped working, and went out. Seth lingered, and looked wistfully at Adam, as if he expected him to say something.

"Shalt go home before thee go'st to the preaching?" Adam asked.

"Nay, I shan't be home before going for ten. I'll happen see Dinah Morris safe home, if she's willing. There's nobody comes with her from Poyser's, thee know'st."

Adam set off home, and at a quarter to seven Seth was on the village green where the Methodists were preaching. The people drew nearer when Dinah Morris mounted the cart which served as a pulpit. There was a total absence of self-consciousness in her demeanour; she walked to the cart as simply as if she were going to market. There was no keenness in the eyes; they seemed rather to be shedding love than making observations. When Dinah spoke it was with a clear but not loud voice, and her sincere, unpremeditated eloquence held the attention of her audience without interruption.

When the service was over, Seth Bede walked by Dinah's side along the hedgerow path that skirted the pastures and corn-fields which lay between the village and the Hall Farm.

Seth could see an expression of unconscious placid gravity on her face—an expression that is most discouraging to a lover. He was timidly revolving something he wanted to say, and it was only when they were close to the yard-gates of the Hall Farm he had the courage to speak.

"It may happen you'll think me overbold to speak to you again after what you told me o' your thoughts. But it seems to me there's more texts for your marrying than ever you can find against it. St. Paul says, 'Two are better than one,' and that holds good with marriage as well as with other things. For we should be o' one heart and o' one mind, Dinah. I'd never be the husband to make a claim on you as could interfere with your doing the work God has fitted you for. I'd make a shift, and fend indoor and out, to give you more liberty—more than you can have now; for you've got to get your own living now, and I'm strong enough to work for us both."

When Seth had once begun to urge his suit, he went on earnestly and almost hurriedly. His voice trembled at the last sentence.

They had reached one of those narrow passes between two tall stones, which performed the office of a stile in Loamshire. And Dinah paused, and said, in her tender but calm notes, "Seth Bede, I thank you for your love towards me, and if I could think of any man as more than a Christian brother, I think it would be you. But my heart is not

free to marry, or to think of making a home for myself in this world. God has called me to speak His word, and He has greatly owned my work."

They said farewell at the yard-gate, for Seth wouldn't enter the farmhouse, choosing rather to turn back along the fields through which he and Dinah had already passed. It was ten o'clock when he reached home, and he heard the sound of tools as he lifted the latch.

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“Why, mother,” said Seth, “how is it as father’s working so late?”

“It’s none o’ thy feyther as is a-workin’; it’s thy brother as does iverything, for there’s niver nobody else i’ th’ way to do nothin’.”

Lisbeth Bede was going on, for she was not at all afraid of Seth—who had never in his life spoken a harsh word to his mother—and usually poured into his ears all the querulousness which was repressed by the awe which mingled itself with her idolatrous love of Adam.

But Seth, with an anxious look, had passed into the workshop, and said, “Addy, how’s this? What! Father’s forgot the coffin?”

“Ay, lad, th’ old tale; but I shall get it done,” said Adam, looking up. “Why, what’s the matter with thee—thee’st in trouble?”

Seth’s eyes were red, and there was a look of deep depression on his mild face.

“Yes, Addy, but it’s what must be borne, and can’t be helped. Let me take my turn now, and do thee go to bed.”

“No, lad; I’d rather go on, now I’m in harness. The coffin’s promised to be ready at Brox’on by seven o’clock to-morrow morning. I’ll call thee up at sunrise, to help me to carry it when it’s done. Go and eat thy supper and shut the door, so as I mayn’t hear mother’s talk.”

Adam worked throughout the night, thinking of his childhood and its happy days, and then of the days of sadness that came later when his father began to loiter at public-houses, and Lisbeth began to cry at home. He remembered well the night of shame and anguish when he first saw his father quite wild and foolish.

The two brothers set off in the early sunlight, carrying the long coffin on their shoulders. By six o’clock they had reached Broxton, and were on their way home.

When they were coming across the valley, and had entered the pasture through which the brook ran, Seth said suddenly, beginning to walk faster, “Why, what’s that sticking against the willow?”

They both ran forward, and dragged the tall, heavy body out of the water; and then looked with mute awe at the glazed eyes—forgetting everything but that their father lay dead before them.

Adam’s mind rushed back over the past in a flood of relenting and pity. Only a few hours ago, and the gray-haired father, of whom he had been thinking with a sort of

hardness as certain to live to be a thorn in his side, was perhaps even then struggling with that watery death!

II.—The Hall Farm

It is a very fine old place of red brick, the Hall Farm—once the residence of a country squire, and the Hall.

Plenty of life there, though this is the drowsiest time of the year, just before hay-harvest; and it is the drowsiest time of the day, too, for it is half-past three by Mrs. Poyser's handsome eight-day clock.

Mrs. Poyser, a good-looking woman, not more than eight-and-thirty, of fair complexion and sandy hair, well shaped, light-footed, had just taken up her knitting, and was seated with her niece, Dinah Morris. Another motherless niece, Hetty Sorrel, a distractingly pretty girl of seventeen, was busy in the adjoining dairy.

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“You look the image o’ your aunt Judith, Dinah, when you sit a-sewing,” said Mrs. Poyser. “I allays said that o’ Judith, as she’d bear a pound weight any day to save anybody else carrying a ounce. And it made no difference in her, as I could see, when she took to the Methodists; only she talked a bit different, and wore a different sort o’ cap. If you’d only come and live i’ this country you might get married to some decent man, and there’d be plenty ready to have you, if you’d only leave off that preaching, as is ten times worse than anything your Aunt Judith ever did. And even if you’d marry Seth Bede, as is a poor, wool-gathering Methodist, and’s never like to have a penny beforehand, I know your uncle ’ud help you with a pig, and very like a cow, for he’s allays been good-natur’d to my kin, for all they’re poor, and made ’em welcome to the house; and ’ud do for you, I’ll be bound, as much as ever he’d do for Hetty, though she’s his own niece.”

The arrival of Mr. Irwine, the rector of Hayslope, and Captain Donnithorne, Squire Donnithorne’s grandson and heir, interrupted Mrs. Poyser’s flow of talk.

“I’ll lay my life they’re come to speak about your preaching on the Green, Dinah. It’s you must answer ’em, for I’m dumb. I’ve said enough a’ready about your bringing such disgrace upo’ your uncle’s family. I wouldn’t ha’ minded if you’d been Mr. Poyser’s own niece. Folks must put up wi’ their own kin as they put up wi’ their own noses; it’s their own flesh and blood.”

Mr. Irwine, however, was the last man to feel any annoyance at the Methodist preaching, and young Arthur Donnithorne’s visit was merely an excuse for exchanging a few words with Hetty Sorrel.

The rector mentioned before he left that Thias Bede had been found drowned in the Willow Brook; and Dinah Morris at once decided that she might be of some comfort to the widow, and set out for the village.

As for Hetty Sorrel, she was thinking more of the looks Captain Donnithorne had cast at her than of Adam and his troubles. Bright, admiring glances from a handsome young gentleman—those were the warm rays that set poor Hetty’s heart vibrating.

Hetty was quite used to the thought that people liked to look at her. She was aware that Mr. Craig, the gardener at Squire Donnithorne’s, was over head-and-ears in love with her. She knew still better that Adam Bede—tall, upright, clever, brave Adam Bede—who carried such authority with all the people round about, and whom her uncle was always delighted to see of an evening, saying that “Adam knew a fine sight more o’ the natur o’ things than those as thought themselves his betters”—she knew that this Adam, who was often rather stern to other people, and not much given to run after the lassies, could be made to turn pale or red any day by a word or a look from her. Hetty’s sphere of comparison was not large, but she couldn’t help perceiving that Adam was “something like” a man; always knew what to say about things; knew, with only looking at it, the

value of a chestnut-tree that was blown down, and why the damp came in the walls, and what they must do to stop the rats; and wrote a beautiful hand that you could read, and could do figures in his head—a degree of accomplishment totally unknown among the richest farmers of that country-side.

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Hetty was quite certain her uncle wanted her to encourage Adam, and would be pleased for her to marry him. For the last three years—ever since he had superintended the building of the new barn—Adam had always been made welcome at the Hall Farm, and for the last two years at least Hetty had been in the habit of hearing her uncle say, "Adam Bede may be working for a wage now, but he'll be a master-man some day, as sure as I sit in this chair. Master Burge is in the right on't to want him to go partners and marry his daughter, if it's true what they say. The woman as marries him 'ull have a good take, be't Lady Day or Michaelmas," a remark which Mrs. Poyser always followed up with her cordial assent.

"Ah," she would say, "it's all very fine having a ready-made rich man, but may happen he'll be a ready-made fool; and it's no use filling your pocket full of money if you've got a hole in the corner. It'll do you no good to sit in a spring-cart o' your own if you've got a soft to drive you; he'll soon turn you over into the ditch."

But Hetty had never given Adam any steady encouragement. She liked to feel that this strong, keen-eyed man was in her power; but as to marrying Adam, that was a very different affair.

Hetty's dreams were all of luxuries. She thought if Adam had been rich, and could have given the things of her dreams—large, beautiful earrings and Nottingham lace and a carpeted parlour—she loved him well enough to marry him.

The last few weeks a new influence had come over Hetty; she had become aware that Mr. Arthur Donnithorne would take a good deal of trouble for the chance of seeing her. And Dinah Morris was away, preaching and working in a manufacturing town.

III.—Adam's First Love

Adam Bede, like many other men, thought the signs of love for another were signs of love towards himself. The time had come to him that summer, as he helped Hetty pick currants in the orchard of the Hall Farm, that a man can least forget in after-life—the time when he believes that the first woman he has ever loved is, at least, beginning to love him in return.

He was not wrong in thinking that a change had come over Hetty; the anxieties and fears of a first passion with which she was trembling had become stronger than vanity, and while Adam drew near to her she was absorbed in thinking and wondering about Arthur Donnithorne's possible return.

For the first time Hetty felt that there was something soothing to her in Adam's timid yet manly tenderness; she wanted to be treated lovingly. And Arthur was away from home; and, oh, it was very hard to bear the blank of absence. She was not afraid that Adam would tease her with love-making and flattering speeches; he had always been so

reserved to her. She could enjoy without any fear the sense that this strong, brave man loved her and was near her. It never entered into her mind that Adam was pitiable, too, that Adam, too, must suffer one day.

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It was from Adam that she found out that Captain Donnithorne would be back in a day or two, and this knowledge made her the more kindly disposed towards him. But for all the world Adam would not have spoken of his love to Hetty yet, till this commencing kindness towards him should have grown into unmistakable love. He did no more than pluck a rose for her, and walk back to the farm with her arm in his.

When Adam, after stopping a while to chat with the Poysers, had said good-night, Mr. Poyser remarked, “If you can catch Adam for a husband, Hetty, you’ll ride i’ your own spring-cart some day, I’ll be your warrant.”

Her uncle did not see the little toss of the head with which Hetty answered him. To ride in a spring-cart seemed a very miserable lot indeed to her now.

It was on August 18, when Adam, going home from some work he had been doing at one of the farms, passed through a grove of beeches, and saw, at the end of the avenue, about twenty yards before him, two figures. They were standing opposite to each other with clasped hands, and they separated with a start at a sharp bark from Adam Bede’s dog. One hurried away through a gate out of the grove; the other, Arthur Donnithorne, looking flushed and excited, sauntered towards Adam. The young squire had been home for some weeks celebrating his twenty-first birthday, and he was leaving on the morrow to rejoin his regiment.

Hitherto there had been a cordial and sincere liking and a mutual esteem between the two young men; but now Adam stood as if petrified, and his amazement turned quickly to fierceness.

Arthur tried to pass the matter off lightly, as if it had been a chance meeting with Hetty; but Adam, who felt that he had been robbed treacherously by the man in whom he had trusted, would not so easily let him off. It came to blows, and Arthur sank under a well-planted blow of Adam’s, as a steel rod is broken by an iron bar.

Before they separated, Arthur promised that he would write and tell Hetty there could be no further communication between them. And this promise he kept. Adam rested content with the assurance that nothing but an innocent flirtation had been stopped. As the days went by he found that the calm patience with which he had waited for Hetty’s love had forsaken him since that night in the beech-grove. The agitations of jealousy had given a new restlessness to his passion.

Hetty, for her part, after the first misery caused by Arthur’s letter, had turned into a mood of dull despair, and sought only for change. Why should she not marry Adam? She did not care what she did so that it made some change in her life.

So, in November, when Mr. Burge offered Adam a share in his business, Adam not only accepted it, but decided that the time had come to ask Hetty to marry him.

Hetty did not speak when Adam got out the question, but his face was very close to hers, and she put up her round cheek against his, like a kitten. She wanted to be caressed—she wanted to feel as if Arthur were with her again.

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Adam only said after that, “I may tell your uncle and aunt, mayn’t I, Hetty?” And she said “Yes.”

The red firelight on the hearth at the Hall Farm shone on joyful faces that evening when Adam took the opportunity of telling Mr. and Mrs. Poyser that he saw his way to maintaining a wife now, and that Hetty had consented to have him.

There was a great deal of discussion before Adam went away about the possibility of his finding a house that would do for him to settle in.

“Well, well,” said Mr. Poyser at last, “we needna fix everything to-night. You canna think o’ getting married afore Easter. I’m not for long courtships, but there must be a bit o’ time to make things comfortable.”

This was in November.

Then in February came the full tragedy of Hetty Sorrel’s life. She left home, and in a strange village, a child—Arthur Donnithorne’s child—was born. Hetty left the baby in a wood, and returned to find it dead. Arrest and trial followed, and only at the last moment was the capital sentence commuted to transportation.

She died a few years later on her way home.

IV.—The Wife of Adam Bede

It was the autumn of 1801, and Dinah Morris was once more at the Hall Farm, only to leave it again for her work in the town. Mrs. Poyser noticed that Dinah, who never used to change colour, flushed when Adam said, “Why, I hoped Dinah was settled among us for life. I thought she’d given up the notion o’ going back to her old country.”

“Thought! Yes,” said Mrs. Poyser; “and so would anybody else ha’ thought as had got their right ends up’ards. But I suppose you must be a Methodist to know what a Methodist ’ull do. It’s all guessing what the bats are flying after.”

“Why, what have we done to you, Dinah, as you must go away from us?” said Mr. Poyser. “It’s like breaking your word; for your aunt never had no thought but you’d make this your home.”

“Nay, uncle,” said Dinah, trying to be quite calm. “When I first came I said it was only for a time, as long as I could be of any comfort to my aunt.”

“Well, an’ who said you’d ever left off being a comfort to me?” said Mrs. Poyser. “If you didna mean to stay wi’ me, you’d better never ha’ come. Them as ha’ never had a cushion don’t miss it.”

Dinah set off with Adam, for Lisbeth was ailing and wanted Dinah to sit with her a bit. On the way he reverted to her leaving the Hall Farm. "You know best, Dinah, but if it had been ordered so that you could ha' been my sister, and lived wi' us all our lives, I should ha' counted it the greatest blessing as could happen to us now."

Dinah made no answer, and they walked on in silence, until presently, crossing the stone stile, Adam saw her face, flushed, and with a look of suppressed agitation.

It struck him with surprise, and then he said, "I hope I've not hurt or displeased you by what I've said, Dinah; perhaps I was making too free. I've no wish different from what you see to be best; and I'm satisfied for you to live thirty miles off if you think it right."

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Poor Adam! Thus do men blunder.

Lisbeth opened his eyes on the Sunday morning when Adam sat at home and read from his large pictured Bible.

For a long time his mother talked on about Dinah, and about how they were losing her when they might keep her, and Adam at last told her she must make up her mind that she would have to do without Dinah.

“Nay, but I canna ma’ up my mind, when she’s just cut out for thee; an’ nought shall ma’ me believe as God didna make her and send her here o’ purpose for thee. What’s it sinnify about her being a Methody? It ’ud happen wear out on her wi’ marryin’.”

Adam threw himself back in his chair and looked at his mother. He understood now what her talk had been aiming at, and tried to chase away the notion from her mind.

He was amazed at the way in which this new thought of Dinah’s love had taken possession of him with an overmastering power that made all other feelings give way before the impetuous desire to know that the thought was true. He spoke to Seth, who said quite simply that he had long given up all thoughts of Dinah ever being his wife, and would rejoice in his brother’s joy. But he could not tell whether Dinah was for marrying.

“Thee might’st ask her,” Seth said presently. “She took no offence at *me* for asking, and thee’st more right than I had.”

When Adam did ask, Dinah answered that her heart was strongly drawn towards him, but that she must wait for divine guidance. So she left the Hall Farm and went back to the town, and Adam waited,—and then went after her to get his answer.

“Adam,” she said when they had met and walked some distance together, “it is the divine will. My soul is so knit to yours that it is but a divided life I live without you. And this moment, now you are with me, and I feel that our hearts are filled with the same love, I have a fullness of strength to bear and do our Heavenly Father’s will that I had lost before.”

Adam paused and looked into her sincere eyes.

“Then we’ll never part any more, Dinah, till death parts us.”

And they kissed each other with deep joy.

* * * * *

Felix Holt, the Radical

“Felix Holt, the Radical,” was published in 1866. It has never been one of George Eliot’s very popular books. There is less in it of her own life and experience than in most of her novels, less of the homely wit of agricultural England. The real value of the book is the picture it gives of the social and political life, and for this reason, it will always be read by those who want to know what English political methods and customs were like at the time of the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832. The character of Mr. Rufus Lyon, the independent minister, is an admirable study of the non-conformist of that period. Esther’s renunciation of a brilliant fortune for a humbler lot with the man she loved and admired, was quite in accord with the teaching George Eliot inculcated all her life. The scene of the story is laid in the Midlands, and the action, covering about nine months, begins in 1832.

I.—The Minister’s Daughter

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The Rev. Rufus Lyon, Minister of the Independent Chapel, in the old-fashioned market town of Treby Magna, in the County of Loumshire, lived in a small house, adjoining the entry which led to the Chapel Yard.

He sat this morning, as usual, in a low upstairs room, called his study, which served also as a sleeping-room, and from time to time got up to walk about between the piles of old books which lay around him on the floor. His face looked old and worn, yet the curtain of hair that fell from his bald crown and hung about his neck retained much of its original auburn tint, and his large, brown short-sighted eyes were still clear and bright. At the first glance, everyone thought him a very odd-looking, rusty old man, and the free-school boys often hooted after him, and called him "Revelations." But he was too short-sighted and too absent from the world of small facts and petty impulses to notice those who tittered at him.

He was meditating on the text for his Sunday morning sermon, when old Lyddy, the minister's servant, opened the door to tell him that Mrs. Holt was wanting to see him. "She says she comes out of season, but she's in trouble."

The minister bade her send Mistress Holt up, and a tall elderly woman dressed in black entered.

Mrs. Holt, Mr. Lyon said to himself, is a woman who darkens counsel by words without knowledge, and angers the reason of the natural man; and he prayed for patience while his visitor rambled on concerning her late husband and her son Felix.

The minister made out that Felix objected to the sale of his father's quack medicines, Holt's Elixir and Cancer Cure, and wanted Mr. Lyon to talk to him.

"For after we'd been to chapel, he spoke better of you than he does of most: he said you was a fine old fellow, and an old-fashioned Puritan— he uses dreadful language, Mr. Lyon; but I saw he didn't mean you ill, for all that; he calls most folks' religion rottenness."

Mrs. Holt departed, and in the evening, when Mr. Lyon was in the sitting-room, Felix Holt knocked at the door.

The minister, accustomed to the respectable air of provincial townsmen, felt a slight shock, when his spectacles made clear to him the shaggy-headed, large-eyed, strong-limbed person of this questionable young man, without waistcoat or cravat.

Felix spoke loudly and brusquely when the minister mentioned the subject of Mrs. Holt's visit.

"As to those absurd medicines and gulling advertisements that my mother has been talking of to you, I've no more doubt about *them* than I have about pocket-picking. If I

allowed the sale of those medicines to go on, and my mother to live out of the proceeds when I can keep her by the honest labour of hands, I've not the least doubt that I should be a rascal."

"I would fain inquire more particularly into your objection to these medicines," said Mr. Lyon gravely.

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“My father was ignorant,” said Felix, bluntly. “I know something about these things. I was ’prentice for five miserable years to a stupid brute of a country apothecary—my poor father left money for that—he thought nothing could be finer for me. No matter: I know that the Cathartic Pills may be as bad as poison to half the people who swallow them, and that the cancer cure might as well be bottled ditch-water. I can keep my mother, as well, nay, better, than she keeps herself. With my watch and clock cleaning, and teaching one or two little chaps that I’ve got to come to me, I can earn enough.”

Mr. Lyon’s suggestion that some situation might be obtained as clerk or assistant was brushed aside.

“Why should I want to get into the middle class because I have some learning? The most of the middle class are as ignorant as the working people about everything that doesn’t belong to their own Brummagem life.”

The entrance of Lyddy with the tea tray disturbed the conversation, but the minister, interested in his visitor, asked Felix to stay for a dish of tea, and Felix accepted.

“My daughter, who has been detained in giving a lesson in the French tongue, has doubtless returned now,” said the minister. On the entrance of the young lady, Felix was conscious she was not the sort of person he had expected the minister’s daughter to be, and the incongruity repelled him. There were things about her, her walk, the long neck and high crown of shining brown hair, that suggested a fine lady to him. A fine lady was always a sort of spun glass affair; but a fine lady as the daughter of this rusty old Puritan was especially offensive.

The discovery that Miss Lyon read Byron set Felix off on a tirade against the poet, and his works, and throughout the meal no agreement on any topic seemed possible between Esther and the guest.

Felix noted that Mr. Lyon was devoted to his daughter and stood in some fear of her.

“That is a singular young man, Esther,” said the minister, when Felix had gone. “I discern in him a love for whatever things are honest and true, and I feel a great enlargement in his presence.”

“I think he is very coarse and rude,” said Esther, with a touch of temper. “But he speaks better English than most of our visitors. What is his occupation?”

“Watch and clock making, my dear.”

Esther was disappointed, she thought he was something higher than that.

Felix on his side wondered how the queer old minister had a daughter so little in his own likeness. He decided that nothing should make him marry.

II.—The Election Riot

The return of Mr. Harold Transome, to Transome Court, after fifteen years' absence, and his adoption as Radical Candidate for the county created no little stir and excitement in Treby. It also assisted the growing intimacy between Mr. Lyon and Felix Holt, for though neither possessed votes in that memorable year 1832, they shared the same liberal sympathies. Perhaps the most delightful friendships are those in which there is much agreement, much disputation, and yet more personal liking; and the advent of the public-spirited, contradictory, yet affectionate Felix, into Treby life had made a welcome epoch to the minister.

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Esther had not seen so much of their new acquaintance as her father had. But she had begun to find him amusing, though he always opposed and criticised her, and looked at her as if he never saw a single detail about her person. It seemed to Esther that he thought slightly of her. “But, rude and queer as he is, I cannot say there is anything vulgar about him,” she said to herself.

One Sunday afternoon Felix Holt rapped at the door of Mr. Lyon’s house, although he could hear the voice of the minister in the chapel.

Esther was in the kitchen alone, reading a French romance, and she opened the door and invited him in.

He scoffed at her book, and as the talk went on, upbraided her for her vanity. Finally he told her that he wanted her to change. “Of course, I am a brute to say so,” he added. “I ought to say you are perfect. Another man would, perhaps; I can’t bear to see you going the way of the foolish women who spoil men’s lives.”

Mortification and anger filled Esther’s mind, and when Felix got up to say he was going, she returned his “good-bye” without even looking at him.

Only, when the door closed she burst into tears. She revolted against his assumption of superiority.... Did he love her one little bit, and was that the reason why he wanted her to change? But Esther was quite sure she could never love anyone who was so much of a pedagogue and a master.

Yet, a few weeks later, and Esther accepted willingly when Felix proposed a walk for the first time together. That same afternoon he told her that she was very beautiful, and that he would never be rich: he intended going away to some manufacturing town to lead the people to better things and this meant a life of poverty.

Something Esther said made Felix ask suddenly, “Can you imagine yourself choosing hardship as the better lot?”

“Yes, I can,” she answered, flushing over neck and brow. They walked home very silently after that. Felix struggling as a firm man struggles with a temptation, Esther struggling as a woman struggles with the yearning for some expression of love.

On the day of the election a mob of miners, primed with liquor by an unscrupulous agent of Transome’s, came into the town to hoot the Tory voters; and as the disturbance increased, Felix knowing that Mr. Lyon was away preaching went round to the minister’s house to reassure Esther.

“I am so thankful to see you,” she said eagerly. He mentioned that the magistrates and constables were coming and that the town would be quieter. His only fear was that drinking might inflame the mob again.

Again Felix told her of his renunciation of the ordinary hopes and ambitions of men, and at the same time tried to prove that he thought very highly of her. He wanted her to know that her love was dear to him, and he felt that they must not marry—to do so would be to ruin each other's lives.

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When Felix went out into the streets in the afternoon, the crowd was larger and more mischievous. The constables were quite unable to cope with the mob, the polling booth was closed for the day, and the magistrates had sent to the neighbouring town of Duffield for the military.

There were proofs that the predominant will of the crowd was in favour of Transome for several shops were attacked and they were all of them “Tory shops.”

Felix was soon hotly occupied trying to save a wretched publican named Spratt from the fury of the crowd. The man had been dragged out into the streets, and Felix had got as near him as he could when a young constable armed with a sabre rushed upon him. It was a choice of two evils, and quick as lightning Felix frustrated him, the constable fell undermost and Felix got his weapon. Tucker did not rise immediately, but Felix did not imagine that he was much hurt, and bidding the crowd follow him tried to lead them away from the town. He hoped that the soldiers would soon arrive, and felt confident that there would be no resistance to a military force.

Suddenly a cry was raised, “Let us go to Treby Manor,” the residence of Sir Maximus Debarry, whose son was the Tory candidate.

From that moment Felix was powerless, and was carried along with the rush. All he could hope to do was to get to the front terrace of the house, and assure the inmates that the soldiers would arrive quickly. Just as he approached a large window he heard the horses of the troopers, and then came the words, “Halt! Fire!” Before he had time to move a bullet whizzed, and passed through Felix Holt’s shoulder—the shoulder of the arm that bore the sabre.

Felix fell. The rioters ran confusedly, like terrified sheep.

It was a weary night for Felix, and the next day his wound was declared trivial, and he was lodged in Loumford Jail. There were three charges against him; that he had assaulted a constable, that he had committed manslaughter (Tucker was dead from spinal concussion), and that he had led a riotous onslaught on a dwelling house.

Four other men were arrested, one for theft, and three others for riot and assault.

III.—The Trial

A great change took place in the fortunes of Esther in the interval between the riot and the opening of the assizes. It was found that she, and not Harold Transome, was the rightful owner of the Transome estates. For Esther’s real name was Bycliffe and not Lyon, and she was the step-daughter only of the minister. Mr. Lyon had found Esther’s mother, a French woman of great beauty, in destitution—her husband, an Englishman, lying in some unknown prison. This Englishman was a Bycliffe—and heir to the

Transome property, and on the proof of his death Mr. Lyon, knowing nothing of Bycliffe's family, married his widow, who, however, died while Esther was still a tiny child. Not till the time of the election did Esther learn that her real father was dead.

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Mr. Transome's lawyer—Jermyn—was fully aware of the claim of the Bycliffes, but knew they were powerless without money to enforce the claim, and that Esther and her step-father alike were ignorant of all the facts. It was only when Harold Transome, on his return, quarrelled with Jermyn on the management of the estates, and, after the Election (which Transome lost) threatened him with a law-suit, that Jermyn turned round and told Harold the truth. At the same time, another lawyer, formerly in Jermyn's confidence, thought the more profitable course could be found in throwing Jermyn over, and wrote to Esther informing her of her inheritance.

Harold Transome decided to act openly. With his mother, he drove to the minister's house and Mrs. Transome persuaded Esther to come and stay at Transome Court. Both mother and son found Esther to their liking, and it appeared to Harold that marriage with Esther would be a happy conclusion to the divided claim to the property. He was rich, and the Transome (or Bycliffe) property was heavily encumbered.

The Transomes, Esther and Mr. Lyon all agreed that no law-suit over the property should take place.

But while Esther stayed at Transome Court she never forgot her friend in prison. Mr. Lyon had visited Felix, and Esther herself obtained an interview with him just before the assizes began.

She had grown conscious that Harold Transome was making love to her, that Mrs. Transome really desired her for a daughter-in-law, and it seemed to her as she waited with the minister in the cheerless prison room, that she stood at the first and last parting of the ways.

Soon the door opened, and Felix Holt entered.

"Miss Lyon—Esther!" and her hand was in his grasp. He was just the same—no, something inexpressibly better, because of the distance and separation, which made him like the return of morning.

"Take no heed of me, children," said Mr. Lyon. "I have some notes to make." And the old man sat down at a window with his back to them, writing with his head bent close to the paper.

Felix had heard of Esther's change of fortune and felt sure she would marry Harold Transome. It was only when the time for parting came that he could bring himself to say:

"I had a horrible struggle, Esther. But you see I was right. There was a fitting lot in reserve for you." Esther felt too miserable for tears to come. She looked helplessly at

Felix for a moment, then took her hands from his, and turning away mutely, said, “Father, I am ready—there is no more to say.”

“Esther.”

She heard Felix say the word, with an entreating cry, and went towards him swiftly. He clasped her, and they kissed each other.

When the trial came on Esther went under Mrs. Transome’s protection to the court.

The case against Felix looked very black when the prosecution closed. Various respectable witnesses swore to the prisoner’s leadership of the mob, to his fatal assault on Tucker, and to his attitude in front of the drawing-room window at the Manor.

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Felix then gave a concise narrative of his motives and conduct on the day of the riot, and explained that in throwing the constable down he had not foreseen the possibility of death ensuing. It was a good, straightforward speech, not without a touch of defiant independence, which did the prisoner little good with judge or jury.

Mr. Lyon and Harold Transome both gave evidence in favour of Felix, stating that the prisoner had often expressed his hatred of rioting, and had protested with indignation against the treating that went on during the election by some of the Radical agents.

One or two witnesses were called who swore that Felix had tried to lead the mob in the opposite direction to Treby Manor, and it was understood that the case for the defence was closed.

Then it came to Esther that she must speak if Felix was to be saved. There had been no witness to tell what had been his behaviour just before the riot. There was time, but not too much time.

Before Harold Transome was aware of Esther's intention she was on her way to the witness-box.

A sort of gleam shot across the face of Felix Holt, and anyone close to the prisoner would have seen that his hand trembled, for the first time, at Esther's beautiful aspect. There was no blush on her face: she stood, divested of all personal consideration whether of vanity or shyness, and gave her story as if she had been making a confession of faith.

She knew Felix Holt well, she said. He came to see her on the day of the election, and told her he feared the men might collect again after drinking. "It was the last thing he would have done to join in riot or to hurt any man, if he could have helped it. He could never have had any intention that was not brave and good."

When she was back in her place Felix could not help looking towards her, and their eyes met in one solemn glance.

Esther stayed in court till the end. She heard the verdict, "Guilty of Manslaughter," followed by the judge's sentence, "Imprisonment for four years." But so great was the impression made by Esther's speech that a petition to the Home Secretary was at once set on foot by the leading men of the county.

IV.—Felix and Esther

One April day, when the sun shone on the lingering raindrops, Lyddy was gone out, and Esther chose to sit in the kitchen. She was not reading, but stitching, and as her fingers moved nimbly, something played about her lips like a ray.

A loud rap came at the door.

“Mr. Lyon at home?” said Felix in his firm tones. “No, sir,” said Esther: “but Miss Lyon is, if you’ll please to walk in.”

“Esther!” exclaimed Felix, amazed.

They held each other by both hands, and looked into each other’s faces with delight.

“You are out of prison?”

“Yes, till I do something bad again. But you—how is it all? Are you come back to live here then?”

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“Yes.”

“You are not going to be married to Harold Transome, or to be rich?”

“No.”

“Why?” said Felix in rather a low tone, leaning his elbow on the table, and resting his head on his hand while he looked at her.

“I did not wish to marry him, or to be rich.”

“You have given it all up?” said Felix, leaning forward a little and speaking in a still lower tone. “Could you share the life of a poor man, then, Esther?”

“If I thought well enough of him,” she said, with a smile, and a pretty movement of her head.

“Have you considered well what it would be?—that it would be a very bare and simple life? and the people I shall live among, Esther? They have not just the same follies and vices as the rich, but they have their own forms of folly and vice. It is very serious, Esther.”

“I know it is serious,” said Esther, looking up at him. “Since I have been at Transome Court I have seen many things very seriously. If I had not, I should not have left what I did leave. I made a deliberate choice.”

She could not tell him that at Transome Court, all that finally seemed balanced against her love for him, was the offer of a silken bondage that arrested all motive, and was nothing better than a well-cushioned despair. A vision of being restless amidst ease, of being languid among all appliances had quickened her resignation of the Transome estates.

Esther explained, however, that she thought of retaining a little of the wealth.

“How?” said Felix, anxiously. “What do you mean?”

“I think even of two pounds a week: one needn’t live up to the splendour of all that, you know: we might live as simply as you liked. And then I think of a little income for your mother, and a little income for my father, to save him from being dependent when he is no longer able to preach!”

Felix put his hand on her shoulder, said, lifting up his eyes with a smile:

“Why, I shall be able to set up a great library, and lend the books!”

They laughed merrily, each holding the other's arms, like girl and boy. There was the ineffable sense of youth in common.

Then Felix leaned forward, that their lips might meet, and after that his eyes roved tenderly over her face and curls.

"I'm a rough, severe fellow, Esther. Shall you never repent?—never be inwardly reproaching me that I was not a man who could have shared your wealth? Are you quite sure?"

The very next May, Felix and Esther were married. Everyone in those days was married at the parish church; but Mr. Lyon was not satisfied without an additional private solemnity, "so that he might have a more enlarged utterance of joy and supplication."

It was a very simple wedding; but no wedding, even the gayest, ever raised so much interest and debate in Treby Magna. Even the very great people of the county went to the church to look at this bride, who had renounced wealth, and chosen to be the wife of a man who said he would always be poor.

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Some few shook their heads; could not quite believe it; and thought there was more behind. But the majority of honest Trebians were affected somewhat in the same way as Mr. Wall, the brewer of the town, who observed to his wife as they walked home, “I feel somehow as if I believed more in everything that’s good.”

Felix and Esther did not take up their abode in Treby Magna; and after awhile Mr. Lyon left the town too, and joined them where they dwelt.

As to the town in which Felix Holt now resides I will keep that a secret.

I will only say that Esther has never repented. Felix, however, grumbles a little that she has made his life too easy.

There is a young Felix, who has a great deal more science than his father, but not much more money.

* * * * *

Romola

“Romola” was George Eliot’s fifth book, and followed “Silas Marner,” which was published in 1861. It is a story of Florence in the days of Savonarola, and was largely the outcome of a visit the novelist paid to Italy with her life-long friend, George Henry Lewes. With dim ideas for the story in her mind, she made exhaustive researches in the Florentine libraries, gathering historical and topographical details of the city and its life as they were in the mediaeval period which she was setting herself to re-create. After much study there and at home, and after one false start, she made a serious beginning in January, 1862. She was engaged upon it for eighteen months, always in doubt and sometimes in despair of her ability to accomplish the task, and by June of the following year she had thankfully written the last words of what is regarded by some as her greatest book. Meanwhile, the romance had begun to appear serially in the “Cornhill” in July, 1862. The writing of “Romola” is said to have “ploughed into her” more than any of her other books.

I.—Tito and Little Tessa

Under the Loggia de Cerchi, in the heart of old Florence, in the early morning of April 9, 1492, two men had their eyes fixed on each other. One was looking downward with the scrutiny of curiosity; the other, lying on the pavement, was looking upward with the startled gaze of a suddenly awakened dreamer.

“Young man,” said the standing figure, pointing to a ring on the finger of the other, “when your chin has got a stiffer crop on it you’ll know better than to take your nap in street corners with a ring like that on your forefinger. By the holy ’vangels, if it had been

anybody but me standing over you—but Bratti Ferravecchi is not the man to steal! Three years ago, one San Giovanni, the saint, sent a dead body in my way—a blind beggar, with his cap well lined with pieces. But how comes a young man like you, with the face of Messer San Michele, to be sleeping on a stone bed? Your tunic and hose match ill with that jewel, young man. Anybody might say the saints had sent you a dead body; but if you took the jewels, I hope you buried him—and you can afford a mass or two for him into the bargain!"

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Something like a painful thrill appeared to dart through the frame of the listener, and arrest the careless stretching of his arms. But he immediately recovered an air of indifference, took off the red Levantine cap which hung like a great purse over his left ear, and pushing back his long, dark brown curls, said smiling, “The fact is, I’m a stranger in Florence, and when I came in footsore last night, I preferred flinging myself in the corner of this hospitable porch to hunting for a chance hostelry, which might turn out to be a nest of bloodsuckers. Can you show me the way to a more lively quarter, where I can get a meal and a lodging?”

“That I can,” said Bratti.

And, talking volubly as they went, Bratti led the way to the Mercato Vecchio, or the Old Market, promising to conduct him to the prettiest damsel in the Mercato for a cup of milk.

But as soon as they emerged from the narrow streets into the Old Market, they found the place packed with excited groups of men and women humming with gossip.

“Diavolo!” said Bratti. “The Mercato has gone as mad as if the Holy Father had excommunicated us again! I must know what this is.”

He pushed about among the crowd, inquiring and disputing, and was presently absorbed in discussing the newest development of Florentine politics, the death of Lorenzo de Medici, and whether or not this death was the beginning of the time of tribulation that Savonarola had been seeing in visions and foretelling in sermons.

Indifferent to this general agitation, the young stranger became tired of waiting for Bratti’s escort, and strolling on round the piazza, felt, on a sudden thought, in the wallet that hung at his waist.

“Not an obolus, by Jupiter!” he murmured, in a language that was not Tuscan or even Italian. “I must get my breakfast for love, then!”

In a corner, away from any group of talkers, two mules were standing. One carried wooden milk vessels, the other a pair of panniers filled with herbs and salads. Resting her elbow on the mule that carried the milk, there leaned a young girl, apparently not more than sixteen, with a red hood surrounding her face, which was all the more baby-like in its prettiness from the entire concealment of her hair. The poor child was weary, and it seemed to have gone to sleep in that half-standing, half-leaning posture. Nevertheless, our stranger had no compunction in awaking her. She opened her baby-blue eyes, and stared up with astonishment and confusion.

“Forgive me, pretty one, for awaking you,” he said. “I’m dying with hunger, and the scent of milk makes breakfast seem more desirable than ever.”

She bestirred herself, and in a few moments a large cup of fragrant milk was held out to him; and by the time he set the cup down she had brought bread from a bag which hung by the side of the mule, and shyly and mutely insisted on his taking it, even though he told her he had nothing to pay her with; and just as he was leaning down to kiss her he was harshly interrupted by Monna Ghita, Tessa's mother, who had come upon them unobserved.

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The handsome presence of the stranger and his charm of manner were of no avail with Monna Ghita; her noisy rating of him drew Bratti and the barber, Nello, to the spot, and with these he was glad to make good his escape, having waived a furtive adieu to the pretty Tessa.

It was not until after Bratti, having business at home, had handed the young stranger over to Nello, and in the barber's shop he had been shaved and trimmed, and made to look presentable, that Tito Melema became more confidential, and explained that he was a Greek; that he was returning from adventures abroad, had suffered shipwreck, and found himself in Florence with nothing saved from the disaster but some few rare old gems for which he was anxious to obtain a purchaser.

"Let us see, let us see," said Nello, walking up and down his shop. "What you want is a man of wealth and influence and scholarly tastes; and that man is Bartolommeo Scala, the Secretary of our Republic. He came to Florence as a poor adventurer himself, a miller's son; and that may be a reason why he may be the more ready to do a good turn to a strange scholar. I could take you to a man who, if he has a mind, can help you to a chance of a favourable interview with Scala—a man worth seeing for his own sake, too, to say nothing of his collections, or of his daughter Romola, who is as fair as the Florentine lily before it got quarrelsome and turned red."

"But if the father of this beautiful Romola makes collections, why should he not like to buy some of my gems himself?"

Nello shrugged his shoulders. "For two good reasons—want of sight to look at the gems and want of money to pay for them."

II.—"More than a Man's Ransom"

He was a moneyless, blind old scholar, the Bardo de Bardi, to whom Nello introduced Tito Melema; a man who came of a proud, energetic stock, whose ancestors had loved to play the signor, had been merchants and usurers of keen daring, and conspicuous among those who clutched the sword in the earliest world-famous quarrels of Florentine with Florentine. The family passions lived on in Bardo under altered conditions; he was a man with a deep-veined hand cramped by much copying of manuscripts, who ate sparing dinners, and wore threadbare clothes, at first from choice, and at last from necessity; who sat among his books and manuscripts, and saw them only by the light of those far-off younger days which still shone in his memory.

And among his books and antiquities and rare marble fragments, in a spacious room surrounded with laden shelves, Romola was his daily companion and assistant. There was a time when he had hoped that his son, Dino, would have followed in his steps, to be the prop of his age, and to take up and continue his scholarly labours after he was dead. But Dino had failed him; Dino had given himself up to religion and entered the

priesthood, and the passion of Bardo's resentment had flamed into fierce hatred towards this recreant son of his, and none dared so much as to name him within his hearing.

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Maso, the old serving-man ushered in the two visitors he had announced a few minutes previously, and Nello introduced Tito to Bardo and his daughter as a scholar of considerable learning.

Romola's astonishment could hardly have been greater if the stranger had worn a panther-skin and carried a thyrsus, for the cunning barber had said nothing of the Greeks age or appearance, and among her father's scholarly visitors she had hardly ever seen any but gray-headed men.

Nevertheless, she returned Tito's bow with the same pale, proud face as ever; but as he approached the snow melted, and when he ventured to look towards her again a pink flush overspread her face, to vanish again almost immediately, as if her imperious will had recalled it. Tito's glance, on the other hand, as he looked at this tall maiden of seventeen or eighteen, as she stood at the reading-desk with one hand on the back of her father's chair, had that gentle, beseeching admiration in it which is the most propitiating of appeals to a proud, shy woman, and is perhaps the only atonement a man can make for being too handsome.

"Messere, I give you welcome," said Bardo with some condescension; "misfortune wedded to learning, and especially to Greek learning, is a letter of credit that should win the ear of every instructed Florentine."

He proceeded to question Tito as to what part of Greece he came from, learned that he was a young man of unusual scholastic attainments, and that he had a father who was himself a scholar.

"At least," said Tito, "a father by adoption. He was a Neapolitan, but," he added, after another slight pause, "he is lost to me—was lost on a voyage he too rashly undertook to Delos."

Bardo forbore to speak further on so painful a topic; he discoursed freely upon his own studies, his past hopes, and the one great ambition that remained to him—that his library and his magnificent collection of treasures should not be dissipated on his death, but should become the property of the public, and be honourably housed in Florence for all time, with his name over the door.

In his eagerness he made passing reference to his son, of how Romola had been filling his place to the best of her power, and plainly hinted—and Tito was not slow to profit by the opportunity—that if he could have the young Greek scholar to work with him instead of her, he might yet look to fulfill some of the notable designs he had abandoned when his blindness came upon him.

“But,” he resumed, in his original tone of condescension, “we are departing from what I believe is your most important business. Nello informed me that you had certain gems which you would fain dispose of.”

“I have one or two intagli of much beauty,” said Tito. “But they are now in the keeping of Messer Domenico Cennini, who has a strong and safe place for such things. He estimates them as worth at least five hundred ducats.”

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“Ah, then, they are fine intagli!” said Bardo. “Five hundred ducats! Ah, more than a man’s ransom!”

Tito gave a slight, almost imperceptible start, and opened his long, dark eyes with questioning surprise at Bardo’s blind face, as if his words—a mere phrase of common parlance at a time when men were often being ransomed from slavery or imprisonment—had some special meaning for him.

But Bardo had used the words in all innocence, and went on to talk of superstitions that attached to certain gems, and to undertake that he would use his influence with the Secretary of the Republic in Tito’s behalf. Both Romola and her father were attracted by the charm and freshness and apparent simplicity of the young man; but just as he was making ready to depart they were interrupted by the entrance of Bernardo del Nero, one of the chief citizens of Florence, Bardo’s oldest friend, and Romola’s godfather; and Bernardo felt an instant, instinctive distrust of the handsome, ingratiating stranger, and did not hesitate to say so after Tito had left them.

“Remember, Bardo,” he said at length, “thou hast a rare gem of thy own; take care no one gets it who is not like to pay a worthy price. That pretty Greek has a sleekness about him that seems marvelously fitted for slipping into any nest he fixes his mind on.”

III.—The Man who was Wronged

It was undeniable that Tito’s coming had been the dawn of a new life for both father and daughter, and he grew to care for Romola supremely—to wish to have her for his beautiful and loving wife.

He took her place as Bardo’s assistant, and served him with an easy efficiency that had been beyond her; and she, happier in her father’s happiness, had given her love to Tito even before he ventured to offer her his own. He was thus sailing under the fairest breeze, and besides convincing fair judges that his talents squared with his good fortune, he wore that fortune so unpretentiously that no one seemed to be offended by it.

And that was not the whole of Tito’s good fortune, for he had sold his jewels, and was master of full five hundred gold florins. Yet the moment when he first had this sum in his possession was the crisis of the first serious struggle his facile, good-humoured nature had known.

“A man’s ransom!” Who was it that had said five hundred florins was more than a man’s ransom? If, now, under this mid-day sun, on some hot coast far away, a man somewhat stricken in years—a man not without high thoughts, and with the most passionate heart—a man who long years ago had rescued a little boy from a life of beggary, filth, and cruel wrong, and had reared him tenderly, if that man were now, under this summer sun,

toiling as a slave, hewing wood and drawing water? If he were saying to himself, “Tito will find me. He had but to carry our gems to Venice; he will have raised money, and will never rest till he finds me out?” If

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that were certain, could he—Tito—see the price of the gems lying before him, and say, “I will stay at Florence, where I am fanned by soft airs of love and prosperity; I will not risk myself for his sake?” No, surely not *if it were certain*. But the galley had been taken by a Turkish vessel; that was known by the report of the companion galley which had escaped; and there had been resistance and probable bloodshed, a man had been seen falling overboard.

He quieted his conscience with such reasonings as these, and when definite tidings reached him that his father was still a prisoner, he contrived to keep the knowledge to himself, and still did nothing. The death of the exhausted, emaciated monk who had brought these tidings freed him of one fear; but this monk was Romola’s brother, Dino, and obeying his summons she had been in secret to see him as he lay dying.

“Romola,” her brother began to speak, “in the deep night, as I lay awake, I saw my father’s room, and I saw you ... And at the *leggio* where I used to stand stood a man whose face I could not see. I saw him move and take thee, Romola, by the hand, and then I saw thee take my father by the hand, and you all three went down the stone steps into the streets, the man, whose face was a blank to me, leading the way. And you stood at the altar of Santa Croce, and the priest who married you had the face of death; and the graves opened and the dead in their shrouds followed you like a bridal train. And it seemed to me that at last you came to a stony place where there was no water, and no trees or herbage; but instead of water I saw written parchment unrolling itself everywhere, and instead of trees and herbage I saw men of bronze and marble springing up and crowding round you. And my father was faint, and fell to the ground; and the man loosed thy hand and departed; and as he went I could see his face, and it was the face of the Great Tempter.... Thrice have I had that vision, Romola. I believe it is a revelation meant for thee—to warn thee against marriage as a temptation of the enemy....”

The words died away.

“Frate,” said the dying voice. “Give her——”

“The crucifix,” said the voice of Fra Girolamo Savonarola, who was standing in the shadows behind her.

“Dino!” said Romola, with a low but piercing cry.

“Take the crucifix, my daughter,” said Fra Girolamo, after a few minutes. “His eyes behold it no more.”

* * * * *

But, heedless of the distrust and opposition of Messer Bernardo del Nero, and with this vision of Dino's menacing his highest hope, Tito went gaily on his triumphant way.

Also he had renewed acquaintance with the little Tessa. He came upon her in the thronged streets during carnival time, and seeing her, a timorous, tearful little *contadin*, terrified by the burlesque threats of a boisterous conjurer, took her under his protection.

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Thereafter, he met her again at intervals, finding her naive love and humble adoration and obedience very pleasant; and, meeting her once at a peasant's fair, he jestingly yielded to the burlesque solicitations of a mountebank in a white mitre, paid a small fee, and went through an absurd ceremony of mock-marriage with her.

Tessa herself believed the marriage to be real enough, and he would not mar her delight by undeceiving her. Later, since she was wretched at home with her scolding mother and a brutal step-father, and there were dangers in allowing her to go on waylaying him in streets when too long a period elapsed between his visits to her, he quietly took her away and established her in a small house on the outskirts of the city, with the deaf, discreet old Monna Lisa as her servant and companion.

Neither this nor the darker secret of his treachery to his adoptive father cast any cloud over his habitual cheerfulness. His love for Romola was a higher and deeper passion than anything he felt for the child-like, submissive little Tessa, and when she told him frankly of her brother's warning vision, he set himself to convince her it was the mere nightmare of a diseased imagination, and the perfect love and trust she had for him made the task easy.

For a while after their marriage she was ideally happy; she was not even separated from her father, for Tito came to live with them, and was to Bardo, in his scholastic labours, all that he had wished his own son to be. Then came the first cloud.

On November 17, 1494, more than eighteen months after the marriage of Tito and Romola, the King of France marched his army into Florence on his way to take possession of Naples and impose peace on the warring little states into which Italy was divided. There were those in Florence who were prepared to welcome the invaders, but the majority, the common people in particular, resented their coming.

With the soldiery came three wretched prisoners; they were led in ropes by their captors, and with blows from knotted cords were stimulated to beg. Two, as they passed, held out their hands, crying piteously, "For the love of God and the Holy Madonna, give us something towards our ransom!"

But the third remained obstinately silent. He was old, white-haired, emaciated, with a thick-set figure that seemed to express energy in spite of age; yet there was something fitful in his eyes.

This sight was witnessed by the Florentines with growing exasperation, and presently from jeering at the French soldiers and hustling them, they became bent upon rescuing this third prisoner from his tormentors; one venturesome youth suddenly dashed in, cut the old man's bonds and urged him to run; and the next moment he had plunged into the crowd, which closed behind him and hampered the pursuit.

With one soldier struggling desperately on his track, the fugitive sped towards the Duomo, to seek refuge in that sanctuary, but in mounting the steps his foot slipped, he was precipitated towards a group of signori who stood there with their backs to him, and clutched one to save himself.

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It was Tito Melema who felt the clutch. He turned, and saw the face of his adoptive father, Baldassarre Calvo, close to his own. The two men looked at each other silent as death; Tito with cheeks and lips all bloodless, fascinated by terror. The next instant the grasp on his arm relaxed, and Baldassarre disappeared within the church.

IV.—Romola's Ordeal

With Baldassarre lurking in Florence, Tito went in hourly fear. At any moment the story of his baseness might be blown abroad; at any moment, worse still, he might be struck down by the old man, in whose wild eyes he had read only a fierce yearning for vengeance.

As a precaution, Tito took to wearing a coat of fine chain-mail under his doublet, and the discovery of this alarmed Romola for his safety, and shocked her with a suspicion that he was something of a coward.

But by now Tito was deeply involved in Florentine politics, and easily persuaded her that it was against secret political intriguers that he thus shielded himself. He went on to confess that his life was no longer safe in Florence, and he was resolved to leave the city for good. But to this she demurred; her father had died and left his library and his collection as a sacred trust to her and Tito, and until they had carried out his wish and made them over to the city authorities, she felt she could not go.

Tito made light of her scruples. Her father's wish, he said, had been a mere foolish vanity; they had need of money, and he intended to sell both the library and collection, and when, for the first time in her life, she spoke bitterly, in scorn and anger of his faithlessness, he told her flatly it was useless to bandy words for he had sold them already, and they were to be removed that day.

Frantic with grief and resentment, she thought of desperate ways of preventing the accomplishment of his heartless plans, even to borrowing of her godfather and buying back the treasures, so that Tito might keep his ill-gotten gain and her father's last wish still be fulfilled; but he convinced her that all interference was too late, for the things had been purchased by the Count di San Severino and the Seneschal de Beaucaire, who were already on their way with the French king to Sienna.

Latterly, in many ways, Romola had been disappointed in her husband's character; she had found that his handsome face and gay air masked a cowardice, a cunning meanness, a sordid selfishness of disposition that were all at variance with her high ideal of him; but that final unspeakable treachery of the dead man who had trusted him so implicitly shattered her love for Tito utterly.

As soon as her father's library was dismantled and his treasures taken away, Romola went from the house with the old man-servant, Maso, and would never have looked upon Tito's face again, but that Fra Girolamo intercepted her.

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“I have a command to call you back,” he said. “My daughter, you must return to your place. You are flying from your debts; the debt of a Florentine woman to her fellow citizens; the debt of a wife. You are turning your back on the lot that has been appointed for you—you are going to choose another. My daughter, you are fleeing from the presence of God into the wilderness. My daughter, if the cross comes to you as a wife, you must carry it as a wife. You may say, ’I will forsake my husband,’ but you cannot cease to be a wife.”

There was hunger and misery in the streets, and he urged upon her that if she had no other purpose in life she could stay, and help the poor of her own city. Her pride was broken, and she yielded.

V.—Baldassarre is Avenged

Meanwhile, Baldassarre, lurking about Florence, had armed himself with a knife, and was ravenous for revenge. Being homeless, he called by chance at Tessa’s little house, and she, not knowing who he was, took pity on his age and misery, gave him shelter in a shed, and food and drink.

Whilst he was there, Tito came, and, too frankly simple to keep anything from him, Tessa confessed that she had disobeyed his injunctions against holding converse with strangers, and was sheltering a strange, weary old man in the shed without. Her description of this guest left Tito in no doubt as to his identity, and, subduing his first perturbation, he conceived that he might turn the situation to his own advantage. He went out to the shed, and looking down upon Baldassarre in the moonlight, sought to propitiate him with honeyed words, specious explanations, and a plea for pardon. But the old man answered nothing, till his smouldering fury burst into a flame, then he precipitated himself upon the intruder and struck with all his force; but the blade of the knife broke off short against the hidden coat of mail.

Tito insisted that he was welcome to remain there, and said what he could to soothe him, but Baldassarre would stay no longer when he knew whose roof covered him. Presently, he armed himself anew, and waited for another opportunity. He learned all that was to be known of Tito’s career since his arrival in Florence; ascertained that he was married, and had thoughts of winning his wife’s sympathy and telling her of Tessa. Then one night he contrived to get into the Rucellai Gardens, where Tito was at supper with a gathering of Florentine notabilities, and, seized in time and held back from assassinating him, he passionately denounced him before the company as a scoundrel, a liar, and a robber.

There were those present who had been on the church steps that day when Baldassarre had clutched Tito by the arm, and Tito had then explained away his momentary panic. Questioned now by one of these, he declared that though when first he encountered his accuser he did not recognise him, he now saw that he was the

servant who years ago accompanied him and his adoptive father to Greece, and was dismissed on account of misdemeanours, and that the story of his being rescued from beggary was the vision of a disordered brain.

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Baldassarre was given a chance to prove that he was not the servant, but the great scholar to whom Tito was indebted for his learning.

“The ring I possess,” said Rucellai, “is a fine sard that I myself purchased from Messer Tito. It is engraved with a subject from Homer. Will you turn to the passage in Homer from which that subject was taken?”

But sitting to look over the book, Baldassarre realised that the sufferings through which he had passed had unhinged his mind and his memory; the words he stared at had no meaning for him, and he lifted his hands to his head in despair.

The consequence of this fresh failure was that Baldassarre was cast into prison, and Tito was at liberty to pursue his political ambitions unhaunted by that dogging shadow that was to him as the shadow of death. He managed his affairs so cleverly that whichever party came uppermost he was secure of favour and money.

But by-and-by the tide began to turn against him. Baldassarre was at large again, and met Romola and told her not only of his own wrongs, but of Tessa. She saw Tessa and her two children, and befriended them, and was so far from blaming that innocent little creature that she did not even disclose the truth to her; but she was importunate with Tito that he should make atonement to the man who had been a father to him. Then came a day when Tito’s treacheries were discovered by the party he was supposed to serve, and he had to flee for his life through Florence. Scattering jewels and gold to delay his pursuers, he leaped from the bridge into the river, and swam in the darkness, leaving the bellowing mob to think he was drowned.

But far down the stream there were certain eyes that saw him from the banks of the river, and when he landed and fell, faint and helpless, Baldassarre’s hands closed on his throat; and next evening a passer-by found the two dead bodies there.

* * * * *

Silas Marner

“Silas Marner, the Weaver of Raveloe,” begun about November, 1860, and published early in 1861, is in many respects the most admirable of all George Eliot’s works. It is not a long story, but it is a most carefully finished novel—“a perfect gem, a pure work of art,” Mr. Oscar Browning describes it. Mr. Blackwood, the publisher, found it rather sombre, and George Eliot replied to him, “I hope you will not find it at all a sad story as a whole, since it sets—or is intended to set—in a strong light the remedial influences of pure, natural, human relations. I have felt all through as if the story would have lent itself best to metrical rather than to prose fiction, especially in all that relates to the psychology of Silas; except that, under that treatment, there could not be an equal play

of humour." No novel of George Eliot's has received more praise from men of letters than "Silas Marner."

I.—Why Silas Came to Raveloe

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In the early years of the nineteenth century a linen-weaver named Silas Marner worked at his vocation in a stone cottage that stood among the nutty hedgerows near the village of Raveloe, and not far from the edge of a deserted stone-pit.

It was fifteen years since Silas Marner had first come to Raveloe; he was then simply a pallid young man with prominent, short-sighted brown eyes. To the villagers among whom he had come to settle he seemed to have mysterious peculiarities, chiefly owing to his advent from an unknown region called "North'ard." He invited no comer to step across his door-sill, and he never strolled into the village to drink a pint at the Rainbow, or to gossip at the wheel-wrights'; he sought no man or woman, save for the purposes of his calling, or in order to supply himself with necessaries.

At the end of fifteen years the Raveloe men said just the same things about Silas Marner as at the beginning. There was only one important addition which the years had brought; it was that Master Marner had laid by a fine sight of money somewhere, and that he could buy up "bigger men than himself."

But while his daily habits presented scarcely any visible change, Marner's inward life had been a history and a metamorphosis as that of every fervid nature must be when it has been condemned to solitude. His life, before he came to Raveloe, had been filled with the close fellowship of a narrow religious sect, where the poorest layman had the chance of distinguishing himself by gifts of speech; and Marner was highly thought of in that little hidden world, known to itself as the church assembling in Lantern Yard. He was believed to be a young man of exemplary life and ardent faith, and a peculiar interest had been centred in him ever since he had fallen at a prayer-meeting into a trance or cataleptic fit, which lasted for an hour.

Among the members of his church there was one young man, named William Dane, with whom he lived in close friendship; and it seemed to the unsuspecting Silas that the friendship suffered no chill, even after he had formed a closer attachment, and had become engaged to a young servant-woman.

At this time the senior deacon was taken dangerously ill, and Silas and William, with others of the brethren, took turns at night-watching. On the night the old man died, Silas fell into one of his trances, and when he awoke at four o'clock in the morning death had come, and, further, a little bag of money had been stolen from the deacon's bureau, and Silas's pocket-knife was found inside the bureau. For some time Silas was mute with astonishment, then he said, "God will clear me; I know nothing about the knife being there, or the money being gone. Search me and my dwelling."

The search was made, and it ended in William Dane finding the deacon's bag, empty, tucked behind the chest of drawers in Silas's chamber.

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According to the principles of the church in Lantern Yard prosecution was forbidden to Christians. But the members were bound to take other measures for finding out the truth, and they resolved on praying and drawing lots; there was nothing unusual about such proceedings a hundred years ago. Silas knelt with his brethren, relying on his own innocence being certified by immediate Divine interference. *The lots declared that Silas Marner was guilty*. He was solemnly suspended from church-membership, and called upon to render up the stolen money; only on confession and repentance could he be received once more within the fold of the church. Marner listened in silence. At last, when everyone rose to depart, he went towards William Dane and said, in a voice shaken by agitation, "The last time I remember using my knife was when I took it out to cut a strap for you. I don't remember putting it in my pocket again. *You* stole the money, and you have woven a plot to lay the sin at my door. But you may prosper for all that; there is no just God, but a God of lies, that bears witness against the innocent!"

There was a general shudder at this blasphemy. Poor Marner went out with that despair in his soul—that shaken trust in God and man which is little short of madness to a loving nature. In the bitterness of his wounded spirit, he said to himself, "*She* will cast me off, too!" and for a whole day he sat alone, stunned by despair.

The second day he took refuge from benumbing unbelief by getting into his loom and working away as usual, and, before many hours were past, the minister and one of the deacons came to him with a message from Sarah, the young woman to whom he had been engaged, that she held her engagement at an end. In little more than a month from that time Sarah was married to William Dane, and not long afterwards it was known to the brethren in Lantern Yard that Silas Marner had departed from the town.

II.—The Second Blow

When Silas Marner first came to Raveloe he seemed to weave like a spider, from pure impulse, without reflection. Then there were the calls of hunger, and Silas, in his solitude, had to provide his own breakfast, dinner, and supper, to fetch his own water from the well, and put his own kettle on the fire; and all these immediate promptings helped to reduce his life to the unquestioning activity of a spinning insect. He hated the thought of the past; there was nothing that called out his love and fellowship towards the strangers he had come amongst; and the future was all dark, for there was no Unseen Love that cared for him.

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It was then, when all purpose of life was gone, that Silas got into the habit of looking towards the money he received for his weaving, and grasping it with a sense of fulfilled effort. Gradually, the guineas, the crowns, and the half-crowns, grew to a heap, and Marner drew less and less for his own wants, trying to solve the problem of keeping himself strong enough to work sixteen hours a day on as small an outlay as possible. He handled his coins, he counted them, till their form and colour were like the satisfaction of a thirst to him; but it was only in the night, when his work was done, that he drew them out, to enjoy their companionship. He had taken up some bricks in his floor underneath his loom, and here he had made a hole in which he set the iron pot that contained his guineas and silver coins, covering the bricks with sand whenever he replaced them.

So, year after year, Silas Marner lived in this solitude, his guineas rising in the iron pot, and his life narrowing and hardening itself more and more as it became reduced to the functions of weaving and hoarding.

This is the history of Silas Marner until the fifteenth year after he came to Raveloe. Then, about the Christmas of that year, a second great change came over his life.

It was a raw, foggy night, with rain, and Silas was returning from the village, plodding along, with a sack thrown round his shoulders, and with a horn lantern in his hand. His legs were weary, but his mind was at ease with the sense of security that springs from habit. Supper was his favourite meal, because it was his time of revelry, when his heart warmed over his gold.

He reached his door in much satisfaction that his errand was done; he opened it, and to his short-sighted eyes everything remained as he had left it, except that the fire sent out a welcome increase of heat.

As soon as he was warm he began to think it would be a long while to wait till after supper before he drew out his guineas, and it would be pleasant to see them on the table before him as he ate his food.

He rose and placed his candle unsuspectingly on the floor near his loom, swept away the sand, without noticing any change, and removed the bricks. The sight of the empty hole made his heart leap violently, but the belief that his gold was gone could not come at once—only terror, and the eager effort to put an end to the terror. He passed his trembling hand all about the hole, then he held the candle and examined it curiously, trembling more and more. He searched in every corner, he turned his bed over, and shook it, and kneaded it; he looked in his brick oven; and when there was no other place to be searched, he felt once more all round the hole.

He could see every object in his cottage, and his gold was not there. He put his trembling hands to his head, and gave a wild, ringing scream— the cry of desolation.

Then the idea of a thief began to present itself, and he entertained it eagerly, because a thief might be caught and made to restore the gold. The robber must be laid hold of. Marner's ideas of legal authority were confused, but he felt that he must go and proclaim his loss; and the great people in the village—the clergyman, the constable, and Squire Cass—would make the thief deliver up the stolen money.

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It was to the village inn Silas Marner went, where the parish clerk and a select company were assembled, and told the story of his loss—L272 12s. 6d. in all. The machinery of the law was set in motion, but no thief was ever captured, nor could grounds be found for suspicion against any persons.

What had really happened was that Dunsey Cass, Squire Cass's second son—a mean, boastful rascal—on his way home on foot from hunting, saw the light in the weaver's cottage, and knocked, hoping to borrow a lantern, for the lane was unpleasantly slippery, and the night dark. But all was silence in the cottage, for the weaver at that moment had not yet reached home. For a minute Dunsey thought that old Marner might be dead, fallen over into the stone pits. And from that came the decision that he must be dead. If so, the question arose, what would become of the money that everybody said the old miser had put by?

Dunstan Cass was in difficulties for want of money, and he had killed his brother's horse that day on the hunting-field. Who would know, if Marner was dead, that anybody had come to take his hoard of money away?

There were only three hiding-places where he had heard of cottagers' hoards being found: the thatch, the bed, and a hole in the floor. His eyes travelling eagerly over the floor, noted a spot where the sand had been more carefully spread.

Dunstan found the hole and the money, now hidden in two leathern bags. From their weight he judged they must be filled with guineas. Quickly he hastened out into the darkness with the bags, and Dunstan Cass was seen no more alive.

At the very moment when he turned his back on the cottage Silas Marner was not more than a hundred yards away.

III.—Silas Marner's Visitor

It was New Year's Eve, and Squire Cass was giving a dance to the neighbouring gentry of Raveloe. There had been snow in the afternoon, but at seven o'clock it had ceased, and a freezing wind had sprung up.

A woman, shabbily dressed, with a child in her arms, was making her way towards Raveloe, seeking the Red House, where Squire Cass lived. It was not the squire she wanted, but his eldest son, Godfrey, to whom she was secretly married. The marriage—the result of rash impulse—had been an unhappy one from the first, for Godfrey's wife was the slave of opium. The squire had long desired that his son should marry Miss Nancy Lammeter, and would have turned him out of house and home had he known of the unfortunate marriage already contracted. Cold and weariness drove the woman, even while she walked, to the only comfort she knew. She raised the black remnant to her lips, and then flung the empty phial away. Now she walked, always more and more

drowsily, and clutched more and more automatically the sleeping child at her bosom. Soon she felt nothing but a supreme longing to lie down and sleep; and so sank down against a straggling furze-bush, an easy pillow enough; and the bed of snow, too, was soft. The cold was no longer felt, but her arms did not at once relax their instinctive clutch, and the little one slumbered on.

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The complete torpor came at last; the fingers lost their tension, the arms unbent; then the little head fell away from the bosom, and the blue eyes of the child opened wide on the cold starlight. At first there was a little peevish cry of “Mammy,” as the child rolled downward; and then, suddenly, its eyes were caught by a bright gleaming light on the white ground, and with the ready transition of infancy it decided the light must be caught.

In an instant the child had slipped on all fours, and, after making out that the cunning gleam came from a very bright place, the little one, rising on its legs, toddled through the snow—toddled on to the open door of Silas Marner’s cottage, and right up to the warm hearth, where was a bright fire.

The little one, accustomed to be left to itself for long hours without notice, squatted down on the old sack spread out before the fire, in perfect contentment. Presently the little golden head sank down, and the blue eyes were veiled by their delicate half-transparent lids.

But where was Silas Marner while this strange visitor had come to his hearth? He was in the cottage, but he did not see the child. Since he had lost his money he had contracted the habit of opening his door, and looking out from time to time, as if he thought that his money might, somehow, be coming back to him.

That morning he had been told by some of his neighbours that it was New Year’s Eve, and that he must sit up and hear the old year rung out, and the new rung in, because that was good luck, and might bring his money back again. Perhaps this friendly Raveloe way of jesting had helped to throw Silas into a more than usually excited state. Certainly he opened his door again and again that night, and the last time, just as he put out his hand to close it, the invisible wand of catalepsy arrested him, and there he stood like a graven image, powerless to resist either the good or evil that might enter.

When Marner’s sensibility returned he was unaware of the break in his consciousness, and only noticed that he was chilled and faint.

Turning towards the hearth it seemed to his blurred vision as if there was a heap of gold on the floor; but instead of hard coin his fingers encountered soft, warm curls. In utter amazement, Silas fell on his knees to examine the marvel: it was a sleeping child, a round, fair thing, with soft, yellow rings all over its head. Could this be the little sister come back to him in a dream—his little sister whom he had carried about in his arms for a year before she died? That was the first thought. *Was* it a dream? It was very much like his little sister. How and when had the child come in without his knowledge?

But there was a cry on the hearth; the child had awakened, and Marner stooped to lift it on to his knee. He had plenty to do through the next hour. The porridge, sweetened with some dry brown sugar, stopped the cries of the little one for “mammy.” Then it

occurred to Silas's dull bachelor mind that the child wanted its wet boots off, and this having been done, the wet boots suggested that the child had been walking on the snow.

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He made out the marks of the little feet in the snow, and, holding the child in his arms, followed their track to the furze-bush. Then he became aware that there was something more than the bush before him—that there was a human body, half covered with the shifting snow.

With the child in his arms, Silas at once went for the doctor, who was spending the evening at the Red House. And Godfrey Cass recognised that it was his own child he saw in Marner's arms.

The woman was dead—had been dead for some hours, the doctor said; and Godfrey, who had accompanied him to Marner's cottage, understood that he was free to marry Nancy Lammeter.

"You'll take the child to the parish to-morrow?" Godfrey asked, speaking as indifferently as he could.

"Who says so?" said Marner sharply. "Will they make me take her? I shall keep her till anybody shows they've a right to take her away from me. The mother's dead, and I reckon it's got no father. It's a lone thing, and I'm a lone thing. My money's gone—I don't know where, and this is come from I don't know where."

Godfrey returned to the Red House with a sense of relief and gladness, and Silas kept the child. There had been a softening of feeling to him in the village since the day of his robbery, and now an active sympathy was aroused amongst the women. The child was christened Hephzibah, after Marner's mother, and was called Eppie for short.

IV—Eppie's Decision

Eppie had come to link Silas Marner once more with the whole world. The disposition to hoard had utterly gone, and there was no longer any repulsion around to him.

As the child grew up, one person watched with keener, though more hidden, interest than any other the prosperous growth of Eppie under the weaver's care. The squire was dead, and Godfrey Cass was married to Nancy Lammeter. He had no child of his own save the one that knew him not. No Dunsey had ever turned up, and people had ceased to think of him.

Sixteen years had passed, and now Aaron Winthrop, a well-behaved young gardener, is wanting to marry Eppie, and Eppie is willing to have him "some time."

"'Everybody's married some time,' Aaron says," said Eppie. "But I told him that wasn't true, for I said look at father—he's never been married."

"No, child," said Silas, "your father was a lone man till you was sent to him."

“But you’ll never be lone again, father,” said Eppie tenderly. “That was what Aaron said —’I could never think o’ taking you away from Master Marner, Eppie.’ And I said, ’It ‘ud be no use if you did, Aaron.’ And he wants us all to live together, so as you needn’t work a bit, father, only what’s for your own pleasure, and he’d be as good as a son to you—that was what he said.”

The proposal to separate Eppie from her foster-father came from Godfrey Cass.

When the old stone-pit by Marner’s cottage went dry, owing to drainage operations, the skeleton of Dunstan Cass was found, wedged between two great stones. The watch and seals were recognised, and all the weaver’s money was at the bottom of the pit. The shock of this discovery moved Godfrey to tell Nancy the secret of his earlier marriage.

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“Everything comes to light, Nancy, sooner or later,” he said. “That woman Marner found dead in the snow—Eppie’s mother—was my wife. Eppie is my child. I oughtn’t to have left the child unowned. I oughtn’t to have kept it from you.”

“It’s but little wrong to me, Godfrey,” Nancy answered sadly. “You’ve made it up to me—you’ve been good to me for fifteen years. It’ll be a different coming to us, now she’s grown up.”

They were childless, and it hadn’t occurred to them as they approached Silas Marner’s cottage that Godfrey’s offer might be declined. At first Godfrey explained that he and his wife wanted to adopt Eppie in place of a daughter.

“Eppie, my child, speak,” said old Marner faintly. “I won’t stand in your way. Thank Mr. and Mrs. Cass.”

“Thank you, ma’am—thank you, sir,” said Eppie dropping a curtsy; “but I can’t leave my father, nor own anybody nearer than him.”

Godfrey Cass was irritated at this obstacle.

“But I’ve a claim on you, Eppie,” he returned. “It’s my duty, Marner, to own Eppie as my child, and provide for her. She’s my own child. Her mother was my wife. I’ve a natural claim on her.”

“Then, sir, why didn’t you say so sixteen years ago, and claim her before I’d come to love her, i’stead o’ coming to take her from me now, when you might as well take the heart out o’ my body? When a man turns a blessing from his door, it falls to them as take it in. But let it be as you will. Speak to the child. I’ll hinder nothing.”

“Eppie, my dear,” said Godfrey, looking at his daughter not without some embarrassment, “it’ll always be our wish that you should show your love and gratitude to one who’s been a father to you so many years; but we hope you’ll come to love us as well, and though I haven’t been what a father should ha’ been to you all these years, I wish to do the utmost in my power for you now, and provide for you as my only child. And you’ll have the best of mothers in my wife.”

Eppie did not come forward and curtsy as she had done before, but she held Silas’s hand in hers and grasped it firmly.

“Thank you, ma’am—thank you, sir, for your offers—they’re very great and far above my wish. For I should have no delight in life any more if I was forced to go away from my father.”

In vain Nancy expostulated mildly.

“I can’t feel as I’ve got any father but one,” said Eppie. “I’ve always thought of a little home where he’d sit i’ the corner, and I should fend and do everything for him. I can’t think o’ no other home. I wasn’t brought up to be a lady, and,” she ended passionately, “I’m promised to marry a working man, as’ll live with father and help me to take care of him.”

Godfrey Cass and his wife went out.

A year later Eppie was married, and Mrs. Godfrey Cass provided the wedding dress, and Mr. Cass made some necessary alterations to suit Silas’s larger family.

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“Oh, father,” said Eppie, when the bridal party returned from the church, “what a pretty home ours is! I think nobody could be happier than we are!”

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The Mill on the Floss

In “The Mill on the Floss,” published in 1860, George Eliot went to her own early life for the chief characters in the story, and in the relations of Tom and Maggie Tulliver we get a picture of the youth of Mary Ann Evans and her brother Isaac. Lord Lytton objected that Maggie was too passive in the scene at Red Deeps, and that the tragedy of the flood was not adequately prepared. To this criticism George Eliot answered, “Now that the defect is suggested to me, if the book were still in manuscript I should alter, or rather expand, that scene at Red Deeps.” She also admitted that there was “a want of proportionate fulness” in the conclusion. But, with all its faults, “The Mill on the Floss” deserves the reputation it has won. The reception of the story at first was disappointing, and we find the authoress telling her publisher that “she does not want to see any newspaper articles.” But the book made its way, and prepared an ever-growing public for “Silas Marner.”

I.—The Tullivers of Dorlcote Mill

“What I want, you know,” said Mr. Tulliver, “what I want is to give Tom a good eddication—an eddication as’ll be a bread to him. I mean to put him to a downright good school at midsummer. The two years at th’ academy ‘ud ha’ done well enough if I’d meant to make a miller and farmer of him, but I should like Tom to be a bit of a scholard. It ’ud be a help to me wi’ these lawsuits, and arbitrations, and things. I wouldn’t make a downright lawyer o’ the lad—I should be sorry for him to be a raskill—but a sort of engineer, or a surveyor, or an auctioneer and vallyer, like Riley, or one o’ them smartish businesses as are all profits and no outlay, only for a big watch-chain and a high stool. They’re pretty nigh all one, and they’re not far off being even wi’ the law, I believe; for Riley looks Lawyer Wakem i’ the face as hard as one cat looks another. *He’s* none frightened at him.”

Mr. Tulliver was speaking to his wife, a blonde, comely woman, nearly forty years old.

“Well, Mr. Tulliver, you know best. *I’ve* no objections. But if Tom’s to go to a new school, I should like him to go where I can wash him and mend him, else he might as well have calico as linen. And then, when the box is goin’ backwards and forwards, I could send the lad a cake, or a pork-pie, or an apple.”

“Well, well, we won’t send him out o’ reach o’ the carrier’s cart, if other things fit in,” said Mr. Tulliver. “Riley’s as likely a man as any to know o’ some school; he’s had schooling himself, an’ goes about to all sorts o’ places—arbitratin’ and vallyin’, and that.”

So a day or two later Mr. Riley, the auctioneer, came to Dorlcote Mill, and stayed the night, the better that Mr. Tulliver, who was slow at coming to a point, might consult him on the all-important subject of his boy.

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“You see, I want to put him to a new school at midsummer,” said Mr. Tulliver, when the topic had been reached. “I want to send him to a downright good school, where they’ll make a scholard of him. I don’t mean Tom to be a miller an’ farmer. I see no fun i’ that. I shall give Tom an eddication and put him to a business as he may make a nest for himself, an’ not want to push me out o’ mine.”

At the sound of her brother’s name, Maggie, the second and only other child of the Tullivers, who was seated on a low stool close by the fire, with a large book open on her lap, looked up eagerly. Tom, it appeared, was supposed capable of turning his father out of doors. This was not to be borne, and Maggie jumped up from her stool, and going up between her father’s knees, said, in a half-crying, half-indignant voice, “Father, Tom wouldn’t be naughty to you ever; I know he wouldn’t.”

Mr. Tulliver’s heart was touched.

“What! They mustn’t say any harm o’ Tom, eh?” he said, looking at Maggie with a twinkling eye. Then, in a lower voice, turning to Mr. Riley, “She understands what one’s talking about so as never was. And you should hear her read—straight off, as if she knowed it all beforehand. But it’s bad—it’s bad. A woman’s no business wi’ being so clever; it’ll turn to trouble, I doubt. It’s a pity, but what she’d been the lad—she’d ha’ been a match for the lawyers, she would.”

Mr. Riley took a pinch of snuff before he said, “But your lad’s not stupid, is he? I saw him, when I was here last, busy making fishing-tackle; he seemed quite up to it.”

“Well, he isn’t not to say stupid; he’s got a notion o’ things out o’ door, an’ a sort o’ commonsense, as he’d lay hold o’ things by the right handle. But he’s slow with his tongue, you see, and reads but poorly, and can’t abide the books, and spells all wrong, they tell me, an’ as shy as can be wi’ strangers. Now, what I want is to send him to a school where they’ll make him a bit nimble with his tongue and his pen, to make a smart chap of him. I want my son to be even wi’ these fellows as have got the start o’ me with schooling.”

The talk ended in Mr. Riley recommending a country parson named Stelling as a suitable tutor for Tom, and Mr. Tulliver decided that his son should go to Mr. Stelling at King’s Lorton, fifteen miles from Dorlcote Mill.

II.—School-Time

Tom Tulliver’s sufferings during the first quarter he was at King’s Lorton, under the distinguished care of the Rev. Walter Stelling, were rather severe. It had been very difficult for him to reconcile himself to the idea that his school-time was to be prolonged, and that he was not to be brought up to his father’s business, which he had always

thought extremely pleasant, for it was nothing but riding about, giving orders, and going to market.

Mr. Stelling was not a harsh-tempered or unkind man—quite the contrary, but he thought Tom a stupid boy, and determined to develop his powers through Latin grammar and Euclid to the best of his ability.

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As for Tom, he had no distinct idea how there came to be such a thing as Latin on this earth. It would have taken a long while to make it conceivable to him that there ever existed a people who bought and sold sheep and oxen, and transacted the everyday affairs of life through the medium of this language, or why he should be called upon to learn it, when its connection with those affairs had become entirely latent. He was of a very firm, not to say obstinate disposition, but there was no brute-like rebellion or recklessness in his nature; the human sensibilities predominated, and he was anxious to acquire Mr. Stelling's approbation by showing some quickness at his lessons, if he had known how to accomplish it.

In his secret heart Tom yearned to have Maggie with him, and, before the first dreary half-year was ended, Maggie actually came. Mrs. Stelling had given a general invitation for the little girl to come and stay with her brother; so when Mr. Tulliver drove over to King's Lorton late in October, Maggie came too, with the sense that she was taking a great journey, and beginning to see the world.

"Well, my lad," Mr. Tulliver said, "you look rarely! School agrees with you!"

"I don't think I *am* well, father," said Tom; "I wish you'd ask Mr. Stelling not to let me do Euclid—it brings on the toothache, I think."

"Euclid, my lad—why, what's that?" said Mr. Tulliver.

"Oh, I don't know! It's definitions and axioms and triangles and things. It's a book I've got to learn in—there's no sense in it."

"Go, go!" said Mr. Tulliver reprovingly. "You mustn't say so. You must learn what your master tells you. He knows what it's right for you to learn."

In the second term Mr. Stelling had a second pupil—Philip, the son of Lawyer Wakem, Mr. Tulliver's standing enemy.

Philip was a very old-looking boy, Tom thought. His spine had been deformed through an accident in infancy, and to Tom he was simply a humpback. He had a vague notion that the deformity of Wakem's son had some relation to the lawyer's rascality, of which he had so often heard his father talk with hot emphasis.

There was a natural antipathy of temperament between the two boys; for Tom was an excellent bovine lad, and Philip was sensitive, and suffered acute pain when the other blurted out offensive things.

Maggie, on her second visit to King's Lorton, pronounced Philip to be "a nice boy."

"He couldn't choose his father, you know," she said to Tom. "And I've read of very bad men who had good sons, as well as good parents who had bad children."

“Oh, he’s a queer fellow,” said Tom curtly, “and he’s as sulky as can be with me because I told him his father was a rogue. And I’d a right to tell him so, for it was true—and he began it with calling me names.”

An accident to Tom’s foot brought the two boys nearer again, and also threw Philip and Maggie together.

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“Maggie,” said Philip one day, “if you had had a brother like me, do you think you should have loved him as well as Tom?”

“Oh, yes, better,” she answered immediately. “No, not better; because I don’t think I could love you better than Tom. But I should be so sorry—so sorry for you.”

Philip coloured. He had meant to imply, would she love him as well in spite of his deformity, and yet when she alluded to it so plainly he winced under her pity. Maggie, young as she was, felt her mistake.

“But you are so very clever, Philip, and you can play and sing,” she added quickly. “I wish you were my brother. I’m very fond of you.”

“But you’ll go away soon, and go to school, Maggie, and then you’ll forget all about me, and not care for me any more.”

“Oh, no, I shan’t forget you, I’m sure.” And Maggie put her arm round his neck, and kissed him quite earnestly.

III.—The Downfall

When Tom had turned sixteen, and Maggie, three years younger, was at boarding school, came the downfall of the Tullivers. A long and expensive law-suit concerning rights of water, brought by Mr. Tulliver, ended in defeat. Wakem was his opponent’s lawyer.

Maggie broke the news to Tom. Not only would mill and lands and everything be lost, and nothing left, but their father had fallen off his horse, and knew nobody, and seemed to have lost his senses.

“They say Mr. Wakem has got a mortgage or something on the land, Tom,” said Maggie, on their way home from King’s Lorton. “It was the letter with that news in it that made father ill, they think.”

“I believe that scoundrel’s been planning all along to ruin my father,” said Tom, leaping from the vaguest impressions to a definite conclusion. “I’ll make him feel for it when I’m a man. Mind you never speak to Philip again!”

For more than two months Mr. Tulliver lay ill in his room, oblivious to all that was taking place around him. From time to time recognition came to him of his wife and family, but there was no remembrance of recent events.

The mill and land of the Tullivers were sold to Wakem the lawyer, and the bulk of their household goods were disposed of by public auction; but the Tullivers were not turned out of Dorlcote Mill. And, indeed, when Mr. Tulliver, known to be a man of proud

honesty, was once more able to be up and about, it was proposed that he should remain and accept employment as manager of the mill for Mr. Wakem.

It was with difficulty that poor Tulliver could bring himself to accept the situation, but he saw the possibility, by much pinching, of saving money out of the thirty shillings a week salary promised by Wakem, and paying a second dividend to his creditors. The strongest influence of all was the love of the old premises where he had run about when he was a boy, just as Tom had done after him.

Tom, who had at once applied to his Uncle Deane, partner in a wealthy merchant's business, for work, and was now earning a pound a week, had protested against entertaining the proposition; he shouldn't like his father to be under Wakem; he thought it would look nothing but mean spirited.

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But Mr. Tulliver had come to a decision. The first evening of his new life downstairs, he called his family round him, and began to speak, looking first at his wife.

“I’ve made up my mind, Bessy. I’ll stop in the old place, and I’ll serve under Wakem, and I’ll serve him like an honest man; there’s no Tulliver but what’s honest, mind that, Tom. They’ll have it to throw up against me as I paid a dividend—but it wasn’t my fault—it was because there’s raskills in the world. They’ve been too many for me, and I must give in. But I’ll serve him as honest as if he was no raskill. I’m an honest man, though I shall never hold my head up no more! I’m a tree as is broke—a tree as is broke.”

He paused, and looked on the ground. Then suddenly raising his head, he said, in a louder yet deeper tone, “But I won’t forgive him! I know what they say—he never meant me any harm! I shouldn’t ha’ gone to law they say. But who made it so as there was no arbitrating and no justice to be got? It signifies nothing to him—I know that he’s one o’ them fine gentlemen as get money by doing business for poorer folks, and when he’s made beggars of ’em he’ll give ’em charity. I won’t forgive him! I wish he might be punished with shame till his own son ’ud like to forget him. And you mind this, Tom—-you never forgive him, neither, if you mean to be my son. Now write—write it i’ the Bible!”

“Oh, father, what?” said Maggie. “It’s wicked to curse and bear malice.”

“It isn’t wicked, I tell you,” said her father, fiercely. “It’s wicked as the raskills should prosper—it’s the devil’s doing. Do as I tell you, Tom! Write.”

The big Bible was open at the beginning, where many family entries were put down.

“What am I to write, father?” said Tom, with gloomy submission.

“Write as your father, Edward Tulliver, took service under John Wakem, the man as had helped to ruin him, because I’d promised my wife to make her what amends I could, and because I wanted to die in th’ old place where I was born, and my father was born. Put that i’ the right words—you know how—and then write as I don’t forgive Wakem for all that; and for all I’ll serve him honest, I wish evil may befall him. Write that.”

There was a dead silence as Tom’s pen moved along the paper.

“Now let me hear what you’ve wrote,” said Mr. Tulliver; and Tom read aloud, slowly.

“Now, write—write as you’ll remember what Wakem’s done to your father, and you’ll make him and his feel it, if ever the day comes. And sign your name—Thomas Tulliver!”

“Oh, no, father, dear father!” said Maggie, trembling like a leaf. “You shouldn’t make Tom write that!”

“Be quiet, Maggie!” said Tom, impatiently, “I shall write it!”

IV.—In Death They Were Not Divided

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The Red Deeps was always a favourite place to Maggie to walk in. An old stone quarry, so long exhausted that both mounds and hollows were now clothed with brambles and trees, and with here and there a stretch of grass which a few sheep kept close nibbled. This was the Red Deeps, and it was here in June that Maggie once more met Philip Wakem, five years after their first meeting at Mr. Stelling's. He told her that she was much more beautiful than he had thought she would be, and assured her, in answer to the difficulties she raised as to their meeting, that there was no enmity in his father's mind.

And Maggie went home with an inward conflict already begun, and Philip went home to do nothing but remember and hope.

In the following April they met again, after Philip had been abroad.

And now he took her hand, and asked her the simple question, "*Do* you love me?"

"I think I could hardly love anyone better; there is nothing but what I love you for," Maggie answered. But she pointed out how impossible even their friendship was, if it were discovered.

Philip, on his side, refused to give up hope, and before they parted that day she had kissed him.

Tom intervened before the next visit to the Red Deeps. He had heard that Philip Wakem had been seen there with his sister, and Maggie admitted, on his questioning her, that she had told Philip that she loved him.

"Now, then, Maggie," Tom said coldly, "there are but two courses for you to take. Either you vow solemnly to me, with your hand on father's Bible, that you will never have another meeting or speak another word in private to Philip Wakem, or you refuse and I tell my father everything!"

In vain Maggie pleaded. Tom was obdurate, and she repeated the words of renunciation.

But that was not enough for Tom Tulliver; he accompanied Maggie to Red Deeps, and in a voice of harsh scorn told Philip that he had been taking a mean, unmanly advantage.

"It was for my father's sake, Philip," said Maggie, imploringly. "Tom threatens to tell my father—and he couldn't bear it. I have promised, I have vowed solemnly, that we will not have any intercourse without my brother's knowledge."

"It is enough, Maggie. *I* shall not change, but I wish you to hold yourself entirely free. But trust me—remember that I can never seek for anything but good to what belongs to you."

Tom only replied with angry contempt, and led Maggie away. All his sister's remonstrances he answered with cold obstinacy.

For his character in its strength was hard. Tom had laboured to one end in these years: to pay off his father's creditors, and regain Dorlcote Mill. By his industry, and by some successful private ventures in trade, the day came when the first of the objects was realised, and Mr. Tulliver lived to see himself free of debt.

But Mr. Tulliver's satisfaction was short-lived. Excited by the dinner given to celebrate the payment of his creditors, he met Mr. Wakem near the mill. From angry words it came to blows, and Tulliver fell on the lawyer furiously, only ceasing from attack when Maggie and Mrs. Tulliver appeared. Wakem went off without serious injury, but Tulliver only lived through the night; the excitement had killed him.

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“You must take care of her, Tom,” said the dying man, turning to his daughter. “You’ll manage to pay for a brick grave, Tom, so as your mother and me can lie together? This world’s...too many...honest man...”

At last there was total stillness, and poor Tulliver’s dimly lighted soul had ceased to be vexed with the painful riddle of this world.

Tom and Maggie went downstairs together, and Maggie spoke. “Tom, forgive me; let us always love each other”—and they clung and wept together.

But they were not to be always united.

Tom lived in lodgings in the town, and was anxious to provide for his sister, but Maggie preferred to take up teaching in her old boarding-school. She met Philip Wakem again, and though Tom released her from her old promise, he could not regard Philip with any feelings of friendship.

It was when Tom had, by years of steady work, fulfilled his father’s wishes and become once more master of Dorlcote Mill that Maggie returned—to be no more separated from her brother. She was staying in the town near the river on the night when the flood came, and the river rose beyond its banks. Her first thought, as the water entered the lower part of the house, was of the mill, where Tom was. There was no time to get assistance; she must go herself, and alone. Hastily she procured a boat, and at last reached the mill. The water was up to the first story, but still the mill stood firm.

“Tom, where are you? Here is Maggie!” she called out, in a loud, piercing voice. Tom opened the middle window, and got into the boat. Tom rowed with vigour, but a new danger was before them in the river.

“Get out of the current!” was shouted at them, but it could not be done at once. Huge fragments of machinery, swept off one of the wharves, blocked the stream in one wide mass, and the current swept the boat swiftly on to its doom.

“It is coming, Maggie!” Tom said, in a deep, hoarse voice, loosing the oars and clasping her.

The next instant the boat was no longer seen upon the water, and brother and sister had gone down in an embrace never to be parted; living through again in one supreme moment the days when they had clasped their little hands in love.

“In their death they were not divided.”

* * * * *

ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN

Waterloo

Emile Erckmann was born at Phalsbourg, in Alsace, on May 20, 1822, and Alexandre Chatrian, at Soldatenthal, on December 18, 1826. Erckmann, the son of a bookseller, became a law student, and was admitted to the Bar in 1858. But the law studies were always uncongenial, and Erckmann meeting Chatrian as a fellow student in the gymnasium at Phalsbourg, the two young men decided to join forces in authorship. The Erckmann-Chatrian partnership lasted from 1860 to 1885, and resulted in a remarkable

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series of novels, short stories, plays, and operas. “Waterloo” was published in 1865, and has enjoyed a wide popularity in many languages. Like “The Conscript,” its predecessor, the charm of “Waterloo” consists largely in the character of Joseph Bertha, the young clockmaker of Phalsbourg, who tells the story. Bertha is a peaceful citizen who hates war and has no taste for glory. Yet he is nothing of a coward, and behaves like a man when he is forced to fight. To the student of history, the light thrown on the rise and fall of the Bourbon popularity in France, 1813-14, in this novel, will always be of interest. Chatrian died in Paris on September 4, 1890, and Erckmann at Luneville, on March 14, 1899.

I.—Napoleon Returns

Never was anything so joyous as the spring of 1814 Louis XVIII. was king, and the war was over. All except the old soldiers were content; and only when the nobles, who had fled at the Revolution, returned, and it was said that they were going to bring back all their old ideas, did M. Goulden express any dissatisfaction. There were great religious processions everywhere and expiatory services, and talk of rebuilding all the convents, and setting up the nobles again in their castles. But these things did not trouble me, because I was married to Catherine, and knew nothing about politics.

The treatment of the old soldiers enraged me. On the day of the religious procession at Phalsbourg, half a dozen old veterans, restored prisoners, were set upon in our town by that rascal Pinacle and the people of Baraques, and knocked about. Pinacle did this to curry favour with Louis XVIII., and M. Goulden warned us that if ruffians like Pinacle got the upper hand it would open people’s eyes.

Sure enough, Pinacle received the cross of honour in the autumn when the Duc de Berry came to review the troops at Phalsbourg, and even Aunt Gredel, who was fond of abusing Napoleon and the Jacobins, and applauding the king and the clergy, thought this a shameful thing.

It really was scandalous the way titles and honours were given to worthless people who shouted for the king. Worse than this was the way Napoleon’s old officers were treated. Men who had fought and bled for France for twenty years were now well-nigh starving, driven out of the army to make room for the king’s favourites.

We read all this in the “Gazette,” and Zebede, who had come back alive and in time for my wedding, and was still in the army, would often come in and tell us of the growing indignation of the soldiers. The whole of that winter the indignation was spreading in the town at the sight of so many brave officers, the heroes of Marengo, Austerlitz, and Wagram, wandering forlornly about, starving on half-pay, and deprived of their posts.

How well I remember one day in January, 1815, two of these officers, pale and gaunt, coming into the workshop to sell a watch.

M. Goulden examined the watch with great care and said, “Do not be offended, gentlemen; I, too, served France under the Republic, and I know it must cut to the heart to be forced to sell something which recalls sacred memories.”

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“It was given me by Prince Eugene,” said one of the officers, Commandant Margarot, a hussar.

“It is worth more than 1,000 francs,” said M. Goulden, “and I cannot afford to buy it. But I will advance you 200 francs, and the watch shall remain here if you like, and shall be yours whenever you come to reclaim it.”

The old hussar broke down at this, and though his comrade, Colonel Falconette, tried to restrain him, he poured forth thanks and bitter words against the government.

From that time it always seemed to me that things would end badly, and that the nobles had gone too far. The old commandant had said that the government behaved like Cossacks to the army, and this was horrible.

M. Goulden read the “Gazette” aloud to us every day, and both Catherine and I were pleased to find there were men in Paris maintaining the very things we thought ourselves.

All this time the clergy were going on with their processions, and sermons were being preached about the rebellion of 1790, the restitution of property to the landowners, and the re-establishment of convents, and the need for missionaries for the conversion of France. From such ideas what good could come?

It is no wonder that when a report came early in March that Napoleon had landed at Cannes and was marching on Paris we were all very agitated at Phalsbourg.

“It is plain,” said M. Goulden, “that the emperor will reach Paris. The soldiers are for him; so are the peasantry, whose property is threatened; and so are the middle classes, provided he will make treaties of peace.”

II.—“Vive l’Empereur!"

For some days, though all knew Napoleon had set foot in France, no one dared talk of it aloud. Only the looks of the half-pay officers betrayed their anxiety. If they had possessed horses and arms I am sure they would have set out to meet their emperor.

On March 8, Zebede entered our house and said abruptly, “The two first batallions are starting.”

“They are going to stop him?” said M. Goulden.

“Yes, they’ll stop him, that is very likely,” Zebede answered, winking. At the foot of the stairs he drew me aside and whispered, “Look inside my cap, Joseph; all the soldiers have got it, too.”

Sure enough it was the old tricolour cockade, which had been removed on the return of Louis XVIII.

At last the papers had to admit that Buonaparte had escaped from Elba. What a scene it was in the cafe the night the papers arrived! M. Goulden and I were hardly seated before the place was filled with people, and it was so close the windows had to be opened.

Commandant Margarot mounted on a table with other officers all around him, and began to read the “Gazette” aloud. It took a long time, the reading, and the people laughed and jeered at the passages that said the troops were faithful to the king, that Buonaparte was surrounded and would soon be taken, and that the illustrious Ney and the other marshals had hastened to place their swords at the service of the king. The commandant read on firmly in that distinct voice of his until he came to the order calling upon the French to seize Buonaparte and give him up dead or alive.

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Then his whole face changed and his eyes glittered. He took the “Gazette” up and tore it into little pieces, and, drawing himself up, his long arms stretched out, cried, “Vive l’Empereur!” with all his might. Immediately all the half-pay officers took up the cry, and “Vive l’Empereur!” was repeated again by the very soldiers posted outside the town hall when they heard the shout.

The commandant was carried shoulder high round the cafe, and everyone was now calling out, “Vive l’Empereur!” I saw the tears in the eyes of the commandant, tears at hearing the name he loved best acclaimed once more.

As for me, I felt as if cold water was being forced down my back. “It’s all over,” I said to myself. “It’s no good talking about peace.”

But M. Goulden was more hopeful, and after we got home spoke cheerfully of the blessings of liberty and a good constitution.

Aunt Gredel did not take this view. She came to see us the morning after the scene in the cafe, when all the town was discussing the great news, and began at once, “So it seems the villain has run away from his island?”

Both M. Goulden and I were anxious to avoid a dispute, for Aunt Gredel was really angry, and she couldn’t leave the subject.

M. Goulden admitted that he preferred Napoleon to the Bourbons, with their nobles and missionary priests, because the emperor was bound to respect the national property, whereas the later would have destroyed all that the Revolution had accomplished. “Still, I am now, and always shall be till death, for the Republic and the rights of man,” M. Goulden concluded.

The old gentleman took his hat and went out to escape further argument, and Aunt Gredel turned to me and told me that M. Goulden was an old fool and always had been, and that I should have to go to Switzerland now, unless Buonaparte was taken before he reached Paris.

In the evening, however, when Aunt Gredel had gone, and we three were together, Catherine said quietly, “M. Goulden is right; he knows more about these things than my mother does, and we will always listen to his advice.”

I thought to myself, “Yes, that’s all very well; but it will be a horrible thing to have to put on one’s knapsack again and be off. I would rather be in Switzerland than in Leipzig.”

Each day now brought news of Napoleon’s advance, from Grenoble to Lyons, from Lyons to Macon and Auxerre. There was no opposition anywhere to his progress, and the only question that troubled M. Goulden’s mind was the attitude of Ney to the emperor. Could Ney, an old soldier of the Revolution, though he had kissed the hand of

Louis XVIII., betray the country to please the king? The uneasiness disappeared when we learnt that Ney had followed the example of the army, the citizens, and of all who did not wish to go back to the customs and laws of twenty-five years earlier.

On March 21, just as it was getting dark, we knew that something decisive must have happened at Paris. The drums were calling to arms in the market-place, and a great crowd soon assembled.

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The soldiers fell into their ranks, Commandant Gemeau, who had only just recovered from his wounds, drew his sword, and gave the order to form square.

M. Goulden and I got on a bench to listen; we knew that the fate of France depended on the message we were to hear.

“Present arms!” called out the commandant in the same clear voice which had bidden us at Luetzen and Leipzig, “Close up your ranks!”

Then came the news we had been waiting for.

“Soldiers, his Majesty Louis XVIII. left Paris on March 20, and the Emperor Napoleon entered the capital the same day.”

For a second there was a dead silence, and then the commandant spoke of the banner of France, the banner of Marengo, Austerlitz, and Jena, stained with our blood; and the old sergeant drew out the tattered tricolour flag from its case.

“I know no other flag!” cried the commandant, raising his sword. “Vive la France! Vive l’Empereur!”

What a shout there was of “Vive l’Empereur! Vive la France!” at this. The people and the soldiers embraced one another, and that night and for the next five or six days there was, if anything, even more rejoicing than there had been on the return of Louis XVIII. We still hoped for the continuance of peace, but who could say how long the peace would last?

Phalsbourg was ordered to put itself into a state of defence, a large workshop was set up at the arsenal for the repairing of arms, and engineers and artillerymen came over from Metz to make earthworks in the fortifications. It seemed to me that a large number of men would be required for all the guns and forts, and that my watchmaking days would soon be exchanged for active service. I began to think that, after all, religious processions were better than being sent to fight against people one knew nothing about.

III.—On the Road to Waterloo

Aunt Gredel had not been to see us for a month, and it was a great comfort to Catherine and me when one Sunday M. Goulden proposed that we should all three pay her a visit at Quatre Vents. As soon as she saw us, Aunt Gredel rushed to kiss her daughter, and called out, “You are a good man, M. Goulden, better a thousand times than I am. How glad I am to see you! It doesn’t matter about being a Jacobin or anything else; the main thing is to have a good heart.”

It was not until the afternoon that M. Goulden explained that he had known for some days that I should be called up to rejoin my old regiment, and that he had arranged with

the commandant of artillery that I should be received at the arsenal as a workman. What relief this was to us, for I could not bear the thought of separation from Catherine. So from that day I went to work at the arsenal, and Aunt Gredel came to see us again as she had been accustomed to do.

It can be guessed with what spirit I worked at the arsenal, and how pleased I was when the commandant expressed satisfaction at my work. But I was not allowed to stop at Phalsbourg.

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On May 23 the commandant told me that I must go to Metz with the 3rd battalion, to which I belonged. He assured me, however, that I should be kept at Metz in the workshops, and we all did our best to believe that I was fortunate in my destination. M. Goulden, however, warned me before I left that France was threatened by her enemies, that the allies would make no peace with the emperor, but were determined to set Louis XVIII. once more on the throne, and that now the question was not of invading other countries, but of defending our own.

Catherine was asleep when the morning came for my departure, and I was glad to escape the pain of saying "good-bye." At the barracks, Zebede, who was now a sergeant, led me into the soldiers' room, and I put on my uniform. Then the battalion defiled through the gates, the soldiers at the outworks presented arms, and we were on the way to Waterloo.

It was useless to think of stopping in Metz. We arrived in that city of Jews and soldiers after five days' march, and were at once, after our night's rest, supplied with ammunition. I saw that my only chance of staying at the workshops of Metz would be after the campaign was over, for we were on the march the very next morning. Zebede was not always with me now, and my closest comrade was Jean Buche, the son of a sledge-maker at Harberg, who had never eaten anything better than potatoes before he became a conscript. Buche turned in his feet in walking, but he never seemed to know the meaning of being tired, and in his own fashion was a wonderful pedestrian.

From Metz we marched through Thionville, Chatelet, Etain, Dannevoux, Yong, Vivier, and Cul-de-Sard. All our troops were pouring into Belgium—cavalry, infantry, and artillery—and though there were no signs of the enemy, it was reported that we were to attack the English. I thought as well English as Prussians, Austrians, or Russians, since we were to kill each other.

On the night of June 14 we bivouacked outside the village of Roly, and General Pecheux read a proclamation by the emperor, reminding us that this was the anniversary of Marengo, that the powers were in coalition against France, and that the hour had come for France to conquer or perish.

It is impossible to describe the enthusiasm at this message from the emperor; our courage was stronger, and the conscripts were even more anxious than the veterans for the fighting to begin.

We were up at daybreak next day and on the march, eager to get a sight of the Prussians, who had been repulsed from Charleroi by the emperor, we were told. At the village of Chatelet we halted, and heard the noise of firing away across the River Sambre, in the direction of Gilly. An old bald peasant told us that evening that the Prussians had men in the villages of Fleurus and Lambusart, that the English and Belgians were on the great Brussels road, and that the causeway through Quatre Bras

and Ligny enabled the Prussians and English to communicate freely with each other. He also told us that the Prussians said insulting things of the French army, and were generally hated by the people. When I heard of the way the Prussians boasted, my blood boiled, and I said to myself, “There shall be no more compassion. Either they or we must be utterly destroyed.”

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I can recall with what splendour the sun rose next morning above a cornfield—it was the morning of the battle of Ligny. Zebede and one or two comrades whom I had known in 1813 came and chattered while we lit our fires. We could see the Prussians before us, posting themselves behind hedges and walls, and preparing to defend the villages, and all the time we were kept roasting in the corn, waiting for the signal to attack. The emperor arrived, and held a short conference with the superior officers, and I saw him at close quarters before he rode off again to the village of Fleurus, already vacated by the Prussians.

And still we waited, though we knew the attack on St. Amand had begun.

At last came our turn to advance on Ligny. “Forward! Forward!” cried the officers. “Vive l’Empereur!” we shouted. The Prussian bullets whizzed like hail upon us, and then we could see or hear nothing till we were in the village.

No quarter was given that day; we fought in houses and gardens, in barns and lanes, with muskets and bayonets. Those who fell were lost. At one time fifteen of us were in possession of a barn, and the Prussians, for a time outnumbering us, drove us up a ladder. They fired up at our floor, and finally, when it seemed we were lost, and were all to be massacred we heard the shout of “Vive l’Empereur!” and the Prussians fled. Out of that fifteen only six were left alive, but Zebede and Buche were among the survivors.

The battle still raged in the village streets, dead and dying were everywhere. Towards nightfall it was plain we were the victors; Ligny and St. Amand were in our hands, and the Prussians had moved away. On the plateau behind Ligny, where our cavalry had been at work, the slaughter had been terrible.

The dozen or so remaining of our company rested for a few hours that night in the ruins of a farmhouse, and next day came the roll-call of our battalion, and the sending off of the wounded. More than 360 of our men, including Commandant Gemeau and Captain Vidal, were disabled, and we were busy all day over the wounded.

It was wet and muddy that evening, and we were hungry and dispirited when we reached Quatre Bras, about eight o’clock. We were not allowed to halt here, but marched on to a village called Jemappes, and at midnight we settled down in a furrow to wait for morning.

The red coats of the English were visible before us when we awoke next morning; behind their lines was the village of Mont St. Jean, and they had also the farmhouses of La Haie-Sainte and Hougomont. At six o’clock I looked at their position, with Zebede, Captain Florentin, and Buche, and it seemed to me it was a difficult task before us. It was Sunday, and I could hear the bells of villages, recalling Phalsbourg. But in a very little while we heard no more bells, for at half-past eight our battalion was on its way to the high road in front, and the battle of Waterloo had begun.

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IV.—The Hour of Disaster

I have often heard veterans describe the order of battle given by the emperor. But all I remember of that terrible day is that we marched out with the bands playing, that we got to close quarters with the English, were repulsed, and were assisted by regiments of cuirassiers, that we carried La Haie-Sainte with terrible slaughter at Ney's command. Hougomont we could not carry. When we thought we were winning, the news was spread that Bluecher, with 60,000 men, was advancing on our flank, and that unless Grouchy, with his 30,000, arrived in time to reinforce us the day might be lost.

All the world knows now that Grouchy did not arrive, that we threw ourselves again and again upon the English squares, and that at last, when regiment after regiment had tried in vain to break the enemy's line, the Old Guard were called up by the emperor. It was the last chance of retrieving the day, the grand stroke—and it failed.

The four battalions of the Guards, reduced from 3,000 to 1,200 men, were assailed by so fierce a fire that they were compelled to retire. They retired slowly, defending themselves with muskets and bayonets, but with their retirement, and the approach of night, the battle ended for us in the confusion of a rout. It was like a flood. We were surrounded on all sides when Bluecher arrived. The Old Guard formed a square for the emperor and his officers, and the rest of us simply straggled away, back to France. The most awful thing of all was the beating of the drum of the Old Guard in that hour of disaster. It was like a fire-bell, the last appeal of a burning nation.

Buche was by my side in the retreat. Several times the Prussians attacked us. We heard that the emperor had departed for Paris, and we struggled on, only hoping to escape with our lives. At Charleroi the inhabitants shut the city gates in our face, and Buche shared in the general rage, and proposed to destroy the town. But I thought we had had enough massacres, and that it was not right we should be killing our own countrymen, and I persuaded Buche to come on with me.

In a few days we felt ourselves safe from pursuing Prussians, and at the village of Bouvigny I wrote a letter to Catherine, telling her I was safe. In this village some officers of our regiment, the 6th of the Line, found us, and we had to rejoin. Presently we saw all that was left of Grouchy's army corps in retreat, and a day or two later we heard of the emperor's abdication. On July 1, we reached Paris, and outside the city, near the village of Issy, we once more fell in with the Prussians; for two days we fought them with fury, and then some generals announced that peace had been made.

We believed that this truce was to give the enemy time to leave the country, and that otherwise France would rise, as it rose in '92, and drive them out.

Unhappily, we soon learnt that the Prussians and English were to occupy Paris, and that the remains of the French army were to be kept beyond the Loire. We all felt that we

had been betrayed, and the old officers, pale with anger, wept in their misery. Paris in the hands of the Prussians! Besides, were we to go to the other side of the Loire at the command of Bluecher?

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Desertions began that very day, and I said to Buche, “Let us return to Phalsbourg and Harberg, and take up our work, and live like honest men.” About fifty of us from Alsace-Lorraine were in the battalion, and we set off together on the road to Strasbourg.

On July 8 we heard that Louis XVIII. was to come back, and already the white banner of the Bourbons was being displayed in the villages.

In some places there were rascals who called us Buonapartists, and gendarmes who took us to the town hall and made us shout “Vive le Roi!” Buche and some of the old soldiers hated this; but what did it matter who was king, and what these fools wanted us to shout?

Our little company got smaller and smaller as men halted in their own villages, and when, on July 16, we reached Phalsbourg, Buche and I were alone.

Buche went on to break the news of my return, but I could not wait, and ran after him.

I heard people saying, “There’s Joseph, Bertha,” and in a moment I was in the house, and in Catherine’s arms. Then I embraced M. Goulden, and an hour later Aunt Gredel arrived.

Jean Buche would not stay and dine with us, but hurried home to Harberg. I have often seen him since; and Zebede, too, who remained in the army.

Many insulting things were said about us by the Pinacles, but I had happiness in my family circle, especially when Catherine presented me with a little Joseph.

I am an old man now, but M. Goulden always said the principles of freedom and liberty would triumph, and I have lived long enough to see his words come true.

* * * * *

OCTAVE FEUILLET

Romance of a Poor Young Man

Octave Feuillet, born at Saint Lo, in France, on August 11, 1821, was the son of a Norman gentleman who regarded literature as an ignoble profession. When Octave ran away to Paris in order to pursue a literary career, his father refused to help him, and for some years the young writer had a very hard struggle. But on taking to novel-writing, Feuillet quickly acquired fame and fortune. His “Romance of a Poor Young Man” ("Le Roman d’un Jeune Homme Pauvre"), which appeared in 1858, made him the most popular author of the day. Standing midway between the novelists of the romantic school and the writers of the realistic movement, he combined a sense of the poetry of

life with a gift for analysing the finer shades of feeling. The plot of the “Romance of a Poor Young Man” is certainly extraordinary; but in the present case some allowance must be made for the fact that the hero is induced to accept the humble position in which he finds himself by his old family lawyer, who secretly designs to marry him to the daughter of his new employers. A scheme of this sort would not Strike a French reader as improbable, for marriage in France is often more a business arrangement than a love affair. Feuillet spent the latter part of his life in retirement, and died on December 29, 1890.

I.—A Nobleman in Difficulties

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Here I am, then, in the situation that Lawyer Laubepin obtained for me. I am alone at last, thank goodness, sitting in a gloomy room in this old Breton castle, in which the former steward to the Laroque family used to live. My position is certainly very strange, but as Laubepin was discreet, and did not tell his clients that he was sending them a new steward in the person of the young Marquis of Champcey, perhaps I shall not find my post very difficult. I was afraid that the Laroques were a family of the vulgarly rich sort, like the dreadful persons who have bought my father's lands. Laroque is a picturesque figure in his old age, and though his widowed daughter-in-law is rather more commonplace, his grand-daughter, Marguerite Laroque, is a nobly beautiful girl.

If it were not for my accursed pride, I should now feel happier than I have ever felt since that day of disaster, misery, and shame when Laubepin told me that my poor dead father had lost his fortune in speculations, and left nothing but his title and his debts. Well, I have paid the debts, and if I can now only earn enough money to keep my little sister Helene at school, I shall not grumble at my lot. I feel the loss of my friends, it is true. There is not a soul I can confide in, and I must find some outlet for the thoughts and feelings that oppress me; so I will keep this diary.

It will be at least a silent confidant, and perhaps when I am older I shall be able to read with a certain pleasurable interest its record of my singular adventures. No other man in France, on May 1, 1857, can have been transformed so suddenly, as by the wand of a witch, from a powerful and wealthy young nobleman of ancient lineage into a humble and despised domestic servant. Perhaps a good fairy will appear and restore me to my proper shape; but I wish she had appeared at dinner this evening. There were twenty guests, and it was the first time since the change of my fortunes that I took part in a society affair. Nobody spoke to me, except the pretty little governess of the family, *Mlle*. Helouin; and we were placed at the end of the table. The position of honour was given to a young and brilliant nobleman, M. de Bevallan, whose estate joined that of the Laroque family. I gathered from *Mlle*. Helouin that it was his ambition to unite the two estates by marrying *Mlle*. Marguerite Laroque. I was, therefore, surprised when the lovely heiress led her grandfather into the room when everybody was seated, placed him in a chair by Bevallan, and came and sat by my side.

"She can't," I thought to myself, "be much in love with her wooer," and I began to study her with a certain curiosity. Her fine, clear-cut features and large dark eyes attracted me; and by way of opening the conversation I spoke of the wildly beautiful scenery through which I had passed on my way to the castle. It was a bad beginning.

"I see," she said, with a singular expression of irony, "that you are a poet. You must talk about the forests and moorlands with *Mlle*. Helouin, who also adores these things. For my part I do not love them."

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“What is it, then, that you really love?” I said.

She gave me a supercilious look and said, in a hard voice, “Nothing, sir.”

I must confess I was hurt. I could not see that I had done anything to lay myself open to so harsh an answer. No doubt I was only a servant. But why had she come and sat beside me if she did not want to talk? I was glad when the dinner was over and we went into the drawing-room. Madame Laroque, the widowed mother of Marguerite, began to ask M. Bevallan about the new opera in Paris; he was unable to reply, so, as I had seen the work in Italy before it was produced in France, I gave her a description of it. I am afraid I forgot myself with Madame Laroque—a fine-looking, cultivated woman of forty years of age. Flattered by the way in which she treated me entirely as her equal, I insensibly glided from theatrical topics to fashionable gossip, and just stopped in time in an anecdote about my tour in Russia. A few more words and she would have learnt that her humble steward, Maxime Odiot—as I am now called— was a man with very aristocratic connections.

In order to hide my embarrassment, I moved towards the table where some of the guests were playing whist. This led to my committing a blunder which, I fear, may make my position a difficult one. Among the whist-players was a *Mlle*. de Porhoet-Gael, eighty-eight years of age and full of strange crotchets. The last descendant of the noblest of Breton families, she lived, so Madame Laroque told me, on an income of forty pounds a year, her fortune having been spent in vainly fighting for the succession to a great estate in Spain. She was talking about it to her partner when I came up.

“The estate belongs to me,” she was saying. “My father told me so a hundred times, and the persons who are trying to take it from me have no more connection with my family than this handsome young gentleman has.”

And she designated me with a look and a movement of her head. No doubt she did not mean to imply that because I was a steward I was of mean birth; but I was stung by her remark, and forgetting myself, I replied rather sharply, “You are mistaken, madam, in thinking that I am unrelated to your family.”

“You will have to prove that to me, young man.”

Confused and ashamed, I withdrew into the corner and tried to talk to *Mlle*. Helouin about poetry and art, but at last, upset and distracted, I arose and walked out of the room. *Mlle*. de Porhoet followed me.

“Monsieur Odiot,” she said, “would you mind seeing me home? My servant has not arrived, and I am growing too feeble now to walk without help.”

Naturally, I went with her.

“What did you mean,” she said, as we walked on together, “by claiming to be a relation of mine?”

“I hope,” I replied very humbly, “that you will pardon a jest that—”

“A jest!” she interrupted. “Is a matter touching my honour a jest? I see; a remark which would be an insult if addressed to a man becomes only a jest when it is levelled at an old, unprotected woman.”

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After that, nothing was left to me, as a man of honour, but to entrust her with my secret. There had been several marriages between our families, and after listening with great interest to the story of my troubles, she became wonderfully kind in her manner to me.

“You must come and see me to-morrow, cousin,” she said, when we parted. “My law-suit is going very badly and I should like you to go through all my papers, and see if you can discover any new documents in support of my claim. Do not despair, my dear, over your own misfortunes. I think I shall be able to help you.”

II.—Love and Jealousy

I am afraid I lack the industry necessary for keeping a diary. It is now two months since I wrote the last entry. If I had made every night a brief note of the events of the day, I should now have a better view of my position. Has *Mlle*. de Porhoet betrayed my secret? There has certainly been a curious change in my relations with the Laroques. I fancy it began on the day when Marguerite and I met at last on an equal footing at *Mlle*. de Porhoet’s house. The document which I had just then found may not be as important as we thought, but our common joy in what we considered was a discovery of tremendous value brought us closer together.

But I cannot understand Marguerite. Sometimes she still goes out of her way to be insulting towards me, and sometimes she treats me with a sweet frankness which has something sisterly in it. One day, for instance, she came to my window and asked me if I would go for a walk with her. “Bring your sketch-book, Monsieur Odiot,” she called out gaily, “and I will take you to Merlin’s Tomb in the Enchanted Valley.”

As a matter of fact, the woods around the castle of the Laroques were the remains of the famous forest of Broceliande, and I had always been promising myself a long ramble through this region of romance, but I had never found time to explore it. I was now glad I had waited, for Marguerite was a charming guide. Never had I seen her so light-hearted. When we reached a great block of stone in the depth of the wood, under which the wizard Merlin is said to be imprisoned by Vivien, Marguerite made herself a garland of oak-leaves, and standing like a lovely priestess clad all in white against the Druidic monument, she asked me to make a sketch of her. With what joy did I paint the poetic vision before me! I think she was pleased with the drawing, but on our way back to the castle a foolish word of mine brought our friendship to an end. We came to a picturesque little lake, at the end of which was a waterfall, overgrown with brambles. In order to show what a good swimmer her dog was, Marguerite threw something in the current and told him to fetch it, but he got carried over the waterfall and caught in the whirlpool below.

“Come away! He is drowning—come away! I can’t bear to see it!” cried Marguerite, seizing me by the arm. “No, do not attempt to save him. The pool is very dangerous.”

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I am a good swimmer, however, and with a little trouble I managed to rescue the dog.

“What madness!” she murmured. “You might have been drowned, and just for a dog!”

“It was yours,” I answered in a low voice.

Her manner at once changed.

“You had better run home, Monsieur Odiot,” she said very coldly, “or you will get a chill. Do not wait for me.”

So I returned alone, and for some days Marguerite never spoke a word to me. What was still worse, M. Bevallan appeared at the castle, and she went for walks with him, leaving me in the company of *Mlle*. Helouin. I am afraid that I became very friendly with the pretty governess. Nothing, however, that I ever said to her, or that she said to me, prepared me for the strange scene that happened to-night. As I was walking along the terrace, she came up and took my arm, and said, “Are you really my friend, Maxime?”

“Yes,” I said.

“Then tell me the truth,” she exclaimed. “Do you love me, or do you love Mademoiselle Marguerite?”

“Why do you bring in her name?” I said.

“Ah, you love her!” she cried fiercely; “or, rather, you love her fortune. But you shall never have it, Monsieur de Champcey. I know why you came here under a false name, and so shall she.”

With a movement of anger she departed. I cannot continue here under suspicion of being a fortune-hunter, so I have written to Laubepin to obtain another situation for me.

III.—Two on a Tower

It is all over. Was it because she still only half believed the slanders spread against me that Marguerite again asked me to go for a walk with her? Oh, what an unfortunate wretch I am! We rode through the forest together to one of the most magnificent monuments in Brittany, the Castle of Elven. Finding the door unlocked, we tethered our horses in the deserted courtyard, and climbed up the narrow, winding staircase to the battlements. The sea of autumnal foliage below was bathed in the light of the setting sun, and for a long time we sat side by side in silence, gazing at the infinite distances.

“Come!” she said at last, in a low whisper, as the light died out of the sky. “It is finished!”

But on descending the dark staircase we found that the door of the keep was locked. No doubt the shepherd boy who looked after the castle had come and shut up the place while we were sitting, watching the sunset.

“Monsieur de Champcey,” she said, in a cold, hard voice, “were there any scoundrels in your family before you?”

“Marguerite!” I cried.

“You paid that boy to lock us in,” she exclaimed. “You think you will force me to marry you by compromising me in this manner. Do you think you will win my hand—and, what is more important to you still, my wretched wealth—by this trick? Rather than marry a scoundrel like you, I will shut myself up in a convent!”

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Carried away by my feelings, I seized her two hands, and said, “Now listen, Marguerite. I love you, it is true. Never did man love more devotedly, yes, and more disinterestedly, than I do. But I swear that if I get out of this place alive I will never marry you until you are as poor as I am, or I as rich as you are. If you love me, as I think you do, fall on your knees and pray, for unless a miracle happens you will never see me again alive.”

But a miracle did happen. I threw myself out of the window, and fell upon a branch of an oak-tree. It bent beneath my weight, and then broke; but it came so near the earth before breaking that if my left arm had not struck against the masonry I should have escaped uninjured. As it was, my arm was smashed, and I swooned away with the pain. When I came to, Marguerite was leaning out of the window, calling, “Maxime, speak to me! For the love of heaven, speak to me, and say you pardon me!”

I arose, saying, “I am not hurt. If you will only wait another hour, I will go home and get some one to let you out. Believe me, I will save your honour as I have saved my own.”

Binding up my arm, I got on my horse, and galloped back to Laroque Castle. On the way I met Bevallan.

“Have you seen *Mlle*. Marguerite?” he said. “We are afraid she has got lost.”

“I met her this afternoon,” I replied. “She told me she was going for a ride to Elven Castle.”

He rode off in the direction from which I had come, and when I returned from the doctor with my broken arm set and bandaged, Marguerite and Bevallan entered.

Hearing that I had had an accident, Madame Laroque came up late to-night to see me. Old Laroque has had a stroke of paralysis, she tells me, and she wishes to get the marriage contract between her daughter and Bevallan signed to-morrow. Laubepin is bringing the document.

IV.——A Test Case

I don’t know why I take the trouble to go on with this diary, but having begun it I may as well finish it. Laubepin wanted me to go into the drawing-room to witness the signing of the marriage contract, but happily I was too ill to leave my bed; not only was my arm very painful, but I was suffering from the shock of the fall. What an hour of misery I passed before *Mlle*. de Porhoet-Gael appeared with the news of what had happened! Her sweet, kind old eyes were bright with joy.

“It is all over,” she said. “Bevallan has gone, and young Helouin has also been turned out of the house.”

I started up with surprise.

“Yes,” she continued, with a smile, “the contract has not been signed. Our friend Laubepin drew it up in such a way that the husband was not able to touch a penny of the wife’s money. M. Bevallan objected to this; while he and his lawyer were arguing the matter with Laubepin, Marguerite rose up.

“‘Throw the contract in the fire,’ she said, ’and, mother, give this gentleman back the presents he sent to me.’

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“Laubepin threw the deed in the flames, and Marguerite and her mother walked out of the room.

“‘What is the meaning of this?’ cried Bevallan.

“‘I will tell you,’ I answered. ’A certain young lady was afraid that you were merely a fortune-hunter. She wanted to be certain of it, and now she is so.’

“Thereupon I, too, left the room.

“But what is the matter with you, my dear boy? You are as pale as a corpse.”

The fact was that the unexpected news aroused in me such a mixture of joyful and painful feelings that I fell back in a swoon. When I recovered, dear old Laubepin was standing by my bed.

“Will you not confide in me, my boy?” he said rather sadly. “Something, I can see, has happened which has made you miserable on the very day on which you should be full of joy. What is it?”

Moved by his sympathy, I gave him this diary to read, and poured out my very soul to him.

“It is useless for me,” he said at last, “to conceal from you the fact that I sent you here with the design to marry you to Marguerite. Everything at first went as well as I could wish, and Madame Laroque was delighted with the match. You and Marguerite were made for each other, and you fell in love almost at first sight. But this affair at the Castle of Elven is something I had not reckoned on. To leap out of the window at the risk of breaking your neck was, my romantic young friend, a sufficient demonstration of your disinterestedness. You need not have taken a solemn oath never to marry Marguerite until you were as rich as she is. What can you do now? You cannot forswear yourself, and you cannot suddenly make an immense fortune.”

“I must depart with you,” I said very sorrowfully. “There is no other way.”

“No, Maxime,” he replied, “you are too unwell to move. Remain here for one month longer; then, if you do not hear from me, return to Paris.”

It is now a week since he left me, and I have seen no one for the last seven days but the servant who waits upon me. He tells me that Laroque has died, and that Marguerite and her mother, who have been tending him night and day, have worn themselves out, and are now laid up with some sort of fever. *Mlle*. de Porhoet is also very ill, and not expected to live. Since I am well enough to walk over to *Mlle*. de Porhoet. I am told that she keeps asking to see me.

V.—Two in a Garden

The little maid who came to open the door was weeping, and as I came in I was surprised to hear the voice of Laubepin.

“It is Maxime, Marguerite,” he said.

Had Marguerite also risen up from a bed of sickness to see *Mlle*. de Porhoet? I sprang up the stairs, and entered the room.

“My poor, dear boy!” said *Mlle*. de Porhoet, in a strange, broken voice.

She was lying in bed. Laubepin, a priest, and a doctor were standing on one side, and Marguerite and her mother were kneeling down in prayer on the other. I saw at once that she was at the point of death, and knelt down beside Marguerite. The poor dying woman smiled faintly, and groped for my hand and put it in Marguerite’s, and then fell back on the pillow. She was dead.

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Laubepin led me out of the room, and put a document in my hand. It was a will, and the ink on it was hardly dry. *Mlle*. de Porhoet had made me her heir.

“How good of her!” I said to Laubepin. “I shall treasure her testament as a mark of her love for me. I will settle her little estate on my sister. It will at least keep Helene from having to go out into the world as a governess.”

“And it will keep you, my friend, from having to go out into the world as a steward,” said Laubepin, with a smile. “Don’t you remember that document about the Spanish succession which you discovered and sent to me? We have won the law-suit, and you are the heir to an estate in Spain which will make you one of the richest men in France.”

I went into the garden to think over my strange fortune. How long I sat there in the darkness I do not know. On rising up, I heard a faint sound beneath one of the trees, and a beloved form emerged from the foliage, and stood against the starry sky.

“Marguerite!” I cried, running up to her with outstretched arm.

She murmured my name, and as I clasped her her lips sought mine, and we poured our souls out in a kiss.

* * * * *

I have given Helene half of my fortune. Marguerite is my wife, and I close these pages for ever, having nothing more to confide to them. It can be said of men, as it has been said of nations, “Happy are those that have no story.”

* * * * *

HENRY FIELDING

Amelia

Henry Fielding was born at Sharpham Park, near Glastonbury, England, April 12, 1707. His father, a grandson of the Earl of Desmond, and great-grandson of the first Earl of Denbigh, settled in England shortly after the battle of Ramillies as a country squire. In due course, Fielding was sent to Eton, and afterwards to Leyden, where he remained for two years studying civil law. Financial difficulties, however, put a temporary end to his intention of entering the Bar, and in 1727 he solved the problem of a career by beginning to write for the stage. During the next nine years some eighteen of his plays were produced. In 1748 he was appointed a justice of peace for Westminster, and his writings on police and crime are of interest to this day. “Amelia” was published in 1751, when its author was a magistrate at Bow Street. In a dedicatory letter, Fielding explained that the book was “sincerely designed to promote the cause of virtue, and to

expose some of the most glaring evils, as well public as private, which at present infest the country." The licentiousness of wealthy "men about town," the corruption of justice, the abuses of the prison system, the lack of honour concerning marriage—these are some of the "glaring evils" exposed with all the great novelist's power in "Amelia." In the characters of Dr.

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Harrison and Amelia herself, the virtuous man and woman are drawn so clearly that they inevitably win the reader's sympathy. "Amelia" does not equal the genius of "Tom Jones," but it is remarkable for being so largely devoted to the adventures of a married couple, instead of ending at marriage. Fielding died on October 8, 1754.

I.—The Inside of a Prison

On the first of April, in the year—, the watchmen of a certain parish in Westminster brought several persons, whom they had apprehended the preceding night, before Jonathan Thrasher, Esq., one of the justices of the peace for that city.

Among the prisoners a young fellow, whose name was Booth, was charged with beating the watchman in the execution of his office, and breaking his lantern. The justice perceiving the criminal to be but shabbily dressed, was going to commit him without asking any further questions, but at the earnest request of the accused the worthy magistrate submitted to hear his defence.

The young man then alleged that as he was walking home to his lodgings he saw two men in the street cruelly beating a third, upon which he had stopped and endeavoured to assist the person who was so unequally attacked; that the watch came up during the affray, and took them all four into custody; that they were immediately carried to the round-house, where the two original assailants found means to make up the matter, and were discharged by the constable, a favour which he himself, having no money in his pocket, was unable to obtain. He utterly denied having assaulted any of the watchmen, and solemnly declared that he was offered his liberty at the price of half a crown.

Though the bare word of an offender can never be taken against the oath of his accuser, yet the magistrate might have employed some labour in cross-examining the watchman, or at least have given the defendant time to send for the other persons who were present at the affray; neither of which he did.

Booth and the poor man in whose defence he had been engaged were both dispatched to prison under a guard of watchmen.

Mr. Booth was no sooner arrived in the prison than a number of persons gathered around him, all demanding garnish. The master or keeper of the prison then acquainted him that it was the custom of the place for every prisoner, upon his first arrival there, to give something to the former prisoners to make them drink. This was what they called garnish. Mr. Booth answered that he would readily comply with this laudable custom, were it in his power; but that in reality he had not a shilling in his pocket, and, what was worse, he had not a shilling in the world. Upon which the keeper departed, and left poor Booth to the mercy of his companions, who, without loss of time, stripped him of his coat and hid it.

Mr. Booth was too weak to resist and too wise to complain of his usage. He summoned his philosophy to his assistance, and resolved to make himself as easy as possible under his present circumstances.

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On the following day, Miss Matthews, an old acquaintance whom he had not seen for some years, was brought into the prison, and Booth was shortly afterwards invited to the room this lady had engaged. Miss Matthews, having told her story, requested Booth to do the same, and to this he acceded.

II.—Captain Booth Tells His Story

“From the first I was in love with Amelia; but my own fortune was so desperate, and hers was entirely dependent on her mother, a woman of violent passions, and very unlikely to consent to a match so highly contrary to the interest of her daughter, that I endeavoured to refrain from any proposal of love. I had nothing more than the poor provision of an ensign’s commission to depend on, and the thought of leaving my Amelia to starve alone, deprived of her mother’s help, was intolerable to me.

“In spite of this I could not keep from telling Amelia the state of my heart, and I soon found all that return of my affection which the tenderest lover can require. Against the opposition of Amelia’s mother, Mrs. Harris, to our engagement, we had the support of that good man, Dr. Harrison, the rector; and at last Mrs. Harris yielded to the doctor, and we were married. There was an agreement that I should settle all my Amelia’s fortune on her, except a certain sum, which was to be laid out in my advancement in the army, and shortly afterwards I was preferred to the rank of a lieutenant in my regiment, and ordered to Gibraltar. I noticed that Amelia’s sister, Miss Betty, who had said many ill-natured things of our marriage, now again became my friend.

“At the siege of Gibraltar I was very badly wounded, and in this situation the image of my Amelia haunted me day and night. Two months and more I continued in a state of uncertainty; when one afternoon poor Atkinson, my servant, came running to my room. I asked him what was the matter, when Amelia herself rushed into the room, and ran hastily to me. She gently chided me for concealing my illness from her, saying, ’Oh, Mr. Booth! And do you think so little of your Amelia as to think I could or would survive you?’ Amelia then informed me that she had received a letter from an unknown hand, acquainting her with my misfortune, and advising her, if she desired to see me more, to come directly to Gibraltar.

“From the time of Amelia’s arrival nothing remarkable happened till my perfect recovery; and then the siege being at an end, and Amelia being in some sort of fever, the governor gave me leave to attend my wife to Montpelier, the air of which was judged to be most likely to restore her to health.

“A fellow-officer, Captain James, willingly lent me money, and, after an ample recovery at Montpelier, and a stay in Paris, we returned to England. It was in Paris we received a long letter from Dr. Harrison, enclosing L100, and containing the news that Mrs. Harris was dead, and had left her whole fortune to Miss Betty. So now it was that I was a married man with children, and the half-pay of a lieutenant.

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“Dr. Harrison, at whose rectory we were staying, came to our assistance. He asked me if I had any prospect of going again into the army; if not, what scheme of life I proposed to myself.

“I told him that as I had no powerful friends, I could have but little expectations in a military way; that I was incapable of thinking of any other scheme, for I was without the necessary knowledge or experience, and was likewise destitute of money to set up with.

“The doctor, after a little hesitation, said he had been thinking on this subject, and proposed to me to turn farmer. At the same time he offered to let me his parsonage, which was then become vacant; he said it was a farm which required but little stock, and that little should not be wanting.

“I embraced this offer very eagerly, and Amelia received the news with the highest transports of joy. Thus, you see me degraded from my former rank in life; no longer Captain Booth, but Farmer Booth.

“For a year all went well; love, health, and tranquillity filled our lives. Then a heavy blow befell us, and we were robbed of our dear friend the doctor, who was chosen to attend the young lord, the son of the patron of the living, in his travels as a tutor.

“By this means I was bereft not only of the best companion in the world, but of the best counsellor, and in consequence of this loss I fell into many errors.

“The first of these was in enlarging my business by adding a farm of one hundred a year to the parsonage, in renting which I had also as bad a bargain as the doctor had before given me a good one. The consequence of which was that whereas at the end of the first year I was L80 to the good, at the end of the second I was nearly L40 to the bad.

“A second folly I was guilty of was in uniting families with the curate of the parish, who had just married. We had not, however, lived one month together before I plainly perceived the curate’s wife had taken a great prejudice against my wife, though my Amelia had treated her with nothing but kindness, and, with the mischievous nature of envy, spread dislike against us.

“My greatest folly, however, was the purchase of an old coach. The farmers and their wives considered that the setting up of a coach was the elevating ourselves above them, and immediately began to declare war against us. The neighbouring little squires, too, were uneasy to see a poor renter become their equal in a matter in which they placed so much dignity, and began to hate me likewise.

“My neighbours now began to conspire against me. Whatever I bought, I was sure to buy dearer, and when I sold, I was obliged to sell cheaper than any other. In fact, they were all united; and while they every day committed trespasses on my lands with

impunity, if any of my cattle escaped into their fields I was either forced to enter into a law-suit or to make amends for the damage sustained.

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“The consequence of all this could be no other than ruin. Before the end of four years I became involved in debt to the extent of L300. My landlord seized my stock for rent, and, to avoid immediate confinement in prison, I was forced to leave the country.

“In this condition I arrived in town a week ago. I had just taken a lodging, and had written my dear Amelia word where she might find me; and that very evening, as I was returning from a coffee-house, because I endeavoured to assist the injured party in an affray, I was seized by the watch and committed here by a justice of the peace.”

III.—Amelia in London

Miss Matthews, being greatly drawn to Captain Booth, procured his discharge by the expenditure of L20, and obtained her own release at the same time.

Amelia arrived in London to receive her husband in her arms. “For,” said she, “your confinement was known all over the county, my sister having spread the news with a malicious joy; and so, not hearing from you, I hastened to town with our children.”

Poor Booth, in spite of his release, was very cast down. Seeing tears in his eyes at the sight of his children, Amelia, embracing him with rapturous fondness, cried out, “My dear Billy, let nothing make you uneasy. Heaven will provide for us and these poor babes. Great fortunes are not necessary to happiness. Make yourself easy, my dear love, for you have a wife who will think herself happy with you, and endeavour to make you so, in any situation. Fear nothing, Billy; industry will always provide us a wholesome meal.”

Booth, who was naturally of a sanguine temper, took the cue she had given him, but he could not help reproaching himself as the cause of all her wretchedness. This it was that enervated his heart and threw him into agonies, which all that profusion of heroic tenderness that the most excellent of women intended for his comfort served only to heighten and aggravate: as the more she rose in his admiration, the more she quickened the sense of his unworthiness.

His affairs did not prosper; in vain he solicited a commission in the army. With no great man to back him, and with his friend, Captain James (now a colonel, and in London), too taken up with his own affairs to exert any influence on behalf of Booth, it seemed as though no escape from misery was possible. The beautiful Amelia, always patient and cheerful, remained his comforter. And Atkinson, now a sergeant in the guards, was the devoted servant of both Amelia and her husband.

Then one morning, when Amelia was out, Booth was arrested for debt and carried to the bailiff’s house in Gray’s Inn Lane.

“Who has done this barbarous action?” cries Amelia, when the news is told her by Sergeant Atkinson.

“One I am ashamed to name,” cries the sergeant; “indeed, I had always a very different opinion of him; but Dr. Harrison is the man who has done the deed.”

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“Dr. Harrison!” cries Amelia. “Well, then, there is an end of all goodness in the world. I will never have a good opinion of any human being more!”

The fact was that while the doctor was abroad he had received from the curate, and from a gentleman of the neighbourhood, accounts of Booth’s doings very much to his disadvantage. On his return to the parish these accusations were confirmed by many witnesses, and the whole neighbourhood rang with several gross and scandalous lies, which were merely the inventions of Booth’s enemies. Poisoned with all this malice, the doctor came to London, and calling at Booth’s lodgings, when both the captain and Amelia were out, learnt from the servant-maid that the children had got a gold watch and several fine trinkets. These presents, indeed, had come from a certain noble lord, who hoped by these means to win Amelia’s affection; but no suspicion of his evil desire had entered the innocent mind of Amelia.

The doctor had no doubt that these trinkets had been purchased by Amelia; and this account tallied so well with the ideas he had imbibed of Booth’s extravagance in the country, that he firmly believed both the husband and wife to be the vainest, silliest and most unjust people alive.

But no sooner did the doctor hear that Booth was arrested than the wretched condition of his wife and children began to affect his mind. In this temper of mind he resolved to pay Amelia a second visit, and was on his way thither when Sergeant Atkinson met him, and made himself known to him.

The doctor received from Atkinson such an account of Booth and his family that he hastened at once to Amelia, and soon became satisfied concerning the trinkets which had given him so much uneasiness. Amelia likewise gave the doctor some satisfaction as to what he had heard of her husband’s behaviour In the country, and assured him, upon her honour, that Booth could answer every complaint against his conduct, so that the doctor would find him an innocent, unfortunate man, the object of a good man’s compassion, not of his anger or resentment.

This worthy clergyman, who was not desirous of finding proofs to condemn the captain, rejoiced heartily in every piece of evidence which tended to clear up the character of his friend, and gave a ready ear to all which Amelia said.

Induced, indeed, by the love he always had for that lady, whom he was wont to call his daughter, as well as by pity for her present condition, the doctor immediately endeavoured to comfort the afflicted, and then proceeded to accomplish the captain’s release.

“So, captain,” says the doctor, on arrival at the bailiff’s house, “when last we met I believe that we neither of us expected to meet in such a place as this.”

“Indeed, doctor,” cries Booth, “I did not expect to have been sent hither by the gentleman who did me this favour.”

“How so, sir!” said the doctor. “You were sent hither by some person, I suppose, to whom you were indebted. But you ought to be more surprised that the gentleman who sent you thither is come to release you.”

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IV.—Fortune Smiles on Amelia

Booth was again arrested some months later, and lodged in the bailiff's house. This time his creditor was a Captain Trent, who had lent him money, and promised him assistance in getting returned to the army. In reality, Trent was only seeking to ingratiate himself with Amelia, and meeting with no encouragement, took his revenge accordingly.

Amelia at once sought out Dr. Harrison, and told him what had occurred to her husband; and the doctor set forwards to the bailiff's to see what he could do for Booth.

The doctor had not got so much money in town as Booth's debt amounted to, and therefore he was forced to give bail to the action.

While the necessary forms were being made out, the bailiff, addressing himself to the doctor, said, "Sir, there is a man above in a dying condition that desires the favour of speaking to you. I believe he wants you to pray by him."

Without making any further inquiry, the doctor immediately went upstairs.

The sick man mentioned his name, and explained that he lived for many years in the town where the doctor resided, and that he used to write for the attorneys in those parts. He was anxious, he said, as he hoped for forgiveness, to make all the amends he could to some one he had injured, and to undo, if possible, the injury he had done.

The doctor commended this as a sincere repentance.

"You know, good doctor," the sick man resumed, "that Mrs. Harris, of our town, had two daughters—one now Mrs. Booth, and another. Before Mrs. Harris died, she made a will, and left all her fortune, except L1,000, to Mrs. Booth, to which will Mr. Murphy, the lawyer, myself, and another were witnesses. Mrs. Harris afterwards died suddenly, upon which it was contrived, by her other daughter and Mr. Murphy, to make a new will, in which Mrs. Booth had a legacy of L10, and all the rest was given to the other."

"Good heaven, how wonderful is thy providence!" cries the doctor. "Murphy, say you? Why, this Murphy is still my attorney."

Within a short time Murphy was arrested, and the sick man's depositions taken. Booth was released on the doctor's bail, and on the following morning Amelia learnt of the change in fortune that had befallen them.

Dr. Harrison himself broke the good news by reading the following paragraph from the newspaper.

“Yesterday, one Murphy, an eminent attorney-at-law, was committed to Newgate for the forgery of a will, under which an estate has been for many years detained from the right owner.”

“Now,” said the doctor, “in this paragraph there is something very remarkable, and that is that it is true. But now let us read the following note upon the words ‘right owner.’ ’The right owner of this estate is a young lady of the highest merit, whose maiden name was Harris, and who some time since was married to an idle fellow, one Lieutenant Booth; and the best historians assure us that letters from the elder sister of this lady, which manifestly prove the forgery and clear up the whole affair, are in the hands of an old parson, called Dr. Harrison.’”

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“And is this really true?” cries Amelia.

“Yes, really and sincerely,” cries the doctor, “the whole estate—for your mother left it you all; and it is as surely yours as if you were already in possession.”

“Gracious heaven!” cries she, falling on her knees, “I thank you!” And then, starting up, she ran to her husband, and embracing him, cried, “My dear love, I wish you joy! It is upon yours and my children’s account that I principally rejoice.”

She then desired her children to be brought to her, whom she immediately caught in her arms; and having profusely cried over them, soon regained her usual temper and complexion.

Miss Harris, having received a letter from Amelia, informing her of the discovery and the danger in which she stood, immediately set out for France, carrying with her all her money, most of her clothes, and some few jewels.

About a week afterwards, Booth and Amelia, with their children, and Atkinson and his wife, all set forward together for Amelia’s house, where they arrived amidst the acclamations of all the neighbours, and every public demonstration of joy.

Miss Harris lived for three years with a broken heart at Boulogne, where she received annually L50 from her sister; and then died in a most miserable manner.

Dr. Harrison is grown old in years and in honour, beloved and respected by all his parishioners and neighbours.

As to Booth and Amelia, fortune seems to have made them large amends for the tricks she played them in their youth. They have continued to enjoy an uninterrupted course of health and happiness. In about six weeks after Booth’s first coming into the country, he went to London and paid all his debts, after which, and a stay of two days only, he returned into the country, and has never since been thirty miles from home.

Amelia is still the finest woman in England of her age; Booth himself often avers she is as handsome as ever. Nothing can equal the serenity of their lives.

Amelia declared the other day that she did not remember to have seen her husband out of humour these ten years!

* * * * *

Jonathan Wild

“Jonathan Wild,” published in 1743, is in many respects Fielding’s most powerful piece of satire, surpassed only, perhaps, by Thackeray’s “Barry Lyndon.” It can hardly be called a novel, and still less a serious biography, though it is founded on the real history of a notorious highway robber and thief. The author disclaimed in his preface any attempt on his part at authentic history or faithful portraiture. “Roguery, and not a rogue is my subject,” he wrote; adding, that the ideas of goodness and greatness are too often confounded together. “A man may be great without being good, or good without being great.” The story of “Jonathan Wild” is really a bitter, satirical attack on what

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Fielding called “the greatness which is totally devoid of goodness.” He avowed it his intention “to expose the character of this bombast greatness,” and no one can deny the success of his achievement. Surely no story was ever written under more desperate circumstances. The evils of poverty, which at this period were at their height, were aggravated by the serious illness of his wife, and his own sufferings from attacks of gout. These troubles and others may well increase our admiration for the genius which, in the face of all difficulties, is shown in “Jonathan Wild.”

I.—Mr. Wild’s Early Exploits

Mr. Jonathan Wild, who was descended from a long line of great men, was born in 1665. His father followed the fortunes of Mr. Snap, who enjoyed a reputable office under the sheriff of London and Middlesex; and his mother was the daughter of Scragg Hollow, Esq., of Hockley-in-the-Hole. He was scarce settled at school before he gave marks of his lofty and aspiring temper, and was regarded by his schoolfellows with that deference which men generally pay to those superior geniuses who will exact it of them. If an orchard was to be robbed, Wild was consulted; and though he was himself seldom concerned in the execution of the design, yet was he always concerter of it, and treasurer of the booty, some little part of which he would now and then, with wonderful generosity, bestow on those who took it. He was generally very secret on these occasions; but if any offered to plunder of his own head without acquainting Master Wild, and making a deposit of the booty, he was sure to have an information against him lodged with the schoolmaster, and to be severely punished for his pains.

At the age of seventeen his father brought the young gentleman to town, where he resided with him till he was of an age to travel.

Men of great genius as easily discover one another as Freemasons can. It was therefore no wonder that the Count la Ruse—who was confined in Mr. Snap’s house until the day when he should appear in court to answer a certain creditor—soon conceived an inclination to an intimacy with our young hero, whose vast abilities could not be concealed from one of the count’s discernment; for though the latter was exceedingly expert at his cards, he was no match for Master Wild, who never failed to send him away from the table with less in his pocket than he brought to it. With so much ingenuity, indeed, could our young hero extract a purse, that his hands made frequent visits to the count’s pocket before the latter had entertained any suspicion of him. But one night, when Wild imagined the count asleep, he made so unguarded an attack upon him that the other caught him in the act. However, he did not think proper to acquaint him with the discovery he had made, but only took care for the future to button his pockets and to pack the cards with double industry.

In reality, this detection recommended these two prigs to each other, for a wise man—-that is to say, a rogue—considers a trick in life as a gamester doth a trick at play. It sets him on his guard, but he admires the dexterity of him who plays it.

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When our two friends met the next morning, the count began to bewail the misfortune of his captivity, and the backwardness of friends to assist each other in their necessities.

Wild told him that bribery was the surest means of procuring his escape, and advised him to apply to the maid, telling him at the same time that as he had no money he must make it up with promises, which he would know how to put off.

The maid only consented to leave the door open when Wild, depositing a guinea in the girl's hands, declared that he himself would swear that he saw the count descending from the window by a pair of sheets.

Thus did our young hero not only lend his rhetoric, which few people care to do without a fee, but his money too, to procure liberty for his friend. At the same time it would be highly derogatory from the great character of Wild should the reader not understand that this was done because our hero had some interested view in the count's enlargement.

Intimacy and friendship subsisted between the count and Mr. Wild, and the latter, now dressed in good clothes, was introduced into the best company. They constantly frequented the assemblies, auctions, gaming-tables, and play-houses, and Wild passed for a gentleman of great fortune.

It was then that an accident occurred that obliged Wild to go abroad for seven years to his majesty's plantations in America; and there are such various accounts, one of which only can be true, of this accident that we shall pass them all over. It is enough that Wild went abroad, and stayed seven years.

II.—An Example of Wild's Greatness

The count was one night very successful at the gaming-table, where Wild, who was just returned from his travels, was then present; as was likewise a young gentleman whose name was Bob Bagshot, an acquaintance of Mr. Wild's. Taking, therefore, Mr. Bagshot aside, he advised him to provide himself with a case of pistols, and to attack the count on his way home.

This was accordingly executed, and the count obliged to surrender to savage force what he had in so genteel a manner taken at play. As one misfortune never comes alone, the count had hardly passed the examination of Mr. Bagshot when he fell into the hands of Mr. Snap, who carried him to his house.

Mr. Wild and Mr. Bagshot went together to the tavern, where Mr. Bagshot offered to share the booty. Having divided the money into two unequal heaps, and added a golden snuffbox to the lesser heap, he desired Mr. Wild to take his choice.

Mr. Wild immediately conveyed the larger share of the ready into his pocket, according to an excellent maxim of his—"First secure what share you can before you wrangle for

the rest"; and then, turning to his companion, he asked him whether he intended to keep all that sum himself. "I grant you took it," Wild said; "but, pray, who proposed or counselled the taking of it?

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Can you say that you have done more than execute my scheme? The ploughman, the shepherd, the weaver, the builder, and the soldier work not for themselves, but others; they are contented with a poor pittance—the labourer's hire—and permit us, the great, to enjoy the fruits of their labours. Why, then, should the state of a prig differ from all others? Or why should you, who are the labourer only, the executor of my scheme, expect a share in the profit? Be advised, therefore; deliver the whole booty to me, and trust to my bounty for your reward."

Mr. Bagshot not being minded to yield to these arguments, Wild adopted a fiercer tone, and the other was glad to let him borrow a part of his share. So that Wild got three-fourths of the whole before taking leave of his companion.

Wild then returned to visit his friend the count, now in captivity at Mr. Snap's; for our hero was none of those half-bred fellows who are ashamed to see their friends when they have plundered and betrayed them.

The count, little suspecting that Wild had been the sole contriver of the misfortune which had befallen him, eagerly embraced him, and Wild returned his embrace with equal warmth.

While they were discoursing, Mr. Snap introduced Mr. Bagshot; for Mr. Bagshot had lost what money he had from Mr. Wild at a gaming-table, and was directly afterwards arrested for debt. Mr. Wild no sooner saw his friend than he immediately presented him to the count, who received him with great civility. But no sooner was Mr. Bagshot out of the room than the count said to Wild, "I am very well convinced that Bagshot is the person who robbed me, and I will apply to a justice of the peace."

Wild replied with indignation that Mr. Bagshot was a man of honour, but, as this had no weight with the count, he went on, more vehemently, "I am ashamed of my own discernment when I mistook you for a great man. Prosecute him, and you may promise yourself to be blown up at every gaming-house in the town. But leave the affair to me, and if I find he hath played you this trick, I will engage my own honour you shall in the end be no loser." The count answered, "If I was sure to be no loser, Mr. Wild, I apprehend you have a better opinion of my understanding than to imagine I would prosecute a gentleman for the sake of the public."

Wild having determined to make use of Bagshot as long as he could, and then send him to be hanged, went to Bagshot next day and told him the count knew all, and intended to prosecute him, and the only thing to be done was to refund the money.

"Refund the money!" cried Bagshot. "Why, you know what small part of it fell to my share!"

“How?” replied Wild. “Is this your gratitude to me for saving your life? For your own conscience must convince you of your guilt.”

“Marry come up!” quoth Bagshot. “I believe my life alone will not be in danger. Can you deny your share?”

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“Yes, you rascal!” answered Wild. “I do deny everything, and do you find a witness to prove it. I will show you the difference between committing a robbery and conniving at it.”

So alarmed was Bagshot at the threats of Wild that he drew forth all he found in his pockets, to the amount of twenty-one guineas, which he had just gained at dice.

Wild now returned to the count, and informed him that he had got ten guineas of Bagshot, and by these means the count was once more enlarged, and enabled to carry out a new plan of the great Wild.

III.—Mr. Heartfree’s Weakness

By accident, Wild had met with a young fellow who had formerly been his companion at school.

Mr. Thomas Heartfree (for that was his name) was of an honest and open disposition. He was possessed of several great weaknesses of mind, being good-natured, friendly, and generous to a great excess.

This young man, who was about Wild’s age, had some time before set up in the trade of a jeweller, in the materials for which he had laid out the greatest part of a little fortune.

He no sooner recognised Wild than he accosted him in the most friendly manner, and invited him home with him to breakfast, which invitation our hero, with no great difficulty, consented to.

Wild, after vehement professions of friendship, then told him he had an opportunity of recommending a gentleman, on the brink of marriage, to his custom, “and,” says he, “I will endeavour to prevail on him to furnish his lady with jewels at your shop.”

Having parted from Heartfree, Wild sought out the count, who, in order to procure credit from tradesmen, had taken a handsome house, ready-furnished, in one of the new streets. He instructed the count to take only one of Heartfree’s jewels at the first interview, to reject the rest as not fine enough, and order him to provide some richer. The count was then to dispose of the jewel, and by means of that money, and his great abilities at cards and dice, to get together as large a sum as possible, which he was to pay down to Heartfree at the delivery of the set of jewels.

This method was immediately put in execution; and the count, the first day, took only a single brilliant, worth about L300, and ordered a necklace and earrings, of the value of L3,000 more, to be prepared by that day week.

This interval was employed by Wild in raising a gang, and within a few days he had levied several bold and resolute fellows, fit for any enterprise, how dangerous or great soever.

The count disposed of his jewel for its full value, and by his dexterity raised L1,000. This sum he paid down to Heartfree at the end of the week, and promised him the rest within a month. Heartfree did not in the least scruple giving him credit, but as he had in reality procured those jewels of another, his own little stock not being able to furnish anything so valuable. The count, in addition to the L1,000 in gold, gave him his note for L2,800 more.

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As soon as Heartfree was departed, Wild came in and received the casket from the count, and an appointment was made to meet the next morning to come to a division of its contents.

Two gentlemen of resolution, in the meantime, attacked Heartfree on his way home, according to Wild's orders, and spoiled the enemy of the whole sum he had received from the count. According to agreement, Wild, who had made haste to overtake the conquerors, took nine-tenths of the booty, but was himself robbed of this L900 before nightfall.

As for the casket, when he opened it, the stones were but paste. For the sagacious count had conveyed the jewels into his own pocket, and in their stead had placed artificial stones. On Wild's departure the count hastened out of London, and was well on his way to Dover when Wild knocked at his door.

Heartfree, wounded and robbed, had only the count's note left, and this was returned to him as worthless, inquiries having proved that the count had run away. So confused was poor Heartfree at this that his creditor for the jewels was frightened, and at once had him arrested for the debt.

Heartfree applied in vain for money to numerous customers who were indebted to him; they all replied with various excuses, and the unhappy wretch was soon taken to Newgate. He had been inclined to blame Wild for his misfortunes, but our hero boldly attacked him for giving credit to the count, and this degree of impudence convinced both Heartfree and his wife of Wild's innocence, the more so as the latter promised to procure bail for his friend. In this he was unsuccessful, and it was long before Heartfree was released and restored to happiness.

IV.—The Highest Pinnacle of Greatness

Wild was a living instance that human greatness and happiness are not always inseparable. He was under a continual alarm of frights and fears and jealousies, and was thoroughly convinced there was not a single man amongst his own gang who would not, for the value of five shillings, bring him to the gallows.

A clause in an act of parliament procured by a learned judge entrapped Wild. Hitherto he had always employed less gifted men to carry out his plans. Now, by this law it was made capital in a prig to steal with the hands of other people, and it was impossible for our hero to avoid the destruction so plainly calculated for his greatness.

Wild, having received from some dutiful members of his gang a valuable piece of goods, did, for a consideration, re-convey it to the right owner, for which fact, being ungratefully informed against by the said owner, he was surprised in his own house, and, being

overpowered by numbers, was hurried before a magistrate, and by him committed to Newgate.

When the day of his trial arrived, our hero was, notwithstanding his utmost caution and prudence, convicted and sentenced to be hanged by the neck. He now suspected that the malice of his enemies would overpower him, and therefore betook himself to that true support of greatness in affliction—a bottle, by means of which he was enabled to curse, swear, and bully, and brave his fate. Other comfort, indeed, he had not much, for not a single friend ever came near him.

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From the time our hero gave over all hopes of life, his conduct was truly great and admirable. Instead of showing any marks of contrition or dejection, he rather infused more confidence and assurance into his looks. He spent most of his hours in drinking with acquaintances, and with the good chaplain; and being asked whether he was afraid to die, he answered, “It’s only a dance without music. A man can die but once. Zounds! Who’s afraid?”

At length the morning came which Fortune had resolutely ordained for the consummation of our hero’s greatness; he had himself, indeed, modestly declined the public honour she intended him, and had taken a quantity of laudanum in order to retire quietly off the stage. But it is vain to struggle against the decrees of fortune, and the laudanum proved insufficient to stop his breath.

At the usual hour he was acquainted that the cart was ready, and his fetters having been knocked off in a solemn and ceremonious manner, after drinking a bumper of brandy, he ascended the cart, where he was no sooner seated than he received the acclamations of the multitude, who were highly ravished with his greatness.

The cart now moved slowly on, preceded by a troop of Horse Guards, bearing javelins in their hands, through the streets lined with crowds all admiring the great behaviour of our hero, who rode on, sometimes sighing, sometimes swearing, sometimes singing or whistling, as his humour varied.

When he came to the tree of glory, he was welcomed with an universal shout of the people; but there were not wanting some who maligned this completion of glory, now about to be fulfilled by our hero, and endeavoured to prevent it by knocking him on the head as he stood under the tree, while the chaplain was performing his last office.

They therefore began to batter the cart with stones, brick-bats, dirt, and all manner of mischievous weapons, so that the ecclesiastic ended almost in an instant, and conveyed himself into a place of safety in a hackney coach.

One circumstance must not be omitted. Whilst the chaplain was busy in his ejaculations, Wild, in the midst of the shower of stones, *etc*., which played upon him, true to his character, applied his hands to the parson’s pocket, and emptied it of his bottle-screw, which he carried out of the world in his hand.

The chaplain being now descended from the cart, Wild had just opportunity to cast his eyes around the crowd, and to give them a hearty curse, when immediately the horses moved on, and, with universal applause, our hero swung out of this world.

* * * * *

Joseph Andrews

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“Joseph Andrews,” Fielding’s first novel, was published in 1742, and was intended to be a satire on Richardson’s “Pamela” (see Vol. VII), which appeared in 1740. He described it as “written in the manner of Cervantes,” and in Parson Adams there is the same quaint blending of the humorous and the pathetic as in the Knight of La Mancha. Although such characters as Lady Booby and Mrs. Slipslop are admittedly ridiculous, Parson Adams remains an admirable study of a simple-minded clergyman of the eighteenth century.

I.—The Virtues of Joseph Andrews

Mr. Joseph Andrews was esteemed to be the only son of Gaffer and Gammer Andrews, and brother to the illustrious Pamela.

At ten years old (by which time his education was advanced to writing and reading) he was bound an apprentice to Sir Thomas Booby, an uncle of Mr. Booby’s by the father’s side. From the stable of Sir Thomas he was preferred to attend as foot-boy on Lady Booby, to go on her errands, stand behind her chair, wait at her tea-table, and carry her prayer-book to church; at which place he behaved so well in every respect at divine service that it recommended him to the notice of Mr. Abraham Adams, the curate, who took an opportunity one day to ask the young man several questions concerning religion, with his answers to which he was wonderfully pleased.

Mr. Abraham Adams was an excellent scholar, a man of good sense and good nature, but at the same time entirely ignorant of the ways of the world. At the age of fifty he was provided with a handsome income of twenty-three pounds a year, which, however, he could not make any great figure with, because he was a little encumbered with a wife and six children.

Adams had no nearer access to Sir Thomas or my lady than through Mrs. Slipslop, the waiting-gentlewoman, for Sir Thomas was too apt to estimate men merely by their dress or fortune, and my lady was a woman of gaiety, who never spoke of any of her country neighbours by any other appellation than that of the brutes.

Mrs. Slipslop, being herself the daughter of a curate, preserved some respect for Adams; she would frequently dispute with him, and was a mighty affecter of hard words, which she used in such a manner that the parson was frequently at some loss to guess her meaning.

Adams was so much impressed by the industry and application he saw in young Andrews that one day he mentioned the case to Mrs. Slipslop, desiring her to recommend him to my lady as a youth very susceptible of learning, and one whose instruction in Latin he would himself undertake, by which means he might be qualified for a higher station than that of footman. He therefore desired that the boy might be left behind under his care when Sir Thomas and my lady went to London.

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“La, Mr. Adams,” said Mrs. Slipslop, “do you think my lady will suffer any preambles about any such matter? She is going to London very concisely, and I am confidous would not leave Joey behind on any account, for he is one of the genteelest young fellows you may see in a summer’s day; and I am confidous she would as soon think of parting with a pair of her grey mares, for she values herself on one as much as the other. And why is Latin more necessitous for a footman than a gentleman? I am confidous my lady would be angry with me for mentioning it, and I shall draw myself into no such delemy.”

So young Andrews went to London in attendance on Lady Booby, and became acquainted with the brethren of his profession. They could not, however, teach him to game, swear, drink, nor any other genteel vice the town abounded with. He applied most of his leisure hours to music, in which he greatly improved himself, so that he led the opinion of all the other footmen at an opera. Though his morals remain entirely uncorrupted, he was at the same time smarter and genteeler than any of the beaus in town either in or out of livery.

At this time an accident happened, and this was no other than the death of Sir Thomas Booby, who left his disconsolate lady closely confined to her house. During the first six days the poor lady admitted none but Mrs. Slipslop and three female friends, who made a party at cards; but on the seventh she ordered Joey, whom we shall hereafter call Joseph, to bring up her teakettle.

Lady Booby’s affection for her footman had for some time been a matter of gossip in the town, but it is certain that her innocent freedoms had made no impression on young Andrews.

Now, however, he thought my lady had become distracted with grief at her husband’s death, so strange was her conduct, and wrote to his sister Pamela on the subject.

If madam be mad, I shall not care for staying long in the family, so I heartily wish you could get me a place at some neighbouring gentleman’s. I fancy I shall be discharged very soon, and the moment I am I shall return to my old master’s country seat, if it be only to see Parson Adams, who is the best man in the world. London is a bad place, and there is so little good fellowship that the next-door neighbours don’t know one another. Your loving brother, JOSEPH ANDREWS.

The sending of this letter was quickly followed by the discharge of the writer. To Lady Booby’s open declarations of love, Joseph replied that a lady having no virtue was not a reason against his having any.

“I am out of patience!” cries the lady, “did ever mortal hear of a man’s virtue? Will magistrates who punish lewdness, or parsons who preach against it, make any scruple of committing it? And can a boy have the confidence to talk of his virtue?”

“Madam,” says Joseph, “that boy is the brother of Pamela, and would be ashamed that the chastity of his family, which is preserved in her, should be stained in him. If there are such men as your ladyship mentions, I am sorry for it, and I wish they had an opportunity of reading my sister Pamela’s letters; nor do I doubt but such an example would amend them.”

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“You impudent villain!” cries the lady in a rage. “Get out of my sight, and leave the house this night!”

Joseph having received what wages were due, and having been stripped of his livery, took a melancholy leave of his fellow-servants and set out at seven in the evening.

II.—Adventures on the Road

It may be wondered why Joseph made such extraordinary haste to get out of London, and why, instead of proceeding to the habitation of his father and mother, or to his beloved sister Pamela, he chose rather to set out full speed to Lady Booby’s country seat, which he had left on his journey to town.

Be it known then, that in the same parish where this seat stood there lived a young girl whom Joseph longed more impatiently to see than his parents or his sister. She was a poor girl, formerly bred up in Sir Thomas’s house, and, discarded by Mrs. Slipslop on account of her extraordinary beauty, was now a servant to a farmer in the parish.

Fanny was two years younger than our hero, and had been always beloved by him, and returned his affection. They had been acquainted from their infancy, and Mr. Adams had, with much ado, prevented them from marrying, and persuaded them to wait till a few years’ service and thrift had a little improved their experience, and enabled them to live comfortably together.

They followed this good man’s advice, as, indeed, his word was little less than a law in his parish, for during twenty-five years he had shown that he had the good of his parishioners entirely at heart, so that they consulted him on every occasion, and very seldom acted contrary to his opinion.

Honest Joseph therefore set out on his travels without delay, in order that he might once more look upon his Fanny, from whom he had been absent for twelve months.

But on the road he was attacked by robbers, and, having been left wounded in a ditch, was mercifully taken to an inn by some later travellers.

It was at this same inn that, to the great surprise on both sides, Mr. Abraham Adams found Joseph.

The parson informed his young friend, who was still sick in bed, that the occasion of the journey he was making to London was to publish three volumes of sermons, being encouraged, as he said, by an advertisement lately set forth by the Society of Booksellers; but, though he imagined he should get a considerable sum of money on this occasion, which his family were in urgent need of, he protested he would not leave Joseph in his present penniless condition. Finally, he told him he had nine shillings and threepence-halfpenny in his pocket, which he was welcome to use as he pleased.

This goodness of Parson Adams brought tears into Joseph's eyes; he had now a second reason to desire life, that he might show his gratitude to such a friend.

Before pursuing his journey Adams made the acquaintance of another clergyman named Barnabas at the inn, who in his turn, hearing that Adams was proposing to publish sermons, introduced him to a stranger who he said was a bookseller.

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Adams, saluting the stranger, answered Barnabas that he was very much obliged to him; that nothing could be more convenient, for he had no other business to the great city, and was heartily desirous of returning with the young man, who was just recovered of his misfortune. To induce the bookseller to be as expeditious as possible, he assured them their meeting was extremely lucky to himself, for that he had the most pressing occasion for money at that time, his own being almost spent. "So that nothing," says he, "could be so opportune as my making an immediate bargain with you."

"Sir, sermons are mere drugs," said the stranger. "The trade is so vastly stocked with them that really, unless they come out with the name of Whitefield or Wesley, or some other such great man, as a bishop, or those sort of people, I don't care to touch. However, I will, if you please, take the manuscript with me to town, and send you my opinion of it in a very short time."

When, however, Adams began to describe the nature of his sermons the bookseller drew back, on the ground that the clergy would be certain to cry down such a book.

An accident prevented Mr. Adams from pursuing a market for his sermons any further, which he would have done in spite of the advice of Barnabas and the bookseller. This accident was, that those sermons which the parson was travelling to London to publish were left behind; what he had mistaken for them in the saddle-bags were three shirts, which Mrs. Adams, who thought her husband would need shirts rather than sermons on his journey, had carefully provided for him.

Joseph, concerned at the disappointment to his friend, begged him to pursue his journey all the same, and promised he would himself return with the books to him with the utmost expedition.

"No, thank you, child," answered Adams; "it shall not be so. What would it avail me to tarry in the great city unless I had my discourses with me? No; as this accident has happened, I am resolved to return back to my cure, together with you; which, indeed, my inclination sufficiently leads me to."

Mr. Adams, whose credit was good wherever he was known, having borrowed a guinea from a servant belonging to a coach-and-six, who had been formerly one of his parishioners, discharged the bill for Joseph and himself, and the two travellers set off.

III.—More Adventures

Adams and Joseph Andrews being for a time separated on the road, through the former's absent-mindedness, it fell to the lot of the parson to hasten to the assistance of a damsel who in a lonely place was being attacked by some ruffian.

Adams was as strong as he was brave, and having rescued the maiden, took her under his protection. It was too dark for either to identify the other, but on Mr. Adams ejaculating the name of Joseph Andrews, for whose safety he was anxious, his companion recognised his voice, and the parson was quickly informed that it was Fanny who was by his side.

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The fact was the poor girl had heard of Joseph's misfortune from the servants of a coach which had stopped at the inn while the poor youth was confined to his bed; and she had that instant abandoned the cow she was milking, and taking with her a little bundle of clothes under her arm, and all the money she was worth in her own purse, immediately set forward in pursuit of one whom she loved with inexpressible violence, though with the purest and most delicate passion.

Fanny was now in the nineteenth year of her age; she was tall and delicately shaped. Her hair was a chestnut brown; her complexion was fair; and, to conclude all, she had a natural gentility which surprised all who beheld her.

Can it be wondered that on the following day, when Adams and the damsel overtook Andrews at a wayside ale-house, the youth imprinted numberless kisses on her lips, while Parson Adams danced about the room in a rapture of joy?

It was so late when our travellers left the ale-house that they had not travelled many miles before night overtook them. They moved forwards where the nearest light presented itself; and having crossed a common field, they came to a meadow where they seemed to be at a very little distance from the light, when, to their grief, they arrived at the banks of a river. Adams declared he could swim, but Joseph answered, if they walked along its banks they might be certain of soon finding a bridge, especially as, by the number of lights, they might be assured a parish was near.

"That's true, indeed," said Adams. "I did not think of that."

Accordingly, Joseph's advice being taken, they passed over two meadows, and came to a little orchard which led them to a house. Fanny begged of Joseph to knock at the door, assuring him she was so weary that she could hardly stand on her feet; and the door being immediately opened, a plain kind of man appeared at it. Adams acquainted him that they had a young woman with them, who was so tired with her journey that he should be much obliged to him if he would suffer her to come in and rest herself.

The man, who saw Fanny by the light of the candle which he held in his hand, perceiving her innocent and modest look, and having no apprehensions from the civil behaviour of Adams, presently answered that the young woman was very welcome to rest herself in his house, and so were her company. He then ushered them into a very decent room, where his wife was sitting at a table; she immediately rose up, and assisted them in setting forth chairs, and desired them to sit down.

They now sat cheerfully round the fire till the master of the house, having surveyed his guests, and conceiving that the cassock which appeared under Adams's greatcoat, and the shabby livery of Joseph Andrews, did not well suit the familiarity between them, began to entertain some suspicions not much to their advantage. Addressing himself,

therefore, to Adams, he said he perceived he was a clergyman by his dress, and supposed that honest man was his footman.

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“Sir,” answered Adams, “I am a clergyman, at your service; but as to that young man, whom you have rightly termed honest, he is at present in nobody’s service; he never lived in any other family than that of Lady Booby, from whence he was discharged; I assure you, for no crime.”

The modest behaviour of Joseph, with the character which Adams gave of him, entirely cured a jealousy which had lately been in the gentleman’s mind that Fanny was the daughter of some person of fashion and that Joseph had run away with her, and Adams was concerned in the plot. Having had a full account from Adams of Joseph’s history he became enamoured of his guests, drank their healths with great cheerfulness; and, at the parson’s request, told something of his own life.

“Sir,” says Adams, at the conclusion of the history, “fortune has, I think, paid you all her debts in this sweet retirement.”

“Sir,” replied the gentleman, whose name was Wilson, “I have the best of wives and three pretty children; but within three years of my arrival here I lost my eldest son. If he had died I could have borne the loss with patience; but, alas, he was stolen away from my door by some wicked travelling people, whom they call gypsies; nor could I ever, with the most diligent search, recover him. Poor child, he had the sweetest look! The exact picture of his mother!” Mr. Wilson went on to say that he should know his son amongst ten thousand, for he had a mark on his breast of a strawberry.

IV.—Joseph Finds his Father

Our travellers, having well refreshed themselves at Mr. Wilson’s house, renewed their journey next morning with great alacrity, and two days later reached the parish they were seeking.

The people flocked about Parson Adams like children round a parent; and the parson, on his side, shook every one by the hand. Nor did Joseph and Fanny want a hearty welcome from all who saw them. Adams carried his fellow-travellers home to his house, where he insisted on their partaking whatever his wife could provide, and on the very next Sunday he published, for the first time, the banns of marriage between Joseph Andrews and Fanny Goodwill.

Lady Booby, who was now at her country seat again, was furious when she heard in church these banns called, and at once sent for Mr. Adams, and rated him soundly.

“It is my orders that you publish these banns no more, and if you dare, I will recommend it to your master, the rector, to discard you from his service,” says my lady. “The fellow Andrews is a vagabond, and shall not settle here and bring a nest of beggars into the parish.”

“Madam,” answered Adams, “I know not what your ladyship means by the terms ‘master’ and ‘service.’ I am in the service of a Master who will never discard me for doing my duty; and if the rector thinks proper to turn me from my cure, God will provide me, I hope, another.”

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The malice of Lady Booby did not stop at this; she endeavoured to get Joseph and Fanny convicted on a trumped-up charge of trespass. In this base wickedness she was defeated by her nephew, young Squire Booby, who had married the virtuous Pamela, Joseph's sister; and at once stopped the proceedings. More than that, he carried off Andrews to Lady Booby's, and on his arrival, said, "Madam, as I have married a virtuous and worthy woman, I am resolved to own her relations, and show them all respect; I shall think myself, therefore, infinitely obliged to all mine who will do the same. It is true her brother has been your servant, but he has now become my brother."

Lady Booby answered that she would be pleased to entertain Joseph Andrews; but when the squire went on to speak of Fanny, his aunt put her foot down resolutely against her civility to the young woman.

And now both Pamela and her husband were inclined to urge Joseph to break off the engagement with Fanny, but the young man would not give way, and in this he was supported by Mr. Adams.

The arrival of a peddler in the parish, who had shown some civility to Adams and Andrews when they were travelling on the road, threatened the marriage prospect much more dangerously for a time.

According to the pedaler, who was a man of some education and birth, Fanny had been stolen away from her home when an infant, and sold for three guineas to Sir Thomas Booby; the name of her family was Andrews, and they had a daughter of a very strange name, Pamela. This story he had received from a dying woman when he had been a drummer in an Irish regiment.

The only thing now to be done was to send for old Mr. Andrews and his wife; and, in the meantime, the pedal was bidden to Booby Hall to tell the whole story again. All who heard him were well satisfied of the truth, except Pamela, who imagined as neither of her parents had ever mentioned such an incident to her, it must be false; and except Lady Booby, who suspected the falsehood of the story from her ardent desire that it should be true; and Joseph, who feared its truth, from his earnest wishes that it might prove false.

On the following morning news came of the arrival of old Mr. Andrews and his wife. Mr. Andrews assured Mr. Booby that he had never lost a daughter by gypsies, nor ever had any other children than Joseph and Pamela. But old Mrs. Andrews, running to Fanny, embraced her, crying out, "She is—she is my child!"

The company were all amazed at this disagreement, until the old woman explained the mystery. During her husband's absence at Gibraltar, when he was a sergeant in the army, a party of gypsies had stolen the little girl who had been born to him, and left a small male child in her place. So she had brought up the boy as her own.

“Well,” says Gaffer Andrews, “you have proved, I think, very plainly, that this girl does not belong to us; I hope you are certain the boy is ours.”

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Then it turned out that Joseph had a strawberry mark on his left breast, and this made the peddler, who knew all about Mr. Wilson's loss, satisfied that Joseph was no other than Mr. Wilson's son.

So Mr. Wilson had to be sent for, who, on his arrival, no sooner saw the mark than he cried out with tears of joy, "I have discovered my son!"

The banns having been duly called, there was now nothing to prevent the wedding, which, having taken place, Joseph and his wife settled down in Mr. Wilson's parish, Mr. Booby having given Fanny a fortune of L2,000. He also presented Mr. Adams with a living of L130 a year.

* * * * *

Tom Jones

"The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling," described in the dedication as the "labour of some years of my life," appeared in six volumes, on February 28, 1749, a short time after Fielding's appointment as justice of peace for Westminster. Though its broad humour and coarseness of expression are perhaps hard to bear in these times, it is by common consent Fielding's masterpiece, and by way of being one of the greatest novels in the language. For experience of life, observation of character, and sheer humanity, it is certainly an outstanding specimen of the English novel and manners. Like others of his books, "Tom Jones" was written during a period of great mental strain. Ever haunted by poverty, Fielding acknowledges his debt to his old schoolfellow Lyttelton, to whom he owed his "existence during the composition of the book." The story was popular from the first.

I.—Mr. Allworthy Makes a Discovery

In that part of the country which is commonly called Somersetshire there lately lived a gentleman whose name was Allworthy, and who might well be called the favourite of both nature and fortune. From the former of these he derived an agreeable person, a sound constitution, a solid understanding, and a benevolent heart; by the latter he was decreed to the inheritance of one of the largest estates in the country.

Mr. Allworthy lived, for the most part, retired in the country, with one sister, for whom he had a very tender affection. This lady, Miss Bridget Allworthy, now somewhat past the age of thirty, was of that species of women whom you commend rather for good qualities than beauty.

Mr. Allworthy had been absent a full quarter of a year in London on some very particular business, and having returned to his house very late in the evening, retired, much fatigued, to his chamber. Here, after he had spent some minutes on his knees—a

custom which he never broke through on any account—he was preparing to step into bed, when, upon opening the clothes, to his great surprise, he beheld an infant wrapped up in some coarse linen, in a sweet and profound sleep, between his sheets. He stood for some time lost in astonishment at this sight; but soon began to be touched with sentiments of compassion for the little wretch before him. He then rang his bell, and ordered an elderly woman-servant to rise immediately and come to him.

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The consternation of Mrs. Deborah Wilkins at the finding of the little infant was rather greater than her master's had been; nor could she refrain from crying out, with great horror, "My good sir, what's to be done?"

Mr. Allworthy answered she must take care of the child that evening, and in the morning he would give orders to provide it a nurse.

"Yes, sir," says she, "and I hope your worship will send out your warrant to take up the hussy its mother. Indeed, such wicked sluts cannot be too severely punished for laying their sins at honest men's doors; and though your worship knows your own innocence, yet the world is censorious, and if your worship should provide for the child it may make the people after to believe. If I might be so bold as to give my advice, I would have it put in a basket, and sent out and laid at the churchwarden's door. It is a good night, only a little rainy and windy, and if it was well wrapped up and put in a warm basket, it is two to one but it lives till it is found in the morning. But if it should not, we have discharged our duty in taking care of it; and it is, perhaps, better for such creatures to die in a state of innocence than to grow up and imitate their mothers."

But Mr. Allworthy had now got one of his fingers into the infant's hand, which, by its gentle pressure, seeming to implore his assistance, certainly outpleaded the eloquence of Mrs. Deborah. Mr. Allworthy gave positive orders for the child to be taken away and provided with pap and other things against it waked. He likewise ordered that proper clothes should be procured for it early in the morning, and that it should be brought to himself as soon as he was stirring.

Such was the respect Mrs. Wilkins bore her master, under whom she enjoyed a most excellent place, that her scruples gave way to his peremptory commands, and, declaring the child was a sweet little infant, she walked off with it to her own chamber.

Allworthy betook himself to those pleasing slumbers which a heart that hungers after goodness is apt to enjoy when thoroughly satisfied.

In the morning Mr. Allworthy told his sister he had a present for her, and, when Mrs. Wilkins produced the little infant, told her the whole story of its appearance.

Miss Bridget took the good-natured side of the question, intimated some compassion for the helpless little creature, and commended her brother's charity in what he had done. The good lady subsequently gave orders for providing all necessaries for the child, and her orders were indeed so liberal that had it been a child of her own she could not have exceeded them.

II.—The Foundling Achieves Manhood

Miss Bridget having been asked in marriage by one Captain Blifil, a half-pay officer, and the nuptials duly celebrated, Mrs. Blifil was in course of time delivered of a fine boy.

Though the birth of an heir to his beloved sister was a circumstance of great joy to Mr. Allworthy, yet it did not alienate his affections from the little foundling to whom he had been godfather, and had given his own name of Thomas; the surname of Jones being added because it was believed that was the mother's name.

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He told his sister, if she pleased, the newborn infant should be bred up together with little Tommy, to which she consented, for she had truly a great complaisance for her brother.

The captain, however, could not so easily bring himself to bear what he condemned as a fault in Mr. Allworthy; for his meditations being chiefly employed on Mr. Allworthy's fortune, and on his hopes of succession, he looked on all the instances of his brother-in-law's generosity as diminutions of his own wealth.

But one day, while the captain was exulting in the happiness which would accrue to him by Mr. Allworthy's death, he himself died of apoplexy.

So the two boys grew up together under the care of Mr. Allworthy and Mrs. Blifil, and by the time he was fourteen Tom Jones—who, according to universal opinion, was certainly born to be hanged—had been already convicted of three robberies—*viz.*, of robbing an orchard, of stealing a duck out of a farmer's yard, and of picking Master Blifil's pocket of a ball.

The vices of this young man were, moreover, heightened by the disadvantageous light in which they appeared when opposed to the virtues of Master Blifil, his companion. He was, indeed, a lad of remarkable disposition—sober, discreet, and pious beyond his age; and many expressed their wonder that Mr. Allworthy should suffer such a lad as Tom Jones to be educated with his nephew lest the morals of the latter should be corrupted by his example.

To say the truth, the whole duck, and great part of the apples, were converted to the use of Tom's friend, the gamekeeper, and his family; though, as Jones alone was discovered, the poor lad bore not only the whole smart, but the whole blame.

Mr. Allworthy had committed the instruction of the two boys to a learned divine, the Reverend Mr. Thwackum, who resided in the house; but though Mr. Allworthy had given him frequent orders to make no difference between the lads, yet was Thwackum altogether as kind and gentle to Master Blifil as he was harsh, nay, even barbarous, to the other. In truth, Blifil had greatly gained his master's affections; partly by the profound respect he always showed his person, but much more by the decent reverence with which he received his doctrine, for he had got by heart, and frequently repeated, his phrases, and maintained all his master's religious principles, with a zeal which was surprising in one so young.

Tom Jones, on the other hand, was not only deficient in outward tokens of respect, often forgetting to pull off his cap at his master's approach, but was altogether unmindful both of his master's precepts and example.

At the, age of twenty, however, Tom, for his love of hunting, had become a great favourite with Mr. Allworthy's neighbour, Squire Western; and Sophia, Mr. Western's only child, lost her heart irretrievably to him before she suspected it was in danger. On his side, Tom was truly sensible of the great worth of Sophia. He liked her person extremely, no less admired her accomplishments, and tenderly loved her goodness. In reality, as he had never once entertained any thoughts of possessing her, nor had ever given the least voluntary indulgence to his inclinations, he had a much stronger passion for her than he himself was acquainted with.

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An accident occurred on the hunting-field in saving Sophia from her too mettlesome horse kept Jones a prisoner for some time in Mr. Western's house, and during those weeks he not only found that he loved Sophia with an unbounded passion, but he plainly saw the tender sentiments she had for him; yet could not this assurance lessen his despair of obtaining the consent of her father, nor the horrors which attended his pursuit of her by any base or treacherous method.

Hence, at the approach of the young lady, he grew pale; and, if this was sudden, started. If his eyes accidentally met hers, the blood rushed into his cheeks, and his countenance became all over scarlet. If he touched her, his hand, nay, his whole frame, trembled.

All these symptoms escaped the notice of the squire, but not so of Sophia. She soon perceived these agitations of mind in Jones, and was at no loss to discover the cause; for, indeed, she recognised it in her own breast. In a word, she was in love with him to distraction. It was not long before Jones was able to attend her to the harpsichord, where she would kindly condescend for hours together to charm him with the most delicious music.

The news that Mr. Allworthy was dangerously ill (for a servant had brought word that he was dying) broke off Tom's stay at Mr. Western's, and drove all the thoughts of love out of his head. He hurried instantly into the chariot which was sent for him, and ordered the coachman to drive with all imaginable haste; nor did the idea of Sophia once occur to him on the way.

III.—Tom Jones Falls into Disgrace

On the night when the physician announced that Mr. Allworthy was out of danger Jones was thrown into such immoderate excess of rapture by the news that he might be truly said to be drunk with joy—an intoxication which greatly forwards the effects of wine; and as he was very free, too, with the bottle, on this occasion he became very soon literally drunk.

Jones had naturally violent animal spirits, and Thwackum, resenting his speeches, only the doctor's interposition prevented wrath kindling. After which, Jones gave loose to mirth, sang two or three amorous songs, and fell into every frantic disorder which unbridled joy is apt to inspire; but so far was he from any disposition to quarrel that he was ten times better-humoured, if possible, than when he was sober.

Blifil, whose mother had died during her brother's illness, was highly offended at a behaviour which was so inconsistent with the sober and prudent reserve of his own temper. The recent death of his mother, he declared, made such conduct very indecent.

“It would become them better,” he said, “to express the exultations of their hearts at Mr. Allworthy’s recovery in thanksgiving, than in drunkenness and riot.”

Wine had not so totally overpowered Jones as to prevent him recollecting Blifil’s loss the moment it was mentioned. He at once offered to shake Mr. Blifil by the hand, and begged his pardon, saying his excessive joy for Mr. Allworthy’s recovery had driven every other thought out of his mind.

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Blifil scornfully rejected his hand, and with an insulting illusion to the misfortune of Jones's birth provoked the latter to blows. The scuffle which ensued might have produced mischief had it not been for the interference of Thwackum and the physician.

Blifil, however, only waited for an opportunity to be revenged on Jones, and the occasion was soon forthcoming when Mr. Allworthy was fully recovered from his illness.

Mr. Western had found out that his daughter was in love with Tom Jones, and at once decided that she should marry Blifil, to whom Sophia professed great abhorrence.

As for Blifil, the success of Jones was much more grievous to him than the loss of Sophia, whose estate, indeed, was dearer to him than her person.

Mr. Western swore that his daughter shouldn't have a ha'penny, nor the twentieth part of a brass farthing, if she married Jones; and Blifil, with many sighs, professed to his uncle that he could not bear the thought of Sophia being ruined by her preference for Jones.

"This lady, I am sure, will be undone in every sense; for, besides the loss of most part of her own fortune, she will be married to a beggar. Nay, that is a trifle; for I know him to be one of the worst men in the world."

"How?" said Mr. All worthy. "I command you to tell me what you mean."

"You know, sir," said Blifil, "I never disobeyed you. In the very day of your utmost danger, when myself and all the family were in tears, he filled the house with riot and debauchery. He drank, and sang, and roared; and when I gave him a gentle hint of the indecency of his actions, he fell into a violent passion, swore many oaths, called me rascal, and struck me. I am sure I have forgiven him that long ago. I wish I could so easily forget his ingratitude to the best of benefactors."

Thwackum was now sent for, and corroborated every circumstance which the other had deposed.

Poor Jones was too full of grief at the thought that Western had discovered the whole affair between him and Sophia to make any adequate defence. He could not deny the charge of drunkenness, and out of modesty sunk everything that related particularly to himself.

Mr. Allworthy answered that he was now resolved to banish him from his sight for ever. "Your audacious attempt to steal away a young lady calls upon me to justify my own character in punishing you. And there is no part of your character which I resent more than your ill-treatment of that good young man (meaning Blifil), who hath behaved with so much tenderness and honour towards you."

A flood of tears now gushed from the eyes of Jones, and every faculty of speech and motion seemed to have deserted him. It was some time before he was able to obey Allworthy's peremptory commands of departing, which he at length did, having first kissed his hands with a passion difficult to be affected, and as difficult to be described.

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Mr. Allworthy, however, did not permit him to leave the house penniless, but presented him with a note for L500. He then commanded him to go immediately, and told Jones that his clothes, and everything else, should be sent to him whithersoever he should order them.

Jones had hardly set out, which he did with feelings of agony and despair, before Sophia Western decided that only in flight could she be saved from marriage with the detested Blifil.

Mr. Western, in spite of tremendous love for his daughter, thought her inclinations of as little consequence as Blifil himself conceived them to be; and Mr. Allworthy, who said "he would on no account be accessory to forcing a young lady into a marriage contrary to her own will," was satisfied by his nephew's disingenuous statement that the young lady's behaviour to him was full as forward as he wished it.

Sophia, having appointed her maid to meet her at a certain place not far from the house, exactly at the ghostly and dreadful hour of twelve, began to prepare for her own departure.

But first she was obliged to give a painful audience to her father, and he treated her in so violent and outrageous a manner that he frightened her into an affected compliance with his will, which so highly pleased the good squire that he at once changed his frowns into smiles, and his menaces into promises.

He vowed his whole soul was wrapped in hers, that her consent had made him the happiest of mankind.

He then gave her a large bank-bill to dispose of in any trinkets she pleased, and kissed and embraced her in the fondest manner.

Sophia reverenced her father piously and loved him passionately, but the thoughts of her beloved Jones quickly destroyed all the regretful promptings of filial love.

IV.—Tom Jones's Restoration

After many adventures on the road Mr. Jones reached London; and as he had often heard Mr. Allworthy mention the gentlewoman at whose house in Bond Street he used to lodge when he was in town, he sought the house, and was soon provided with a room there on the second floor. Mrs. Miller, the person who let these lodgings, was the widow of a clergyman, and Mr. Allworthy had settled an annuity of L50 a year on her, "in consideration of always having her first floor when he was in town."

Tom Jones's fortunes were now very soon at the lowest. Having been forced into a quarrel in the streets with an acquaintance named Fitzpatrick, and having wounded him with his sword, a number of fellows rushed in and carried Jones off to the civil

magistrate, who, being informed that the wound appeared to be mortal, straightway committed the prisoner to the Gatehouse.

Sophia Western was also in London at the house of her aunt; and soon afterwards Mr. Western, Mr. Allworthy, and Blifil all reached the city.

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It was just at this time that Mr. Allworthy, consenting to his nephew once more offering himself to Sophia, came with Blifil to his accustomed lodgings in Bond Street. Mrs. Miller, to whom Jones had showed many kindnesses, at once put in a good word for the unfortunate young man; and, on Blifil exulting over the manslaughter Jones was alleged to have committed, declared that the wounded man, whoever he was, was in fault. This, indeed, was shortly afterwards corroborated by Fitzpatrick himself, who acknowledged his mistake.

But it was not till Mr. Allworthy discovered that Blifil had been arranging with a lawyer to get the men who had arrested Jones to bear false witness, and learnt further that Tom Jones was his sister Bridget's child, and that on her death-bed Mrs. Blifil's message to her brother confessing the fact had been suppressed by her son, that his old feelings of affection for Tom Jones returned. Before setting out to visit Jones in the prison Mr. Allworthy called on Sophia to inform her that he regretted Blifil had ever been encouraged to give her annoyance, and that Mr. Jones was his nephew and his heir.

Men over-violent in their dispositions are, for the most part, as changeable in them. No sooner was Western informed of Mr. Allworthy's intention to make Jones his heir than he joined heartily with the uncle in every commendation of the nephew, and became as eager for his daughter's marriage with Jones as he had before been to couple her to Blifil.

Fitzpatrick being recovered of his wound, and admitting the aggression, Jones was released from custody and returned to his lodgings to meet Mr. Allworthy.

It is impossible to conceive a more tender or moving scene than this meeting between the uncle and nephew. Allworthy received Jones into his arms. "O my child!" he cried, "how have I been to blame! How have I injured you! What amends can I ever make you for those unkind suspicions which I have entertained, and for all the sufferings they have occasioned you?"

"Am I not now made amends?" cried Jones. "Would not my sufferings, had they been ten times greater, have been now richly repaid?"

Here the conversation was interrupted by the arrival of Western, who could no longer be kept away even by the authority of Allworthy himself. Western immediately went up to Jones, crying out, "My old friend Tom, I am glad to see thee, with all my heart. All past must be forgotten. Come along with me; I'll carry thee to thy mistress this moment."

Here Allworthy interposed; and the squire was obliged to consent to delay introducing Jones to Sophia till the afternoon.

Blifil, now thoroughly exposed in his treachery, was at first sullen and silent, balancing in his mind whether he should yet deny all; but finding at last the evidence too strong

against him, betook himself to confession, and was now as remarkably mean as he had been before remarkably wicked. Mr. Allworthy subsequently settled L200 a year upon him, to which Jones hath privately added a third. Upon this income Blifil lives in one of the northern counties. He is also lately turned Methodist, in hopes of marrying a very rich widow of that sect. Sophia would not at first permit any promise of an immediate engagement with Jones because of certain stories of his inconstancy, but Mr. Western refused to hear of any delay.

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“To-morrow or next day?” says Western, bursting into the room where Sophia and Jones were alone.

“Indeed, sir,” says she, “I have no such intention.”

“But I can tell thee,” replied he, “why hast not; only because thou dost love to be disobedient, and to plague and vex thy father. When I forbid her, then it was all nothing but sighing and whining, and languishing and writing; now I am for thee—(this to Jones)—she is against thee. All the spirit of contrary, that’s all. She is above being guided and governed by her father, that is the whole truth on’t. It is only to disoblige and contradict me.”

“What would my papa have me do?” cries Sophia.

“What would I ha’ thee do?” says he, “why gee un thy hand this moment.”

“Well, sir,” said Sophia, “I will obey you. There is my hand, Mr. Jones.”

“Well, and will you consent to ha’ un to-morrow morning?” says Western.

“I will be obedient to you, sir,” cries she.

“Why, then, to-morrow morning be the day,” cries he.

“Why, then, to-morrow morning shall be the day, papa, since you will have it so,” said Sophia. Jones then fell upon his knees and kissed her hand in an agony of joy, while Western began to caper and dance about the room, presently crying out, “Where the devil is Allworthy?” He then sallied out in quest of him, and very opportunely left the lovers to enjoy a few tender minutes alone.

But he soon returned with Allworthy, saying, “If you won’t believe me, you may ask her yourself. Hast not gin thy consent, Sophy, to be married to-morrow?”

“Such are your commands, sir,” cries Sophia, “and I dare not be guilty of disobedience.”

“I hope there is not the least constraint,” cries Allworthy.

“Why, there,” cried Western, “you may bid her unsay all again if you will. Dost repent heartily of thy promise, dost not, Sophy?”

“Indeed, papa,” cried she. “I do not repent, nor do I believe I ever shall, of any promise in favour of Mr. Jones.”

“Then, nephew,” cries Allworthy, “I felicitate you most heartily, for I think you are the happiest of men.”

Mr. Allworthy, Mr. Western, and Mrs. Miller were the only persons present at the wedding, and within two days of that event Mr. Jones and Sophia attended Mr. Western and Mr. Allworthy into the country.

There is not a neighbour or a servant, who doth not most gratefully bless the day when Mr. Jones was married to Sophia.

* * * * *

CAMILLE FLAMMARION

Urania

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Camille Flammarion is one of the most remarkable of modern French scientists. Born on February 25, 1842, he was apprenticed at an early age to an engraver, but, attracted by astronomy, he studied so well that, when a lad of sixteen, he was admitted as a pupil to the Paris Observatory. There is no doubt that the great French mathematician, Le Verrier, regarded Flammarion with a certain disdain as more of a poet than an astronomer; but he soon vindicated, by several important discoveries, his title to be regarded as a man of science. "Urania," which appeared in 1889, is an excellent example of his ability as a thinker, and of his charm as a writer. The work is hardly a novel, though it is far more popular than many books of fiction. It is really an essay in philosophy dealing with the question of the immortality of the soul; and it has an especial interest for English readers owing to the fact that much in it that seems to be pure fantasy is based on researches undertaken by the British Society for Psychical Research. The plot and the characters are of secondary importance; they are only used for the purpose of illustrating certain ideas.

I.—The Muse of Astronomy

I was seventeen years old when I fell in love with Urania. Was she a fair, young, blue-eyed daughter of Eve? No; she was an exquisite statue of the Muse of Astronomy, chiselled by Pradier in the days of the Empire. She stood on the mantelpiece in the study of the famous mathematician, Le Verrier, who directed the Paris Observatory, where I was working. At four o'clock in the afternoon my illustrious chief used to depart, and I would then steal into his room and sit down before Urania and dream of lovelier worlds than ours, hidden in the infinite spaces of the starry sky. Sometimes my friend and companion in studies, Georges Spero, would come and sit beside me; and, inspired by the immortal beauty of Urania, we would let our young and ardent imaginations play over the glories and wonders of the heavens.

"You will be too late for Jupiter," said Le Verrier, entering unexpectedly one evening, and catching me in an attitude of adoration before Urania. "I am afraid you are more of a poet than an astronomer."

The great man of science himself certainly did not love beauty as much as he loved wisdom, for the next day he sold the lovely image of Urania in order to buy an old Chinese astronomical clock. I was almost heartbroken when I entered his room and found that Urania had disappeared. With her had gone the vivifying power of imagination which had transmuted the abstruse calculations on which I was engaged into glimpses of heavenly visions of infinite life. With what wild joy then did I see, when I returned home, Urania shining in all her loveliness on my own mantelpiece. Knowing my love for the beautiful figure of the muse, Georges Spero had bought it back from the watchmaker to whom Le Verrier had sent it, and placed it in my room as a gift.

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It was an extraordinary mark of friendship, for Georges loved Urania even more passionately than I did. To him she was the personification of everything in life that lifted man above the level of the brute.

Possessing a nobler and finer intellect than mine, he had thrown himself into the study of the problems of the soul with a fury of passion and a concentration of thought that almost killed him. Are our souls immortal, or do they perish with our bodies? This was the question that tormented him to madness. One night I found him sitting in his room in the Place du Pantheon with a glass of poison in his hand.

“This is the quickest road to the knowledge I want,” he said, with a smile. “I shall soon know if the soul is immortal.”

He had been dissecting a skull; and by his side was a microscope with which he had been studying the grey matter of the brain. Convinced at last of the uncertainty of the positive sciences, he had fallen into violent despair. But Urania was at hand to comfort him, and his mind became calmer and clearer when we ceased to talk about earthly things, and ascended into high regions of philosophic speculation over which the muse of heaven presides.

“Ah, Camille,” he exclaimed, “the Uranian way is the best. It is only by studying the heavens that we shall be able to understand this little earth of ours, and the part we play in it. Look at the midnight sky, streaming with the light of infinite suns, and filled with an unending procession of worlds in which the spirit of life clothes itself in an unimaginable variety of forms. This clot of dust on which we live will grow cold, and break and scatter in the abysses of space. But it is not our home; we are only passengers, and when our journey here is done, fairer mansions are waiting for us in the depths of the sky. If I die before you, I will return and convince you of this truth.”

Returning to the study of astronomy, Spero built up a system of philosophy which made him, at the age of twenty-five, one of the most famous men in France.

II.—Love and Death

By way of relief from his severer work, Georges Spero resolved to go to Norway and study the wild and beautiful phenomena of the Aurora Borealis, and I went with him. One morning, as we were standing on a mountain looking at a magnificent sunrise, I saw a girl climbing a neighbouring peak. She did not perceive us; but when she reached the summit the image of Spero was thrown on a cloud in front of her, by one of those curious plays of sunlight and mist which sometimes occur in hazy, mountainous regions. His fine, austere features and graceful figure were enlarged into a vast, god-like apparition, with a halo of bright colours shining like a glory around his head, and a fainter circle of rainbow hues framing his whole form. It was the first anthelia that the lovely girl had seen, and it filled her with wonder and awe.

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Theirs was a strange courtship—Spero's and Iclea's. The lovely young Norwegian lady had recently lost her mother, and being, like many of the cultivated women of Northern Europe, somewhat dubious of the dogmas of religion, she had found death a terrible mystery when it was thus brought sharply home to her. She was wandering in the dreadful labyrinth of modern doubt, vainly seeking to forget her trouble in the excitements of mountaineering, when she saw the unearthly apparition of the young French philosopher. A study of his works heightened the feeling of awe with which she already regarded him. At first there was no room for love in the passionate desire after knowledge which drew her to him. She was merely a disciple sitting at the feet of the great master. Accompanied by her father, she continued her studies under him when he returned to Paris, and for three months they were bound together wholly by intellectual interest. For several hours every day they studied side by side, and much of Iclea's time was spent in translating papers in foreign languages, bearing on subjects in which Georges was interested. One morning he arrived earlier than usual, his eyes shining with joy.

"I have settled the problem," he cried, leaning against the mantelpiece. "At least," he added, with his usual modesty, "I have settled it to my own satisfaction."

Striding up and down the room, he rapidly sketched out a system of philosophy in which the ultimate truths of modern science were transformed into the bases of religion. Iclea listened to him in silence as he went on to explain the spiritual forces still dormant in the human soul.

"We are still in our spiritual infancy," he said. "It is scarcely four thousand years since mankind began to manifest its higher powers. Our greatest conquests over nature are all of recent date, and they are the work of a few noble souls who have erected themselves above the animal conditions of life. The reign of brute force is over, and I am certain that as soon as we learn to exercise the powers of our soul we shall acquire transcendental faculties that will enable us to transport ourselves from one world to another."

"That, too, is my belief," said Iclea.

Georges bent over her and gazed into her eyes of heavenly blue through which her very soul was speaking. There was a strange silence, and then their lips met.

* * * * *

For some months I lost sight of my two friends. In the ecstasy of their love they forgot for a while the problems of philosophy which had brought them together. The joys of intellectual communion were submerged and almost lost in the new, strange feeling which crowned and glorified their lives. Hand in hand the lovers wandered about Paris, which had now become to them a city in fairyland. Meeting them one evening on the

banks of the Seine, I learned that they were returning to Norway with Iclea's father, and that they were to be married at Christiania on the anniversary of the mysterious apparition on the mountain which had brought them together. Georges was about to resume his interrupted studies of the Aurora Borealis, which he wished to trace to its source by means of a balloon ascent, and Iclea intended to accompany him in his voyage through the air.

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To my great regret I was unable to go with them to Norway, as my duties as an astronomer kept me in Paris. I anxiously awaited that extraordinary agitation of the magnetic needle which announces the existence of an Aurora Borealis in Northern Europe. When at last the magnetic perturbation occurred in the observatory, I rejoiced to think that Spero and his bride were floating high, feasting their eyes on the most gorgeous of spectacles.

But suddenly an indefinable feeling of uneasiness came over me, which grew into a dreadful presentiment of disaster. Long before the telegram arrived from Christiania I knew what had happened. Georges and Iclea were dead!

Every reader of the newspapers next morning knew as much as I did. An escape of gas which could not be stopped sent the balloon hurtling to the earth. Spero threw everything movable out of the car in a vain attempt to lighten it and break the force of the descent. The balloon still kept falling; then Iclea, with a wild courage born of love, saved Georges' life by leaping out of the car. Relieved of her weight, the balloon rose up, but Spero had now no wish to live. He jumped out with a wild cry, and his body crashed on the edge of the lake into which Iclea had fallen. There the mortal remains of the two lovers now lie, covered by a single stone. But where were their souls?

One night Georges Spero remembered his promise to me, and returned to earth.

III.—A Soul from Mars

Sitting alone on the top of the ancient castle of Montlhery, I was conducting an experiment in optics by means of electrical communications with two assistants at Paris and Juvisy. I was trying to find out if the rays of different colours in the spectrum travel at the same rate. It was just on midnight before I brought the experiment to a successful conclusion. As I covered up my instruments, some one said, "You would not have brought that off, Camille, if it had not been for me. I gave you the idea of comparing the violet vibrations with the red."

I turned round with a cry of fear. Georges Spero was sitting in the moonlight on the parapet, looking at me with a smile.

"Are you afraid of me, Camille?" he said.

"You, Georges! You!" I stammered. "Is it really you? Keep still, and let me touch you."

I put my hands on his face, and stroked his hair, and felt his body. I could no longer doubt that I had him before me in the actual flesh, but he read my thoughts.

"You are mistaken, Camille," he said. "My real body is asleep on Mars."

"So you still live?" I exclaimed. "You have solved the great problem. And Iclea?"

“Let us sit here and talk,” he replied. “There are many things I want to tell you.”

My fears had vanished, and I sat by my beloved friend.

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“It seemed to me,” said Georges, “that my fall from the balloon knocked me senseless. When I came to, I was lying in the darkness with the ripple of lake-water breaking on my ear. What amazed me was a strange sense of lightness that made me feel I could rise up and float away if I wanted to. Thinking this was a disorder of the mind, I did not attempt to move, but watched with wondering eyes the sky above me. It was lighted by two strange moons. When the day broke, and showed around me a world of unimaginable splendour, I knew the meaning of the two moons and of my strange feeling of lightness. I was a disembodied spirit that had been transported to Mars.

“Do you know, Camille, that the soul is able to choose its mortal covering? This is, at least, the case on Mars. For some time I wandered about in an invisible form, studying the conditions of life there. Animal strength, I found, counted for nothing. The Martians are an aerial race, with exquisite senses, which respond in a way unknown on earth to spiritual influences. Do you remember I read your thoughts when we first met, and answered them before you spoke? That is one of the Martians’ gifts. Finding that these wonderful faculties were better developed in the women of Mars than in the men, I chose the feminine form for my reincarnation.”

“And Iclea?” I said.

“Iclea,” said Spero, “was re-born in a masculine shape. It was partly because of the mystic attraction that I felt for her that I chose the other form. Neither of us remembered our earthly existence, but a vague yet deep sentiment of our spiritual relationship made me seek her out and unite myself to her. It was your beloved muse Uriana,” he added, “who revealed the ties that bound us in our former lives.

“Owing to their superior faculties, the Martians have carried every science to a perfection undreamt of on this earth. In astronomical observations, for instance, they employ a system of telephotography. For thousands of years their instruments have been photographing, on an unending roll of paper, the wild spectacle of terrestrial life.

“One day, as Iclea and I were examining recent photographs, we saw a picture of Paris during the Great Exhibition. Seizing a microscope, we looked at the figures, and recognised ourselves among them. Strange memories stirred within us, and we stared at each other in silent amazement. Suddenly I remembered the sacred words I learnt at my mother’s knee. Yes, there were many mansions in our Father’s house! The blood-stained planet from which we had escaped was neither the cradle nor the grave of His children.

“Then we wept as we thought of the cruelty, ignorance, misery, and grossness of existence on earth. It was, dear Camille, with no joy that I recollected the promise I had made to you. But, you see, I have carried it out. I wish to convince you, and, through you, all the rest of mankind, that the soul is immortal, and that the earth is only a

temporary stage of existence in a spiritual progress in which the whole universe is included."

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“But how is it possible for you, Georges,” I interrupted, “to appear to me in the body you wore on earth?”

“All this,” said Spero, touching his body, “is an illusion. Do you not recollect my saying that only invisible things are real? You do not see me with your eyes, or feel me with your hands, as you think you do. The impression which you have of my presence is born of the influence which my mind is exerting in an invisible way on your mind. Can’t you understand? It is a kind of hypnotism. At the present moment, as I have said, I am lying asleep on Mars, but my spirit is in direct communication with yours. The form you see sitting beside you on this parapet is only an illusion of your senses. My soul is speaking to your soul.”

“But could you not,” I said, “give me some description of life on Mars?”

“A dream,” he replied, “would be more vivid than a mere description, though it would only be a shadow of the reality. For since you have not, my dear friend, our exquisite faculties of knowledge, your mind could not clearly mirror our life. Hark! Iclea is awake, and calling me. I cannot stay any longer. Shut your eyes, and I will send you a dream.”

I turned to say good-bye, but Spero had vanished. A deep drowsiness fell upon me, and just as I got off the parapet and found a safer position I fell asleep.

IV.—The Eternal Progress

I was sitting under a strange tree covered with gigantic red flowers. In the sky above me were two moons that shed a dim brightness on the lovely and fantastic scenery. A multitude of radiant shapes fluttered and darted through the air. They were Martians—-exquisite, aerial, and divinely beautiful figures glowing with luminous tints. Airy gondolas, which seemed to be fashioned from phosphorescent flowers, passed above my head, and one of them floated down to the tree under which I was lying. In it were Iclea and Georges, but etherealised beyond the reach of human imagination.

They took me in their flying chariot as day was breaking, and we coursed, with a strange silent interchange of thoughts, over the orange-coloured land of Mars. I could not understand everything which was communicated to me, now by Iclea and now by Georges; but I perceived that all manual labour on the planet was done by means of machines directed by animals whose intelligence was on a level with my own. The Martians themselves lived only for the things of the mind; they had twelve senses instead of five, and their bodies, in which electricity played the part that blood does in our systems, were so finely and yet so strongly organised that they possessed an extraordinary power over the forces of nature. Everything on their world, seas, mountains and rivers were like their wonderful canals, works of art and science. Nature was completely plastic in their hands. There was no poverty and no crime. Deriving

their food from the air which they breathe, the Martians were liberated from material cares and immersed in the joys of intellectual pursuits.

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“You now see, Camille,” said Spero, resorting at last to language which I could clearly understand, “that life on Mars has developed as peacefully and nobly as it began. There is no break between our vegetable kingdom and our animal kingdom. We are nourished, like your plants, trees, and herbs, by the air which we breathe. Ten million years ago your world was also a scene of innocence and tranquil felicity. The land was overgrown with a wildly beautiful vegetation that fed on the gentle winds of heaven, and primitive forms of animal life had spread from the depths of the sea along the shallow shores, and were there learning to extract from the air a nourishment similar to that which they obtained from the water. But by a woeful chance, one of your primitive animals—a deaf, blind, sexless clot of jelly—then had its body pierced by a drop of sea-water thicker than usual, and it found that this way of feeding was quicker than simple respiration. Such was the origin of the first digestive tube, which has exercised so baleful an influence on the course of terrestrial life, and turned the earth into a vast slaughterhouse.”

“Is there no hope for us?” I said.

“No,” he replied; “the earth is a shipwrecked planet. None of the higher organisms there will ever rise to our level. How can they alter the structure of their bodies, and empty their veins of blood, and fill them with the subtle electricity which serves us as a life force? And the grossness of their blood-fed senses! How can all the fine powers of the immortal soul ever develop along with such degraded instruments of knowledge?”

“But even if our earth is a shipwrecked planet,” I exclaimed, “there is at least some means of escaping from it. You and Iclea, for instance——”

“Yes, there is a way of escape,” said Spero, “the Uranian way. By soaring aloft into the serene region of spiritual ideas, a terrestrial soul can still free itself from its animality. Some save themselves by their high moral qualities, others are purified and uplifted by their imagination and intellect. Virtue and science are the wings that enable earth-born spirits to mount the skies. The destiny of a soul is determined by its works and aspirations. Lovers of knowledge sojourn awhile on Mars, which is only the first stage in the eternal progress. Spirits animated by divine feelings rise at once into high regions of starry splendour. The Uranian way is open to all, and the day will arrive when every inhabitant of your wild, dark planet will recognise that he, too, is a citizen of heaven. Then Urania will at last inspire and direct him, and point out the path by which he can ascend from the blood-stained earth to the fairer mansions prepared for him in the skies.”

As he was speaking our aerial chariot floated down to a fairy palace by the shore of an enchanted sea. I alighted; and a radiant, flower-like maiden, who was standing by the portal, unfolded her rainbow wings and shadowed me with them, and murmured, “Do you wish to return to earth?”

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“No,” I cried, running up to clasp her in my arms.

I awoke with a sudden shock. I was lying on the top of the tower of Montlhery; the sun was rising, and the vast circle of country below me shone clear and distinct in the morning light.

“Was it a dream?” I said to myself. “Surely not. The earth is not the only home of life in the universe. Urania, the celestial muse, is now unfolding before our astonished eyes the panoramas of infinity, and we know at last that we are not the children of the earth, but citizens of the heavens.”

* * * * *

DE LA MOTTE FOUQUE

Undine

Friedrich Heinrich Karl Fouque, Baron de la Motte, was born at Brandenburg, in Prussia, Feb. 12, 1777, and died in Berlin January 23, 1843. The mixed nationality indicated by his name is accounted for by his descent from a French Huguenot family. He served as a Prussian cavalryman in the two campaigns against Napoleon of 1792 and 1813, but during the long interval between devoted himself actively to intellectual culture and literary pursuits. He began his career as an author by translating the “Numancia” of Cervantes, but his admiration of the ancient Norse sagas and the old German legends led him into the composition of exquisitely beautiful and tender, though exceedingly fantastic, romances which speedily gained immense popularity. In these productions fairy and magical elements predominate. His masterpiece is “Undine,” published in 1814, the other best-known works being “Sintram,” “Aslauga’s Knight,” and “The Two Captains.” In all Fouque’s stories the marks of genius appear in his brilliant imagination and pure and fascinating diction.

I.—The Water Sprite

About a century ago an aged fisherman sat mending his nets by his cottage door, in front of a lovely lake. Behind his dwelling stretched a sombre forest, reputed to be haunted by goblin creatures. Through this gloomy solitude the pious old fisherman frequently passed, religiously dispelling all terrors by singing hymns as he went with his fish to a town near the border of the forest.

One evening he heard the sound of a horse’s hoofs, and presently appeared a knight riding on a splendid steed, and clad in resplendent armour. The stranger stopped, and besought shelter for the night, and the good old fisherman accorded him a most cheery welcome, taking him into the cottage, where sat his aged wife by a scanty fire. Soon

the three were freely conversing. The knight told of his travels and revealed that he was Sir Huldbrand of Ringstetten, where he had a castle by the Rhine.

A splash against the window surprising the guest he was informed by his host, with some little show of vexation, that little tricks were often played by a foster-child of the old couple, named Undine, a girl of eighteen.

The door flew open, and a lovely girl glided, laughing, into the room. Without the slightest token of shyness she gazed at the knight for a few moments, then asked why he had come to the poor cottage.

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“Have you come through the wild forest?”

He confessed that he had, and she instantly demanded a recital of his adventures. With a slight shudder at his own recollections of the strange creatures he had encountered, Huldbrand consented, but a reproof from the fisherman at her obtrusiveness angered Undine. The girl sprang up and rushed forth into the night, exclaiming, “Sleep alone in your smoky old hut!”

In great alarm, the fisherman and Huldbrand rose to follow the girl, but she had vanished in the darkness. Remarking that she had acted so before, the old fisherman invited Huldbrand to sit by the fire and talk awhile, and began to relate how Undine had come to live with them.

The couple had lost their only child, a wonderfully beautiful little girl. At the age of three, when sitting in her mother’s lap at the edge of the lake, she seemed to be attracted by some lovely apparition in the water, for, suddenly stretching out her hands and laughing, she had in a moment sprung into the lake. No trace of the child could ever be found. But the same evening a lovely little girl, three or four years old, with water streaming from her golden tresses, suddenly entered the cottage, smiling sweetly at the fisherman and his wife. They hastily undressed the little stranger and put her to bed. She uttered not a word, but simply smiled. In the morning she talked a little, confusedly telling how she had been in a boat on the lake with her mother, and had fallen in, and could recollect nothing more. She could say nothing as to who she was or whence she came. But she talked often of golden castles and crystal domes.

While the fisherman was talking thus to the knight, he was suddenly interrupted by the noise of rushing water. Floods seemed to be bursting forth, and he and his guest, going hastily to the door, saw by the moonlight that the brook which issued from the forest was surging in a wild torrent over its margin, while a roaring wind was lashing the lake. In great alarm both shouted, “Undine! Undine!” But there was no response, and the two ran off in different directions in search of the fugitive.

It was Huldbrand who discovered the girl. Clambering down some rocks at the edge of the stream, thinking Undine might have fallen there, he was hailed by the sweet voice of the girl herself.

“Venture not,” she cried. “The old man of the stream is full of tricks.”

Looking across at a tiny isle in the stream, the knight saw her nestling in the grass, smiling, and in an instant he had crossed.

“The fisherman is distressed at your absence,” said he. “Let us go back.”

Looking at him with her beautiful blue eyes, the girl replied. “If you think so, well; whatever you think is right to me.”

Taking Undine in his arms, Huldbrand bore her over the stream to the cottage, where she was received with joy. Dawn was breaking, and breakfast was prepared under the trees. Undine flung herself on the grass at Huldbrand’s feet, and at her renewed request the knight told the story of his forest adventures.

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“It is now about eight days since I rode into the city on the other side of the forest to join in a great tournament. In one of the intervals between the jousts I noticed a lovely lady among the spectators. I learned that she was Bertalda, foster-daughter of a great duke, and each evening I became her partner in the dances.

“This Bertalda was a wayward girl, and each day pleased me less and less; but I continued in her company, and asked her jestingly to give me a glove. She said she would do so if I would explore alone the haunted forest. As an honourable knight I could not decline the challenge, and yesterday I set out on the enterprise. Before I had penetrated very far within the glades, I saw what looked like a bear in the branches of an oak; but the creature, in a harsh, human voice, growled that it was getting branches with which to roast me at night. My horse was scared at this, and other grim apparitions, but at last I emerged from the forest, and saw the lake and this cottage.”

When he had finished, the fisherman spoke of the best way by which the visitor could return to the city; but, with sly laughter, Undine declared that the knight could not depart, for if he attempted now to cross the deluged wood, he would be overwhelmed.

II.—“I Have No Soul!"

Huldbrand, detained at the cottage by the increasing overflow of the stream, enjoyed the most perfect satisfaction with his sojourn.

The old folks with pleasure regarded the two young people as being betrothed, and Huldbrand assumed that he was accepted by the girl, whom he had come to look upon as not being in reality one of this poor household, but one of some illustrious family, and when, one evening, an aged priest appeared at the cottage, driven in by the storm, Huldbrand addressed to him a request that he should on the spot at once unite him and the maiden, as they were pledged to each other. A discussion arose, but matters were at length settled, and the old wife produced two consecrated tapers. Lighting these, the priest, with brief, solemn ceremony, celebrated the nuptials.

Undine had been quiet and grave during these proceedings, but a singular change took place in her demeanour as soon as the rite had been performed. She began at intervals to indulge in wild freaks, teasing the priest, and indulging in a variety of silly tricks. At length the priest gently expostulated with Undine, exhorting her so to attune her soul that it might always be in concord with that of her husband.

Her reply amazed the listeners, for she said, “If one has no soul, as I have none, what is there to harmonise?” Then she burst into a fit of passionate weeping, to the consternation of all the little company. As she again and again wept, the priest, fearing that she was possessed by some evil spirit, sought to exorcise it. The priest turned to the bridegroom with the assurance that he could discover nothing evil in the bride,

mysterious though her behaviour was, and he commended him to be loving and true to her.

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The next morning Undine, when she and her husband made their appearance, responded gracefully to the paternal greeting of the priest, beseeching his pardon for her folly of the previous evening, and begging him to pray for the good of her soul. Through the whole day Undine behaved angelically. She was kind, quiet, and gentle. At eventide she led her husband out to the edge of the stream, which, to the wonder of Huldbrand, had subsided into gentle, rippling waves.

She whispered, “Carry me across to that little isle, and we will decide there.”

Wondering, he carried her across, and, laying her on the turf, listened as she began.

“My loved one, know that there are strange beings which, though seeming almost mortals, are rarely visible to human eyes—salamanders in the flames, gnomes down in the earth, spirits in the air. And in the water are myriads of spirits dwelling in crystal domes, in the coral-trees, and in the lovely shells. These are far more beautiful than the fairest of human beings, and sometimes a fisherman has seen a tender mermaid, and has listened to her song. Such wonderful creatures are called Undines, and one of these you see now before you!

“We should be far superior to other beings—for we consider ourselves human—but for one defect. We have no souls, and nothing remains of us after this mortal life is over. Yet every being aspires to rise higher, and so my father, who is a great water prince in the Mediterranean Sea, desired that his only daughter should become possessed of a soul. But this can only come to pass with loving union with one of your race. Now, O my dearly beloved, I have to thank you that I am gifted with a soul, and it will be due to you should all my life be made wretched. For what will become of me if you forsake me? If you would do so, do it now! Then I will plunge into the stream—which is my uncle—and as he brought me here, so will he take me back to my parents, a loving, suffering woman with a soul.”

Undine would have said yet more, but Huldbrand, astonishing though the recital was, with tears and kisses vowed he would never leave his lovely wife; and with her leaning in loving trustfulness on his arm, they returned to the hut.

The next day, at Undine’s strange urgency, farewell was said with bitter tears and lamentations.

Undine was placed on the beautiful horse, and Huldbrand and the priest walked on either side as the three passed through the solemn glades of the wood. A fourth soon joined them. He was dressed in a white robe, like that of the priest, and presently attempted to speak to Undine. But she shrank from him, declaring she wished to have nothing to do with him.

“Oh, oh!” cried the stranger, with a laugh. “What kind of a marriage is this you have made, that you must not speak to your relative? Do you not know I am your uncle Kuehleborn, who brought you to this region, and that I am here to protect you from goblins and sprites? So let me quietly accompany you.”

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“We are near the end of the forest, and shall not need you further,” was her rejoinder. But he grinned at her so frightfully that she shrieked for help, and the knight aimed at his head a blow from his sword. Instantly Kuehleborn was transformed into a gushing waterfall, foaming over them from a rock near by and drenching all three.

III.—“Woe! Woe!"

The sudden disappearance of the young knight had caused a sensation in the city, for the duke and duchess, and the friends and servants of Huldbrand, feared he had perished in the forest during the terrible tempest When he suddenly reappeared, all rejoiced except Bertalda, who was profoundly vexed at seeing with him a beautiful bride. She so far reconciled herself to the conditions that a warm friendship sprang up between Undine and herself.

It was agreed that Bertalda should accompany the wedded pair to Ringstetten, and with the consent of the noble foster-parents of Bertalda the three appointed a day for departure. One beautiful evening, as they walked about the market-place round the great fountain, suddenly a tall man emerged from among the people and stopped in front of Undine. He quickly whispered something in her ear, and though at first she seemed vexed at the intrusion, presently she clapped her hands and laughed joyously. Then the stranger mysteriously vanished, and seemed to disappear in the fountain.

Huldbrand had suspected that he had seen the man before, and now felt assured that he was Kuehleborn. Undine admitted the fact, and said that her uncle had told her a secret, which she was to reveal on the third day afterwards, which would be the anniversary of Bertalda’s nameday.

The anniversary came, and strange incidents happened. After the banquet given by the duke and duchess, Undine suddenly gave a signal, and from among the retainers at the door came forth the old fisherman and his wife, and Undine declared that in these Bertalda saw her real parents. The proud maiden instantly flew into a violent rage, weeping passionately, and utterly refused to acknowledge the old couple as her father and mother. She declared that Undine was an enchantress and a witch, sustaining intercourse with evil spirits.

Undine, with great dignity, indignantly denied the accusation, while Bertalda’s violent conduct created a feeling of disgust in the minds of all in the assembly. The matter was settled in a simple manner, for the duke commanded Bertalda to withdraw to a private apartment with the duchess and the two old folks from the hut, that an investigation might be made. It was soon over, for the noble lady was able presently to inform the company that Undine’s story was absolutely true. The guests silently departed, and Undine sank sobbing into her husband’s arms.

Next day Bertalda, humbled by these events, sought pardon of Undine for her evil behaviour, and was instantly welcomed with loving assurances of forgiveness, moreover, she was cordially invited to go with the pair to Ringstetten.

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“We will share all things there as sisters,” said Undine.

The three journeyed to the distant castle, and took up their abode together. Soon Kuehleborn appeared on the scene, but Undine at once repulsed him. Next, when her husband was one day hunting, she ordered the great well in the courtyard to be covered with a big stone, on which she cut some curious characters.

Bertalda waywardly complained that this proceeding deprived her of water that was good for her complexion, but Undine privately explained to Huldbrand that she had caused the servants to seal up this spring because only by that way of access could her uncle Kuehleborn come to disturb their peace.

As time passed on, Huldbrand gradually cooled toward his wife and turned affectionately towards Bertalda. Undine bore patiently and silently the sorrow thus inflicted on her. But when her husband was impatient and angry she would plead with him never to speak to her in accents of unkindness when they happened to be on the water, for the water spirits had her completely in their power on their element, and would seek to protect her, and even seize her and take her down for ever to dwell in the crystal castles of the deep.

After some estrangements, Undine and Bertalda had again become loving friends, and Huldbrand’s affection for his wife had revived with its old and welcome warmth, while the attachment between him and Bertalda seemed forgotten.

One day the three were enjoying a delightful excursion on the glorious Danube. Bertalda had taken off a beautiful coral necklace which Huldbrand had given her. She leaned over and drew the coral beads across the surface, enjoying the glitter thus caused, when suddenly a great hand from beneath seized the necklace and snatched it down. The maiden’s scream of terror was answered by mocking laughter from the water.

In an outburst of passion, Huldbrand started up and poured forth curses on the river and its denizens, whether spirits or sirens. With tears in her eyes, Undine besought him softly not to scold her there, and she took from her neck a beautiful necklace and offered it to Bertalda as a compensation.

But the angry knight snatched it away, and hurled it into the river, exclaiming, “Are you still connected with them? In the name of all the witches, remain among them with your presents, and leave us mortals in peace, you sorceress!”

Bitterly weeping and crying, “Woe! Woe!” she vanished over the side of the vessel. Her last words were, “Remain true! Woe! Woe!” Huldbrand lay swooning on the deck, and little waves seemed to be sobbing on the surface of the Danube, “Woe! Woe! Remain true!”

IV.—The White Stranger

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For a time deep sorrow fell on the lord of Ringstetten and Bertalda. They lived long in the castle quietly, often weeping for Undine, tenderly cherishing her memory. Undine often visited Huldbrand in his dreams, caressing him and weeping silently so that his cheeks were wet when he awoke. But these visions grew less frequent, and the knight's grief diminished by degrees. At length he and Bertalda were married, but it was in spite of a grave warning from Father Heilmann, who declared that Undine had appeared to him in visions, beseeching him to warn Huldbrand and Bertalda to leave each other. They were too infatuated to heed the admonition, and a priest from a neighbouring monastery promised to perform the ceremony in a few days.

Meantime, when lying between sleeping and waking, the knight seemed fanned by the wings of a swan, and, as he fell asleep, seemed borne along on the wings of swans which sang their sweetest music. All at once he seemed to be hovering over the Mediterranean Sea. Its waters were so crystalline that he could see through them to the bottom, and there, under a crystal arch, sat Undine, weeping bitterly. She seemed not to perceive him. Kuehleborn approached her, and told her that Huldbrand was to be wedded again, and that it would be her duty, from which nothing could release her, to end his life.

"That I cannot do," said she. "I have sealed up the fountain against my race."

Huldbrand felt as if he were soaring back again over the sea, and at length he seemed to reach his castle. He awoke on his couch, but he could not bring himself to break off the arrangements that had been made.

The marriage feast at Ringstetten was not as bright and happy as such occasions usually are, for a veil of gloom seemed to rest over the company. Even the bride affected a happy and thoughtless demeanour which she did not really feel. The company dispersed early, Bertalda retiring with her maidens, and Huldbrand with his attendants.

In her apartment Bertalda, with a sigh, noticed how freckled was her neck, and a remark she made to her maidens as she gazed in the mirror excited the eager attention of one of them. She heard her fair mistress say, "Oh, that I had a flask of the purifying water from the closed fountain!" Presently the officious waiting-woman was seen leading men to the fountain. With levers they quickly lifted the stone, for some mysterious force within seemed to aid them.

Then from the fountain solemnly rose a white column of water. It was presently perceived that it was a pale female figure, veiled in white. She was weeping bitterly as she walked slowly to the building, while Bertalda and her attendants, pale with terror, watched from the window. The figure passed on, and at the door of Huldbrand's room, where the knight was partly undressed, was heard a gentle tap. The white figure slowly entered. It was Undine, who softly said, "They have opened the spring, and now I am

here and you must die." Said the knight, "It must be so! But let me die in your embrace."

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“Most gladly, my loved one,” said she, throwing back her veil and disclosing her face divinely smiling. Imprinting on his lips a sacred kiss, Undine clasped the knight in her arms, weeping as if she would weep her very soul away. Huldbrand fell softly back on the pillows of his couch, a corpse.

At the funeral of Huldbrand the veiled figure appeared when the procession formed a circle round the grave. All knelt in mute devotion at a signal from Father Heilmann. When they rose again the white stranger had vanished, and on the spot where she had knelt a silvery little fountain gushed forth, which almost encircled the grave and then ran on till it reached a lake near by. And to this day the inhabitants cherish the tradition that thus the poor rejected Undine still lovingly embraces her husband.

* * * * *

EMILE GABORIAU

“File No. 113”

Emile Gaboriau, one of the best-known exponents of the “police story,” was born at Saujon, in France, on November 9, 1833. He began life in a lawyer’s office, became a volunteer in a cavalry regiment, and, later, secretary to Paul Feval, the novelist and dramatist. In the meantime, Gaboriau had contributed a number of sketches dealing with military and fashionable life to various minor Parisian journals, but it was not until 1866, with the publication of “L’Affaire Lerouge,” that he suddenly sprang into fame. From that time until his death, on September 28, 1873, story after story appeared rapidly from his pen. “File No. 113” ("Le Dossier 113”) was published in 1867, and was the first of a remarkable series of detective tales introducing the figure of Lecoq. “File No. 113” is perhaps the most characteristic specimen of his work, exhibiting as it does a careful study of the Paris police system, and a thorough acquaintance with all phases of criminal life.

I.—The Robbery and a Clue

The first mention of the celebrated robbery which took place at M. Fauvel’s bank in Paris—the *dossier* of the case is numbered 113 in the police files—appeared in the evening papers, February 28, 1866.

On the previous day a certain Count Louis de Clameran sent word to M. Fauvel that he wished to withdraw the following morning at ten o’clock the sum of L12,000 which had been deposited in the bank by his brother, an ironmaster from the south of France who had recently died.

M. Fauvel made it a rule never to keep any large sums of money on the premises, but to deposit all such amounts in the keeping of the Bank of France. As this sum, however,

had to be paid the first thing in the morning, the chief cashier, M. Prosper Bertomy, thought he was justified in obtaining the amount from the Bank of France on the evening of the 27th, and in locking it up in the bank safe against the morning.

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The safe was a formidable-looking affair constructed entirely of wrought iron of treble thickness. An ingenious device regulated its opening. On the massive door were five movable steel buttons engraved with the letters of the alphabet. Before the key could be inserted in the lock, these buttons had to be manipulated in the same order in which they had been used when the safe was last shut. The buttons were arranged so that the letters on them formed some word, which was changed from time to time. This word was known only to M. Fauvel and his cashier, each of whom possessed a key of the safe.

As soon as the bank opened on the morning of February 28, the count put in an appearance, and Prosper Bertomy went to the safe to obtain the money. When, a second later, he reappeared, his face was ashy pale, and his steps tottered as he walked. The L12,000 had disappeared from within the safe. What made the affair all the more mysterious was that the safe was locked just as the cashier had left it the night before.

The room in which the safe was situated communicated with the bank by another room in which every night a tried servant of the establishment slept. By a second door admittance was obtained to the private apartments of M. and Madame Fauvel and their niece Madeline.

As soon as M. Fauvel had heard the startling news, he first obtained the necessary money from the Bank of France, settled the business with the count, and then turned his attention to the elucidation of the robbery. He summoned the cashier to his presence.

Bertomy was a young man of thirty to whom M. Fauvel had shown great kindness, advancing his interests wherever possible until, though very young for the position, he was his most important and most confidential employee. Besides the paternal affection with which the bank manager regarded his cashier, another tie tended to make their relations all the stronger and more personal. Bertomy loved M. Fauvel's niece Madeline, and though a curious estrangement had sprung up between them during the previous nine or ten months, the banker always regarded their marriage as practically arranged.

The interview between the two men was a curious one. To each it appeared that the other must be the thief. They alone had the keys of the safe; they alone knew the magic word which could open the massive door. The banker urged Bertomy to confess, promising him forgiveness; the other haughtily rejected the suggestion, and hinted that his employer had converted the L12,000 to his own use. In the end M. Fauvel lost his temper, sent for the police, and before twenty-four hours were up, Prosper Bertomy, who but the day before had held one of the most important and envied positions in the financial world of Paris, was charged before a magistrate as being a common thief.

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Investigation of the case was at first entrusted to a detective named Fanferlot, nicknamed by his comrades the “Squirrel.” Fanferlot’s examination of the premises resulted in little. All he discovered was a scratch upon the door of the safe, but certain words that passed between M. Fauvel and his niece, which seemed to indicate that the former was secretly opposed to the marriage of Madeline with Bertomy, caused him to jump to the conclusion that the banker had robbed his own safe in order to bring disgrace upon his cashier. He connived, however, at the arrest of Bertomy, hoping that later on he might obtain great kudos for himself by unmasking the banker. What might have been the result of his improper and unofficial methods will never be known, but in all probability great inconvenience would have been caused to a number of innocent persons and the whole course of justice thwarted had it not been for the intervention of the great and famous M. Lecoq.

M. Lecoq’s interest in the bank robbery case was largely a personal one. Even detectives have hearts, and M. Lecoq had loved with heart and soul a charming young girl named Nina Gipsy. Under the name of Caldas in one of his innumerable disguises, he had wooed her for many months. When he thought at last that he had won her affections, she had fled to the protection of no less a person than Prosper Bertomy himself. The cashier cared nothing for her, but embittered by an estrangement that had sprung up between Madeline and himself, he had sought forgetfulness in her society. Bertomy’s arrest gave Lecoq an opportunity for a noble revenge. He determined to prove to the woman he loved his superiority over his rival by saving the cashier from disgrace.

Though the case looked black against Bertomy, for it was shown that he was heavily in debt, and living far beyond his means, Lecoq was satisfied that he had not committed the crime. When Fanferlot, hopelessly befogged, called for his advice at his house in the Rue Montmartre, the great detective deigned to explain the preliminary data and the deductions from the data he had made.

The scratch on the safe door, slight and minute as it was, was his starting-point. How had it been made? He had found by experiment that it was impossible to make such a scratch upon the varnish without the exercise of considerable force. It was clear, therefore, that the scratch by the keyhole could not have been made by the thief in his trembling anxiety to get the business he had undertaken accomplished. But why was such force used?

For a long time Lecoq puzzled over this problem. Then, with Fanferlot, he tried an experiment. In his room was an iron box varnished like the safe. Taking the key of this box from his pocket, he ordered Fanferlot to seize his arm just as he put it near the lock. The key slipped, pulled away from the lock, and sliding along the surface of the door, left upon it a diagonal scratch, almost an exact reproduction of the one on the safe.

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From this simple experiment Lecoq deduced that two people were present when the safe was robbed; one wanted to take the money, the other wanted to prevent it being taken. This was the basis of the case which he set out to draw up against some person or persons unknown. He argued, with his usual clear logic, that neither Fauvel nor Bertomy could have robbed the safe. Both of them had keys; both of them knew the secret word and could have robbed the safe whenever they pleased. Therefore, neither of them would have committed the theft in the presence of somebody else.

II.—A Mysterious Journey

Lecoq's first steps after establishing these preliminary deductions was to secure the release of Bertomy on the grounds of insufficient evidence.

On the very morning of his release, Bertomy had received a mysterious letter composed of printed words cut out letter by letter from a book and pasted on paper.

"My dear Prosper," so the epistle ran, "a friend who knows the horror of your situation sends you this help. There is one heart at least which feels for you. Leave France; you are yourself. The future is before you. Go, and may this money be of use."

Enclosed with this note were banknotes for L400. Lecoq, disguised as a M. Verduret, a country merchant, a friend of Bertomy's father, secured this epistle and studied it carefully. His knowledge of the various types used by the printers in Paris showed him that the letters had been taken from a book printed by a well-known firm who published volumes of devotion. The correctness of this conclusion was established by the discovery on the back of one of the small cuttings the word "Deus." The words had been cut from a Catholic prayer-book. To find that prayer-book was his next business.

In another disguise he sought out Nina Gipsy, and, by asking her assistance to clear Prosper, induced her to take up the position of lady's-maid in the Fauvel family, for it was there, he conceived, the mutilated book of devotion would be found. Again his wonderful instinct proved right. In a few days Nina brought him the very book—a prayer-book, belonging to Madeline, which had been given her by Bertomy.

Why had Madeline sent the cashier this elaborately disguised letter? Why had she wished him to leave France, confident as she was, so she told him, of his innocence?

To find an answer to these important queries, Lecoq closely questioned Bertomy. He learnt that the night before the robbery the cashier had dined with his friend Raoul de Lagors, the wealthy, dissolute young nephew of M. Fauvel's wife. This Lagors was the friend of Count Louis de Clameran, whose demand for the L12,000 left him by his dead brother had resulted in the discovery of the mysterious robbery.

Bertomy had nothing but the highest praise for Lagors, but, on the other hand, spoke most disparagingly of the count. The count, it appeared, had proposed for the hand of Madeline, and had pressed his suit with great determination. And Madeline—and this was what provided a new problem for Lecoq's consideration—had tacitly accepted his attention.

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Through Nina, Lecoq had arranged a meeting between Bertomy and Madeline, and satisfied himself that the girl was whole-heartedly and devotedly attached to her uncle's cashier. Then why was she favouring the suit of the count? Lecoq at once made it his business to inquire into the count's past.

He was the second son of an old and noble family. His elder brother, Gaston, having to fly the country in consequence of causing the death of several men, he had inherited the property. A life of dissolute pleasures had soon exhausted his patrimony and he was reduced to living by his wits. Some weeks before the robbery, he had discovered that his brother Gaston was alive and was living on a large estate in the south of France, which he had purchased with the wealth he had accumulated in business. Six weeks after the two brothers met again, the elder died and the younger inherited his vast fortune.

Raoul de Lagors was the next character in the drama whose past the detective made it his business to expose. Lagors, it has been said, was the nephew of Madame Fauvel. To his surprise, Lecoq discovered, by inquiries in her native place, that the banker's wife had never had any brothers or sisters. Lagors, therefore, was not her nephew.

Fanferlot, acting on instructions, had kept a strict watch on the movements of Madeline, and by this means Lecoq received timely warning of a mysterious excursion which the girl made one night. He followed her to a lonely house on the outskirts of the city. When she had gained admittance, the appearance of a light in one of the windows on the first floor seemed to indicate the room to which she had been taken. By the aid of a ladder, Lecoq was able to watch what was going on within through the shutters.

He saw Madeline standing opposite Lagors, evidently, from her attitude, pleading with him. For some time he listened to her, with a cynical smile upon his face, but after an hour he seemed to decide, with evident reluctance, to comply with her request. Going to a cabinet, he took out a bundle of pawn tickets and flung them on the table. Hastily going through the collection, she selected three, and concealing them in her dress, left the house.

By following her to a pawnshop, Lecoq discovered that she had redeemed certain valuable articles of jewelry belonging to Madame Fauvel. Lecoq knew, through Nina Gipsy, who still filled the part of lady's-maid in the Fauvel family, that M. Fauvel had insisted on his wife accompanying him on the following evening to a great fancy-dress ball which was to be given by one of the wealthiest families in the capital. Obviously, then, the jewelry that Madeline had redeemed was required by Madame Fauvel for the occasion. Why had she pawned it for Lagors?

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A theory had half formed itself in Lecoq's brain. He determined to prove its truth. Disguised as a clown, he attended the fancy-dress ball, and in the character of a mountebank collected a group of ladies and gentlemen around him while he related with the inimitable skill of a buffoon a romantic narrative. To most of the people present it was simply an amusing story, but to the count and Lagors and Madame Fauvel, who were among the listeners, it seemed something much more, for Lecoq dressed out his theory of the robbery in the trappings of romance. Just as he reached the climax of the story there was a cry, and Madame Fauvel almost fell fainting on the floor. The count and Lagors rushed up furiously to Lecoq.

"Master Clown," said Lagors, "your tongue is too long."

"Perhaps, my pretty boy," retorted Lecoq, "perhaps it is. But it is, I can assure you, not so long as my arm."

"Who are you, M. le Clown?" the count exclaimed angrily.

"I am," replied Lecoq, "the best friend your brother Gaston had. I was his counsellor. I am the confidant of his last wishes."

Though the solution of the problem seemed so tantalisingly near, there were still some threads in the tangle which required sorting out before Lecoq could say that the case was complete. Among other matters he inquired of Bertomy the word which had been used to lock the safe on, the night of the robbery. The word had been "gipsy." Bertomy was confident that he had not mentioned it to anybody, but Nina Gipsy was able to throw light on this part of the problem. She recollected a chance remark of Bertomy's while sitting at dinner with herself and Lagors on the night of the robbery. She had reproached Bertomy with neglecting her.

"It's too bad for you to reproach me," cried the cashier, "for it is your name which at this very moment guards the safe of M. Fauvel."

Lagors, therefore, had known the password. What did this new discovery imply? How did it fit in with the rest of the data which Lecoq had so brilliantly collected?

After his custom, he marshalled once more in his mind all the facts at his disposal, but they were like so many loose links in a chain. They required the connecting link to make the chain complete. To find that link Lecoq spent a month in visiting the old home of the De Clamerans, the estate formerly occupied by Gaston de Clameron, who had died a few days before the robbery, and also in a trip to England. When he returned to Paris, *dossier* No. 113 was complete.

III.—The Dossier

In her extreme youth, Madame Fauvel had been secretly loved by Gaston de Clameron. It was a result of certain contemptuous words spoken of the girl he loved that Gaston had committed those deeds which had compelled him to fly the country. Shortly after his flight, the girl, finding that she was about to give birth to a child, imparted the secret to her mother. Fearing a scandal, the mother, accompanied by a faithful nurse, took her daughter over to England. There, near London, a child was born, who was immediately handed over to some simple country people to adopt. The unhappy girl returned to France, and shortly after married M. Fauvel, the banker.

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Years after, the Count Louis de Clameron, who had inherited and ruined the estates of which his brother Gaston had been deprived, discovered this secret from the nurse, and finding on inquiries in London that the child had died, persuaded a young ne'er-do-well Englishman to play the *role* of his brother's son. He secretly introduced him to Madame Fauvel, and through this means obtained what money he required from the unhappy woman, who feared the discovery of her past secret by her husband. The situation was complicated by the count falling in love with Madeline and the sudden appearance of Gaston de Clameron, who was thought to be dead.

The count poisoned his brother, and then, finding that Madeline refused to give up Bertomy, determined to accomplish the cashier's ruin, and at the same time obtain an amount of money large enough to buy off his fellow-conspirator Lagors. Lagors, having learnt by chance the password that guarded the safe, was sent to Madame Fauvel late at night with a request for money.

At this time Madame Fauvel was at the end of her resources. Lagors suggested taking the money from the safe. Tom between a desire to help her supposed son and the risk of discovery, she at last consented. Taking M. Fauvel's key, they descended silently to the safe-room. At the last moment, just as the key was in the lock, Madame Fauvel attempted to deter Lagors from his purpose. In the struggle that scratch was made on the door which formed the basis of Lecoq's inquiries and enabled the great detective to unravel the mystery.

Madeline, who all the while half guessed at the truth, and perceived without being told that Madame Fauvel was at the mercy of the count, had been prepared to sacrifice her future happiness in order to prevent the scandal being made public.

M. Lecoq, armed with these facts, sought out Lagors. He arrived only in time to prevent a tragedy. Warned by an anonymous letter that his wife had pawned her diamonds for the benefit of Lagors, the banker came upon them when they were together in Lagor's rooms. Imagining the young man was his wife's lover, the banker drew a revolver and fired four times. Fortunately, none of the shots took effect, and before he could fire again Lecoq had rushed into the room and torn the weapon from his grasp. It was the moment of the great detective's triumph. With the dramatic skill of which he was a master, he laid bare the whole story and disclosed the true identity of Raoul Lagors. Before he left he compelled Lagors to refund the L12,000 he had stolen, and in order to avoid a scandal allowed the young man to go free. Then, that nothing should be wanting to his triumph, he obtained the consent of the banker to Bertomy's marriage with Madeline.

Hurrying from the banker's house, Lecoq hastened to effect the arrest of the count. He arrived too late. Realising that he was hopelessly in the toils, the count was bereft of his senses and become a hopeless maniac.

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Four days later M. Lecoq, the official M. Lecoq, awaited the arrival of Nina Gipsy and Prosper Bertomy. They declared that they had come to meet M. Verduret, who had saved Prosper Bertomy. The detective retired, promising to summon the man they had come to see. A quarter of an hour later M. Verduret entered the room. Facing them, he told them how a friend of his named Caldas had fallen in love with a girl, and how that girl had been won from him by a man who cared nothing for her.

“Caldas determined to revenge himself in his own way. It was his hand that saved the man on the very verge of disgrace. I see you know that you, Nina, are the woman, and you, Prosper, the man; while Caldas is....”

With a quick gesture he removed his wig and whiskers, and the true Lecoq appeared.

“Caldas!” cried Nina.

“No, not Caldas, not Verduret, but Lecoq, the detective.”

After the moments of amazement had passed, Lecoq turned to leave the room, but Nina barred the way.

“Caldas,” she cried, “have you not punished me enough? Caldas....”

Prosper went from the office alone.

* * * * *

JOHN GALT

Annals of the Parish

John Gait, poet, dramatist, historian, and novelist, was born at Irvine, Ayrshire, Scotland, on May 2, 1779. He was trained for a commercial career in the Greenock Custom House, and in the office of a merchant in that seaport. Removing to London, Gait engaged in business and afterwards travelled extensively to forward mercantile enterprises in all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean and the Near East, where he repeatedly met Lord Byron. His first work of fiction was a Sicilian story, published in 1816, but it was not until 1820 that he found his true literary expression, when the “Ayrshire Legatees” appeared in “Blackwood’s Magazine.” The success of this tale was so great that Gait finished the “Annals of the Parish; or the Chronicle of Dalmailing, during the Ministry of the Rev. Micah Balwhidder,” which he had really begun in 1813, and they were published in 1821. The “Annals” contain a lively and humorous picture of Scottish character, manners, and feeling during the era described. In the latter part of his life Gait wrote several novels, a life of Byron, an autobiography, and his “Literary Life and Miscellanies.” He died on April 11, 1838.

I.—The Placing of Mr. Balwhidder

The year A.D. 1760 was remarkable for three things in the parish of Dalmailing. First and foremost, there was my placing, then the coming of Mrs. Malcolm with her five children to settle among us, and next my marriage with my own cousin, Miss Betty Lanshaw. The placing was a great affair, for I was put in by the patron, and the people knew nothing of me whatsoever. They were really mad and vicious, insomuch that there was obliged to be a guard of soldiers to protect the presbytery. Dirt was flung upon us as we passed, and the finger of scorn held out to me. But I endured it with a resigned spirit, compassionating their wilfulness and blindness.

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The kirk door was nailed up and we were obligated to go in by the window, making the Lord's house like an inn on a fair-day with their grievous yelly hooing. Thomas Thorl, the weaver, a pious zealot, got up at the time of the induction and protested, and said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door of the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

When the laying on of the hands upon me was adoing, Mr. Given, minister of Lugton, a jocose man, who could not get near, stretched out his staff and touched my head, saying, to the great diversion of the rest, "This will do well enough—timber to timber."

After the ceremony we went to the manse, and there had an excellent dinner. Although my people received me in this unruly manner, I was resolved to cultivate civility among them; and next morning I began a round of visitations. But, oh! it was a steep brae to climb. The doors in some places were barred against me; in others the bairns ran crying to their mothers, "Here's the feckless Mess-John." But Thomas Thorl received me kindly, and said that this early visitation was a symptom of grace, and that not to condemn me without trial he and some neighbours would be at the kirk at the next Lord's day, so that I would not have to preach just to the bare walls and the laird's family.

As to Mrs. Malcolm, she was the widow of a Clyde shipmaster that was lost at sea with his vessel. A genty body, she never changed her widow's weeds, and span frae morning tae nicht to keep her bairns and herself. When her daughter Effie was ill, I called on her in a sympathising way, and offered her some assistance frae the Session, but she refused help out of the poor's-box, as it might be hereafter cast up to her bairns.

It was in the year 1761 that the great smuggling trade corrupted the west coast. Tea was going like chaff, and brandy like well-water. There was nothing minded but the riding of cadgers by day and excisemen by night, and battles between the smugglers and the king's men, both by sea and land; continual drunkenness and debauchery, and our Session had an awful time o't.

I did all that was in my power to keep my people from the contagion. I preached sixteen times from the text, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's." I visited, exhorted, warned, and prophesied, but the evil got in among us. The third year of my ministry was long held in remembrance. The small-pox came in among the poor bits o' weans of the parish, and the smashing it made among them was woeful. When the pestilence was raging, I preached a sermon about Rachel weeping for her children, which Thomas Thorl, a great judge of good preaching, said, "was a monument of divinity whilk searched the heart of many a parent that day"—a thing I was well pleased to hear, and was minded to make him an elder the next vacancy. But, worthy man, it was not permitted him to arrive at that honour; for that fall it pleased Him that alone can give and take to pluck him from this life.

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In this year Charlie Malcolm, Mrs. Malcolm's eldest son, was sent to sea in a tobacco-trader that sailed between Port Glasgow and Virginia. Tea-drinking was beginning to spread more openly, in so much that by the advice of the first Mrs. Balwhidder, Mrs. Malcolm took in tea to sell to eke out something to the small profits of her wheel. I lost some of my dislike to the tea after that, and we had it for breakfast at the manse as well as in the afternoon. But what I thought most of it for was that it did no harm to the head of the drinkers, which was not always the case with the possets in fashion before, when I remember decent ladies coming home with red faces from a posset-masking. So I refrained from preaching against tea henceforth, but I never lifted the weight of my displeasure from off the smuggling trade, until it was utterly put down by the strong hand of government.

II.—The Minister's Second Marriage

A memorable year, both in public and private, was 1763. The king granted peace to the French. Lady Macadam, widow of General Macadam, who lived in her jointure-house, took Kate Malcolm to live with her as companion, and she took pleasure in teaching Kate all her accomplishments and how to behave herself like a lady. The lint-mill on Lugton Water was burned to the ground, with not a little of the year's crop of lint in our parish. The first Mrs. Balwhidder lost upwards of twelve stone, which was intended for sarking to ourselves and sheets and napery. A great loss indeed it was, and the vexation thereof had a visible effect on her health, which from the spring had been in a dwining way. But for it, I think she might have wrestled through the winter. However, it was ordered otherwise, and she was removed from mine to Abraham's bosom on Christmas Day, and buried on Hogmanay, for it was thought uncanny to have a dead corpse in the house on the New Year's Day.

Just by way of diversion in my heavy sorrow, I got a well-shapen headstone made for her; but a headstone without a epitaph being no better than a body without the breath of life in't, I made a poesy for the monument, not in the Latin tongue, which Mrs. Balwhidder, worthy woman as she was, did not understand, but in sedate language, which was greatly thought of at the time. My servant lassies, having no eye of a mistress over them, wasted everything at such a rate that, long before the end of the year, the year's stipend was all spent, and I did not know what to do. At lang and length I sent for Mr. Auld, a douce and discreet elder, and told him how I was situated. He advised me, for my own sake, to look out for another wife, as soon as decency would allow.

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In the following spring I placed my affections, with due consideration, on Miss Lizzy Kibbock, the well-brought-up daughter of Mr. Joseph Kibbock, of the Gorbyholm, farmer; and we were married on the 29th day of April, on account of the dread we had of being married in May, for it is said, “Of the marriages in May, the bairns die of a decay.” The second Mrs. Balwhidder had a genius for management, and started a dairy, and set the servant lassies to spin wool for making blankets and lint for sheets and napery. She sent the butter on market days to Irville, her cheese and huxtry to Glasgow. We were just coining money, in so much that, after the first year, we had the whole tot of stipend to put into the bank.

The opening of coal-pits in Douray Moor brought great prosperity to the parish, but the coal-carts cut up the roads, especially the Vennel, a narrow and crooked street in the clachan. Lord Eglesham came down from London in the spring of 1767 to see the new lands he had bought in our parish. His coach couped in the Vennel, and his lordship was thrown head foremost into the mud. He swore like a trooper, and said he would get an act of parliament to put down the nuisance. His lordship came to the manse, and, being in a woeful plight, he got the loan of my best suit of clothes. This made him wonderful jocose both with Mrs. Balwhidder and me, for he was a portly man, and I but a thin body, and it was really droll to see his lordship clad in my garments. Out of this accident grew a sort of neighbourliness between Lord Eglesham and me.

III.—A Runaway Match

About Christmas, Lady Macadam’s son, having been perfected in the art of war at a school in France, had, with the help of his mother’s friends and his father’s fame, got a stand of colours in the Royal Scots Regiment. He came to show himself in his regimentals to his lady mother, and during the visit he fell in love and entered into correspondence with Kate Malcolm. A while after, her ladyship’s flunkey came to the manse and begged me to go to her. So I went; and there she was, with gum-flowers on her head, sitting on a settee, for she was lame, and in her hand she held a letter.

“Sir,” she said, as I came into the room, “I want you to go instantly to your clerk,” meaning Mr. Lorimore, the schoolmaster, “and tell him I will give him a couple of hundred pounds to marry Miss Malcolm without delay.”

“Softly, my lady; you must first tell me the meaning of all this haste of kindness,” said I, in my calm, methodical manner. At which she began to sob, and bewail her ruin and the dishonour of her family. I was confounded, but at length it came out that she had accidentally opened a letter that had come from London for Kate, that she had read it, by which she came to know that Kate and her darling son were trysted, and that this was not the first love-letter which had passed between them. Mr. Lorimore promptly declined her ladyship’s proposal, as he was engaged to be married to his present worthy helpmate. Although her ladyship was so overcome with passion, she would not part with Kate, nor allow her to quit the house.

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Three years later the young Laird Macadam, being ordered with his regiment for America, got leave from the king to come and see his lady mother before his departure. But it was not to see her only. He arrived at a late hour unwarned, lest his mother would send Kate out of the way; but no sooner did her ladyship behold his face than she kindled upon both him and Kate, and ordered them out of her sight and house. The young folk had discretion. Kate went home to her mother, and the laird came to the manse and begged us to take him in.

He asked me to perform the ceremony, as he was resolved to marry Kate. We stepped over to Mrs. Malcolm's house, where we found the saintly woman with Kate and Erne and Willie, preparing to read their Bible for the night. After speaking to Mrs. Malcolm for a time, she consented to the marriage. It was sanctified by me before we left Mrs. Malcolm's, the young couple setting off in the laird's chaise to Glasgow, and authorising me to break the matter to Lady Macadam. I was spared this performance, for the servants jealoused what had been done, and told her ladyship. When I entered the room she was like a mad woman in Bedlam. She sent her coachman on horseback to overtake them, which he did at Kilmarnock, and they returned in the morning, when her ladyship was as cagey and meikle taken up with them as if they had gotten her full consent and privilege from the first. Captain Macadam afterwards bought a house at the Braehead, and gave it, with a judicious income, to Mrs. Malcolm, telling her it was not becoming that she should any longer be dependent upon her own industry. For this the young man got a name like a sweet odour in all the country-side.

It will be remembered that Charlie Malcolm went a-sailing in a tobacco-trader to America. When his ship was lying in the harbour of Virginia, a press-gang, that was in need of men for the Avenger, man-of-war, came on board and pressed poor Charles. I wrote to Lord Eglesham anent the matter, and his lordship's brother being connected with the Admiralty, the captain of the man-of-war was instructed to make a midshipman of Charles. This was done, and Mrs. Malcolm heard from time to time from her son, saying that he had found a friend in the captain, that was just a father to him.

In the latter end of 1776, the man-of-war, with Charles Malcolm in her, came to the Tail of the Bank at Greenock, and Charles got leave from his captain to come and see his mother. He brought with him Mr. Howard, another midshipman, the son of a great Parliament man in London. They were dressed in their fine gold-laced garbs. When Charles had seen his mother and his sister, Effie, he came with his friend to see me at the manse, and got Mrs. Balwhidder to ask his friend to sleep there. In short, we had a ploy the whole two days they stayed with us, Lady Macadam made for them at a ball, and it was a delight to see how old and young of all degrees made much of Charles.

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IV.—Years of Lamentation

I was named in the year 1779 for the General Assembly, and Mrs. Balwhidder, by her continual thrift, having made our purse able to stand a shake against the wind, we resolved to go into Edinburgh in a creditable manner. We put up at Widow M'Vicar's, a relation to my first wife, a gawsy, furthy woman, taking great pleasure in hospitality. In short, everybody in Edinburgh was in a manner wearisome kind.

I was delighted and surprised to find Lord Eglesham at the levee, and he introduced me to his grace the Commissioner, who required me to preach before him. Fain would I have eschewed the honour that was thus thrust upon me; but both my wife and Mrs. M'Vicar were just lifted out of themselves at the thought. After the sermon the Commissioner complimented me on my apostolic earnestness, and Mrs. M'Vicar said I had surprised everybody; but I was fearful there was something of jocularity at the bottom of all this.

The year 1781 was one of dolour and tribulation, for Lord Eglesham was shot dead by a poaching exciseman, and Lady Macadam died of paralysis; but the year after was one of greater lamentation. Three brave young fellows belonging to the clachan, who had gone as soldiers in America, were killed in battle with the rebels, for which there was great grief. Shortly after this the news came of a victory over the French fleet, and by the same post I got a letter from Mr. Howard, the midshipman, telling me that poor Charles had been mortally wounded in the action, and had afterwards died of his wounds.

Mrs. Malcolm heard the news of the victory through the steeple hell being set a-ringing, and she came over to the manse in great anxiety. When I saw her I could not speak, but looked at her in pity, and, the tears fleeing into my eyes, she guessed what had happened. After giving a deep and sore sigh, she inquired, "How did he behave? I hope well, for he was aye a gallant laddie!" And then she wept very bitterly. I gave her the letter, which she begged me to give to her to keep, saying, "It's all that I have left now of my pretty boy; but it is mair precious to me than the wealth of the Indies!"

V.—Death of the Second Mrs. Balwhidder

Some time after this a Mr. Cayenne, a man of crusty temper but good heart, and his family, American loyalists, settled among us. In the year 1788, a proposal came from Glasgow to build a cotton mill on the banks of the Brawl burn, a rapid stream which ran through the parish. Mr. Cayenne took a part in the profit or loss of the concern, and the cotton mill and a new town was built, and the whole called Cayenneville. Weavers of muslin were brought to the mill, and women to teach the lassie bairns in our old clachan tambouring instead of hand-spinning.

Prosperity of fortune is like the golden hue of the evening cloud that delighteth the spirit and passeth away. In the month of February 1796, my second wife was gathered to the Lord. Her death was to me a great sorrow, for she was a most excellent wife, industrious to a degree. With her I had grown richer than any other minister in the presbytery.

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I laid her by the side of my first love, Betty Lanshaw, and I inscribed her name upon the same headstone. Time had drained my poetical vein, and I have not yet been able to indite an epithet on her merits and virtues, for she had an eminent share of both. Above all, she was the mother of my children. She was not long deposited in her place of rest until things fell into amazing confusion, and I saw it would be necessary, as soon as decency would allow, for me to take another wife, both for a helpmate, and to tend me in my approaching infirmities.

I saw it would not do for me to look out for an overly young woman, nor yet would it do for one of my way to take an elderly maiden, ladies of that sort being liable to possess strong-set particularities. I therefore resolved that my choice should lie among widows of a discreet age, and I fixed my purpose on Mrs. Nugent, the relict of a professor in the University of Glasgow, both because she was a well-bred woman without any children, and because she was held in great estimation as a lady of Christian principle. And so we were married as soon as a twelve-month and a day had passed from the death of the second Mrs. Balwhidder; and neither of us have had occasion to rue the bargain.

VI.—The Last Sermon

Two things made 1799 a memorable year; the marriage of my daughter Janet with the Rev. Dr. Kittleword of Swappington, a match in every way commendable; and the death of Mrs. Malcolm. If ever there was a saint on earth she was surely one. She bore adversity with an honest pride; she toiled in the day of penury and affliction with thankfulness for her little earnings.

The year 1803 saw tempestuous times. Bonaparte gathered his host fornent the English coast, and the government at London were in terror of their lives for an invasion. All in the country saw that there was danger, and I was not backward in sounding the trumpet to battle. I delivered on Lord's Day a religious and political exhortation on the present posture of public affairs before a vast congregation of all ranks. The week following there were meetings of weavers and others, and volunteers were enrolled in defence of king and country.

In the course of the next four or five years many changes took place in the parish. The weavers and cotton-mill folk and seceders from my own kirk built a meeting-house in Cayenneville, where there had been for a while great suffering on account of the failure of the cotton-mill company. In the year 1809 the elders came in a body to the manse, and said that, seeing that I was now growing old, they thought they could not testify their respect for me in a better manner than by agreeing to get me a helper; and the next year several young ministers spared me from the necessity of preaching.

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When it was known that I was to preach my last sermon on the last sabbath of 1810, everyone, including the seceders to the meeting-house, made it a point to be in the parish kirk, or to stand in the crowd that made a lane of reverence for me to pass from the kirk door to the back-yett of the manse. It was a moving discourse, and there were few dry eyes in the kirk that day; for my bidding them farewell was as when of old among the heathen an idol was taken away by the hand of the enemy. Shortly after, a deputation of the seceders, with their minister at their head, came to me and presented a server of silver in token of their esteem of my blameless life, and the charity I had practised towards the poor.

I am thankful that I have been spared with a sound mind to write this book to the end, having really no more to say, saving only to wish a blessing on all people from on high, where I soon hope to be, and to meet there all the old and long-departed sheep of my flock, especially the first and second Mrs. Balwhidders.

* * * * *

ELIZABETH CLEGHORN GASKELL

Cranford

Mrs. Gaskell, whose maiden name was Elizabeth C. Stevenson, was born in Chelsea, London, Sept. 29, 1810. She married a Unitarian clergyman in Manchester. Her first literary work was published anonymously, and met with a storm of mingled approval and disapproval. Charles Dickens invited her to contribute to his “Household Words,” and it was in the pages of that famous periodical, at intervals between December 13, 1851, and May 21, 1853, that her charming sketches of social life in a little country town first appeared. In June, 1853, they were grouped together under the title of “Cranford,” meeting with wide approval, and have long taken rank as one of the accepted English classics. The town which figures here as Cranford is understood to have been Knutsford, in Cheshire, which still retains something of that old-world feeling and restfulness which Mrs. Gaskell embodied in the pages of her most engaging book. “Cranford” is probably the direct progenitor of many latter-day books of the class to which the word “idyll” has been somewhat loosely applied. Its charm and freshness are unfading; it remains unique and unrivalled as a sympathetic and kindly humorous description of English provincial life. Mrs. Gaskell died in November, 1865.

I.—Our Society

On the first visit I paid to Cranford, after I had left it as a residence, I was astonished to find a man had settled there—a Captain Brown. In my time Cranford was in possession of the Amazons. If a married couple came to settle there, somehow the man always disappeared. Either he was fairly frightened to death by being the only man at the

evening parties, or he was accounted for by being with his regiment, his ship, or closely connected in business all the week in the great neighbouring commercial town of Drumble, distant only twenty miles on the railroad.

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I was naturally interested to learn what opinions Captain Brown had managed to win for himself in Cranford. So, with all the delicacy which the subject demanded, I made inquiries of my hostess, Miss Jenkyns. I was surprised to learn that Captain Brown not only was respected, but had even gained an extraordinary place of authority among the Cranford ladies. Of course, he had been forced to overcome great difficulties.

In the first place, the ladies of Cranford had moaned over the invasion of their territories by a man and a gentleman. Then Captain Brown had started badly, very badly, by openly referring to his poverty. If he had whispered it to an intimate friend, the doors and windows being previously closed, his vulgarity—a tremendous word in Cranford—-might have been forgiven. But he had published his poverty in the public street, in a loud military voice, alleging it as a reason for not taking a particular house.

In Cranford, too, where it was tacitly agreed to ignore that anyone with whom we associated on terms of equality could ever be prevented by poverty from doing anything they wished. Where, if we walked to and from a party, it was because the night was *so* fine or the air *so* refreshing, not because sedan-chairs were so expensive.

So the poor captain had been sent to Coventry. The ladies of Cranford had frozen him out, until the day when the cow, an Alderney cow, had broken the ice.

It happened like this. Miss Betsy Barker had an Alderney cow, which she looked upon as a daughter. You could not pay the regulation short quarter of an hour's call—to stay longer was a breach of manners—without being told of the wonderful milk or wonderful intelligence of this animal. The whole town knew and kindly regarded Miss Betsy Barker's Alderney.

One day the cow fell into a lime-pit, and Cranford grieved over the spectacle of the poor beast being drawn out, having lost most of her hair, and looking naked, cold and miserable, in a bare skin. Miss Betsy Barker absolutely cried with sorrow and dismay, and was about to prepare a bath of oil for the sufferer, when Captain Brown called out: "Get her a flannel waistcoat and flannel drawers, ma'am, if you wish to keep her alive. But my advice is, 'kill the poor creature at once.'" Miss Betsy Barker dried her eyes, and in a few hours the whole town turned out to see the Alderney meekly going to her pasture, clad in dark-gray flannel. Do you ever see cows dressed in gray flannel in London?

On that day was born the respect of the Cranford ladies for Captain Brown.

Soon after my arrival in Cranford, Miss Jenkyns gave a party in my honour, and recalling the old days when we had almost persuaded ourselves that to be a man was to be "vulgar," I was curious to see what the ladies would do with Captain Brown.

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The preparations were much as usual. Card-tables, with green baize tops, were set out by daylight, and towards four, when the evening closed in, we all stood dressed in our best, each with a candle-lighter in our hand, ready to dart at the candles as soon as the first knock came. The china was delicate egg-shell; the old-fashioned silver glittered with polishing; but the eatables were of the slightest description. While the trays were yet on the table, Captain Brown arrived with his two daughters, Miss Brown and Miss Jessie, the former with a sickly, pained, and careworn expression; the latter with a pretty, round, dimpled face, and the look of a child which will remain with her should she live to be a hundred.

I could see that the captain was a favourite with all the ladies present. Ruffled brows were smoothed and sharp voices hushed at his approach. He immediately and quietly assumed the man's place in the room; attended to everyone's wants, lessened the pretty maidservant's labour by waiting on empty cups and bread-and-butterless ladies; and yet did it all in so easy and dignified a manner, and so much as if it were a matter of course for the strong to attend to the weak, that he was a true man throughout.

The party passed off very well in spite of one or two little hitches. One was Miss Jessie Brown's unguarded admission—*a propos* of Shetland wool—that she had an uncle, her mother's brother, who was a shopkeeper in Edinburgh. Miss Jenkyns tried to drown this confession by a terrible cough, for the honourable Mrs. Jamieson was sitting at the card-table nearest Miss Jessie, and what would she say or think if she found out she was in the same room with a shopkeeper's niece!

Then there was a slight breeze between Miss Jenkyns and Captain Brown over the relative merits of Dr. Johnson and the author of "Pickwick Papers"—then being published in parts—as writers of light and agreeable fiction. Captain Brown read an account of the "Swarry" which Sam Weller gave at Bath. Some of us laughed very heartily. *I* did not dare, because I was staying in the house. At the conclusion Miss Jenkyns said to me, with mild dignity, "Fetch me 'Rasselas,' my dear, out of the book-room."

After delivering one of the conversations between Rasselas and Imlac in a majestic, high-pitched voice, Miss Jenkyns said, "I imagine I am now justified in my preference for Dr. Johnson over your Mr. Boz as a writer of fiction."

The captain said nothing, merely screwed his lips up and drummed on the table; but when Miss Jenkyns returned later to the charge and recommended the doctor's style to Captain Brown's favourite, the captain replied, "I should be very sorry for him to exchange his style for any such pompous writing."

Miss Jenkyns felt this as a personal affront in a way of which the captain had not dreamed. How could he know that she and her friends looked upon epistolary writing

as their forte, and that when in a letter they “seized the half-hour just previous to post-time to assure” their friends of this and that, they were using the doctor as a model?

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As it was Miss Jenkyns refused to be mollified by Captain Brown's efforts later to beguile her into conversation on some more pleasing subject. She was inexorable.

Captain Brown endeavoured to make peace after this memorable dispute by a present to Miss Jenkyns of a wooden fire-shovel (his own making), having heard her say how much the grating of an iron one annoyed her. She received the present with cool gratitude and thanked him formally. When he was gone she bade me put it in the lumber-room, feeling probably that no present from a man who preferred Mr. Boz to Dr. Johnson could be less jarring than an iron fire-shovel.

Such was the state of affairs at the time when I left Cranford and went to Drumble. I had, however, several correspondents who kept me *au fait* as to the proceedings of the inhabitants of the dear little town.

II.—The Captain

My next visit to Cranford was in the summer. There had been neither births, deaths, nor marriages since I was there last. Everybody lived in the same house, and wore pretty near the same well-preserved, old-fashioned clothes. The greatest event was that the Misses Jenkyns had purchased a new carpet for the drawing-room. Oh, the busy work Miss Matty and I had in chasing the sunbeams as they fell in an afternoon right down on this carpet through the blindless windows! We spread our newspapers over the places and sat down to our book or our work; and, lo! in a quarter of an hour the sun had moved and was blazing away in a fresh spot; and down again we went on our knees to alter the position of the newspapers. One whole morning, too, we spent in cutting out and stitching together pieces of newspapers so as to form little paths to every chair, lest the shoes of visitors should defile the purity of the carpet. Do you make paper paths for every guest to walk upon in London?

The literary dispute between Captain Brown and Miss Jenkyns continued. She had formed a habit of talking *at* him. And he retaliated by drumming his fingers, which action Miss Jenkyns felt and resented as disparaging to Dr. Johnson.

The poor captain! I noticed on this visit that he looked older and more worn, and his clothes were very threadbare. But he seemed as bright and cheerful as ever, unless he was asked about his daughter's health.

One afternoon we perceived little groups in the street, all listening with faces aghast to some tale or other. It was some time before Miss Jenkyns took the undignified step of sending Jenny out to inquire.

Jenny came back with a white face of terror.

“Oh, ma’am! Oh, Miss Jenkyns, ma’am! Captain Brown is killed by them nasty cruel railroads.” And she burst into tears.

“How, where—where? Good God! Jenny, don’t waste time in crying, but tell us something.”

Miss Matty rushed out into the street, and presently an affrighted carter appeared in the drawing-room and told the story.

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"'Tis true, mum, I seed it myself. The captain was a-readin' some book, waitin' for the down train, when a lass as gave its sister the slip came toddling across the line. He looked up sudden, see'd the child, darted on the line, cotched it up, and his foot slipped and the train came over him in no time. The child's safe. Poor captain would be glad of that, mum, wouldn't he? God bless him!"

The great rough carter turned away to hide his tears. I turned to Miss Jenkyns. She looked very ill, as though she were going to faint, and signed to me to open a window.

"Matilda, bring me my bonnet. I must go to those girls. God pardon me if ever I have spoken contemptuously to the captain."

Miss Brown did not long survive her father. Her last words were a prayer for forgiveness for her selfishness in allowing her sister Jessie to sacrifice herself for her all her life.

But Miss Jessie was not long left alone. Miss Jenkyns insisted she should come and stay with her, and would not hear of her going out into the world to earn her living as a saleswoman. "Some people have no idea of their rank as a captain's daughter," she related indignantly, and stumped out of the room. Presently she came back with a strange look on her face.

"I have been much startled—no, I've not been startled—don't mind me, my dear Miss Jessie, only surprised—in fact, I've had a caller whom you once knew, my dear Miss Jessie."

Miss Jessie went very white, then flushed scarlet.

"Is it?—it is not——" stammered out Miss Jessie, and got no farther.

"This is his card," said Miss Jenkyns, and went through a series of winks and odd faces at me, and formed a long sentence with her lips, of which I could not understand a word.

Major Gordon was shown upstairs.

While downstairs Miss Jenkyns told me what the major had told her. How he had served in the same regiment as Captain Brown and had fallen in love with Miss Jessie, then a sweet-looking, blooming girl of eighteen; how she had refused him, though obviously not indifferent to him; how he had discovered the obstacle to be the fell disease which had stricken her sister, whom there was no one to nurse and comfort but herself; how he had believed her cold and had left in anger; and finally how he had read of the death of Captain Brown in a foreign newspaper.

Just then Miss Matty burst into the room.

“Oh, Deborah,” she said, “there’s a gentleman sitting in the drawing-room with his arm round Miss Jessie’s waist!”

“The most proper place for his arm to be in. Go, Matilda, and mind your own business.”

Poor Miss Matty! This was a shock, coming from her decorous sister.

Thus happiness, and with it some of her early bloom, returned to Miss Jessie, and as Mrs. Gordon her dimples were not out of place.

III.—Poor Peter

My visits to Cranford continued for many years, and did not cease even after the death of Miss Jenkyns.

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Miss Matty became my new hostess. At first I rather dreaded the changed aspect of things. Miss Matty, too, began to cry as soon as she saw me. She was evidently nervous from having anticipated my visit. I comforted her as well as I could, and I found the best consolation I could give was the honest praise that came from my heart as I spoke of the deceased.

Miss Matty made me her confidante in many matters, and one evening she sent Martha to go for eggs at a farm at the other end of the town and told me the story of her brother.

“Poor Peter! The sole honour he brought from Shrewsbury was the reputation of being captain of the school in the art of practical joking. He even thought that the people of Cranford might be hoaxed. ‘Hoaxing’ is not a pretty word, my dear, and I hope you won’t tell your father I used it, for I should not like him to think I was not choice in my language, after living with such a woman as Deborah. I don’t know how it slipped out of my mouth, except it was that I was thinking of poor Peter, and it was always his expression.

“One day my father had gone to see some sick people in the village. Deborah, too, was away from home for a fortnight or so. I don’t know what possessed poor Peter, but he went to her room and dressed himself in her old gown and shawl and bonnet. And he made the pillow into a little—you are sure you locked the door, my dear?—into—into a little baby with white long clothes. And he went and walked up and down in the Filbert Walk—just half hidden by the rails and half seen; and he cuddled the pillow just like a baby and talked to it all the nonsense people do. Oh, dear, and my father came stepping stately up the street, as he always did, and pushing past the crowd saw—I don’t know what he saw—but old Clare said his face went grey-white with anger. He seized hold of poor Peter, tore the clothes off his back—bonnet, shawl, gown, and all—-threw them among the crowd, and before all the people lifted up his cane and flogged Peter.

“My dear, that boy’s trick on that sunny day, when all promised so well, broke my mother’s heart and changed my father for life. Old Clare said Peter looked as white as my father and stood still as a statue to be flogged.

“‘Have you done enough, sir?’ he asked hoarsely, when my father stopped. Then Peter bowed grandly to the people outside the railing and walked slowly home. He went straight to his mother, looking as haughty as any man, and not like a boy.

“‘Mother,’ he said, ‘I am come to say “God bless you for ever.”’

“He would say no more, and by the time my mother had found out what had happened from my father, and had gone to her boy’s room to comfort him, he had gone, and did not come back. That spring day was the last time he ever saw his mother’s face. He wrote a passionate entreaty to her to come and see him before his ship left the Mersey

for the war, but the letter was delayed, and when she arrived it was too late. It killed my mother. And think, my dear, the day after her death—for she did not live a twelve-month after Peter left—came a parcel from India from her poor boy. It was a large, soft white India shawl. Just what my mother would have liked.

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“We took it to my father in the hopes it would rouse him, for he had sat with her hand in his all night long. At first he took no notice of it. Then suddenly he got up and spoke. ‘She shall be buried in it,’ he said. ‘Peter shall have that comfort; and she would have liked it.’”

“Did Mr. Peter ever come home?”

“Yes, once. He came home a lieutenant. And he and my father were such friends. My father was so proud to show him to all the neighbours. He never walked out without Peter’s arm to lean on. And then Peter went to sea again, and by-and-by my father died, blessing us both and thanking Deborah for all she had been to him. And our circumstances were changed, and from a big rectory with three servants we had come down to a small house with a servant-of-all-work. But, as Deborah used to say, we have always lived genteelly, even if circumstances have compelled us to simplicity. Poor Deborah!”

“And Mr. Peter?” I asked.

“Oh, there was some great war in India, and we have never heard of Peter since then. I believe he is dead myself. Sometimes when I sit by myself and the house is quiet, I think I hear his step coming up the street, and my heart begins to flutter and beat; but the sound goes, and Peter never comes back.”

IV.—Friends in Need

The years rolled on. I spent my time between Drumble and Cranford. I was thankful that I happened to be staying with Miss Matty when the Town and County Bank failed, which had such a disastrous effect on her little fortune.

It was an example to me, and I fancy it might be to many others, to see how immediately Miss Matty set about the retrenchment she knew to be right under her altered circumstances. I did the little I could. Some months back a conjuror had given a performance in the Cranford Assembly Rooms. By a strange set of circumstances the identity of Signor Brunoni was revealed. He was plain Samuel Brown, who had fallen out of his cart and had to be attended by our doctor. I went to visit the patient and his wife, and learned that she had been India. She told me a long story about being befriended, after a perilous journey, by a kind Englishman who lived right in the midst of the natives. It was his name which astonished me. Agra Jenkyns.

Could Agra Jenkyns be the long lost Peter? I resolved to say nothing to Miss Matty, but got the address from the signor (as we still called him from habit), spelt by sound, and very queer it looked, and posted a letter to him.

All sorts of plans were discussed for Miss Matty's future. I thought of all the things by which a woman, past middle age, and with the education common to ladies fifty years ago, could earn or add to a living without materially losing caste; but at length I put even this last clause on one side, and wondered what in the world Miss Matty could do. Even teaching was out of the question, for, reckoning over her accomplishments, I had to come down to reading, writing, and arithmetic—and in reading the chapter every morning she always coughed before coming to long words.

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I was still in a quandary the next morning, when I received a letter from Miss Pole, so mysteriously wrapped up and with so many seals on it to secure secrecy that I had to tear the paper before I could unfold it.

It summoned me to go to Miss Pole at 11 a.m., the a.m. twice dashed under as if I were likely to come at eleven at night, when all Cranford was usually abed and asleep by ten. I went and found Miss Pole dressed in solemn array, though there were only Mrs. Forrester, crying quietly and sadly, and Mrs. FitzAdam present. Miss Pole was armed with a card, on which I imagine she had written some notes.

“Miss Smith,” she began, when I entered (I was familiarly known to all Cranford as Mary, but this was a state occasion), “I have conversed in private with these ladies on the misfortune which has happened to our friend, and one and all have agreed that while we have a superfluity, it is not only a duty but a pleasure—a true pleasure, Mary!”—her voice was rather choked just here, and she had to wipe her spectacles before she could go on—“to give what we can to assist her—Miss Matilda Jenkyns. Only in consideration of the feelings of delicate independence existing in the mind of every refined female”—I was sure she had got back to the card—“we wish to contribute our mites in a secret and concealed manner, so as not to hurt the feelings I have referred to.”

Well, the upshot of this solemn meeting was that each of those dear old ladies wrote down the sum she could afford annually, signed the paper and sealed it mysteriously, and I was commissioned to get my father to administer the fund in such a manner that Miss Jenkyns should imagine the money came from her own improved investments.

As I was going, Mrs. Forrester took me aside, and in the manner of one confessing a great crime the poor old lady told me how very, very little she had to live on—a confession she was brought to make from a dread lest we should think that the small contribution named in her paper bore any proportion to her love and regard for Miss Mary. And yet that sum which she so eagerly relinquished was, in truth, more than a twentieth part of what she had to live on. And when the whole income does not nearly amount to a hundred pounds, to give up a twentieth of it will necessitate many careful economies and many pieces of self-denial—small and insignificant in the world’s account, but bearing a different value in another account book that I have heard of.

The upshot of it all was that dear Miss Matty was comfortably installed in her own house, and added to her slender income by selling tea! This last was my idea, and it was a proud moment for me when it realized. The small dining-room was converted into a shop, without any of its degrading characteristics, a table formed the counter, one window was retained unaltered and the other changed into a glass door, and there she was. Tea was certainly a happy commodity, as it was neither greasy nor sticky, grease and stickiness being two of the qualities which Miss Matty could not endure. Moreover, as Miss Matty said, one good thing about it was that men did not buy it, and it was of

men particularly she was afraid. They had such sharp, loud ways with them, and did up accounts and counted their change so quickly.

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Very little remains to be told. The approval of the Honourable Mrs. Jamieson set the seal upon the successful career of Miss Matty as a purveyor of tea. Thus did she escape even the shadow of “vulgarity.”

One afternoon I was sitting in the shop parlour with Miss Matty, when we saw a gentleman go slowly past the window and then stand opposite to the door, as if looking out for the name which we had so carefully hidden. His clothes had an out-of-the-way foreign cut, and it flashed across me it was the Agra himself! He entered.

Miss Matty looked at him, and something of tender relaxation in his face struck home to her heart. She said: “It is—oh, sir, can you be Peter?” and trembled from head to foot. In a moment he had her in his arms, sobbing the tearless cries of old age.

* * * * *

Mary Barton

“Mary Barton,” although not Mrs. Gaskell’s first attempt at authorship, was her first literary success; and although her later writings revealed a gain in skill, subtlety and humour, none of them equalled “Mary Barton” in dramatic intensity and fervent sincerity. This passionate tale of the sorrows of the Manchester poor, given to the world anonymously in the year 1848, was greeted with a storm of mingled approval and disapproval. It was praised by Carlyle and Landor, but some critics attacked it fiercely as a slander on the Manchester manufacturers, and there were admirers who complained that it was too heartrending. The controversy has long since died down, but the book holds a permanent place in literature as a vivid revelation of a dark and painful phase of English life in the middle of the last century.

I.—Rich and Poor

“Mary,” said John Barton to his daughter, “what’s come o’er thee and Jem Wilson? You were great friends at one time.”

“Oh, folk say he is going to be married to Molly Gibson,” answered Mary, as indifferently as she could.

“Thou’st played thy cards badly, then,” replied her father in a surly tone. “At one time he were much fonder o’ thee than thou deservedst.”

“That’s as people think,” said Mary pertly, for she remembered that the very morning before, when on her way to her dressmaking work, she had met Mr. Harry Carson, who had sighed, and sworn and protested all manner of tender vows. Mr. Harry Carson was the son and the idol of old Mr. Carson, the wealthy mill-owner. Jem Wilson, her old playmate, and the son of her father’s, closest friend, although he had earned a position

of trust at the foundry where he worked, was but a mechanic after all! Mary was ambitious; she knew that she had beauty; she believed that when young Mr. Carson declared he meant to marry her he spoke the truth.

It so happened that Jem, after much anxious thought, had determined that day to “put his fortune to the touch.” Just after John Barton had gone out, Jem appeared at the door, looking more awkward and abashed than he had ever done before.

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He thought he had better begin at once.

“Mary, it’s no new story I’m going to speak about. Since we were boy and girl I ha’ loved you above father and mother and all. And now, Mary, I’m foreman at the works, and I’ve a home to offer you, and a heart as true as ever man had to love you and cherish you. Darling, say that you’ll be mine.”

Mary could not speak at once.

“Mary, they say, silence gives consent,” he whispered.

“No, not with me! I can never be your wife.”

“Oh, Mary, think awhile!” he urged.

“Jem, it cannot be,” she said calmly, although she trembled from head to foot. “Once for all, I will never marry you.”

“And this is the end!” he cried passionately. “Mary, you’ll hear, maybe, of me as a drunkard, and maybe as a thief, and maybe as a murderer. Remember! it’s your cruelty that will have made me what I feel I shall become.”

He rushed out of the house.

When he had gone, Mary lay half across the dresser, her head hidden in her hands, and her body shaken with violent sobs. For these few minutes had unveiled her heart to her; it had convinced her that she loved Jem above all persons or things. What were the wealth and prosperity that Mr. Harry Carson might bring to her now that she had suddenly discovered the passionate secret of her soul?

Her first duty, she saw, was to reject the advances of her rich lover. She avoided him as far as possible, and slighted him when he forced his presence upon her. And how was she to redress the wrong she had done to Jem in denying him her heart? She took counsel with her friend, Margaret Legh. When Mary had first known Margaret and her grandfather, Job Legh—an old man who belonged to the class of Manchester workmen who are warm and devoted followers of science, a man whose home was like a wizard’s dwelling, filled with impaled insects and books and instruments—Margaret had a secret fear of blindness. The fear had since been realised, but she remained the quiet, sensible, tender-hearted girl she had been before her great deprivation. She opposed Mary’s notion of writing a letter to Jem.

“You must just wait and be patient,” she advised; “being patient is the hardest work we have to do through life, I take it. Waiting is far more difficult than doing; but it’s one of God’s lessons we must learn, one way or another.”

So Mary waited. But Jem took his disappointment as final, and her hopes of seeing him were always baffled.

John Barton, on the night of Jem's proposal, had gone to his union. The members of the union were all desperate men, ready for anything; made ready by want. Barton himself was out of work. He had seen much of the bitterness of poverty in Manchester; now he was feeling the pinch of it himself.

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Ever since the death of his wife, whose end had been hastened by the sudden and complete disappearance of her darling sister Esther, the wan colourlessness of his face had been intensified; his stern enthusiasm, once latent, had become visible; his heart, tenderer than ever towards the victims of the misery around him, grew harder towards the employers, whom he believed to be the cause of that misery. Trade grew worse, but there was no sign that the masters were suffering; they still had their carriages and their comforts; the woe in these terrible years 1839, 1840, and 1841 seemed to fall wholly upon the poor. It is impossible even faintly to picture the state of distress which prevailed in Manchester at that time. Whole families went through a gradual starvation; John Barton saw them starve, saw fathers and mothers and children die of low, putrid fever in foetid cellars, and cursed the rich men who never extended a helping hand to the sufferers.

“Working folk won’t be ground to the dust much longer,” he declared. “We’n ha’ had as much to bear as human nature can bear.”

Fiercer grew he, and more sullen. Darker and darker were the schemes he brooded over in his desolate home, or discussed with others at the meetings of the union. Even Mary did not escape his ill-temper. Once he struck her. And yet Mary was the one being on earth he devotedly loved. What would he have thought had he known that his daughter had listened to the voice of an employer’s son? But he did not know.

II.—The Rivals

One night, as Jem was leaving the foundry, a woman laid her hand upon his arm. A momentary glance at the faded finery she wore told him the class to which she belonged, and he made an effort to pass on. But she grasped him firmly.

“You must listen to me, Jem Wilson,” she said, “for Mary Barton’s sake.”

“And who can you be to know Mary Barton?” he exclaimed.

“Do you remember Esther, Mary’s aunt?”

’"Yes, I mind her well.” He looked into her face. “Why, Esther! Where have ye been this many a year?”

She answered with fierce earnestness, “Where have I been? What have I been doing? Can you not guess? See after Mary, and take care she does not become like me. As she is loving now, so did I love once—one above me, far.”

Jem cut her short with his hoarse, stern inquiry, “Who is this spark that Mary loves?”

“It’s old Carson’s son.” Then, after a pause, she continued, “Oh, Jem, I charge you with the care of her! Her father won’t listen to me.” She cried a little at the recollection of

John Barton's harsh words when she had timidly tried to approach him. "It would be better for her to die than to live to lead such a life as I do!"

"It would be better," said Jem, as if thinking aloud. Then he went on. "Esther, you may trust to my doing all I can for Mary. And now, listen. Come home with me. Come to my mother."

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“God bless you, Jem!” she replied. “But it is too late now—too late!”

She rapidly turned away. Jem felt that the great thing was to reach home and solitude. His heart was filled with jealous anguish. Mary loved another! She was lost to him for evermore. A frenzied longing for blood entered his mind as he brooded that night over his loss. But at last the thought of duty brought peace to his soul. If Carson loved Mary, Carson must marry her. It was Jem’s part to speak straightforwardly to Carson, to be unto Mary as a brother.

Four days later his opportunity came. He met Carson in an unfrequented lane.

“May I speak a word wi’ you, sir?” said Jem respectfully.

“Certainly, my good man,” replied Harry Carson.

“I think, sir, you’re keeping company wi’ Mary Barton?”

“Mary Barton! Ay, that is her name. An arrant flirt the little hussy is, but very pretty.”

“I will tell you in plain words,” said Jem, angered, “what I have got to say to you. I’m an old friend of Mary’s and her father’s, and I want to know if you mean fair by Mary or not.”

“You will have the kindness to leave us to ourselves,” answered Carson contemptuously. “No one shall interfere between my little girl and me. Get out of my way! Won’t you? Then I’ll make you!”

He raised his cane, and smote the mechanic on his face. An instant afterwards he lay stretched in the muddy road, Jem standing over him, panting with rage. Just then a policeman, who had been watching them unobserved, interfered with expostulations and warnings.

“If you dare to injure her,” shouted Jem, as he was dragged away, “I will wait you where no policeman can step in between. And God shall judge between us two!”

* * * * *

The mill-workers had struck against low wages. Five haggard, earnest-looking men had presented the workpeople’s demands to the assembled mill-owners, and the demands had been rejected. None had been fiercer in opposing the delegates, none more bitter in mockery of their rags and leanness, than the son of old Mr. Carson.

That evening, starved, irritated, despairing men gathered to hear the delegates tell of their failure.

“It’s the masters as has wrought this woe,” said John Barton in a low voice. “It’s the masters as should pay for it. Set me to serve out the masters, and see if there’s aught I’ll stick at!”

Deeper and darker grew the import of the speeches as the men stood hoarsely muttering their meaning out with set teeth and livid looks. After a fierce and terrible oath had been sworn, a number of pieces of paper, one of them marked, were shuffled in a hat. The gas was extinguished; each drew a paper. The gas was re-lighted. Each examined his paper, with a countenance as immovable as he could make it. Then they went every one his own way.

He who had drawn the marked paper had drawn the lot of the assassin. And no one, save God and his own conscience, knew who was the appointed murderer.

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III.—Murder

Two nights later, Barton was to leave for Glasgow, whither he was to travel as delegate to entreat assistance for the strikers. “What could be the matter with him?” thought Mary. He was so restless; he seemed so fierce, too.

Presently he rose, and in a short, cold manner bade her farewell. She stood at the door, looking after him, her eyes blinded with tears. He was so strange, so cold, so hard. Suddenly he came back, and took her in his arms.

“God in heaven bless thee, Mary!”

She threw her arms round his neck. He kissed her, unlaced her soft, twining arms, and set off on his errand.

When Mary reached the dressmaker’s next morning, she noticed that the girls stopped talking. They eyed her! then they began to whisper. At last one of them asked her if she had heard the news.

“No! What news?” she answered.

“Have you not heard that young Mr. Carson was murdered last night?”

Mary could not speak, but no one who looked at her pale and terror-stricken face could have doubted that she had not heard before of the fearful occurrence.

She felt throughout the day as if the haunting horror were a nightmare from which awakening would relieve her. Everybody was full of the one subject.

In the evening she went to Mrs. Wilson’s, hoping that at last she might see Jem. But here a new and terrible shock awaited her.

Mrs. Wilson turned fiercely upon her.

“And is it thee that dares set foot in this house, after what has come to pass? Dost thou know where my son is, all through thee?”

“No,” quivered out poor Mary.

“He’s lying in prison, waiting to take his trial for murdering young Mr. Carson.”

So, indeed, it was. At the inquest the policeman who had witnessed the quarrel between the rivals testified to the threats uttered by Jem; and the gun used by the murderer, and thrown away by him in his haste to escape, had been proved to be Jem’s property.

Jem an assassin, and because of her! In the agony of that night Mary saw the gallows standing black against the burning light which dazzled her shut eyes, press on them as she would. She thought she was going mad; then Heaven blessed her unawares, and she sank to sleep.

She was awakened by the coming of a visitor. It was her long-lost, unrecognised aunt Esther, who had come to her niece bringing her a little piece of paper compressed into a round shape. It was the paper that had served as wadding for the murderer's gun. Esther had picked it up while wandering in curiosity about the scene of the murder. There was writing on the paper, and she had brought it to Mary, fearing that if it fell into the hands of the police it would provide more evidence against Jem.

The paper told Mary everything. It had belonged to John Barton. Jem was innocent, and her own father was the murderer! Jem must be saved, and she must do it; for was she not the sole repository of the terrible secret? And how could she prove Jem's innocence without admitting her father's guilt?

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When she could think calmly, she realised that she must discover where Jem had been on the Thursday night when the murder had been committed. Tremblingly she went to Mrs. Wilson, and learnt what she wanted to know. Jem had walked towards Liverpool with his cousin Will, a sailor who had spent all his money in Manchester, and could not afford railway-fare. Will's ship was to sail on Tuesday, and on Tuesday Jem was to be tried at the Liverpool assizes.

Job Legh engaged a lawyer to defend Jem, and Mary prepared to go to Liverpool to find the one man whose evidence could save her lover. Ere she left, a policeman brought her a bit of parchment. Her heart misgave her as she took it; she guessed its purport. It was a summons to bear witness against Jem Wilson at the assizes.

IV.—"Not Guilty"

Arrived at Liverpool on Monday, after the bewilderment of a railway journey—the first she had ever made—Mary found her way to the little court, not far from the docks, were Jem's sailor cousin lodged.

"Is Will Wilson here?" she asked the landlady.

"No, he is not," replied the woman, curtly.

"Tell me—where he is?" asked Mary, sickening.

"He's gone this very morning, my poor dear," answered the landlady, relenting at the sight of Mary's obvious distress. "He's sailed, my dear—sailed in the John Cropper this very blessed morning!"

Mary staggered into the house, stricken into hopelessness. Yet hope was not dead. The landlady's son told her that the John Cropper would be waiting for high-water to cross the sandbanks at the river's mouth, and that there was a chance that a sailing-boat might overtake the vessel.

Mary hurried down to the docks, spent every penny she had in hiring a boat, and presently was tossing on the water for the first time in her life, alone with two rough men.

The boatmen hailed the John Cropper just as the crew were heaving anchor, and told their errand. The captain refused with a dreadful oath to stop his ship for anyone, whoever swung for it. But Will Wilson, standing at the stern, shouted through his hands, "So help me God, Mary Barton, I'll come back in the pilot-boat time enough to save his life!"

As the ship receded in the distance, Mary asked anxiously when the pilot-boat would be back. The boatmen did not know; it might be twelve hours, it might be two days. A

chance yet remained, but she could no longer hope. When she reached the landing-place, faint and penniless, one of the boatmen took her to his home, and there she sat sleeplessly awaiting the dawn of the day of trial.

When she entered the witness-box next day, the whole court reeled before her, save two figures only—that of the judge and that of the prisoner. Jem sat silent—he had held his peace ever since his arrest—with his face bowed on his hands.

Mary answered a few questions with a sort of wonder at the reality of the terrible circumstances in which she was placed.

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“And pray, may I ask, which was the favoured lover?” went on the barrister.

A look of indignation for an instant contracted Mary’s brow. She was aware that Jem had raised his head and was gazing at her. Turning towards the judge, she said steadily, “Perhaps I liked Mr. Harry Carson once; but I loved James Wilson beyond what tongue can tell. When he asked me to marry him, I was very hard in my answer; but he’d not been gone out of my sight above a minute before I knew I loved him—far above my life.”

After these words the prisoner’s head was no longer bowed. He stood erect and firm, with self-respect in his attitude; yet he seemed lost in thought.

But Will Wilson did not come, and the evidence against Jem grew stronger and stronger. Mary was flushed and anxious, muttering to herself in a wild, restless manner. Job Legh heard her repeat again and again, “I must not go mad; I must not!”

Suddenly she threw up her arms and shrieked aloud: “Oh, Jem! Jem! You’re saved! and I am mad!” and was carried out of court stiff and convulsed. And as they bore her off, a sailor forced his way over rails and seats, through turnkeys and policemen. Will Wilson had come in time.

He told his tale clearly and distinctly; the efforts of the prosecution to shake him were useless. “Not guilty” was the verdict that thrilled through the breathless court. One man sank back in his seat in sickening despair. The vengeance that old Mr. Carson had longed to compass for the murder of his beloved boy was thwarted; he had been cheated of the desire that now ruled his life—the desire of blood for blood.

V.—“Forgive Us Our Trespasses”

For many days Mary hovered between life and death, and it was long ere she could make the journey back to Manchester under the tender care of the man who now knew she loved him. Not until she had recovered did he tell her that he had lost his situation at the foundry—the men refused to work under one who had been tried for murder—and that he was looking for work elsewhere.

“Mary,” he asked, “art thou much bound to Manchester? Would it grieve thee sore to quit the old smoke-jack?”

“With thee?” was her quiet response.

“I’ve heard fine things of Canada. Thou knowest where Canada is, Mary?”

“Not rightly—but with thee, Jem”—her voice sank to a whisper—“anywhere.” Then, after a pause, she added, “But father!”

John Barton was smitten, helpless, very near to death. His face was sunk and worn—-like a skull, with yet a suffering expression that skulls have not! Crime and all had been forgotten by his daughter when she saw him; fondly did she serve him in every way that heart could devise.

Jem had known from the first that Barton was the murderer of Harry Carson. Several days before the murder Barton had borrowed Jem's gun, and Jem had seen the truth at the moment of his arrest. When Mary came to tell him that her father wished to speak to him, Jem could not guess what was before him, and did not try to guess.

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When they entered the room, Mary saw all at a glance. Her father stood holding on to a chair as if for support. Behind him sat Job Legh, listening; before him stood the stern figure of Mr. Carson.

“Don’t dare to think that I shall be merciful; you shall be hanged—hanged—man!” said Mr. Carson, with slow, emphasis.

“I’ve had far, far worse misery than hanging!” cried Barton. “Sir, one word! My hairs are grey with suffering.”

“And have I had no suffering?” interrupted Mr. Carson. “Is not my boy gone—killed—out of my sight for ever? He was my sunshine, and now it is night! Oh, my God! comfort me, comfort me!” cried the old man aloud.

Barton lay across the table broken-hearted. “God knows I didn’t know what I was doing,” he whispered. “Oh, sir,” he said wildly, “say you forgive me?”

“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us,” said Job solemnly.

Mr. Carson took his hands from his face.

“Let my trespasses be unforgiven, so that I may have vengeance for my son’s murder.”

John Barton lay on the ground as one dead.

When Mr. Carson had left the house, he leant against a railing to steady himself, for he was dizzy with agitation. He looked up to the calm, majestic depths of the heavens, and by-and-by the last words he had spoken returned upon him, as if they were being echoed through all that infinite space in tones of unutterable sorrow. He went homewards; not to the police-office. All night long, the archangel combated with the demon in his soul.

All night long, others watched by the bed of death. As morning dawned, Barton grew worse; his breathing seemed almost stopped. Jem had gone to the druggist’s, and Mary cried out for assistance to raise her father.

A step, which was not Jem’s, came up the stairs. Mr. Carson stood in the doorway. He raised up the powerless frame, and the departing soul looked out of the eyes with gratitude.

“Pray for us!” cried Mary, sinking on her knees.

“God be merciful to us sinners,” was Mr. Carson’s prayer. “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.”

And when the words were said, John Barton lay a corpse in Mr. Carson's arms.

* * * * *

At the door of a long, low wooden house stands Mary, watching the return of her husband from his work.

Her baby boy, in his grandmother's arms, sees him come with a crow of delight.

"English letters!" cries Jem. "Guess the good news!"

"Oh, tell me!" says Mary.

"Margaret has recovered her sight. She and Will are to be married, and he's bringing her out here to Canada; and Job Legh talks of coming, too—not to see you, Mary, but to try and pick up a few specimens of Canadian insects."

"Dear Job Legh!" said Mary, softly.

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WILLIAM GODWIN

Caleb Williams

William Godwin, the son of a dissenting parson, was a man of remarkable gifts and the father of the poet Shelley's second wife, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (see Vol. VII). Born at Wisbeach, England, March 3, 1756, he served for five years, 1778-83, as a Nonconformist minister, and then going to London, joined the leading Whig circle of the day, and turned his attention to political writings. His "Political Justice," though little read to-day, had a great number of readers and considerable influence a hundred years ago. "Things as They Are, or the Adventures of Caleb Williams," published in 1794, has a philosophical significance, suggested by the falseness of the common code of morality, which is apt to be overlooked by many readers in the strong interest of the tale. It is one of the few books of that period which may still be said to live. It is quite the best of his novels. "It raised Godwin's reputation to a pinnacle," according to contemporary criticism, though some of his other novels, notably "Fleetwood," have been preferred for their descriptive writing. He was an exceedingly industrious writer; essays, biography, political philosophy, and history all coming from his pen; but in spite of this and of his many distinguished friendships, Godwin was always in difficulties, which he bore with the becoming grace of a philosopher. He died on April 7, 1836.

I.—Mr. Falkland's Secret

My life has for several years been a theatre of calamity. My fairest prospects have been blasted. My enemy has shown himself inaccessible to entreaties and untired in persecution. I was born of humble parents, in a remote county of England. Their occupations were such as usually fall to the lot of peasants, and they had no portion to give me. I was taught the rudiments of no science, except reading, writing, and arithmetic. But I had an inquisitive mind, and neglected no means of information from conversation or books.

The residence of my parents was within the manor of Ferdinando Falkland, a country squire of considerable opulence. At an early age I attracted the favourable notice of Mr. Collins, this gentleman's steward, who used to call in occasionally at my father's.

In the summer of the year——, Mr. Falkland visited his estate in our county after an absence of several months. This was a period of misfortune to me. I was then eighteen years of age. My father lay dead in our cottage, and I had lost my mother some years before. In this forlorn situation I received a message from the squire, ordering me to repair to the manor house.

My reception was as gracious and encouraging as I could possibly desire. Mr. Falkland questioned me respecting my learning, and my conceptions of men and things, and

listened to my answers with condescension and approbation. He then informed me that he was in want of a secretary, and that if I approved of the employment he would take me into his house.

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I felt highly flattered by the proposal, and found my employment—which included the duties of librarian as well as those of a secretary—easy and agreeable.

Mr. Falkland's mode of living was in the utmost degree recluse and solitary. His features were scarcely ever relaxed in a smile, and the distemper which afflicted him with incessant gloom had its paroxysms. None of the domestics, except myself and Mr. Collins approached Mr. Falkland but at stated seasons and then only for a very short interval.

Once after I had seen my patron in a strange fit of intolerable anguish, I could not help confiding in Mr. Collins that I feared Mr. Falkland had some secret trouble, and in answer to my communication Mr. Collins told me the story of Tyrrel's murder.

Barnabas Tyrrel had been a neighbouring squire insupportably brutish and arrogant, tyrannical to his inferiors, and insolent to his equals. From the first he hated Falkland, whose dignity and courtesy were a constant rebuke to the other's boorish ill-humours, and rejected with scorn all proposals for civil intercourse.

The crisis came when Tyrrel, who had been expelled from the rural assembly which met every week at the market-town, forced his way in. He was intoxicated, and at once attacked Falkland, knocking him down, and then kicking his prostrate enemy before anyone had time to interfere.

To Mr. Falkland disgrace was worse than death. This complication of ignominy, base, humiliating, and public, stung him to the very soul, and filled his mind with horror and uproar. One other event closed that memorable evening. Mr. Tyrrel was found dead in the street, having been murdered a few yards from the assembly-house.

From that day Falkland was a changed man. His cheerfulness and tranquillity gave way to gloomy and unsociable melancholy, and, filled with the ideas of chivalry, the humiliating and dishonourable situation in which he had been placed could never be forgotten. To add to his misfortunes, it was presently whispered that he was no other than the murderer of his antagonist, and even the magistrates at length decided that the matter must be investigated, and requested Falkland to appear before them.

Mr. Falkland attended, and easily convinced the magistrates of his innocence, pointing out that his one desire was to have called out the man who had insulted him so horribly, and to have fought him to the death. He was not only acquitted, but a public demonstration of sympathy was arranged at once to show the esteem in which he was held.

A few weeks, and the real murderer was discovered. This was a man named Hawkins, who, with his son, had been reduced from an honest livelihood to beggary and ruin by

Tyrrel. On circumstantial evidence, Hawkins and his son were condemned and executed.

This was the story Mr. Collins told me in order that I might understand Mr. Falkland's unhappy state. In reality it only added to my embarrassment.

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Was it possible, after all, that Mr. Falkland should be the murderer? It was but a passing thought, and yet what was the meaning of Mr. Falkland's agonies of mind? I could not accept Mr. Collins's view that Mr. Falkland was so much the slave and fool of honour that the shame of Tyrrel's savage assault alone had driven him to this melancholy and solitude, and compelled the violent outbursts of passion.

II.—I Learn the Secret

My suspicions would not be set at rest. No spark of malignity was harboured in my soul. I reverenced the sublime mind of Mr. Falkland, but I had a mistaken curiosity to find out the truth of Tyrrel's murder. Often it seemed that Mr. Falkland was about to speak to me, but the movement always ended in silence.

At last one day he sent for me to his room, and after making me swear never to disclose his confidence, and warning me that he had observed my suspicions, told me that he was the murderer of Tyrrel and the assassin of the two Hawkins.

"This it is to be a gentleman, a man of honour!" Falkland went on, in extreme distress. "My virtue, my honesty, my everlasting peace of mind, all sacrificed that I may preserve my good name. And I am as much the fool of fame as ever. Though I be the blackest of villains, I will leave behind me a spotless and illustrious name. Why is it that I am compelled to this confidence? From the love of fame. I had no alternative but to make you my confidant or my victim, and perhaps my next murder would not have been so fortunate. I do not want to shed more blood. It is better to trust you with the whole truth, under every seal of secrecy, than to live in perpetual fear of your penetration. But look what you have done with your foolishly inquisitive humour. You shall continue in my service, and I will benefit you in respect of fortune; but I shall always hate you. If ever an unguarded word escape from your lips, you may expect to pay for it with your death, or worse. By everything that is sacred, preserve your faith!"

Such was the secret I had been so desirous to know.

"It is a wretched prospect," I said to myself, "that he holds up to me. But I will never become an informer. I will never injure my patron; and therefore he will not be my enemy."

It was no long time after this that Mr. Forester—Mr. Falkland's half-brother—came to stay in the house while his own residence was being got ready for him, and there being little in common between the two, Mr. Forester being of a peculiarly sociable disposition, our visitor chose to make me his companion. No sooner was this growing intimacy observed than Mr. Falkland warned me that it was not agreeable to him, and that he would not have it.

“Young man, take warning!” he said to me one day when we were alone. “You little suspect the extent of my power. You might as well think of escaping from the power of the omnipresent God as from mine.”

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My whole soul now revolted against the treatment I endured, and yet I could not utter a word. I resolved to quit Mr. Falkland's service, and when Mr. Forester had retired to his own house, I wrote a letter to Mr. Falkland to that effect.

"You shall never quit it with your life," was his reply. "If you attempt it, you shall never cease to rue your folly as long as you exist. Do not imagine I am afraid of you! I wear an armour against which all your weapons are impotent. Do you not know, miserable wretch, that I have sworn to preserve my reputation, whatever it cost? I have dug a pit for you, and whichever way you move it is ready to swallow you."

This speech was the dictate of frenzy, and it created in me a similar frenzy. It determined me to do the very thing against which I was thus solemnly warned, and fly from my patron's house.

No sooner, however, had I set off, and travelled some miles, than a horseman overtook me, and handed me a letter from Mr. Forester. I opened the letter, and read as follows:

"Williams:—My brother Falkland has sent the bearer in pursuit of you. He expects that, if found, you will return with him. I expect it, too. If you are a villain and a rascal, you will perhaps endeavour to fly; if your conscience tells you you are innocent, you will, out of all doubt, come back. If you come, I pledge myself that if you clear your reputation, you shall not only be free to go wherever you please, but shall receive every assistance in my power to give.

"Valentine Forester."

To a mind like mine, such a letter was enough to draw me from one end of the earth to the other. I could not recall anything out of which the shadow of a criminal accusation could be extorted, and I returned with willingness and impatience. I knew the stern inflexibility of Mr. Falkland's mind, but I also knew his virtuous and magnanimous principles. I could not believe my innocence could be confounded with guilt.

III.—My Persecutions and Sufferings

Mr. Falkland accused me of having stolen money and jewels from him, and when my boxes, which I had left behind, were opened, a watch and certain jewels were found in one of them.

My amazement yielded to indignation and horror. I protested my innocence I declared that Mr. Falkland knew I was innocent, and that while I was wholly unable to account for the articles found in my possession, I firmly believed that their being there was of Mr. Falkland's contrivance.

Mr. Falkland now expressed his willingness to proceed no further against me, and, since I had been brought to public shame, to let me depart wherever I pleased. I was unworthy of his resentment, he said, and he could afford to smile at my malice.

Mr. Forester, however, said this was impossible, and, as a magistrate, he thereupon committed me to prison to await my trial. Not one of the servants who had been present at my examination expressed any compassion for me. The robbery appeared to them atrocious, and they were indignant at my recrimination on their excellent master.

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When I had been about a month in prison the assizes were held, but my case was not brought forward, and I was suffered to stand over six months longer.

I noticed a change in my jailer's behaviour at this time. He offered to make better provision for my comfort, and as I had no doubt he was instigated by Mr. Falkland, I answered that he might tell his employer I would accept no favours from a man that held a halter about my neck. Then the idea of an escape occurred to me, and as I had some proficiency in carpentry, I decided to obtain tools by proposing to make some chairs for the jailer. My offer was accepted, and I gradually accumulated tools of various sorts—-gimlets, chisels, *etc*.

In the middle of the night, my plans being now thoroughly digested, I set about making my escape. I had to get the first door from its hinges, and though this was attended with considerable difficulty, I was successful. The second door being fastened on the inside, all I had to do was to push back the bolts and unscrew the box of the lock.

Thus far I had proceeded with the happiest success; but close on the other side there was a kennel with a large mastiff dog, of which I had not the smallest previous knowledge. However, I managed to soothe the animal, and go to the wall. Before I had gained half the ascent, a voice at the garden door cried out, "Halloa! Who is there?" At this the dog began to bark violently, and a second man came out. Alarmed at my situation, I descended on the other side too quickly, and in my fall nearly dislocated my ankle.

In the meantime, the two warders came through a door in the wall, of which I had not been aware, and were at the place where I had descended, in no time. The pain in my ankle was so intense that I could scarcely stand, and I suffered myself to be retaken.

The condition in which I was now placed was totally different from that which had preceded this attempt. I was chained all day in my dungeon, my manual labors were at an end, my cell was searched every night, and every kind of tool carefully kept from me.

Nevertheless, an active mind, which has once been forced into any particular train, can scarcely give it up as hopeless. One day I chanced to observe a nail trodden into the mud floor at no great distance from me. I seized upon this new treasure, and found that I could unlock with it the padlock that fastened me to the staple in the floor. By this means I had the pitiful consolation of being able to range, without constraint, the miserable coop in which I was confined. It became my constant practice to liberate myself at night; but security breeds negligence. One morning I overslept myself, and the turnkey, to his surprise, found me disengaged.

Again my apartment was changed. I was now put in the strong-room, an underground dungeon, and handcuffs were added to my fetters.

It was at this time that Thomas, Mr. Falkland's footman, and an old acquaintance of mine, visited me. He was of the better order of servants, and my condition shocked him. He returned again in the afternoon.

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“Well, Master Williams,” he said, “you have been very wicked, to be sure, and I thought it would have done me good to see you hanged. I know I am doing wrong; but if they hang me, too, I cannot help it. For Christ’s sake, get out of this place; I cannot bear the thought of it.”

With that, he slipped into my hand a chisel, a file, and a saw. I received the implements with great joy, and thrust them into my bosom.

I waited for bright moonlight; it was necessary that I should work in the night, and between nine and seven.

It was ten o’clock when I first took off my handcuffs. I then filed through my fetters, and next performed the same service to the three iron bars that secured my window. All this was the work of more than two hours. But, even with the bars removed, the space was by no means wide enough to admit the passing of my body. Therefore, I had to loosen the brickwork, and this I did partly with the chisel, and partly with one of the iron bars. When the space was sufficient for my purpose, I crept through the opening and stepped upon a shed outside.

The prison wall, which now had to be scaled, was of considerable height, and there was no resource for me but that of making a breach in its lower part. For six hours I worked at this with incredible labour, and at last I had made a passage. But the day was breaking, and in ten minutes’ time the keepers would probably enter my apartment and see the devastation I had left.

I decided to avoid the town as much as possible, and depended upon the open country for protection; and so I passed along the lane beyond the wall.

I was free of my prison, but I was destitute, and had not a shilling in the world.

IV.—The Doom of Falkland

Mr. Falkland’s implacable animosity pursued me beyond the prison. A hundred guineas was at once offered for my recapture, and though I evaded arrest for some months, a man named Gines, who had at one time been a member of a gang of robbers, undertook to lay hold of me, and tracked me to my place of hiding in London. By this time the hawkers were actually selling papers in the streets containing “The most Wonderful and Surprising History and Miraculous Adventures of Caleb Williams,” for a halfpenny, and I had the temerity to purchase one. In this I was informed how I, Caleb Williams, “first robbed, and then brought false accusations against my master”; how I attempted at divers times to break out of prison, and at last succeeded “in the most wonderful and incredible manner”; and how I had travelled the kingdom in disguise, and was now lying concealed in London, with a hundred guineas reward for my discovery.

It seemed then that there was no end to my persecution, and I thought of death as my only release. That very night the landlord of my humble lodgings brought Gines to the house, and gave me up to the authorities.

And now the result of all my labour to get out of prison and evade my pursuers had brought me back to my starting-place! Never was a human creature so hunted by enemies. What hope was there they would ever cease their persecution.

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My long-cherished reverence for Mr. Falkland was changed to something like abhorrence. I determined to bring the real criminal to justice.

Accordingly, when I was taken before the magistrates at Bow Street, I declared that Mr. Falkland was a murderer, and that I was entirely innocent.

But the magistrates simply told me they had nothing to do with such statements, and that I seemed a most impudent rascal to trump up such things against my master.

I was conducted back to the very prison from which I had escaped, and my situation seemed more irremediable than ever. How great, therefore, was my astonishment, at the assizes when my case was called, to find neither Mr. Falkland, nor Mr. Forester, nor any individual to appear against me. I, who had come to the bar with the sentence of death already ringing in my ears, to be told I was free to go whithersoever I pleased!

I was not, however, yet free of Mr. Falkland. I was kidnapped by Gines and an accomplice, and carried to an inn, and here Mr. Falkland commanded me to sign a paper declaring that the charge I had alleged against him at Bow Street was false, malicious, and groundless. On my refusal, he told me that he would exercise a power that should grind me to atoms.

The impression of that memorable meeting on my understanding is indelible. The deathlike weakness and decay of Mr. Falkland, his misery and rage, his haggard, emaciated, and fleshless visage, are still before me.

There was to be no peace or happiness for me. Wherever I went, sooner or later, Gines found me, and any new acquaintances turned from me with loathing after they had read the handbills containing my “Wonderful and Surprising History.” This man followed me from place to place, blasting my reputation.

I now formed my resolution and carried it into execution. At all costs I would free myself from this overpowering tyranny.

I set out for the chief town of the county in which Mr. Falkland lived, and there laid a formal charge of murder before the principal magistrate.

After an interval of three days, I met Mr. Falkland in the presence of the magistrate. It was now the appearance of a ghost before me. He was brought in in a chair, unable to stand, fatigued and almost destroyed by the journey he had just taken.

Until that moment my breast was steeled to pity; it was now too late to draw back.

I told my story plainly, declared the nobility of Mr. Falkland’s character, and admitted that my own proceedings now seemed to me a dreadful mistake.

When I had finished, Mr. Falkland rose from his seat, and, to my infinite astonishment, threw himself into my arms.

“Williams,” said he, “you have conquered. All that I most ardently desired is for ever frustrated. I have spent a life of the basest cruelty to cover one act of momentary passion. And now”—turning to the magistrate—“do with me as you please. I am prepared to suffer all the vengeance of the law.”

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He survived this dreadful scene but three days, and I feel, and always shall feel, that I have been his murderer. I began these memoirs to vindicate my character. I have now no character that I wish to vindicate.

* * * * *

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

The Sorrows of Young Werther

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, the greatest of German poets, and one of the most highly gifted men of the eighteenth century, was born in 1749 at Frankfort-on-the-Main. He received his early education from his father, who was an imperial councillor, and in the year 1765 he went to the University of Leipzig. Goethe's first great work was "Goetz von Berlichingen" (see Vol. XVII). which was translated into English by Sir Walter Scott. "The Sorrows of Young Werther" ("Die Leiden des jungen Werthers") was begun in 1772, when Goethe was twenty-three years old, and was published anonymously two years later. It immediately created an immense sensation, made a round of the world, and was everywhere either enthusiastically praised or severely condemned. It became the fashion of young men to dress themselves in blue coats and yellow breeches in imitation of the hero, and many of them were moved to follow Werther's example as the simplest way of settling their love affairs. Nevertheless, "Werther" formed the real basis of Goethe's fame. It was the first revelation to the world of the genius, which, a quarter of a century later, was to give it "Faust" (Vol. XVI). The story is frankly sentimental, but as such it is easily the best of the sentimental novels of the eighteenth century. When, many years later, Goethe was invited to an audience with Napoleon, the emperor volunteered the information that he had read "Werther" through six times. Goethe died in March, 1832, in his eighty-fourth year.

I.—"I Have Found an Angel"

May 4. What a strange thing is the heart of man. To leave my dearest friend, and yet to feel happy! I know you will forgive me, and I in return will promise that I will no longer worry myself over every petty stab of fortune. Poor Leonora! And yet I was not to blame. Was I in fault that, while I was pleasantly entertained by the charms of her sister, her feeble heart conceived a passion for me? And yet I am not wholly blameless. Did I not encourage her emotion? Did I not—but what is man that he dares so to accuse himself? Beyond doubt, the sufferings of mankind would be far less did they but endure the present with equanimity, instead of raking up the past for memories of sorrow.

A wonderful calm has come over me; I am alone, and feel that a spot like this was created for the happiness of souls like mine. You ask if you shall send me books; I pray

you spare me. My heart craves for no excitement; I need strains to soothe me, and I find them to perfection in my Homer.

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May 17. I have formed many acquaintances, but as yet have found no friends. If you inquire what sort of people are here, I answer “the same as everywhere.” The human race is a monotonous affair. The majority labours nearly all its time for mere subsistence, and is then so distressed to have a small portion of freedom still unemployed that it exerts even greater efforts to get rid of it.

I have just become acquainted with a very worthy person, the district judge. They tell me how charming it is to see him in the midst of his family of nine. His eldest daughter is much spoken of. He has invited me to go and see him.

June 16. Why do I not write to you? You should have guessed that I was pre-occupied; that, in a word, that I have made a friend who has won my heart. I have found—I know not what. An angel? Nonsense! Everyone so describes his mistress. And yet I cannot tell you how perfect she is, or why so perfect. Between ourselves, I have been three times on the point of throwing down my pen, ordering my horse, and riding out. And yet this morning I determined not to ride to-day; and I keep running to the window to see how high the sun is.

I could not restrain myself; go to her I must. I have just returned, Wilhelm, and while I eat my supper I will write to you. I had already made the acquaintance of her aunt, the judge’s sister, and with her I was going to accompany Charlotte to a ball given by some young people in the neighbourhood. While we were on our way to fetch her, my companion was loud in her praises of her niece’s beauty and charm. “Take care, however,” she added, “that you do not lose your heart.” “Why?” I asked. “Because she is already betrothed to a most excellent man.”

As the door opened, I saw before me the most charming sight that I have ever beheld. Six children, of various ages, were running about the hall and surrounding a lady of medium height, with a lovely figure, dressed in a robe of simple white, trimmed with pink ribbons. She held a loaf of brown bread, and was cutting slices for the little ones all round. She apologised for not being quite ready, explaining that household duties had made her forget the children’s supper, which they always preferred to take from her. I uttered some unmeaning compliment, but my whole soul was absorbed by her air, her voice, her manner. You who know me can imagine how I gazed upon her rich, dark eyes; how my soul gloated over her warm lips and fresh glowing cheeks.

Never did I dance more lightly; I felt myself more than mortal, holding this loveliest of creatures in my arms, flying with her as rapidly as the wind, till I lost sight of every other object. And, oh, Wilhelm, I vowed at that moment that no maiden whom I loved should ever waltz with another than myself, if I went to perdition for it.

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Returning from the ball, there was a most magnificent sunrise. Our companions were asleep. Charlotte asked me if I did not wish to sleep too, and begged me not to stand on ceremony. Looking deep into her eyes, I answered, “As long as those eyes remain open, there is no fear for mine.” We continued awake until we reached her door. I left her, asking her permission to call in the course of the day. She consented, and I went Since then, sun, moon, and stars may pursue their course; I know not whether it is day or night; the whole world is nothing to me.

June 21. My days are as happy as those reserved by God for His elect, and whatever be my fate hereafter, I can never say that I have not tasted joy—the purest joy of life. Little did I think when I selected this spot for my home that all heaven lay within half a league of it.

How childish is man. To be disturbed about a mere look. We had been to Walheim, but during our walk I thought I saw in Charlotte’s eyes—I am a fool, but forgive me. You should see her eyes. However, to be brief, as the ladies were preparing to drive away I watched her eyes; they wandered from one to another, but they did not alight on me—-on me who saw nothing but her. She noticed me not. The carriage drove off, and my eyes filled with tears. Suddenly I saw Charlotte’s bonnet leaning out of the window, and she turned to look back—was it at me? I know not, and in uncertainty is my consolation. Perhaps she turned to look at me. Perhaps. Good-night. What a child I am!

July 10. Someone asked me the other day how I like her. How I *like* her! What sort of creature must he be who merely likes Charlotte? Whose entire being were not absolutely filled with her? Like her! One might as well ask if I like Ossian.

July 13. No, I am not deceived. In her dark eyes I read a real interest in me. Yes, I feel it, and I believe my own heart which tells me—dare I say it?—that she loves me. How the idea exalts me in my own eyes. And as you can understand my feelings, I may say to you, how I honour myself because she loves me.

I do not know a man able to take my place in her heart; yet when she speaks of Albert with so much warmth and affection, I feel like a soldier who has been stripped of all his honours. Sometimes when we are talking, in the eagerness of conversation she comes closer to me, and her balmy breath reaches my lips, I feel that I could sink into the earth for very joy. And yet, Wilhelm, if I know myself, and should ever dare—you understand me—No, no; my heart is not so corrupt; it is weak, but is not that a degree of corruption?

She is to me a sacred being; how her simplest song enchants me. Sometimes, when I am ready to commit suicide, she sings some favourite air, and instantly the gloom and madness are dispersed.

July 24. Yes, dear Charlotte. I will arrange everything. Only give me more commissions; the more the better. One thing, however, I must request you—use no more writing-sand with the letters you send me! Today, I raised your letter to my lips, and it set my teeth on edge.

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II.—Bereft of Comfort

July 30. Albert is arrived, and I must take my departure. Were he the best of men, and I absolutely beneath him, I could not endure to see him in possession of my perfect being. Enough! her betrothed is here. A fine fellow, whom I cannot help liking. And he is so considerate; he has not given Charlotte one kiss in my presence. Heaven reward him for it. He is free from ill-humour, which you know is the fault I detest most. I do not ask whether he may not now and then tease her with some little jealousies, as I know that in his place I should not be entirely free from such feelings.

August 8. I am amazed to see from my diary, which I have somewhat neglected of late, how deliberately I have entangled myself, step by step. But even though I see the result plainly, I have no thought of acting with any greater prudence. And yet I feel that if only I knew where to go, I would abandon everything and fly from this place.

And yet I feel that, if I were not a fool, I could enjoy life here most delightfully. Admitted into this charming family, loved by the father as a son, by his children as a second father, and by Charlotte! Furthermore, Albert welcomes me with the heartiest affection, and loves me, next to Charlotte, more than all the world.

August 21. In vain do I stretch out my arms towards her when I wake in the morning. In vain do I seek for her when some innocent dream has happily deceived me, and placed me near her in the fields when I have seized her hand and covered it with kisses. Tears flow from my oppressed heart; and, bereft of all comfort, I weep over my future woes.

August 28. This is my birthday, and early in the morning I received a packet from Albert. I found within one of the pink ribbons which Charlotte wore in her dress the first time I saw her, and which I had often asked her to give me. With it were two volumes of Wetstein's Homer, a book I had often wished for. How well they understood those little attentions of friendship, so superior to costly presents, unhappy being that I am. Why do I thus deceive myself? What is to be the outcome of all this wild, aimless, endless passion? I cannot pray except to her. Oh, Wilhelm, the hermit's cell, his sackcloth and girdle of thorns, would be luxury and indulgence compared with what I have to suffer.

October 20. I have taken the plunge, and following your repeated advice, I have taken a post with the ambassador. We arrived here yesterday. If he were less peevish and morose all would be well. As it is, he occasions me continual annoyance; he is the most punctilious blockhead in the world. He does everything step by step, with the paltry fussiness of an old woman; and he is a man whom it is impossible to please, because he is never pleased with himself.

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January 20. I have but one being here to interest me, my dear Charlotte—a Miss B——. She resembles you, if indeed anyone can possibly resemble you. "Ah," you will say, "he has learnt to pay fine compliments." And this is partly true; I have been very agreeable lately, as it was not in my power to be otherwise. But I must tell you of Miss B——. She has abundance of soul, which flashes from her deep blue eyes. Her rank is a torment to her, and satisfies no single desire of her heart. She knows you, my dear Charlotte, as I have told her all about you, and renders homage to your merits; but her homage is not exacted, but voluntary—she loves you, and delights to hear you made the subject of conversation. Adieu! Is Albert with you, and what is he to you? Forgive the question.

February 20. I thank you, Albert, for having deceived me. I waited for the news that your wedding-day was fixed, and I meant on that day to remove Charlotte's picture from the wall, and bury it with some old papers that I wish destroyed. You are now united, and the picture remains. Well, let it remain. Why should it not?

III.—"I Can Remain No Longer"

June 11. Say what you will, I can remain here no longer. Why should I remain? The prince is as gracious to me as anyone could be, and yet I am not at my ease. There is, indeed, nothing in common between us; he is a man of understanding, but quite of the ordinary kind. His conversation gives me no more amusement than I should derive from an ordinary well-written book. Whither am I going? I think it would be better for me to visit the mines in——. But I am only deluding myself thus. You know that I only want to be near my dear Charlotte once more. I smile at the suggestion of my heart, but I obey its dictates.

July 29. Dear Wilhelm, my whole frame feels convulsed when I see Albert put his arms round that slender waist. Oh, the very thought of folding that dearest of heaven's creatures in one's arms.

And—shall I avow it? Why should I not?—she would have been happier with me than with him. Albert is not the man to satisfy the wishes of such a heart. He wants a certain sensibility; he wants—in short, their hearts do not beat in unison. But, Wilhelm, he loves her with his whole heart, and what does not such a love deserve?

September 5. Charlotte had written a letter to her husband in the country, where he was detained on business. It began: "My dearest love, return as soon as possible. I await you with a thousand raptures!"

A friend who arrived brought word that he could not return immediately. Her letter fell into my hands. I read it, and smiled. She asked the reason. "What a heavenly treasure is imagination," I exclaimed. "I fancied for a moment that this was written to me." She paused, and seemed displeased. I was silent.

October 10. Only to gaze into her dark eyes is to me a source of happiness. And what grieves me is that Albert does not seem so happy as he—as I—as he hoped to be—as I should have been—if—. I am no friend to these pauses, but here I cannot express myself otherwise; and probably I am explicit enough.

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October 19. Alas the void—the fearful void which I feel in my bosom! Sometimes I think, if I could only once press her to my heart, this dreadful void would be filled.

October 30. A hundred times I have been on the point of embracing her. Heavens! what a torment it is to see so much loveliness passing and repassing before us, and yet not dare to touch it. And to touch is the most natural of human instincts. Do not children touch everything that they see?

November 8. Charlotte reproves me for my excesses with so much tenderness and goodness. I have lately drunk more wine than usual. “Don’t do it,” she said; “think of Charlotte.” “Think of you,” I answered; “can such advice be necessary? Do I not ever think of you?” She immediately changed the subject to prevent me pursuing it further. My dear friend, my energies are all prostrated; she can do with me what she pleases. Yesterday, when I took leave, she seized me by the hand, and said, “Adieu, dear Werther!” It was the first time she had ever called me “dear.” I have repeated it a hundred times.

IV.—“I am Resolved to Die"

November 24. She is sensible of my sufferings. This morning her look pierced my soul. I found her alone; she was silent, and only gazed steadfastly at me. Oh, who can express my emotions? I was quite overcome, and bending down, pronounced this vow to myself, “Beautiful lips, which angels guard, never will I seek to profane your purity with a kiss.” And yet, oh, I wish—But, alas, my heart is darkened by doubt and indecision. Could I but taste felicity, and then die to expiate the sin. What sin?

December 21. I am lost. My senses are bewildered, my recollection is confused, my eyes are bathed in tears. I am ill, and yet am well. I wish for nothing; I have no desires; it were better I were gone. I saw Charlotte to-day; she was busy preparing some little gifts for her brothers and sisters, to be given to them on Christmas Day. “You shall have a gift too,” she said, “if you behave well.” “And what do you call behaving well?” I asked. “What should I do; what can I do?” “Thursday night,” she answered, “is Christmas Eve; the children are all to be here, and my father too; there is a present for each of them. Do you come likewise, but do not come before that time!”

I started. She must have seen my emotion, for she continued, hastily “I desire that you will not. It must be so; I ask it of you as a favour, for my own peace and tranquillity. We cannot go on in this manner any longer!” It were idle to attempt to describe my emotions I was as if paralysed; it was as if the sun had suddenly gone out. When I recollected myself, Charlotte was trying to speak on some indifferent topic. “No, Charlotte,” I explained, “I understand you perfectly. I will never see you again!”

December 22. It is all over, Charlotte; I am resolved to die. I make this declaration deliberately and coolly, without any romantic passion, on the morning of the day when I

am to see you for the last time. At the moment that you read these lines the cold grave will hold the remains of that restless and unhappy being who, in his last moments of existence, knew no pleasure so great as that of conversing with you.

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When I tore myself from you yesterday my senses were in tumult and disorder. I could scarcely reach my room. A thousand ideas floated through my mind. At last one fixed, final thought took possession of my heart. It was to die. Oh, beloved Charlotte, this heart, excited by rage and fury, has often conceived the horrid idea of murdering your husband—you—myself.

What do they mean by saying that Albert is your husband? He may be so for this world, and in this world it is a sin to love you—to wish to tear you from his embrace. Yes, it is a crime, and I suffer the punishment—but I have enjoyed the full delight of my sin. I have inhaled a balm that has revived my soul; from this hour you are mine; yes, Charlotte, you are mine. I do not dream, I do not rave. Drawing nearer to the grave my perceptions become clearer. We shall exist; we shall see each other again.

I wish to be buried in the dress I wear at present; it has been made sacred by your touch. How warmly I have loved you, Charlotte. Since the first hour I saw you, how impossible have I found it to leave you. This ribbon must be buried with me; it was a present from you on my birthday. How confused it all appears. Little did I think then that I should journey on this road. But peace, I pray you, peace.

Both my pistols are loaded. The clock strikes twelve. I say Amen. Charlotte! Charlotte! Farewell! Farewell!

* * * * *

Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship

Goethe’s prestige was enormously increased by the publication in 1796 of “Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship” ("Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre"). Representing the fruit of twenty years’ labour, it was, like “Faust,” written in fragments during the ripest period of his intellectual activity. The story of “Wilhelm Meister” is by no means exciting, but, as a gallery of portraits and repository of wise observation, it is more characteristic of the genius of its author than any other of his prose works. It is more mellow than “Werther,” and the action moves slower. Incident follows incident in a leisurely fashion. The keen psychological analysis in the story is assumed to have been derived from Goethe’s own experience. “Wilhelm Meister” was dramatised and produced at Leipzig a few years ago, but with no marked success.

I.—On the Road

The moment was now at hand to which poor Mariana had been looking forward as to the last of her life. Wilhelm Meister, the man she loved, was departing on a long journey in connection with his father’s business; a disagreeable lover was threatening to come.

“I am miserable,” she exclaimed, “miserable for life! I love him, and he loves me; yet I see that we must part, and know not how I shall survive it. Wilhelm is poor, and can do nothing for me—”

Darkness had scarcely come on when Wilhelm glided forth to her house; he carried with him a letter in which he entreated her to marry him forthwith, saying that he would abandon his father’s business, and earn his living on the stage, to which he had always been strongly drawn. This he could do with certainty, as he was well acquainted with Serlo, manager of a theatre in a town at some distance.

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His plan was to leave the letter with her, and return a little later for her answer. The vehemence of his emotion at first prevented him from noticing that she did not greet him with her wonted heartiness; she complained of a headache, and would not hear of his coming back later that evening. Suspecting nothing wrong, he ceased to urge her, but he felt that this was not the moment for delivering his letter. He retained it, therefore, and, in a tumult of insatiable love, as he tore himself away from her he snatched one of her neckerchiefs, and, after pressing it madly to his lips, crushed it into his pocket.

His whole being was in a ferment of excitement as he walked aimlessly about the streets. Midnight found him again in the neighbourhood of Mariana's house; consciousness of the fact brought him to himself. He went slowly away, set himself for home, and constantly turned round again; at last, with an effort, he constrained himself, and actually departed. At the corner of the street, looking back yet once more, he imagined that he saw Mariana's door open, and a dark figure issue from it. He was too distant to see clearly, and in a moment the appearance was lost in the night.

On his way, he had almost effaced the unexpected delusion from his mind by the most sufficient reasons. To soothe his heart, and put the last seal on his returning belief, ere he disrobed for the night, he took her kerchief from his pocket. The rustle of a letter which fell from it took the kerchief from his lips; he lifted it, and read a passionate letter from another man, railing at her for her coldness on the preceding night, making an appointment for that same night, and breathing a spirit of intimate familiarity.

* * * * *

A violent fever, with its train of consequences, besides the unwearied attentions of his family, were so many fresh occupations for his mind, and formed a kind of painful entertainment. On his recovery, he determined to abandon for ever his former leaning towards the stage, and to apply himself with greater diligence to business, and, to the great contentment of his father, no one was now more diligent in the counting-house. For a long time he continued to show exemplary attention to his duties, and was then thought sufficiently master of his business to be sent on a long expedition on behalf of the firm.

The first part of his business successfully accomplished, Wilhelm found himself at a little mountain town called Hochdorf. A troupe of actors had got stranded there, their exchequer empty, their properties seized as security for debts. Wilhelm recognised among them an old man whom he recollected as having seen on the stage with Mariana. After some hesitation, he hazarded a question concerning her. "Do not speak to me of that baggage!" cried the old man. "I am ashamed that I felt such a friendship for her. Yet, had you known the girl better, you would excuse me. I loved her

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as my own daughter; indeed, I had formed a resolution to take the creature into my own house, and save her from the hands of that old crone Barbara, her confidante; but my wife died, and so the project came to nothing. At the end of our stay in your native town, I noticed a visible sadness about her. I questioned her, but she evaded me. At last we set out on our journey. She travelled in the same coach with me, and I soon observed what she could not deny, that she was about to become a mother. In a short time the manager made the same discovery; he paid her off at once and left her behind at the village inn."

Wilhelm's old wounds were all torn open afresh by the old man's story; the thought that perhaps Mariana was not wholly unworthy of his love was again brought to life. Nay, even the bitter accusations brought against her could not lower her in his estimation; for he, as well as she, was guilty in all her aberrations. He saw her as a frail, ill-succoured mother, wandering helplessly about the world.

The old longing for the stage came back to him with redoubled force; he determined to give it vent, for a time at least, and to this end he advanced to Melina, the manager of the actors, a sum of money sufficient to redeem their properties, and accompanied the troupe until such time as it should be repaid.

A profitable engagement soon came their way. A wealthy count, who happened to pass through the town, required their services to entertain the prince, whom he was shortly expecting as a guest. For several weeks they stayed at his castle, and when, on the prince's departure, their engagement came to an end, they were all weightier in purse than they had been for many a long day. Melina was now in hopes to get established with his company in a thriving town at some distance. To get there it was necessary to take a considerable journey by unfrequented roads.

Accordingly, conveyances were hired, and a start was made. Towards evening, they began to pitch their camp in the midst of a beech wood; all were busily engaged about the task allotted to each—the women to prepare the evening meal, the men to attend to everything necessary for their comfort for the night. All at once, a shot went off; immediately another; the party flew asunder in terror. Next moment armed men were to be seen pressing forward to the spot where the coaches, packed with luggage, stood.

The men all rushed at the intruders. Wilhelm fired his pistol at one who was already on the top of the coach cutting the cords of the packages. The scoundrel fell, but several of his friends rushed to his aid; our hero fell, stunned by a shot-wound and by a sword-stroke that almost penetrated to his brain.

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When he recovered his senses, it was to find himself deserted by all his companions except two of the girls. His head was lying in Phillina's lap, while Mignon, the child whom he had rescued from a brutal circus master who was ill-treating her, was vainly trying to staunch his wounds with her hair. For some time they continued in this position, no one returning to their aid. At last, they heard a troop of horses coming up the road; a young lady emerged on horseback, accompanied by some cavaliers. Wilhelm fixed his eye on the soft, calm, sympathising features of the stranger; he thought he had never seen aught nobler or more lovely. In a few moments one of the party stepped to the side of our hero. He held in his hand some surgeon's instruments and bandages, with which he hastily attended to his wounds. The lady asked several questions, and then, turning to the old gentleman, said, "Dear uncle, may I be generous at your expense?" taking off the coat that she was wearing as she spoke, and laying it softly above him. As he tried to open his mouth to stammer out some words of gratitude to the beautiful Amazon, the impression of her presence worked so strongly on his senses that all at once it seemed to him that her head was encircled with rays, and a glancing light seemed by degrees to spread itself all over her form. At this moment the surgeon gave him a sharper twinge; he lost consciousness; and on returning to himself the horsemen and coaches, the fair one and her attendants, had vanished like a dream.

II.—A Message from the Dead

Wilhelm's wounds were slow to heal, and it was long before he was able to move about freely again. When he fully recovered he went to his old friend, Serlo, and obtained a position in his company, both for himself, and also for many of his companions in misfortune.

With Serlo he remained for a considerable period, until an untoward event led to his leaving him. Aurelia, Serlo's sister, had long entertained an affection for a nobleman, whom she knew by the name of Lothario; though at one time much attached to her, his affection had cooled off, and for a long time now he had not had any communication with her. Heartbroken at this treatment, though still devotedly attached to him, she gradually pined away, and complete neglect of her health finally brought her to her death-bed. Before she died, however, she wrote a letter of farewell to him, which she entrusted to Wilhelm to deliver as soon after her death as possible.

Arrived at the castle where the baron lived, he found his lordship unable to give him any attention that day, as he was engaged to fight a duel, and was busy settling up his affairs in preparation. Wilhelm was requested to remain until a more convenient season. On the following morning, while the company were seated at breakfast, the baron was brought back in a carriage, seriously wounded.

As the surgeon came out from attending him, the band hanging from his pouch caught Wilhelm's eye; he fancied that he knew it. He was convinced that he beheld the very

pouch of the surgeon who had dressed his wounds in the forest, and the hope, so long deferred, of again finding his lovely Amazon struck like a flame through his soul.

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The abbe entered from Lothario's chamber, and said to Wilhelm, "The baron bids me ask you to remain here to share his hospitality, and, in the present circumstances, to contribute to his solacement."

From this hour our friend was treated in the house as if he belonged to it.

"We have a kindness to ask of you," said Jarno, the baron's confidential companion, to Wilhelm one morning. "The violent, unreasonable love and passionateness of the Lady Lydia only hinder the baron's recovery. She must be removed by some means. His wound requires rest and calmness; you see how she tortures him with her tempestuous anxieties, her ungovernable terrors, her never-drying tears. Enough! Our doctor expressly requires that she should quit us for a while; we have persuaded her to pay a visit to a lady, an old friend of hers; it will be your task to escort her, as you can best be spared."

"I willingly undertake the charge," said Wilhelm, "though it is easy to foresee the pain I shall have to suffer from the tears, the despair, of Lydia."

"And for this no small reward awaits you," said Jarno. "Fraulein Theresa, with whom you will get acquainted, is a lady such as you will rarely see. Indeed, were it not for an unfortunate passage between her mother and the baron, she would long since have been married to his lordship."

When they returned from their visit, Lothario was in the way of full recovery. He was now for the first time able to talk with Wilhelm about the sad cause that had brought him to the castle. "You may, however, well forgive me," he said, with a smile, "that I forsook Aurelia for Theresa; with the one I could expect a calm and cheerful life, with the other not a happy hour."

"I confess," said Wilhelm, "that in coming hither I had no small anger in my heart against you, that I proposed to censure with severity your conduct towards Aurelia. But, at the grave in which the hapless mother sleeps, let me ask you why you acknowledge not the child—a son in whom any father might rejoice and whom you appear entirely to overlook. With your tender nature, how can you altogether cast away the instinct of a parent?"

"Of whom do you speak?" said Lothario. "I do not understand you."

"Of whom but your son, Aurelia's son, the lovely child to whose good fortune there is nothing wanting but that a tender father should acknowledge and receive him."

"You mistake, my friend," said Lothario; "Aurelia never had a son. I know of no child, or I would gladly acknowledge it. But did she ever give you to believe that the boy was hers—was mine?"

“I cannot recollect that I ever heard a word from her expressly on the subject, but we took it so, and I never for a moment doubted it.”

“I can give you a clue to this perplexity,” interposed Jarno. “An old woman, whom Wilhelm must have noticed, gave Aurelia the child, telling her that it was yours. She accepted it eagerly, hoping to alleviate her sorrows by its presence; and, in truth, it gave her many a comfortable hour.”

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This discovery awoke anxieties in Wilhelm. He thought of the beautiful child Felix with the liveliest apprehension, and expressed his wish to remove him from the state in which he was.

“We can soon arrange that,” said Lothario. “I think you ought yourself to take charge of him; what in us the women leave uncultivated, children cultivate when we retain them near us.”

It was agreed to lose no time in putting this plan into execution, and Wilhelm departed forthwith to fetch the child.

Passing through the house, he found Aurelia’s old serving-maid, whom he had never seen at close quarters before, employed in sewing. Felix and Mignon were sitting by her on the floor.

“Art thou the person,” he demanded earnestly, “from whom Aurelia received this child?”

She looked up, and turned her face to him; he saw her in full light, and started back in terror. It was old Barbara!

“Where is Mariana?” cried he.

“Far from here.”

“And Felix?”

“Is the son of that unhappy and too tender-hearted girl. Here are Mariana’s last words,” she added, handing him a letter.

“She is dead?” cried he.

“Dead,” said the old woman.

A bitter grief took hold of Wilhelm; he could scarcely read the words that Barbara placed before him.

“If this should reach thee, then lament thine ill-starred friend. The boy, whose birth I survived but a few days, is thine. I die faithful to thee, much as appearances may be against me; with thee I lost everything that bound me to life. This will be my only comfort, that though I cannot call myself blameless, towards thee I am free from blame.”

Wilhelm was stupified by this news. He removed the children from Barbara’s care, and took them both back with him to Lothario’s castle. Felix he kept with him, while Mignon, who was not in the best of health, was sent by the baron to the house of his sister, at some distance.

III.—Wilhelm's Apprenticeship

One evening Jarno said to Wilhelm, "We can now consider you as one of ourselves with such security that it were unjust not to introduce you deeper into our mysteries. You shall see what a curious little world is at your very hand, and how well you are known in it." He led our friend through certain unknown chambers and galleries of the castle to a door, strongly framed with iron. Jarno knocked; the door opened a little, so as to admit one person. Jarno introduced our friend, but did not follow him.

Within was complete darkness. A voice cried "Enter"; he pressed forward and found that only tapestry was hemming him in. Raising this, he entered. Within, he found a man, who said, in a tone of dignity, "To guard from error is not the instructor's duty, but to lead the erring pupil; nay, let him quaff his error in deep, satiating draughts; he who only tastes his error will long dwell with it; he who drains it to the dregs will, if he be not crazy, find it out."

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A curtain closed before the figure, whom Wilhelm vaguely recollected as having seen at some time previously; possibly on the night when he had parted from Mariana. Then the curtain opened again; another figure advanced, “Learn to know the men who may be trusted,” he said, and again the curtain closed. “Dispute not with us,” cried a voice; “thou art saved, thou art on the way to the goal. None of thy follies wilt thou repent; none wilt thou wish to repeat.”

The curtain opened; the abbe came into view. “Come hither,” he cried to his marvelling friend. Wilhelm mounted the steps. On the table lay a little roll.

“Here is your indenture,” said the abbe. “Take it to heart; it is of weighty import.” Wilhelm opened it, and read:

“*INDENTURE*.

“*Art is long, life short, judgment difficult, opportunity transient. To act is easy, to think is hard, to act according to our thought is troublesome. It is but a part of art that can be taught; the artist needs it all. Who knows it half, speaks much, and is always wrong; who knows it all, speaks seldom, and is inclined to act. No one knows what he is doing while he acts aright; but of wrong-doing we are always conscious. The instruction which the true artist gives us opens the mind, for where words fail him, deeds speak. The true scholar learns from the known to unfold the unknown, and approaches more and more to being a master*——”

“Enough,” cried the abbe; “the rest in due time. Now look round you among these cases.” With astonishment Wilhelm found, among others, “*Lothario’s Apprenticeship,” “Jarno’s Apprenticeship*,” and his own “*Apprenticeship*” placed there. “May I hope to look into these rolls?”

“In this chamber nothing is now hid from you.”

Wilhelm heard a noise behind him, and saw a child’s face peeping through the tapestry at the end of the room. It was Felix. His father rushed towards him, took him in his arms, and pressed him to his heart.

“Yes, I feel it,” cried he. “Thou art mine. For what a gift of Heaven have I to thank my friends! How comest thou, my child, at this important moment?”

“Ask not,” said the abbe. “Hail, young man! Thy apprenticeship is done; nature has pronounced thee free.”

After sorrow, often and in vain repeated, for the loss of Mariana, Wilhelm felt that he must find a mother for the boy; and also, that he could not find one equal to Theresa. With this gifted lady he was now thoroughly acquainted. Such a spouse and helpmate seemed the only one to trust to in such circumstances. Her affection for Lothario did not

make him hesitate; she looked on herself as free; she had even spoken of marrying, with indifference, indeed, but as a matter understood.

Before Theresa's answer came to hand, Lothario sent for our friend. "My sister Natalia bids me beg of you to go to her as soon as possible. Poor Mignon seems to be getting steadily worse, and it is thought that your presence might allay the malady." Wilhelm agreed, and proceeded on the journey.

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IV.—Heart Against Reason

Behind a light screen, which threw a shadow on her, sat a young lady, reading; she rose and came to him. It was the Amazon! Unable to restrain himself, he fell on his knee and cried "It is she!" He seized her hand, and kissed it with unbounded rapture.

A day or two later, the following letter from Theresa was handed to Wilhelm.

"I am yours, as I am, and as you know me. I call you mine, as you are, and as I know you. As it is no passion, but trust and inclination for each other, that leads us together, we run less risk than thousands of others. You will forgive me, will you not, if I still think often and kindly of my former friend; in return, I will press Felix to my heart, as if I were his mother. Adieu, dear friend! Theresa clasps you to her breast with hope and joy."

Natalia wrote a letter to her brother; she invited Wilhelm to add a word or two. They were just about to seal it, when Jarno unexpectedly came in.

"I am come," he said, "to give you very curious and pleasing tidings about Theresa; now guess."

"We are more skilful than you think," said Natalia, smiling. "Before you asked, we had the answer down in black and white," handing him as she spoke the letter she had just written. Jarno read the sheet hastily. "What shall I say?" cried he. "Surprise against surprise! I came to tell you that Theresa is not the daughter of her reputed mother. There is no obstacle to her marriage with Lothario: *I came to ask you to prepare her for it*."

"And what," said Lothario, taking Wilhelm by the hand, "what if your alliance with my sister were the secret article on which depended my alliance with Theresa? These amends the noble maiden has appointed for you; she has vowed that we two pairs should appear together at the altar. 'His reason has made choice of me,' she said; 'his heart demands Natalia: my reason shall assist his heart.'"

Lothario embraced his friend, and led him to Natalia, who, with Theresa, came to meet them. "To my mind, thou resemblest Saul, the son of Kish, who went out to seek his father's asses, and found a kingdom."

"I know not the worth of a kingdom," said Wilhelm, "but I know that I have attained a happiness undeserved, which I would not change for anything in life."

* * * * *

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

The Vicar of Wakefield

Oliver Goldsmith, the most versatile and perhaps the most unstable of eighteenth century men of letters, was born in Ireland on November 10, 1728. At Trinity College, Dublin, he revealed three characteristics that clung to him throughout his career—high spirits, conversational brilliance, and inability to keep money in his pocket. After a spell of “philosophic vagabondage” on the Continent, he settled in London in 1756, earned money in various ways,

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and spent it all. “The Vicar of Wakefield,” perhaps the greatest of all Goldsmith’s works, was published on March 27, 1766, after Dr. Johnson had raised L60 for him on the manuscript of it. The liveliness and grace of Goldsmith’s style were never more plainly manifested than in this delightful story; and its faults—it contains many coincidences and improbabilities—are far more than atoned for by the masterly portrait of the simple, manly, generous, and wholly lovable vicar who is the central figure of the story. “It has,” says Mitford, “the truth of Richardson, without his minuteness, and the humour of Fielding, without his grossness; if it yields to LeSage in the diversified variety of his views of life, it far excels him in the description of domestic virtues and the pleasing moral of the tale.” Goldsmith died on April 4, 1774. (See also Vol. XVII.)

I.—Family Portraits

I was ever of opinion that the honest man who married and brought up a large family did more service than he who continued single and only talked of population. From this motive, I chose my wife, as she did her wedding-gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but such qualities as would wear well. There was nothing that could make us angry with the world or each other. We had no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo; all our adventures were by the fireside, and all our migrations from the blue bed to the brown.

My children, as they were educated without softness, so they were at once well-formed and healthy; my four sons hardy and active, my two daughters beautiful and blooming. Olivia, the elder daughter, was open, sprightly, and commanding; Sophia’s features were not so striking at first, but often did more certain execution, for they were soft, modest, and alluring.

The profits of my living I made over to the orphans and widows of the clergy of our diocese; for, having a sufficient fortune of my own, I was careless of temporalities, and felt a secret pleasure in doing my duty without reward.

My eldest son, George, just upon leaving college, fixed his affections upon Miss Arabella Wilmot, the daughter of a neighbouring clergyman, who was in circumstances to give her a large fortune. Mr. Wilmot was not averse to the match, but after the day for the nuptials had been fixed, I engaged in a dispute with him which threatened to interrupt our intended alliance. I have always maintained that it is unlawful for a priest of the Church of England, after the death of his first wife, to take a second; and I showed Mr. Wilmot a tract which I had written in defence of this principle. It was not till too late I discovered that he was violently attached to the contrary opinion, and with good reason; for he was at that time actually courting a fourth wife.

While the controversy was hottest, a relation, with a face of concern, called me out.

“The merchant in town,” he said, “in whose hands your money was lodged has gone off, to avoid a statute of bankruptcy. Your fortune is now almost nothing.”

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It would be useless to describe the sensations of my family when I divulged the news. Near a fortnight had passed before I attempted to restrain their affliction; for premature consolation is but the remembrance of sorrow. During this interval I determined to send my eldest son to London, and I accepted a small cure of fifteen pounds a year in a distant neighbourhood.

The first day's journey brought us within thirty miles of our future retreat, and we put up at an obscure inn in a village by the way. At the inn was a gentleman who, the landlord told me, had been so liberal in his charity that he had no money left to pay his reckoning. I could not avoid expressing my concern at seeing a gentleman in such circumstances, and offered the stranger my purse. "I take it with all my heart, sir," replied he, "and am glad that my late oversight has shown me that there are still some men like you." The stranger's conversation was so pleasing and instructive that we were rejoiced to hear that he was going the same way as ourselves.

The next morning we all set forward together. Mr. Burchell and I lightened the fatigues of the road with philosophical disputes, and he also informed me to whom the different seats belonged that lay in our view.

"That, Dr. Primrose," he said to me, pointing to a very magnificent house, "belongs to Mr. Thornhill, a young gentleman who enjoys a large fortune, though entirely dependent upon the will of his uncle, Sir William Thornhill."

"What!" cried I, "is my young landlord, then, the nephew of one who is represented as a man of consummate benevolence?"

At this point we were alarmed by the cries of my family, and I perceived my youngest daughter in the midst of a rapid stream, and struggling with the torrent; she must have certainly perished had not my companion instantly plunged in to her relief. Her gratitude may be more readily imagined than described; she thanked her deliverer more with looks than words. Soon afterwards Mr. Burchell took leave of us, and we pursued our journey to the place of our retreat.

II.—The Squire

At a small distance from our habitation was a seat overshaded by a hedge of hawthorn and honeysuckle. Here, when the weather was fine, and our labour soon finished, we usually sat together to enjoy an extensive landscape in the calm of the evening. On an afternoon about the beginning of autumn, when I had drawn out my family to the seat, dogs and horsemen swept past us with great swiftness. After them a young gentleman, of a more genteel appearance than the rest, came forward, and, instead of pursuing the chase, stopped short, and approached us with a careless, superior air. He let us know that his name was Thornhill, and that he was the owner of the estate that lay around

us. As his address, though confident, was easy, we soon became more familiar; and the whole family seemed earnest to please him.

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As soon as he was gone, my wife gave the opinion that it was a most fortunate hit, and hoped again to see the day in which we might hold up our heads with the best of them.

“For my part,” cried Olivia, “I don’t like him, he is so extremely impudent and familiar.” I interpreted this speech by contrary, and found that Olivia secretly admired him.

“To confess the truth,” said I, “he has not prepossessed me in his favour. I had heard that he was particularly remarkable for faithlessness to the fair sex.”

A few days afterwards we entertained our young landlord at dinner, and it may be easily supposed what provisions were exhausted to make an appearance. As he directed his looks and conversation to Olivia, it was no longer doubted but that she was the object that induced him to be our visitor; and my wife exulted in her daughter’s victory as if it were her own.

On one evening Mr. Thornhill came with two young ladies, richly dressed, whom he introduced as women of very great distinction and fashion from town. The two ladies threw my girls quite into the shade, for they would talk of nothing but high life and high-lived company. ’Tis true, they once or twice mortified us sensibly by slipping out an oath; their finery, however, threw a veil over any grossness in their conversation.

I now began to find that all my long and painful lectures upon temperance, simplicity, and contentment were entirely disregarded. The distinctions lately paid us by our betters awakened that pride which I had laid asleep, but not removed. When the two ladies of quality showed a willingness to take our girls to town with them as companions, my wife was overjoyed at our good fortune. But Mr. Burchell, who had at first been a welcome guest at our house, but had become less welcome since we had been favoured with the company of persons of superior station, dissuaded her with great ardour, and so angered her that she ended by asking him to stay away.

Returning home one day, I found my wife and girls all in tears, Mr. Thornhill having been there to inform them that their journey to town was entirely over. The two ladies, having heard reports of us from some malicious person, were that day set out for London. We were not long in finding who it was that had been so base as to asperse the character of a family so harmless as ours. One of our boys found a letter-case which we knew to belong to Mr. Burchell. Within it was a sealed note, superscribed, “The copy of a letter to be sent to the two ladies at Thornhill Castle.” At the joint solicitation of the family, I opened it, and read as follows:

“Ladies,—I am informed that you have some intention of bringing two young ladies to town, whom I have some knowledge of, under the character of companions. As I would neither have simplicity imposed upon nor virtue contaminated, I must offer it as my opinion that the impropriety of such a step will be attended with dangerous consequences. Take therefore, the admonition of a friend, and seriously reflect on the

consequences of introducing infamy and vice into retreats where peace and innocence have hitherto resided."

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Our doubts were now at an end. It appeared to me one of the vilest instances of unprovoked ingratitude I had ever met with. As we set ruminating upon schemes of vengeance, Mr. Burchell himself entered and sat down.

“Do you know this, sir—this pocket-book?” said I.

“Yes, sir,” returned he, with a face of impenetrable assurance.

“And do you know this letter?”

“Yes; it was I that wrote that letter.”

“And how could you so basely presume to write this letter?”

“And how came you,” replied he, with looks of unparalleled effrontery, “so basely to presume to open this letter?”

I could scarcely govern my passion. “Ungrateful wretch!” I cried. “Begone, and no longer pollute my dwelling with thy baseness!”

So saying, I threw him his pocket-book, which he took up with a smile, and left us astonished at the serenity of his assurance.

III.—The Elopement

The visits of Mr. Thornhill now became more frequent and longer; but all the schemes of Olivia and her mother to bring him to a declaration came to nothing. And although Olivia considered his fine sentiments as instances of the most exalted passion, it seemed to me plain that they had more of love than matrimony in them.

One evening as I sat by the fireside, thanking Heaven for tranquillity, health, and competence, and thinking myself happier than the greatest monarch upon earth, I noticed that Olivia was absent.

“Where is my darling Olivia?” I asked. Just as I spoke, my boy Dick came running in.

“Oh, papa, papa, she is gone from us; she is gone from us for ever!”

“Gone, child?”

“Yes; she is gone off with two gentlemen in a postchaise, and one of them kissed her. And she cried very much, but he persuaded her, and she went into the chaise.”

“Now, then,” cried I, “may Heaven’s everlasting fury light upon him and his! Thus to rob me of my child! Bring me my pistols; I’ll pursue the traitor. Old as I am, he shall find I can sting him yet—the perfidious villain!”

My poor wife caught me in her arms.

“Indeed, sir,” said my son Moses, “your rage is too violent.”

“I did not curse him, child, did I?”

“Indeed, sir, you did.”

“Then may Heaven forgive me and him. But it is not—it is not a small distress that can wring tears from these old eyes. My child—to undo my darling! May confusion seize—-Heaven forgive me! What am I about to say? Had she but died! My son, bring hither my Bible and my staff. I will pursue her; and though I cannot save her from shame, I may prevent the continuance of her iniquity.”

My suspicions fell entirely upon our young landlord, whose character for such intrigues was but too well known. I therefore directed my steps towards Thornhill Castle. He soon appeared, with the most open, familiar air, and seemed perfectly amazed at my daughter’s elopement, protesting upon his honour that he was quite a stranger to it. A man, however, averred that my daughter and Mr. Burchell had been seen driving very fast towards the Wells, about thirty miles distant.

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I walked towards the Wells with earnestness, and on entering the town I was met by a person on horseback, whom I remembered to have seen at the squire's, and he assured me that if I followed them to the races, which were but thirty miles further, I might depend upon overtaking them.

Early the next day I walked forward to the races, but saw nothing of my daughter or of Mr. Burchell.

The agitations of my mind, and the fatigues I had undergone, now threw me into a fever. I retired to a little ale-house by the roadside, and here I languished for nearly three weeks.

The night coming on as I was twenty miles from home on my return journey, I put up at a little public-house, and asked for the landlord's company over a pint of wine. I could hear the landlady upstairs bitterly reproaching a lodger who could not pay.

"Out, I say," she cried; "pack out this moment!"

"Oh, dear madame," replied the stranger, "pity a poor, abandoned creature for one night and death will soon do the rest!"

I instantly knew the voice of my poor ruined child, Olivia, and flew to her rescue.

"Welcome, anyway welcome, my dearest lost one, to your poor old father's bosom!"

"Oh, my own dear"—for minutes she could say no more—"my own dearest, good papa! You can't forgive me—I know you cannot!"

"Yes, my child, from my heart I do forgive thee." After we had talked ourselves into some tranquillity, I said, "It surprises me how a person of Mr. Burchell's seeming honour could be guilty of such deliberate baseness."

"My dear papa," returned my daughter, "you labour under a strange mistake. It is Mr. Thornhill who has ruined me; who employed the two ladies, as he called them, but who, in fact, were abandoned women of the town, to decoy us up to London. Their artifices would certainly have succeeded but for Mr. Burchell's letter, who directed those reproaches at them which we all applied to ourselves."

"You amaze me, my dear!" cried I. "But tell me, what temptation was it that could thus obliterate your virtue?"

"He offered me marriage," replied she. "We were indeed married secretly by a popish priest, whose name I was sworn to conceal."

"What!" interrupted I. "And were you indeed married?"

“Alas!” she said, “he has been married already by the same priest to six or eight wives more, whom, like me, he has deceived and abandoned.”

“Have patience, my child,” cried I, “and I hope things will yet be better. To-morrow I’ll carry you home to your mother. Poor woman, this has gone to her heart; but she loves you still, Olivia, and will forget it.”

IV.—Fresh Calamities

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It was late the next night when I approached my own home. I had left Olivia at an inn five miles away, intending to prepare my family for her reception. To my amazement, I saw the house bursting out into a blaze of fire, and every aperture red with conflagration! I gave a loud convulsive outcry, which alarmed my son, and all my family ran out, wild with apprehension. Our neighbours came running to our assistance; but the flames had taken too strong a hold to be extinguished, and all the neighbours could do was to stand spectators of the calamity. They brought us clothes and furnished one of our outhouses with kitchen utensils; so that by daylight we had another, though a wretched, dwelling to retire to.

In the midst of this affliction our poor lost one returned to us. “Ah, madam,” cried her mother, “this is but a poor place to come to after so much finery! I can afford but little entertainment to persons who have kept company only with persons of distinction; but I hope Heaven will forgive you.”

The unhappy victim stood pale and trembling, unable to weep or to reply.

“I entreat, woman,” I said to my wife, with severity in my voice and manner, “that my words may be now marked once for all. I have here brought you back a poor deluded wanderer—her return to duty demands the revival of our tenderness. The real hardships of life are now coming fast upon us; let us not increase them by dissensions among each other. The kindness of Heaven is promised to the penitent, and let ours be directed by the example.”

My daughter’s grief, however, seemed formed for continuing, and her wretchedness was increased by the news that Mr. Thornhill was going to be married to the rich Miss Wilmot, who had formerly been betrothed to my eldest son.

On a morning of peculiar warmth for the season, when we were breakfasting out of doors, Mr. Thornhill drove up in his chariot, alighted, and inquired after my health with his usual air of familiarity.

“Sir,” replied I, “your present assurance only serves to aggravate your baseness.”

“My dear sir,” returned he, “I cannot understand what this means!”

“Go!” cried I. “Thou art a poor, pitiful wretch, and every way a liar; but your meanness secures you from my anger!”

“I find,” he said, “you are bent upon obliging me to talk in a harsher manner than I intended. My steward talks of driving for the rent, and it is certain he knows his duty. Yet, still, I could wish to serve you, and even to have you and your daughter present at my marriage.”

“Mr. Thornhill,” replied I, “as to your marriage with any but my daughter, that I never will consent to! And though your friendship could raise me to a throne, or your resentment sink me to the grave, yet would I despise both.”

“Depend upon it,” returned he, “you shall feel the effects of this insolence,” and departed abruptly.

On the very next morning his steward came to demand my annual rent, which, by reason of the accidents already related, I was unable to pay. On the following day two officers of justice took me to the county gaol.

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There is no situation, however wretched it seems, but has some sort of comfort attending it; and I found mine in the help and kindness of a fellow-prisoner, Mr. Jenkinson by name, who was awaiting trial for several acts of cheating and roguery. I myself, indeed, had been one of his victims.

The fortune of my family, who were lodged in the town, was wholly and distressingly adverse. Olivia was ill, and longed for me to make my submission to Mr. Thornhill by approving his marriage with Miss Wilmot. When I had been confined a fortnight, Mr. Jenkinson brought me dreadful news—Olivia was dead! And while yet my grief was fresh upon me my wife came weeping to tell me that Sophia had been seized by ruffians and carried off.

The sum of my miseries, thought, I, is now made up; nor is it in the power of anything on earth to give me another pang. Yet another awaited me. My eldest son, George, to whom I had written, went to Thornhill Castle to punish our betrayer; he was attacked by the coward's servants, injured one of them, and was brought into the very prison where I was confined.

The enemy of my family had now triumphed completely. My only hope was in a letter I had written to Sir William Thornhill, telling him of the misdeeds of his nephew. I was by this time myself extremely ill. I sought to break from my heart all ties that bound it to earth, and to fit myself for eternity.

V.—The Rescue

On parting from my unhappy son, who was removed to a stronger cell, I laid me down in bed, when Mr. Jenkinson, entering, informed me that there was news of my daughter. He had scarcely delivered his message when my dearest girl entered with Mr. Burchell.

"Here, papa," she cried, "here is the brave man to whom I owe my delivery; to this gentleman's intrepidity—"

A kiss from Mr. Burchell interrupted what she was going to add.

"Ah, Mr. Burchell," said I, "you were ever our friend. We have long discovered our errors with regard to you, and repented our ingratitude. And now, as you have delivered my girl, if you think her a recompense, she is yours."

"But I suppose, sir," he replied, "you are apprised of my incapacity to support her as she deserves?"

"I know no man," I returned, "so worthy to deserve her as you."

Without the least reply to my offer, he ordered from the next inn the best dinner that could be provided. While we were at dinner, the gaoler brought a message from Mr.

Thornhill, desiring permission to appear before his uncle in order to vindicate his innocence and honour. The poor, harmless Mr. Burchell, then, was in reality the celebrated Sir William Thornhill!

Mr. Thornhill entered with a smile, and was going to embrace his uncle.

“No fawning, sir, at present,” cried the baronet. “The only way to my heart is by the road of honour; but here I only see complicated instances of falsehood, cowardice, and oppression.”

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At this moment Jenkinson and the gaoler's two servants entered, hauling in a tall man very genteelly dressed. As soon as Mr. Thornhill perceived the prisoner and Mr. Jenkinson, he seemed to shrink backward with terror, for this was the man whom he had put upon the carrying off of Sophia.

"Heavens," cried Sir William, "what a viper have I been fostering in my bosom!"

"As Mr. Thornhill and I have been old fellow-sporters," said Jenkinson, "I have a friendship for him; and I hope he will show a proper return of friendship to his own honest Jenkinson, who brings him a wife."

So saying, he went off and left us.

"I am surprised," said the baronet, "what he can intend by this?"

"When we reflect," I replied, "on the various schemes—Amazement! Do I see my lost daughter? It is—it is my Olivia!"

"As for you, squire," said Jenkinson, "this young lady is your lawful wedded wife. Here is the licence to prove it. He commissioned me, gentlemen," he continued, "to procure him a false licence and a false priest in order to deceive this young lady. What did I do, but went and got a true licence and a true priest. To my shame, I confess it, my only design was to keep the licence and let the squire know that I could prove it upon him whenever I wanted money."

"How could you," I cried, "add to my miseries by the story of her death?"

"That," replied Jenkinson, "is easily answered. I thought the only probable means of freeing you from prison was by submitting to the squire, and consenting to his marriage with the other young lady. But this you had vowed never to grant while your daughter was living, so I had to join with your wife in persuading you that she was dead."

Mr. Thornhill's assurance had now entirely forsaken him. He fell on his knees before his uncle, and implored compassion.

"Thy vices, crimes, and ingratitude," said the baronet, "deserve no compassion; but a bare competence shall be supplied thee, and thy wife shall possess a third part of that fortune which once was thine." Then, turning to Sophia, he caught her to his breast with ardour. "I have sought," he cried, "for a woman who, a stranger to my fortune, could think I had merit as a man. How great must be my rapture to have made a conquest over such sense and such heavenly beauty!"

On the next day Sophia was wedded to Sir William Thornhill; and my son George, now freed from justice, as the person supposed to be wounded by him was detected to be an impostor, led Miss Wilmot to the altar. As soon as I had awakened that morning, I

had heard that my merchant had been arrested at Antwerp, and that my fortune had been restored to me.

It may not be improper to observe, with respect to Mr. Thornhill, that he now resides as companion at a relation's house. My eldest daughter has told me that when he reforms she may be brought to relent.

I had now nothing on this side of the grave to wish for. All my cares were over. It only remained that my gratitude in good fortune should exceed my submission in adversity.

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EDMOND AND JULES DE GONCOURT

Renee Mauperin

Edmond de Goncourt, born at Nancy on May 26, 1822, and his brother Jules, born in Paris on December 17, 1830, were primarily artists, who, while wandering over France, knapsack on back, discovered that their note-books also made them writers. In 1850 they entered upon a literary partnership which only finished with the death of the younger brother on June 20, 1870. Their earliest literary endeavours consisted of a series of historical studies dealing with the France of the second half of the eighteenth century. It was not until 1860, with the publication of their first novel, “Les Hommes de Lettres,” that they discovered their true bent lay in fiction. “Renee Mauperin,” which is, perhaps, the best known of their books, was published in 1864. As a psychological analysis of contemporaneous youth, it is probably without its equal in French fiction. “The plot of the story,” wrote Edmond de Goncourt, “is secondary. The authors have rather preferred to paint the modern young woman as she is: the product of the artistic and masculine system of education in force during the last thirty years. We have also attempted to portray the modern young college man influenced by the republican ideas of the time since Louis Philippe.” Edmond de Goncourt died on July 16, 1896.

I.—A Wayward Girl

“Yes, I love riding and hunting. I never miss a meet. The wind blowing through one’s hair, the hounds, the horns, the trees flying past you—it is intoxicating! In those moments I feel brave. Life has few other pleasures for a well-brought-up girl like me. Everything is shocking! I dance, yes ... but do you think I am allowed to talk to my partner? Yes, no, no, yes—that’s all! That’s proper. And I am allowed to read if the books and articles are proper. I paint in oils, and that shocks my family; a young lady must not go beyond copying roses in water-colours. Isn’t the current strong here?”

Renee Mauperin and young Reverchon, her parent’s guest, were swimming in the Seine.

“How beautiful!” exclaimed the girl, as she noticed the evening sun gilding the river and the banks where country and suburb merged into each other.

“You are an artist by nature, mademoiselle.”

“Ouf!” she exclaimed with a comic intonation.

A boat approached.

“Well, Renee, how is the water?” asked one of the rowers.

“Splendid, thanks, Denoisel,” she replied, as she mounted the steps lowered for her.

“I was almost getting nervous for you. And Reverchon? Ah, there he is!”

* * * * *

Renee was the youngest daughter of a distinguished Napoleonic officer, who, at the time of the revolution of 1830, was elected deputy, and fought with all his ardour for the Liberal cause, but who subsequently, at the urging of his wife, a tyrannical conventional member of the *bourgeois*, retired from the world of politics and established a sugar refinery, so as to be able to provide suitably for his three children.

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The first two, a boy born in 1826 and a daughter in 1827, were a disappointment to the old soldier. They were too reasonable, too “grown-up” before they were children, but in Renee, who was born after an interval of eight years, M. Mauperin found ample consolation. His heart revelled in her pranks and merry laughter, and she grew up the pet of her father, whose affection she returned with all her heart. She was now twenty; her brother Henri, serious, studious, plodding and determined to make a career, was a lawyer, and had made some reputation by his articles on statistical subjects; and Henriette, her elder sister, had found a husband in M. Davarande, whose wealth and position allowed her to devote herself to the life of empty amusement, divided mainly between long rounds of calls, the opera, and the Bois, which filled the days of the moneyed Paris *bourgeoisie* of that time.

Madame Mauperin, delighted with Henriette’s match, was anxious to find an equally suitable partner for Renee; but the high-spirited girl had a will of her own, and seemed to take almost a pleasure in crossing her mother’s transparent matrimonial schemes. Quite a number of eligible young men had been introduced to the house at La Briche—-and had left it without having furthered their suit. Reverchon had now been invited with similar intentions, and Renee was no more amenable than before. While her mother filled the young man’s ears with praise of her accomplishments, the wayward girl, with her charming ingenuous talk, did her best to demonstrate her lack of those negative conventional virtues that were expected from a well-educated French girl in those days. She made Madame Mauperin turn first crimson, then pale, when she finally proceeded to cut Denoisel’s hair in the drawing-room after dinner.

Denoisel was the son of Mauperin’s bosom friend, who had fought by his side in many battles, and who on his death-bed had made him his son’s guardian. Mauperin became more than a guardian to the boy—he became his father. When Henri and Henriette were born, it seemed to Denoisel that he had been given a brother and sister; but he adored the baby Renee, and he alone succeeded in making her listen and obey.

“Sometimes,” said Henri to Denoisel as they travelled back to Paris, “my sister’s follies are harmless enough; but to-night ... before that fellow ... I am sure the marriage will fall through. And such an excellent match!”

“You think so? I began to fear for her. And that’s why I lent myself to her prank. He is too hopelessly commonplace—a tailor’s dummy! He would never have understood her. Your sister ought to marry a man of intelligence and character.”

And Madame Mauperin, as she prepared for bed, lectured her husband upon acceding to all his favourite’s whims.

“Another marriage missed! Henri spoke to me this evening. He is sure Reverchon will not have her.”

“Well, what of it?”

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“Why, he is the tenth! Renee will get an awful reputation. She will see when she is thirty ... and you too.” Then, after a pause, “And now about your son. He is twenty-nine now. He, at any rate, has no objection to marriage. Have you ever thought of finding him a suitable wife?”

She continued to talk and to grumble until Mauperin fell asleep.

“Henri is reasonable enough, but he is a young man, and you know the danger. It’s driving me mad! What do you think of trying Madame Rosieres?”

There was no reply. Madame Mauperin resigned herself to silence, and turned to find the sleep which only came with morning.

II.—Plots and Plays

Next morning Madame Mauperin proceeded to Paris, and drove to her son’s apartments in the Rue Taitbout. She found him at work. After some beating about the bush she approached the object of her visit.

“I fear,” she began, “that you must have some reason for ...”

“For not marrying, isn’t it? My dear mother, you need not worry. I know that wealth is needed for a successful career, and that the best and most honourable way to obtain it is a good marriage. And I am determined to make a career. I shall get married soon enough... and better, perhaps, than you think.”

At La Briche, meanwhile, M. Mauperin vainly tried to be stern with his pet.

“I have done it purposely,” she said.

“And why?”

“Because I love you better than that young gentleman who was in no way sympathetic to me. You are ungrateful.”

“But listen, my dear child! Fathers are egotists, and would prefer to keep their children. But I am old, and I should not like to part without seeing you married, a mother, with affections that will replace mine.”

“Oh, this is wicked! Never, never!” she exclaimed; “let me cry alone for a minute.” And she left the room hurriedly.

When she returned after a while, she found Denoisel in the room.

“You have been out? And where have you been?”

“Well, if you want to know, I have been to church to pray that I may die before father. I knelt before a statue of the Virgin. And, you may laugh, but it seemed to me that she nodded at my request. And it made me quite happy.”

The conversation drifted to gayer topics, and the two soon fell into their wonted tone of banter. “Tell me, Renee,” said Denoisel, “have you never felt, I won’t say love, but some sentiment for anybody?”

“Never. That sort of thing only occurs when the heart is empty. But when it is defended by the affection one feels for a father—as a child I felt perhaps the beginning of that emotion of which one reads in novels. And do you know for whom?”

“No.”

“For you. Oh, only for a moment. I soon loved you differently for having corrected the spoilt child of its faults, for having directed my attention to noble and beautiful things. And I resolved to repay you by true friendship.”

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M. Mauperin entered the room, and interrupted the confidences.

A few days later, Renee having set her mind upon playing in private theatricals, a discussion arose about the filling of the second lady's part in the play that had been chosen. One by one the names suggested were dismissed, until Henri said, "Why not ask *Mlle*. Bourjot? They are just staying at Sannois."

"Noemi?" replied Renee. "I'd love it. But she, was so cold towards me last winter. I don't know why."

"She will have L12,000 a year," interrupted Denoisel, "and her mother knows that you have a brother. And they are not a little proud of their money."

Twelve thousand a year! Madame Mauperin thought of her son's future, and supported his suggestion. It was decided that they would call on the Bourjots on Saturday.

To Sannois they went as arranged on the Saturday. They were received with effusion, and had to put up for an hour or so with the unbearable arrogance of their hosts' display of wealth. Renee's warm advances to the playmate of her childhood were received by Noemi with coolness, not to say reluctance, but the request that Noemi should take part in the theatricals met with her mother's approval, the shy girl's objections—nervousness, lack of talent, and so forth—being overruled by Madame Bourjot. Before the two families parted it was arranged that Noemi should be taken by her governess to attend the rehearsals at the Mauperins' house.

Renee's whole-hearted friendliness and sparkling humour soon overcame Noemi's reserve, and under Denoisel's direction the amateur actors made rapid progress. Madame Bourjot herself came to one of the rehearsals, and, after the first compliments, expressed her surprise that Henri, the principal actor, was absent. "Oh, he has a wonderful memory," said his proud mother; "two rehearsals will set him right."

At last the great day arrived. A stage had been arranged in the large drawing-room, which was filled to its utmost capacity, the ladies being seated in the long rows of chairs, the men standing behind and overflowing through open doors into the adjoining rooms. The play chosen was "The Caprice." Henri, who revealed rare talent, took the part of the husband; Noemi of the neglected wife. The curtain fell upon enthusiastic applause, and Madame Bourjot, who had feared that her daughter would be a fiasco, was delighted with her success. Amid the hum of voices she heard the lady sitting next to her say to her neighbour, "His sister, I know ... but for the part he is not sufficiently in love with her ... and too much with his wife. Did you notice?" she continued, in a whisper.

In the second piece Henri appeared as Pierrot, Renee as the forsaken wife, and Noemi as the beloved. Henri played with real passion. From time to time his eyes seemed to

search for Madame Bourjot's. Her neighbour felt her leaning against her shoulder. The curtain fell. Madame Bourjot swayed, and fell back in a faint.

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She was carried to the garden.

“Leave me now,” she said, “I am all right now; it was the heat. I only want a little air ... Let M. Henri stay with me.”

They were left alone.

“You love her?” said Madame Bourjot, clutching Henri’s arm. “I know all.... Have you nothing to say?”

“Nothing. I have struggled for a year. I will not excuse myself. I owe you the truth. I love your daughter, it is true.”

Finally, Madame Bourjot rose and walked towards the house. Henri followed.

“I count upon never seeing you again, sir,” she said, without looking round. With a mighty effort she regained her composure, and walked back to the house on Henri’s arm.

III.—Stint to Death by his Sister

It was Madame Bourjot herself who insisted upon seeing Henri again, and, since he did not answer her letter, she went to his apartments. The interview was painful, but she gave her consent to Henri’s marriage with Noemi, and undertook to overcome M. Bourjot’s possible objections, on condition that Henri should humour her husband’s vanity by adopting a title—an easy matter enough. The Mauperins had a farm called Villacourt. Mauperin de Villacourt would do very well. Henri promised to see what he could do.

Madame Bourjot and her daughter called on the Mauperins next day. The two girls were asked to leave their mothers to their talk, and to take a walk in the garden.

“A secret!” said Renee, as soon as they were alone. “Can you guess it? I can—my brother. ... But you are crying. What is it, my darling Noemi?”

“Oh, you don’t know!” her friend sobbed. “I cannot—if you only knew——Save me! If I could only die!”

“Die! But why?”

“Because your brother is——” She stopped in horror at what she was about to say, then whispered the rest of her sentence into her ear, and hid her face on her friend’s bosom.

“You lie!” Renee pushed her back.

“I?” Renee did not reply, but looked sadly and gently into Noemi’s eyes.

Renee doubted no longer. She was silent for a moment; she felt almost the duties of a mother towards this child.

In the evening Henri was surprised to find his sister waiting in his room. She approached the subject of his impending marriage, and implored him, by his love for her, not to give up his name, and to break off the match.

“Are you mad? Enough of this!”

Renee fixed her eyes upon her brother.

“Noemi has told me—everything!”

Her cheeks flushed, Henri turned deathly pale.

“My dear,” he said, with a shaky voice, “you interfere in things which do not concern you. A young girl—” Then seizing her hand, he pointed towards the door, and said, “Go!”

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Renee was ill for a week, and Henri, knowing the cause, did his best to alleviate her suffering. Still, a coldness remained between them. He understood that she had forgiven the brother, but not the man. One day she accompanied Henri to town and went with him to the Record Office, where he had to make some inquiries about the legality of adopting his own name. While he was questioning the keeper, she overheard two clerks discuss her brother and his claim. "He thinks the Villacourt family is extinct. But he is misinformed, although they have gone down in the world. In fact, I know the heir to the title—a M. Boisjorand with whom I once had a fight when we were boys. They lived in the forest of the Croix-du-Soldat, near St. Mihiel, at La Motte-Noire." Renee fixed these names in her mind.

"I have got all I want," said Henri, gaily coming towards her. And they went out together.

The Bourjots were giving a great ball to celebrate the public announcement of the engagement of their daughter to M. Mauperin de Villacourt.

"You are enjoying yourself," said Renee to Noemi.

"I have never danced so much, it is true." And Noemi took her arm and drew her into a small salon. "No, never." She kissed her. "Oh, what it is to be happy! She loves him no longer. I am sure of it—I can see it; I feel it."

"And you love him now?"

Noemi closed her mouth by pressing her lips upon Renee's. A young man came to claim Noemi for the dance, and Denoisel requested the same favour from Renee.

Denoisel was with Henri Mauperin. They were smoking and talking peacefully, when the door was thrust open, and a man forced his way in, pushing aside the valet who wanted to prevent him from entering.

"M. Mauperin de Villacourt?" he asked.

"That is my name," said Henri, rising.

"Good. My name is Boisjorand de Villacourt," retorted the stranger, striking him so violently on the cheek that his face was immediately covered with blood. Henri conquered his first impulse to throw himself upon the intruder, and said calmly, "You find that there is one Villacourt too many—so do I. Leave your card with my servant. I shall send to you to-morrow."

It was from a marked number of the "Moniteur," which the impoverished heir of the glorious name of De Villacourt found on his return from a two years' sojourn in Africa, that M. Boisjorand had learned that Henri had taken from him this name, which was all that had come down to him from his famous ancestors. He immediately proceeded to

Paris and sought legal advice, but found that his poverty rendered legal action impossible. After his interview with the solicitor, he went straight to Henri's apartment to obtain the only satisfaction that was in his power.

Denoisel and another friend of Henri's arranged with Boisjorand's seconds next morning the details of the meeting. Henri, who was an excellent shot, had insisted on pistols at thirty-five paces, each combatant to have the right to advance ten steps. The duel was to take place at four o'clock the same afternoon near the ponds of Ville d'Avray.

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Neither of the two adversaries showed a trace of nervousness. The signal was given, M. De Villacourt advanced five steps, Henri remaining stationary. At the sixth step Henri fired, and his opponent fell. Henri hurried towards him.

“Back to your place,” shouted the wounded man. On his hands and knees he crawled forward to the limit of his advance leaving a trail of blood in the snow. Then he took careful aim—and Henri fell with arms extended and his face towards the ground.

IV.—Broken Wanderers

To Denoisel fell the painful duty of informing Mauperin of his son’s death. The old man’s grief was heartbreaking. When Denoisel was admitted to Renee, he found her sitting on a footstool, sobbing, with her handkerchief pressed to her mouth.

“Renee,” he said, taking her hands, “he has been killed—that man should never have known. He did not read, he saw nobody, he lived like a wolf—he was not a subscriber to the ‘Moniteur.’ Some enemy must have sent him that paper.”

Renee had risen; she moved her lips; she wanted to scream “It was I!” Then, suddenly pressing her hand against her heart, she fell senseless on the floor.

* * * * *

Renee did not seem to recover from her illness. Denoisel saw her daily, but a certain coldness had set in between them—he thought that Renee held him responsible for not having prevented the duel, while Renee vaguely feared that Denoisel had guessed her secret. He started upon a long journey.

In those days of illness and anxiety the hearts of father and daughter seemed to come together more closely even than before. The heartbroken old man saw his beloved child wasting away. He called in the best specialist from Paris, who did not exactly give up all hope, but did not conceal that Renee’s life was in danger. The poor girl, who could not bear to witness her father’s misery, put on a gay air, assuring him again and again that she was recovering. Indeed, when, at her urging, the family removed to the country house where she had spent her childhood, there was a real and marked improvement, and for a while the roses seemed to return to her pale cheeks.

But she soon fell back into her listless state. Thus she lingered on for several months, always cheering her father and speaking of her happy future, always fading away until she became a mere shadow of her former bright and healthy self. Only to Denoisel, when after a long absence he returned from the Pyrenees, she opened her heart. To him she confessed that she knew her days were counted.

Those who travel far afield have perhaps met in foreign towns or among the ruins of dead places—now in Russia, now in Egypt—two aged people, a man and a woman,

who seem to march along without looking and without seeing. They are the Mauperins —father and mother.

They have sold everything and have gone. Thus they wander from land to land, from hotel to hotel. They wander, trying to lose their grief in the fatigue of the road, dragging their weary life to all the corners of the globe.

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* * * * *

JAMES GRANT

Bothwell

The author of “Bothwell,” and many other romantic tales, was a Scotsman by birth, parentage, and perfervid sentiment. He was born at Edinburgh on August 1, 1822. His father was a distinguished Highland officer; by his mother he was related to his illustrious literary exemplar, Sir Walter Scott. He was only twenty-three years of age when “The Romance of War” made him one of the most famous authors of his day. Other tales quickly followed, including, in 1853, “Bothwell, or The Days of Mary Queen of Scots,” and it seemed as if readers could not have too much of the lively adventure and vigorous historical portraiture to which Grant unfailingly treated them. Altogether he wrote more than fifty novels, many of them involving considerable research. Grant outlived his popularity; the public sought new writers, and when he died, on May 5, 1887, he was penniless. For fertility of incident, rapid change of scene, and skilful intermingling of historical with imaginary people and events, “Bothwell” is not surpassed by any of the romances that came from its author’s fertile pen.

I.—Anna of Bergen

Erick Rosenkrantz, Governor of Aggerhuis, in Norway, and castellan of Bergen, stood in the hall of his castle to welcome noble guests. It was a bleak and stormy day in September of 1565. Ill, indeed, would it have fared with the newcomers had not Konrad of the Salzberg, the young captain of the crossbowmen of Bergen, ventured forth on the raging sea at the peril of his life, and piloted their vessel into safety.

The first of these was a tall and handsome man, about thirty years old, with a peculiar, dare-devil expression in his deep, dark eye, richly attired, and wearing a long sword and Scottish dagger. His companion, who deferentially remained a few paces behind, was a man of gigantic stature, swarthy and dark in complexion, with fierce and restless eyes.

“Sir Erick,” began the chamberlain, “allow me to introduce Sir James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, a noble peer, ambassador from Mary Queen of Scots to his Danish majesty.”

“We thank you for your gracious hospitality, fair sir,” said Bothwell, with a profound courtesy; then, turning to Konrad, “And now, brave youth, by whose valour we have been saved, let me thank *you*.”

He warmly shook Konrad’s hand, while the youth tried to catch the eye of Anna, the governor’s fair-haired and lovely niece. But Anna was too intently regarding the strangers.

Suddenly Bothwell perceived her; his colour heightened, his eyes sparkled.

“Anna—Lady Anna,” he exclaimed, “art *thou* here? When we parted at the palace of King Frederick, I feared it was to meet no more.”

“Thou seest, my lord,” she replied gaily, “that fate never meant to separate us altogether.”

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It was Bothwell who sat by Anna's side at the banquet, not Konrad, her lover from childhood. Konrad was displaced and slighted; he left the hall with a heart full of jealous and bitter thoughts.

"Dost thou not see the hand of fate in this meeting with Anna?" said Bothwell, when retiring, to his gigantic companion, Black Hob of Ormiston, the most merciless and ferocious of border barons.

"Nay," said Hob; "I perceive only the finger of mischief!"

"I own to thee," replied the earl, "that all my old passion is revived in full force. My whole heart and soul are hers," he went on passionately.

"Remember your solemn plight to the Lady Jane Gordon. If that be broken, our doleful case will be worse than ever." For Bothwell was no ambassador, but an exile; and his real mission to King Frederick was in pursuit of a design to hand over the northern Scottish isles to Denmark, and become viceroy of them.

"Hob, be not insolent," retorted Bothwell. "I love her a thousand times more than Huntly's sickly sister."

It was always thus with this reckless noble—the passion of the moment was ever too strong for past pledges and future policy. While waiting at Bergen for the ship to be repaired, he wooed Anna with all the skill of an accomplished man of pleasure.

Anna's heart was ready to be won, and it was not long ere Bothwell, having gained her love, asked Governor Rosenkrantz for her hand. To his mortification, he was refused. Anna, said the governor, had long been pledged to Konrad.

But Konrad, meanwhile, was in despair. Anna no longer smiled upon him; he was lightly cast aside to make way for a more favoured lover. One evening he was missing. A day and a night passed, and Konrad was nowhere to be seen. Search for him was useless—he had disappeared.

Two letters were brought to Bothwell by a king's messenger. One was from King Frederick, commanding him to desist from his mock embassy, and instantly leave the Danish seas; the other, from the Earl of Huntly, told him that his enemies in Scotland were banished, and his forfeiture reversed.

Bothwell's thoughts instantly turned to Anna. He knew that she would not accompany him unless he married her, and policy now more than ever required that he should keep his troth to the sister of his friend, the Earl of Huntly. Then there occurred to him the sinister thought of a mock marriage.

His actions were quick, and his persuasions, to the love-sick Anna, irresistible. That evening the two were wedded by a crazy hermit who dwelt among the rocks of the fjord, and Anna, without a word of farewell to her kin, left her native land, it might be for ever.

A stormy voyage brought the ship to Westeray, in Shetland. Bothwell escorted Anna to the castle of Noltland; and as she landed at the pier, a young man sprang forward and helped her across the plank. She felt agitated, she knew not why; she looked at the man's face, but it was concealed. It was Konrad. He had fallen over a cliff, had been carried out to sea on a plank, had been picked up by a ship which had carried him to Shetland, and had taken service with the castellan of Noltland. The unexpected sight of Anna brought back his emotions to their starting-point, and recalled the poignancy of the hour in which he had realised that he had lost her.

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II.—Bothwell Castle

“I have resolved!” exclaimed the earl, on the morning after their arrival at Noltland. “I would be worse than mad to forego the prospect of power by marring my union with the sister of Huntly.”

“Cock and pie! now thou speakest like a man of mettle!” growled Hob.

“Anna is not my first love,” mused the earl. “Have I not felt how feeble have been my sentiments for Anna, for Jane of Huntly, for all who have succeeded her whom I met in France long ago?”

“Then thou wilt sail——”

“Yes, like AEneas, leaving my Dido behind me.”

With a pretence of the love he felt no longer, Bothwell bade Anna farewell, and left her to doubts which, as the months went on and his promise to return was not fulfilled, gradually rose to despair.

During the decline of a spring evening, as Anna wandered dejectedly on the battlements, Konrad stood before her for the first time since her arrival at Noltland.

“Konrad,” she faltered, “thou here!”

“Anna—dear Anna!” exclaimed the unhappy young man. “I have tidings to tell thee. The false lord of Bothwell hath been espoused to the sister of Huntly!”

“And I—” gasped Anna.

“Thou art a captive for life in this island castle!”

Anna would have fallen backwards had Konrad not sprung to her assistance.

“Listen,” he said, in a low voice. “If thou wouldst escape, an hour will set thee free.”

“Yes, land me once in Scotland, and I will make my way to Bothwell.”

That night Anna was on a Norwegian vessel bound for Glasgow, and Konrad was with her. She could not, he knew, be his bride, but he could at least protect and cherish her, and strive to redress the wrongs she had suffered.

A storm was gathering above the lovely valley of the Clyde one June evening as two strangers—a man and a woman—plodded wearily towards Bothwell Castle. The woman became wholly exhausted; the man laid her gently down in shelter among the

ruins of Blantyre Priory, and went on his errand alone. The storm had now burst, and the river was rising rapidly; but Konrad—for it was he—plunged into the raging waters, and strove to swim across. The current was too strong for him; he clung to an ash tree that projected over the stream, and was nearly exhausted when a man on the bank flung down his mantle and poniard, plunged in, and dragged him to the shore.

Konrad, almost senseless, was carried within the castle. When he had revived and was dressed in dry garments, he was brought before his rescuer—it was Bothwell himself.

“I thank thee,” said Konrad proudly, “for saving my life.”

“Thou didst save mine. We are now equal,” replied the earl.

“’Tis well! I would not be *thy* debtor for all the silver in the mines of Bergen! Lord of Bothwell, I tell thee in thine own hall that thou art a dishonoured villain!”

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“Thou art stark mad!” cried the earl. Then he went on, “Konrad, I have wronged thee deeply. In my youth I loved one who neglected me as cruelly as thou hast been neglected, and since then a mischievous spirit of vengeance, as it were, has led me to make women my playthings, to be won and thrown aside. I love thy spirit, Konrad. If I could be thy friend——”

“Never!” cried Konrad. “I come not for friendship, but for justice to Anna! Hast thou not wedded another after thine espousal of her?”

“Dost thou deem the mock blessing of yon mad hermit a spousal rite?” exclaimed the earl, laughing.

Konrad repressed his passion.

“I go to push my fortune with your turbulent border chiefs; and if, in the strife that will soon convulse this land, thou meetest Konrad of Salzberg, look well to thyself!”

“Go thy way, and God be with thee!” replied the earl. “Thou art the first who hath bent a dark brow on a lord of Bothwell under his own roof-tree.”

Konrad returned to Anna, and in the ruined priory told her how Bothwell was false to her. Anna’s grief was dreadful to behold.

“Anna,” said Konrad, after a pause, “Scotland hath a queen whose goodness of heart is revered in every land save her own.”

“True; and at her feet will I pour forth my sorrow and my tears together.”

So the two traversed the thickets around the priory, and reached the broad highway, which was to lead them at length to Edinburgh.

III.—Mary Queen of Scots

But it was long ere Anna looked upon the face of the queen. At the Red Lion Inn in Edinburgh her beauty struck the eye of the Earl of Morton, the factious, proud, and ferocious associate of Moray in all the dark intrigues of that craftiest of Scottish statesmen. Morton promised that Anna should be entrusted to a lady of fair repute, and soon presented to the queen. Konrad trusted him, little knowing that the repute of Dame Alison Craig, Anna’s new guardian, was anything but fair, and set forth for the Border.

It was to Sir John Elliot of Park that he offered the service of his sword, for it was against this turbulent borderer, who had just raided Northumberland, and threatened the peace of the two kingdoms, that Bothwell was advancing with the army of Queen Mary. Now garrisoning some solitary peel-tower, now hiding in some unfathomed cavern, now

issuing with uplifted lance from the haggs of some deep moss, Konrad engaged with ardour in every desperate foray, and his daring made him the idol of the wild spirits around him. In every deed of arms one thought was in his mind—to come within a lance-length of Bothwell.

Long and fierce was the struggle, but it ended as a fight so unequal was bound to end. John of Park was slain, refusing with his dying breath to surrender, and Konrad was carried, a half-senseless captive to Bothwell's castle of Hermitage. Even then the earl spared his life. He lay in a hideous den, in pitch darkness and dead silence broken only by the splash of drops of fetid water that fell from the slimy arch of the vault.

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No token reached him of what was happening above; and an event happened there that had vast influence on Bothwell's future. Across the hills to Hermitage rode the Queen of Scots herself. The sight of her stirred in Bothwell's heart an emotion he had never wholly conquered, for she, Mary herself, was his first love of the bygone days in France. He had begun to realise that he loved her still; he knew the coldness of her relations with the dissolute and unfaithful Darnley, her husband; now she had come to Hermitage.

"Jesu Maria!" cried the queen, as Bothwell, with beating heart, paused in the conversation. "Have you lost your tongue?"

"Nay, madame—my heart."

"That is very serious; but search for another."

"I want no other," replied the earl, in a trembling voice, "but *thine*!"

"Lord Bothwell," she said, with a hauteur that froze her admirer, "thou art in a dream."

"Pardon me, I pray you—"

"I do pardon thee," replied the queen, with a calm smile; but added, significantly, "I think 'tis time I was riding from Hermitage."

So ended the famous visit to Hermitage, which was interpreted throughout Scotland as a token of Mary's love for her favourite earl.

Konrad, a month afterwards, was sent to Edinburgh and confined in the old tower of Holyrood, awaiting trial as a Border outlaw. Bothwell himself soon followed, and celebrated his return by a wild revel in company with Hob of Ormiston and other choice spirits.

As the revellers wandered through the narrow streets at midnight, seeking a quarrel, they passed the house of Dame Alison Craig.

"My page tells me," said Bothwell, "there is a famous foreign beauty concealed there. Ho! within!"

A stoup of water, poured on them from an upper window, was the answer. They broke open the door, and forced the shrieking dame to lead them to the apartment where the foreign beauty was hidden.

"Death and confusion!" muttered the earl when he saw who was within.

"Cock and pie!" said Ormiston. "We have started the wrong game."

Hastily they thrust back their companions. But Anna had recognised him. When Morton had made advances towards her, she had repulsed him scornfully, telling him she was the Countess of Bothwell. Morton had seized on this opportunity of injuring a man he hated, and resolved to bring Anna before the queen. Bothwell now knew the danger before him, and prepared for it.

Next day, as the queen sat with her grim lords in council, Morton led in Anna.

“I have the pleasure,” said he, “to present a lady who accuseth the Earl of Bothwell of wedding and ignobly deserting her.”

“’Tis false, Lord Earl!” cried Bothwell.

“Oh, madam, hear my story, and condemn me not unheard,” pleaded Anna.

“Let her speak for herself,” said Mary.

Thus encouraged, Anna, in moving accents, told her story.

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“A meloncholy tale, in sooth,” said Mary; “but what proof is there?”

“Your majesty,” said Bothwell, “this is the invention of some unknown enemy”—he glanced at Morton—“to deprive me of your royal favour. Let this frantic damsel be removed to a Danish vessel now at Leith, and conveyed to her home.”

“Well, so be it!” replied the facile queen.

Anna drew herself up to her full height.

“Farewell, Bothwell,” she cried. “In that dark time of ruin and regret that is coming upon thee, remember Anna!”

And as she spoke they hurried her away.

Bothwell henceforth was more than ever in the queen’s favour. Only the life of Darnley intervened between him and the goal of his love and ambition; and the sinister promptings of Ormiston suggested that even that obstacle was not irremovable.

IV.—The Kirk of Field

On a dark winter night a conference of nobles was held at Whittinghame. Mary had been asked to divorce her husband, and had proudly and indignantly refused. Only one way remained. A solemn bond was drawn up among the assembled nobles, and the bond sealed the fate of Darnley. It was not without doubt and shrinking that Bothwell saw whither his schemes were leading him, but he would not, he could not, turn back.

It was at Ormiston’s suggestion that Konrad was employed as an unconscious tool in the affair. Ormiston hinted that with a little adroitness the whole blame might be laid on the unhappy prisoner. Konrad accordingly, on the night when the deed was to be done, was awakened from a reverie in his cell at Holyrood by the entry of a tall, masked figure.

“If thou wouldst attain liberty, follow me!” said Ormiston, for it was he.

He put a sword in Konrad’s hand. Konrad as he grasped the weapon, felt his spirits rise again, and he followed.

Presently they came to a group of masked men, and silently the party went through a private door in the city walls. Their destination, though Konrad knew it not, was the lonely house of the Kirk of Field, where Darnley was lying slowly recovering from small-pox—an illness through which the queen, forgetting her wrongs at his hands, had tenderly nursed him.

Konrad, arrived at the house, helped to unload a horse of heavy packages which he conjectured to contain plunder; but it was gunpowder that he unwittingly handled.

Suddenly a piercing cry came from above. A moment later the startled Konrad perceived Bothwell, his mask awry, his eyes glazed and haggard.

“Thou hast done well!” said Ormiston grimly.

“Well! My God!” groaned the earl.

“Away while I fire the train!” shouted Ormiston.

Like a fiery serpent the train glowed along the ground. Then, red and lurid in the shadowy night, there flashed a volume of dazzling light; then came a roar as if the earth was splitting.

Konrad fled in bewildered terror, and wandered about the outskirts of the city until, in a little ruined chapel on the verge of a moor, he lay down exhausted and fell asleep.

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In the morning he was awakened by a rough grasp on his shoulder.

“We have meshed one of the knaves at least,” said a stern voice. Konrad found himself amidst knights and men-at-arms, and he was led back to the city.

The citizens were in arms, furious at the outrage of the night before. The appearance of a suspected murderer aroused their passion to the utmost; Konrad’s escort was overpowered and thrust aside. “Awa’ wi’ him to the Papist’s pillar!” cried a voice. Down they went with him to the North Loch, and tied him there to an oaken stake about five feet deep in the water—a spot where many a luckless Catholic had perished. The mob retired, and Konrad was left alone, helpless, and to die.

Bothwell sat by the fire in his apartments at Holyrood, with knit brows and muttering lips; the word he muttered was, “Murderer.” The shriek of the man whose death-blow he had struck still echoed in his ears.

Presently there entered the room one of his followers, Hepburn of Bolton.

“The Norwegian hath been bound to the Papist’s pillar,” said he; “and by this time he must be dead, for it rains heavily, and the loch fills fast.”

“One other life!” said the earl gloomily. “By heaven, Bolton! if I can save him—come!”

In the darkness and the rain, with the water rising around him, Konrad waited for death. A sound of oars roused him from the stupefaction into which he had fallen. “Here, here! His head is above water still,” said a voice. The bonds were cut, Konrad was dragged into the boat and taken to land, and offered a draught that revived him.

“Here we part,” said the voice. “Give him dry garments, and take him to the Norwegian vessel, and bid him cross my path no more!”

“Who art thou?” asked Konrad feebly.

“Thy greatest enemy, James, Earl of Bothwell!”

Slowly Konrad mounted the horse that had been brought for him, and with difficulty he rode; but the morning saw him on board a vessel of Bergen, in the hands of countrymen and friends.

Bothwell was tried for the murder of Darnley, and triumphantly acquitted. He procured the secret assent of the nobles to his marriage with Mary; he divorced the Countess Jane; one more vigorous action, and the goal would be attained.

On an April day, as Mary rode along the Stirling road towards Edinburgh, her way was barred by a thousand armed horsemen in close array; and Bothwell, riding up,

requested that she should accompany him to his castle of Dunbar. It was useless to resist. Once in the castle, Bothwell offered her his hand, and was proudly refused.

“Lord Earl,” cried Mary, “thou mayest tremble when I leave Dunbar!”

“Madame,” he replied, “thou shalt never leave Dunbar but as the bride of Bothwell!”

In May, Mary and Bothwell were married. A month later Bothwell fled before the wrath of an outraged nation, never to see Mary again; and within a week of their parting he roamed a pirate on the northern seas.

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V.—Nemesis

A large Danish war vessel approached the port of Bergen, with prisoners to hand over to the castellan—the new castellan, for old Erick Rosenkrantz was dead. Chief of the captives was Bothwell, nonchalant but melancholy, pale, and more thoughtful than formerly; still, in pleasure and in sorrow, was he haunted by the shriek of the dying Darnley.

Near him stood one who was not a captive, but a returning wanderer. Konrad had again crossed the path of the earl; his vessel, long detained in port, and afterwards delayed by storms, had been captured by the Scottish pirate ship, and he had been rescued from this new misfortune by the great Norwegian war vessel.

The prisoners were escorted to the hall of the castle, and Bothwell assumed his most defiant look. The arras that concealed the dais was withdrawn, and Bothwell looked upon the face of the hereditary castellan of Bergen, Anna Rosenkrantz!

On seeing the earl, she turned pale as death. The earl recovered instantly from his surprise, and bowed smilingly.

“Well, madam,” said he, “we foresaw not this meeting!”

“Dost thou know,” replied Anna firmly, “that thy life and liberty are in my power?”

“I am assured,” he answered, “that they could not be in safer keeping.”

“Regicide and betrayer,” return Anna, with flashing eyes, “from this hour thou shalt have meted out to thee the stern measures thou hast so ruthlessly dealt to others. This man,” she went on, turning to the captain of the war ship, “is the king’s prisoner; away with him to the Castle of Kiobenhafen—be under sail before sunset!”

Red-bearded Danish bowmen crowded round the earl, who thus passed away to the wretched captivity that ended only with his death, ten years afterwards.

Konrad, unnoticed and uncared for, stood alone in the hall where he had once been so welcome a guest. He had no intention of remaining in a place where all was so changed; but ere he turned to leave it for ever he paused a moment irresolutely. Once more the arras was withdrawn, and Anna stood before him.

“I heard thou wert here, Konrad,” she said, with a blushing cheek. “Wouldst thou go without one word to me?”

She seated herself in the recess of a window. “I have long wished,” she faltered, “to see thee once more. I have now seen the worth and faith of thy heart when contrasted with mine own, and I blush for my weakness—my wickedness—my folly. Thou mayest deem

this unwomanly—indelicate; but in love we are equal, and why may not one make reparation as the other?"

"Anna," said Konrad, in a choking voice, "though my heart be soured and saddened, my first sentiment for thee hath never altered. For all thou hast made me endure I forgive thee, and I pray that thou mayest be happy. Anna—dearest Anna—I am going far away, for I have doomed myself to exile, but I still regard thee as a sister—as a friend. All is forgotten and forgiven. And now, farewell!"

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He felt the hand of Anna in his; another moment, and she sank upon his breast.

“Oh, Konrad,” she whispered, “if my heart is still prized by thee, it is thine, as in the days of our first love.”

And, borne away by his passion, the forgiving Konrad pressed the woman he loved closer and closer to his breast.