The World's Greatest Books — Volume 05 — Fiction eBook

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MAXWELL GRAY

The Silence of Dean Maitland

Mary Gleed Tuttiett, the gifted lady who writes under the pseudonym of "Maxwell Gray," was born at Newport, Isle of Wight. The daughter of Mr. F.B. Tuttiett, M.R.C.S., she began her literary career by contributing essays, poems, articles, and short stones to various periodicals. With the appearance of "The Silence of Dean Maitland," in 1886, Maxwell Gray's name was immediately and permanently established in the front rank of living novelists. The story and its problem, dramatically set forth, and with rare literary art, became one of the most discussed themes of the day. Since that time Maxwell Gray has produced a number of stories, among them being "The Reproach of Annesley" (1888), "The Last Sentence" (1893), "The House of Hidden Treasure" (1898), and "The Great Refusal" (1906), and also several volumes of poems. This little version of "The Silence of Dean Maitland" has been prepared by Miss Tuttiett herself.

I.—Impending Tragedy

The story opens on a grey October afternoon in the Isle of Wight, in the 'sixties. Alma Lee, the coachman's handsome young daughter, is toiling up a steep hill overlooking Chalkburne, tired and laden with parcels from the town. As she leans on a gate, Judkins, a fellow-servant of her father's, drives up in a smart dog-cart, and offers her a lift home. She refuses scornfully, to the young groom's mortification; he drives off, hurt by her coquetry and prophesying that pride goes before a fall.

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Then a sound of bells is heard—a waggon drawn by a fine bell-team climbs the hill, and stops by Alma. She accepts the waggoner's offer of a lift, and on reaching the gate of her home in the dusk, is distressed by his insistence on a kiss in payment, when out of the tree-shadows steps Cyril Maitland, the graceful and gifted son of the rector of Malbourne, newly ordained deacon.

He rebukes the waggoner, rescues Alma, and escorts her across a field to her father's cottage. There he is welcomed with respectful affection as the rector's son and Alma's former playmate. Afterwards she lights him to the gate, where a chance word of his evokes from her an innocent and unconscious betrayal of her secret love, kindling such strong response in him as he cannot conquer except by touching a letter in his breast-pocket. This letter is from Marion Everard, to whom he has been a year engaged.

He walks through the dark to Malbourne Rectory, where, by the fire, he finds his invalid mother, his twin sister, Lilian, and two younger children. Here he appears the idol of the hearth—genial, graceful, gifted, beautiful, and warm-hearted. But he betrays ambition, sudden and great haste to be married, and some selfishness. He walks to his lodging in a neighbouring village, where trifling circumstances point to a refined sensuousness, self-indulgence, and sophistry in his character, leading to the neglect of serious duty. The shadow of impending tragedy is hinted at from the first line of the book.

December in the following year. Cyril now an East End curate, and Henry Everard, M.D., going by rail to Malbourne. Everard asleep; manly, cheerful, intellectual, healthy in body and mind. Cyril awake; consumed by unspeakable sorrow. Everard wakes; Cyril suddenly becomes gay in response to his friend's high spirits. They chaff each other. Cyril preaches to Everard, when Henry scolds him for fasting, and his laxity of faith and practice. They pass Belminster, when Cyril betrays unconscious ambition at Everard's jesting prophecy that he would preach as bishop in the cathedral. Asceticism is defended by Cyril and condemned by Everard. Cyril speaks of the discipline of sorrow, and presses a spiked cross under his clothes into his side. Everard exalts the discipline of joy. The friends have been privately educated together, and were together at Cambridge. Henry admires Cyril's character and mental brilliance; Cyril regards Henry with condescending affection. Everard is silently in love with Lilian.

Cyril and Everard in the meantime have arrived at Malbourne Rectory. Cyril and Marion, who have not met since a quarrel, are alone together. She wonders that he makes so much of the little tiff. He talks of his unworthiness, and makes her promise to cleave to him through good and *evil* report. At dinner, Everard asks for all the villagers, and gathers that Alma Lee is disgraced. "Alma, little Alma, the child we used to play with!" he cries afterwards to the men Maitlands. "Who is the scoundrel?" Cyril grows impatient under the discussion that follows. "After all, *she is not the first!*" he says at last, to Everard's indignation.

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Sunday. All classes meeting on the way to church, when Cyril preaches for the first time to his friends and neighbours, who throng to hear him. He preaches with passionate earnestness upon the beauty of innocence and the agony of losing it. “That once lost,” he says, “the old careless joy of youth never returns.”

The village parliament in the moonlit churchyard after service comment with humour on the sermon, and on Cyril’s eloquence, learning, and good heart. Granfer, the village oracle, prophesies that the queen will make a bishop of him. Ben Lee, talking with Judkins by the harness-room fire, supposes that Cyril was thinking of Alma in his sermon. “He always had a kind heart.” But Judkins speaks of his suspicions of Everard as Alma’s betrayer, alludes to his frequent visits to Mrs.

Lee during her illness some months ago, and his constant meeting with Alma. Lee is convinced of Everard’s guilt. “I’ll kill him!” he cries furiously.

II.—Sin-Engendered Sin

It is a lovely winter’s day, and Cyril, Lilian, and Everard are walking through the woods at the back of Lee’s cottage. Cyril puts something into a hollow tree, and intimates a chaffinch’s call. Another bird replies. Cyril walks on to Oldport, leaving Everard and Lilian, between whom there follows a warm love scene and betrothal. During this episode Mrs. Lee, Alma’s stepmother, tells her husband that Alma is gone to meet her unknown lover in the wood at the signal of a chaffinch’s call. Lee follows, and finds Alma there *alone*. He picks up a paper she had torn and dropped; it contains an assignation for that evening at dusk. Before luncheon Everard changes the grey suit he was wearing, and had stained in a muddy ditch. He goes to a lonely cottage on the downs in the afternoon; returning in the evening, he gets a black eye while romping with little Winnie Maitland. After bathing the eye, he sponges the stained suit, and is surprised to find blood on it. Cyril has been absent in Oldport all day, and on his return goes to bed with a headache, speaking to nobody. A man in Henry’s grey suit passes through the hall at dusk, followed by the cat, who never runs after anyone but Lilian and Cyril.

That evening, New Year’s eve, there is a gay party of rustics at the wheelwright’s house. In the midst of Granfer’s best story in rushes Grove, the waggoner, crying that Ben Lee had just been found murdered in the wood. The same night Alma gives birth to a son.

Next day, Cyril, in great mental anguish, goes to Admiral Everard’s house, and incidentally puts to a brother clergyman there a case of conscience: Should a man who has acted unwisely, and is guilty of unintentional homicide, imperil a useful and brilliant career by confession? Not if he had such great gifts and opportunities of doing good as Cyril has, he is told. By this pronouncement and a love scene with Marion, Cyril is much comforted.

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In the meantime, Ben Lee's death is by many being imputed to Everard, who is quite unconscious of these suspicions. He is much surprised at the appearance of policemen at the rectory that afternoon, and still more so at being arrested on the charge of murdering Lee.

After due examination, Everard is committed for trial on the charge of murder. His best witness, Granfer, who had seen and spoken with him in the village at the moment of the alleged murder, greatly discredited his evidence by his circumlocution and stupidity, purposely affected to set the court in a roar. He admitted that Everard gave him money and tobacco. Judkins swore that at three o'clock Lee told him Everard had asked Alma to meet him at dusk that evening in the wood, and that he—Lee—meant to follow Everard there and exact reparation from him; that Alma and Everard were known to be together in the wood on the morning of Lee's death (when Everard was with Lilian), and that he himself had seen them meet often clandestinely in the spring during Mrs. Lee's illness, when letters, books, and flowers had passed between them. On the eve of Lee's death he had seen Everard go into the copse at dusk carrying a heavy stick.

Ingram Swaynestone, Grove, the waggoner, and Stevens, the Sexton, all saw Everard going on the upland path to Swaynestone. But the blacksmith swore to seeing him in the village street at the same hour. A keeper saw him going to the copse at the same time that a shepherd met him on the down going in another direction. At five o'clock two rectory maids saw Everard run in by the back door and upstairs, followed by the cat; he made no reply when Miss Maitland spoke to him. An hour later, Everard asked the cook for raw meat for a black eye, which he said he got by running against a tree in the dark. Blood was found in a basin in his room, and on the grey suit, which was much stained and torn, as if by a struggle. A handkerchief of Everard's was found in the wood, also a stick he had been seen with in the morning.

Everard's evidence at the inquest was that he left Malbourne Rectory about four, wearing a black coat, met the blacksmith in the village, and the shepherd on the down, and finding the cottage on the down empty, returned, seeing no one till he met Granfer at Malbourne Cross, and reached the rectory at six, where a romp with Winnie Maitland gave him the black eye, that he promised her not to speak about. He could not account for the blood found on his clothes.

Cyril is much shocked by the verdict and committal of Everard, but is sure that he will be cleared. "He must be cleared," he says, "*at any cost*." Pending the assize trial, he baptises three unknown babes in Malbourne Church. When asking the name of one of the children in his arms, he is told "Benjamin Lee." His evident deep emotion at this evokes sympathy from all present. During the trial at Belminster he has a great spiritual conflict in the cathedral while a fugue of Bach's is played on the organ, suggesting a combat between the powers of evil and good. But he feels that he *cannot* renounce his brilliant prospects. Coming out, he hears that Alma has declared Everard is the man

who was with her father when he met his death in the struggle she heard while outside the copse.

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Cyril at once rushes to the court, which he had only left for an hour, just in time to hear the verdict, “Manslaughter.”

“Stop!” he cries. “I have evidence—the prisoner is innocent!”

The judge, not understanding what he says, orders his removal; his friends, thinking him distracted, persuade him to be quiet while the utmost sentence—twenty years—is given. On hearing this, Cyril, with a loud cry, falls senseless. He remains in delirium many weeks. A pathetic farewell between Henry and Lilian, who is the only believer in his innocence, and who renews her promise to him, closes the first part.

The tragedy, faintly foreshadowed from the first line, and gradually developed from Cyril’s self-righteousness and irrepressible joy in Alma’s unguarded betrayal of unconscious passion, has darkened the whole story. Sin has engendered sin. Cyril’s noble purpose to devote himself entirely to his high calling, and be worthy of it, has become pitiless ambition.

His self-respect, spiritual pride and egoism; his ready tact, social charm, and power of psychological analysis, subtle sophistry and self-deception; his warmest affection, disguised self-love; his finest qualities perverted lead to his lowest fall.

His weak and belated attempt to right Alma’s wrong has killed her father. Alma’s desecrated love has turned to fierce idolatry, laying waste Lilian’s happiness, and working Henry’s complete ruin. Cyril’s cowardice has delayed clearing his friend till it is too late to save him.

> Not poppy, not mandragora,
> Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world

will ever medicine again to him that sweet sleep he had before his guilt.

III.—The Darkness of a Prison

A summer Sunday two years later. Alma and her child in a cornfield, listening to bells ringing for Cyril’s homecoming with his bride. All the softness and youth gone from Alma’s tragic face, and the last gleams of penitence from her heart, since her perjury. Jealousy is prompting her to go and tell Marion all. But Judkins comes and interrupts these wild thoughts. He offers marriage, rehabilitation, and a home in America. She hesitates. She is shunned by all, and can get no work in Malbourne, but has not been destitute; money has found its way mysteriously to her cottage. So for the child’s sake she accepts.

Tea on the rectory lawn. Lilian is thinking of the prisoner, Lennie wondering aloud, “How does Alma *like* having to go to hell for lying about Henry?” Cyril is terribly agitated at this. He has scarcely yet recovered from his long mental illness after Henry’s

sentence. Marion is *not happy*—she may never allude to Henry. The slightest reference to him makes Cyril ill. Later, in the moonlight, Ingram Swaynestone asks Lilian, whom he has always loved, to marry him. He cannot believe that she is secretly engaged to Henry. She points towards Henry's prison. "I am all that man has on earth, and I love him!" she says.

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Nine years later. Convicts pulling down the old walls of Portsmouth. An officer's funeral passes by. No. 62—Henry—overhears people speaking of the manner of the officer's death, and his name, Major Everard. Tears fall on the convict's hands as he works. No. 62's father is port admiral. Alma's perjury in court had revealed all to Henry, and reduced him to apathetic despair. "There is no God—no good anywhere!" he cried. But in time Lilian's periodic letters gave him heart and hope, and he had accepted his fate bravely, trying to lift up and cheer his fellow-prisoners. In the darkness and uproar of a thunderstorm he escapes from the guarded works. His adventures, during which he comes accidentally and unrecognized in contact with his brother's widow, his sister, and her children, who prattle of family matters in his hearing, and, after a few weeks' wandering, by his being recaptured while lying on the roadside unconscious from hunger and exhaustion. This part of the story concludes with the reception of this news by Lilian and Cyril, whose unintentional neglect has caused the miscarriage of a letter that would have enabled Henry to escape.

IV.—"I Will Confess my Wickedness"

Everard is free, and, wearing the grey suit of a discharged prisoner, is travelling from Dartmoor to London by train. Marion, his brother, Leslie, Mrs. Maitland, and the admiral are all dead. Everything is strange and changed to him. Liberty is sweet and bitter. He is prematurely aged and broken down; the great future that had been before him is now for ever impossible. His still undeveloped scientific theories and discoveries have been anticipated by others. He feels the prison taint upon him; he will not see Lilian until it is removed, and he has become accustomed to the bewilderment of freedom.

After a few days' pause he starts from London for Malbourne, stopping at Belminster, through which he had made his last free journey with Cyril, when he told him that "an ascetic is a rake turned monk." Passing the gaol in which he had suffered so much, he goes to the cathedral. He asks who is now Dean of Belminster.

The verger is surprised. "Where have you been, sir, not to have heard of the celebrated Dean Maitland?" The great dean! The books he has written, the things he has done! All the world knows Dean Maitland, the greatest preacher in the Church of England.

The deanery interior. Cyril, charming and adored as ever, is considering whether he shall accept the historic bishopric of Warham. A strange youth from America is announced, and asks the dean to give him a university education—"because I am your son." "Since when," returns the dean tranquilly, "have you been suffering from this distressing illusion?" The youth bears a letter from Alma. She is dying in Belminster, and implores him to come to her. She cannot die, she writes, till she has cleared Everard. After this terrible scene Cyril is in agony, and nearly commits suicide. "But one sin in a life so spotless!" he moans. The same evening Everard, overwhelmed with accounts of Cyril's good deeds and spiritual counsels, and examining with mingled awe

and pity the numerous books he has written, goes to hear one of the Anglican Chrysostom's lectures to working men in the cathedral.

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The music heard by Cyril during his mental conflict there years before is being played. Cyril thinks Lee's death and Henry's suffering the work of Fate, since in wearing Everard's clothes he had no thought of impersonating him, but only of avoiding the publicity of clerical dress; nor had he dreamed of meeting or of struggling with Ben Lee. Meaning to go to Alma, who is already dead, later on that night, Cyril preaches upon the sin of Judas, with great power and passion. "I charge you, my brothers, beware of *self-deception!*" Everard pities him; he feels that his own eighteen years' sufferings were nothing in comparison with Cyril's secret tortures. Suddenly the preacher stops with a low cry of agony. He has caught Everard's eye. He wishes the cathedral would fall and crush him. "I am not well," he says, leaving the pulpit. Everard writes him a letter that night, saying he has long known and forgiven all; he asks Cyril to use his own secret repentance and unspoken agony for the spiritual help of others.

The dean receives and reads the letter at breakfast next morning. He then shuts himself alone in his study for several hours. Then he takes leave of his blind son and only surviving daughter—all the other children died in infancy—and sends them away to a relative. Everard, after waiting vainly for Cyril's answer, goes to Malbourne. He travels in the same carriage as the judge who had sentenced him, and tells him that he was innocent, but is unable to clear himself. Nobody recognises him at Malbourne. He hears his case discussed at the village inn, where he stops an hour, too much agitated to go to the rectory. "He never done it," is the general verdict.

Then follows the pathetic meeting of Henry and Lilian. Mr. Maitland had gradually ceased to believe in his guilt. "But I could never forgive the man who let you suffer in his stead," he says. Lilian shudders at this. Cyril is discussed. "Our dear Chrysostom; our golden-mouth!"

Next day, Sunday, old friends welcome Everard. He has a great reception from the villagers. Lilian presses him to say who was the guilty man. Mark Antony, the cat, is still alive. "Only once did Mark make a mistake," she says, "when he ran after *that grey figure in the dusk*. Else he never ran after any but myself and Cyril. Henry, you *know* who killed Ben Lee. Tell me," she sobs, "oh, tell me it was not *he!*" Henry cannot tell her. Lilian is deeply distressed. "His burden was heavier than mine," Henry says. He comforts her.

The same day, at morning prayer, Cyril enters the cathedral. The organ is playing Mendelssohn's "O Lord, have mercy upon me!" The cathedral is packed with people of all degrees, known and unknown, friends and strangers. The thought that all these will soon know his shame turns Cyril sick. The faces of all those he has injured rise and reproach him. He goes through another great spiritual conflict, but his soul emerges at last, stripped of

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all pretence, in the awful presence of his Maker, shuddering with the shame of its uncovered sin, and alone. He nerves himself to an effort beyond his strength, as he stands in the pulpit before the innumerable gaze of the vast congregation, by holding Henry's letter as a talisman in his hand. Thus he preaches his last and greatest sermon. "I will confess my wickedness, and be sorry for my sin." This he does literally. He tells the whole story in detail, but without names, sometimes unable to go on for agony and shame, sometimes with tears streaming from his eyes. He tells it there that all may take warning from him. He intends to give himself up to justice as soon as possible. He does not spare himself. Since his first sin, he says, "I have not had one happy hour." He never repented, though always consumed with remorse, until his friend forgave him. "That broke my stony heart," he says. The congregation are deeply moved and horrified. Many think he is under a delusion caused by sorrow for his friend, and mental strain. Having finished in the usual way, he sat down in the pulpit, and neither spoke nor moved again. There he was found later, dead.

Next day Henry, who deeply moved, has watched by the dead body of the dean in his library, has to break the news of Cyril's death to Mr. Maitland, in the very room in which Mr. Maitland had accused him of Cyril's crime and given him up to the police. The adoring father's mind gives way under the blow, his memory is permanently confused, and he lives tranquilly on for some years in the belief that Cyril has only gone away for a few days.

The story ends with a family scene by Lake Leman, where Henry and Lilian, happily married, are living for a time with Mr. Maitland and Cyril's children, whom Henry has kept from knowing their father's guilt.

* * * * *

GERALD GRIFFIN

The Collegians

Gerald Griffin, born at Limerick on December 12, 1803, was one of the group of clever Irishmen who, in imitation of Tom Moore, sought literary fame in London in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. At the age of twenty he was writing tales of Munster life. In 1829 he became popular through the tale of "The Collegians," here epitomised —a tale that has held the stage to the present day under the title of "The Colleen Bawn." Nine years later, Griffin renounced literature, returned to Ireland, and entered the Church, and on June 12, 1840, died in a monastery at Cork. A tragedy written in his early days was produced successfully by Macready after Griffin's death. His fame,

however, depends on his pictures of Irish life, and they are concentrated best in the literary accessories of the present melodrama.

I.—A Secret Wife

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At a pleasure garden on a hill near Limerick, Eily O'Connor, the beautiful daughter of Mihil O'Connor, the rope-maker, first met Hardress Cregan, a young gentleman fresh from college; and on the same night, as she and her father were returning homeward, they were attacked by a rabble of men and boys, and rescued by the stranger and his hunchbacked companion, Danny Mann. A few days afterwards Danny Mann visited the rope-walk, and had a long conversation with Eily, and from that time the girl's character seemed to have undergone a change. Her recreations and her attire became gayer; but her cheerfulness of mind was gone. Her lover, Myles Murphy, a good-natured farmer from Killarney, gained over her father to his interests, and the old man pressed her either to give consent to the match or a good reason for her refusal. After a distressing altercation, Eily left the house without a word of farewell.

She had married Hardress Cregan secretly, and the priest had died immediately after the ceremony. The first time she was seen, but not recognised, in her boyish husband's company was by the Dalys, to which family his fellow-collegian and intimate friend, Kyrle Daly, belonged. A boat passed along the river before their house containing a hooded girl, the hunchback, and Hardress Cregan himself. After they had disappeared, Kyrle Daly rode to pay court to Anne Chute, Hardress's cousin, and, to his great distress, learned that she could never be his wife although she had no other engagement. From her manner he realised that he had a rival, and the knowledge plunged him into the deepest despair. After her refusal he went to spend the night at one of his father's dairy farms, a few miles down the river. Whilst supper was being prepared, word came that Hardress's boat was being swamped, with every soul aboard.

The collegian, however, brought the boat safely to the shore, and procured a room for his wife in the dairy-woman's cottage, passing her off as a relative of Danny Mann's. She retired at once and Hardress and Kyrle sat talking together of Anne Chute. The sight of his friend's sufferings won Hardress's sympathies. He protested his disbelief in the idea of another attachment, and recommended perseverance.

"Trust everything to me," he said. "For your sake I will take some pains to become better known to this extraordinary girl, and you may depend on it you shall not suffer in my good report."

When the household was asleep, Hardress went to his wife's room, and found her troubled because of the strangeness of their circumstances.

"I was thinking," she said, "what a heart-break it would be to my father if anyone put it into his head that the case was worse than it is. No more would be wanting, but just a little word on a scrap of paper, to let him know that he needn't be uneasy, and he'd know all in time."

The suggestion appeared to jar against the young husband's inclinations. He replied that if she wished he would return with her to her home, and declare the marriage.

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“If you are determined on certainly destroying our happiness,” he continued, “your will shall be dearer to me than fortune or friends. If you have a father to feel for you, you will not forget, my love, that I have a mother whom I love as tenderly, and whose feelings deserve some consideration.”

He took her hand and pressed it in a soothing manner.

“Come, dry those sweet eyes, while I tell you shortly what my plans shall be,” he said.

“You have heard me speak of Danny Mann’s sister, who lives on the side of the Purple Mountain, in the Gap of Dunlough? I have had two neat rooms fitted up for you in her cottage, and you can have books to read, and a little garden to amuse you, and a Kerry pony to ride over the mountains. In the meantimes I will steal a visit now and then to my mother, who spends the autumn in the neighbourhood. I will gradually let her into my secret, and obtain her forgiveness. I am certain she will not withhold it. I shall then present you to her. She will commend your modesty and gentleness; we will send for your father, and then where is the tongue that shall venture to wag against the fame of Eily Cregan!”

The young man left her, a little chagrined at her apparent slowness in appreciating his noble condescension. In his boyhood he had entertained a passion for his cousin, Anne Chute; but after the long separation of school and college, he had imagined that his early love was completely forgotten. The feeling with which he regarded her now was rather of resentment than indifference, and it had been with a secret creeping of the heart that he had witnessed what he thought was the successful progress of Kyrle Daly’s attachment. It was under those circumstances that he formed his present hasty union with Eily. His love for her was deep, sincere, and tender. Her entire and unbounded confidence, her extreme beauty, her simplicity and timid deference made a soothing compensation to his heart for the coldness of the haughty, though superior beauty, whose inconstancy had raised his indignation.

In the morning, accompanied by Eily and Danny Mann, he sailed for Ballybunion, where they rested in a cavern while the hunchback sought an eligible lodging for the night. During his absence Hardress told Eily that Danny Mann was his foster-brother, and that he himself had been the cause of the poor fellow’s deformity.

“When we were children he was my constant companion,” he said. “Familiarity produced a feeling of equality, on which he presumed so far as to offer rudeness to a little relative of mine, a Miss Chute, who was on a visit to my mother. She complained to me, and my vengeance was summary. I seized him by the collar, and hurled him with desperate force to the bottom of a flight of stairs. An injury was done to his spine.”

But Danny Mann had shown naught but good nature and kindly feeling ever since. His attachment had become the attachment of a zealot. Hardress was sometimes alarmed

at the profane importance he attached to his master's wishes; he seemed to care but little what laws he might transgress when the gratification of Hardress's inclination was in question.

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II.—Tempted

A week afterwards Hardress visited his parents at their Killarney residence, to find that his mother, with her niece, Anne Chute, had gone to a grand ball in the neighbourhood. His father was spending the night with his boon fellows, and a favourite old huntsman lay dying in a room near by. This retainer told his young master that Anne Chute loved him well, and that she deserved a better fortune than to love without return. Hardress went to bed, and was awakened by his mother upon her return. She reproved him for his long absence, and told him of the sensation his beautiful cousin was making in society. In the morning he met Anne with some consciousness and distress. A womanly reserve and delicacy made the girl unwilling to affect an intimacy that might not be graciously acknowledged. She treated him coldly, and began to read some silly novel of the day.

“Ah, Eily, my own, own Eily!” he murmured to himself. “You are worth this fine lady a hundred times over!”

His mother appeared; her raillery entrapped both him and Anne in a scene of coquetry. No longer embarrassed by the feeling of strangeness and apprehension which had depressed her spirits on their first meeting after his return from college, Anne now assumed ease and liveliness of manner. Every hour he spent in her society removed from his mind the prejudice he had conceived against her, and supplied its place with a feeling of strong kindness. When he left the merry circle to return to Eily, blank regret fell suddenly upon his heart. But the sorrow which Anne manifested at his departure, and the cordial pleasure with which she heard of his intention to return soon, inspired him with the strangest happiness. The next time he thought of Eily and his cousin, the conjunction was less favourable to the former.

“My poor little love!” he thought. “How much she has to learn before she can assume, with comfort to herself, the place for which I have designed her!”

At the cottage Eily received him with rapture and affection, and every other feeling was banished from his mind. But in the course of the evening she remarked that he was more silent and abstracted than she had ever seen him, and that he more frequently spoke in connection of some little breach of etiquette, or inelegance of manner, than in those terms of eloquent praise and fondness which he was accustomed to lavish upon her. The next day he returned to his mother’s house leaving her in tears.

That night Mrs. Cregan gave a ball, at which he was one of the gayest revellers. Soon afterwards his mother also told him that Anne was in love, and with none other than himself. In great agitation he replied that he had already pledged himself to another. She insisted that any other engagement must be broken, since if there was to be a victim it should not be Anne. The lady’s violent maternal affection overruled him, and in spite of the call of honour he dared not tell her that he was already married.

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During the ensuing weeks Eily perceived a rapid and fearful change in his temper and appearance. His visits were fewer and shorter, and his manner became extraordinarily restrained and conscious.

But when she told him that the loneliness was troubling her, he accused her of jealousy.

“If I was jealous, and with reason,” said Eily. smiling seriously, “nobody would ever know it; for I wouldn’t say a word, only stretch upon my bed and die. I wouldn’t be long in his way, I’ll engage.”

Hardress warned her never to inquire into his secrets, nor to effect an influence which he would not admit. He bade her avoid suffering the slightest suspicion to appear, since when suspicions are afloat men find the temptation to furnish them with a cause almost irresistible. Eily protested that she was joking, and his uneasy conscience threw him into a paroxysm of fury.

“Curse on you!” he cried. “Curse on your beauty, curse on my own folly, for I have been undone by both! I hate you! Take the truth; I’ll not be poisoned with it! I am sick of you; you have disgusted me! I will ease my heart by telling you the whole. If I seek the society of other women, it is because I find not among them your meanness and vulgarity!”

“Oh, Hardress,” shrieked the affrighted girl, “you are not in earnest now?”

“I do *not* joke!” he exclaimed, with a hoarse vehemence.

“Oh, my dear Hardress, listen to me! Hear your poor Eily for one moment! Oh, my poor father! Forgive me, Hardress. I left my home and all for you. Oh, do not cast me off! I will do anything to please you. I will never open my lips again. Only say you do not mean all that.”

He tore himself away, leaving Eily unconscious on the ground. On the summit of the Purple Mountain, which was all surrounded by mist, he met Danny Mann, and confided to him that his love of Eily had turned to hatred, asking his advice concerning what must be done.

“Sorrow trouble would I even give myself about her,” said Danny, “only send her home packin’ to her father!”

“Should I send Eily home to earn for myself the reputation of a faithless villain!” said Hardress.

“Why, then I’ll tell you what I’d do,” said Danny, nodding his head. “Pay her passage out to Quaybec, an’ put her aboard of a three-master. Do by her as you’d do to dat glove you have on your hand. Make it come off as well as it comes on, an’ if it fits too tight,

take the knife to it. Only give me the word, an' I'll engage Eily O'Connor will never trouble you any more. Don't ax me any questions; only, if you are agreeable, take off that glove an' give it to me for a token. Lave the rest to Danny."

Hardress gazed upon the face of the hunchback with an expression of gaping terror, as if he stood in the presence of the Arch Tempter himself. Then he caught him by the throat, and shook him with appalling violence.

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“If you ever dare again to utter a word or meditate a thought of evil against that unhappy creature,” he cried, “I will tear you limb from limb between my hands!”

III.—“Found Drowned"

Hardress had left Eily almost unprovided with funds. After a few weeks she was obliged to write for pecuniary assistance. The letter was unheeded. She borrowed a pony, and went to ask advice from her father’s brother, Father O’Connor, of Castle Island. The priest received her very coldly, but became deeply moved upon hearing that she was legally married. She begged him to inform her father that she hoped soon to ask his pardon for all the sorrow she had caused. He gave her all the money he had, and she returned to the cottage.

Danny Mann delivered Eily’s letter, and sat drinking with his master in Mrs. Cregan’s drawing-room. Anne Chute entered, and finding the man she loved in an intoxicated condition she withdrew in sorrow and disgust.

He asked the girl’s forgiveness when soberness returned, and she told him that she was greatly distressed because of his changed manner. For a long time past there had been a distressing series of misconceptions on her part, and of inconsistencies on his. She could not explain how deeply troubled she felt.

The intoxication of passion overcame Hardress, and he told her that the key to everything was that he loved her. She forgave him, and he was about to send a reassuring line to his mother, when he found in his hands a portion of Eily’s letter, in which she begged him to let her go back to her father. He turned white with fear, but Mrs. Cregan entered, and her strong will overbore his scruples. He declared himself ready to marry his beautiful cousin. Then he sought Danny Mann, and reminded him of his suggestion about hiring a passage for Eily in a North American vessel.

“You bade me draw my glove from off my hand, and give it for a warrant,” he said, plucking off the glove slowly finger by finger. “My mind is altered. I married too young; I didn’t know my own mind. I am burning with this thralldom. Here is my glove.”

Danny took it, whilst they exchanged a look of cold and fatal intelligence. Hardress gave him a purse, and repeated that Eily must not stay in Ireland, that three thousand miles of roaring ocean were a security for silence. Not a hair of her head must be hurt, but he would never see her more. Then he wrote on the back of Eily’s letter instructions for her to put herself under the bearer’s care, and he would restore her to her father. She determined to obey at once, and without a murmur, and at nightfall left the cottage in Danny’s company. Two hours afterwards Hardress himself arrived in a fit of compunction. On learning that they had departed, he swore to himself that if this his servant exceeded his views, he would tear his flesh from his bones, and gibbet him as a miscreant and a ruffian.

The night grew wild and stormy; a thunderstorm broke over the hill. Hardress slumbered in his chair, crying out, “My glove, my glove! You used it against my meaning! I meant but banishment. We shall be hanged for this!”

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He awoke from a fearsome nightmare, and, unable to remain longer in the cottage, ran home with the speed of one distracted. There he rebuked his mother wildly, telling her that she had forced him into madness, and that he was free to execute her will—to marry or hang, whichever she pleased. His love of Anne now became entirely dormant, and he was able to estimate the greatness of his guilt without even the suggestion of a palliative. Anne returned to Castle Chute, and preparations were soon being made for the wedding. Hardress and his mother went to stay there, and Kyrle Daly heard for the first time that he had won the girl's love, instead of pleading his fellow-collegian's cause as he had promised. The anger he felt was diverted by a family tragedy—the death of his mother. At her wake Hardress appeared, and found himself face to face with old Mihil O'Connor, his father-in-law. The ropemaker, who had only a faint recollection of having met him before, told him of his heart-break because of Eily's disappearance, and misread his agitation for sympathy.

Some while afterwards the gentry of the neighbourhood hunted the fox, and the dogs found on the bank of the Shannon a body covered with a large blue mantle that was drenched with wet and mire. A pair of small feet in Spanish leather shoes appearing from below the end of the garment showed that the body was that of a female, whilst a mass of long, fair hair which escaped from the hood proved that death had found the victim untimely in her youth.

IV.—Exiled for Life

Hardress confided the mournful story to his mother, assuring her that he was Eily's murderer. After the first extreme agitation, the lady declared that he overrated the measure of his guilt. She reproached him for his lack of confidence, after all the love she had showered upon him. He clenched his hand, and she affected to fear that he intended to strike her. At her outcry of fear he sank to her feet, lowering his forehead to the very dust.

"There is one way left for reparation," he said. "I will give myself up. There is peace and comfort in the thought."

He was interrupted by the entrance of Anne. Mrs. Cregan accounted for her son's excitement by saying that he was ill. Later in the evening they heard that the coroner had not even found anyone to identify the body, and that the jury had returned a verdict of "Found Drowned." Some days afterwards Hardress went shooting to the creek, and, believing that he had killed a serving-man, fled panic-stricken back to the house. The fellow, however, was unhurt, but his cries attracted the attention of a stranger who had lain concealed under a bank. A party of soldiers appeared now and fired at this unknown man, and soon he staggered and was taken prisoner.

Mrs. Cregan came to Hardress's room with fearful tidings. Eily's dress had been recognised, and suspicion had fallen upon Danny Mann. Hardress told her that his

former servant had left the country, but soon the soldiers arrived at the house with the hunchback in charge. Late that night Hardress left his bed, and entered the stable where Danny was confined. The hunchback advanced towards him slowly, his hands wreathed together, his jaw dropped, and his eyes filled with tears. He offered Hardress the glove.

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“I had my token surely for what I done,” he said. “’Here is your warrant,’ you says. Worn’t them your words?”

“But not for death,” replied Hardress. “I did not say for death.”

“I own you didn’t,” said Danny Mann. “I felt for you, an’ I wouldn’t wait for you to say it. Your eye looked murder; as sure as that moon is shinin’, so sure the sign of death was on your face that time, whatever way your words went.”

Hardress gave him money, and helped him to escape, bidding him leave the country. “If ever we should meet again on Irish soil,” he said, “it must be the death of either.”

The exertions for Danny Mann’s recapture proved unavailing, and in a few weeks the affair had begun to grow unfamiliar to the tongues and recollections of the people. Hardress’s depression reached an unbearable degree, and Anne at last grew seriously uneasy. He assured her that if she knew all she would pity and not blame. Then, one day when they were walking together they came upon some countryfolk dancing in the road, and amongst them Hardress recognised the hunchback. He caught him by the throat and flung him violently against the wall.

Danny Mann was taken into custody again, and, before the magistrate, told of Hardress’s complicity in the crime. He declared that he had always loved his master, but that from the moment of the assault a change had come over his love.

“He had his revenge, an’ I’ll have mine,” he said. “He doesn’t feel for me, an’ I won’t feel for him. Write down Danny Mann for the murderer of Eily, an’ write down Hardress Cregan for his adviser.” He produced the certificate of Eily’s marriage. “I took it out of her bosom after—” He shuddered with such violence that the door trembled. “She kep’ her hand in her bosom upon that paper to the last gasp, as if she thought it was to rob her of that I wanted.”

The magistrate, accompanied by a guard, rode to Castle Chute. It was the wedding evening, and the house was filled with gay company. As all sat at table together, Hardress heard a low voice whisper in his ear, “Arise, and fly for your life!” The wineglass fell from his hand, and he became filled with terror. Once again he heard the voice, “Arise, I tell you! The army is abroad, and your life is in danger!”

As he was preparing to escape, his mother entered his presence.

“The doors are all defended!” she cried. “There is a soldier set on every entrance! You are trapped and caught! The window—come this way, quick—quick!”

She drew him passively into her own bed-chamber; some minutes later the soldiers forced their way forward, and found him concealed in an inner place. His mother sank

at his feet, and cried out that the crime was hers, since she had been the author of his first temptation, the stumbling-block between him and repentance.

“I have tied the cord upon your throat!” she shrieked. “I have been your fellest foe! You drank in pride with my milk, and passion under my indulgence!”

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Hardress took the wretched woman in his arms and kissed her forehead.

“I will pray for you at the moment of my death, as you will pray for me,” he said. Then he surrendered himself to the soldiers, and was taken away. At the trial the mercy of the executive power was extended to his life, and he was sentenced to perpetual exile. As the convict ship which was to bear him from home waited in the river, he was brought from his gaol and left for a short time on the quay, where he heard that Eily’s father had died, after praying for and forgiving his enemies. The boat arrived to convey him to the ship, and whilst descending the steps he was overcome by a seizure, and would have fallen but for the aid of his escort. The dawn of the following morning beheld him tossed upon the waves of the Atlantic, and looking back to the clifted heads of the Shannon, that stood like a gigantic portal opening far behind. The land of his nativity faded rapidly on his sight, but before the vessel came in sight of that of his exile, he had rendered up the life which the law forbore to take.

Danny Mann died amid all the agonies of a remorse which made even those whose eyes had looked upon such cases shrink back with fear and wonder. Mrs. Cregan lived many years after Hardress’s departure, practising the austere and humiliating works of piety which her Church prescribes for the penitent.

Anne Chute, in the course of time, became Kyrle Daly’s wife, and they were as happy as earth could render hearts that looked to higher destinies and a more lasting rest.

* * * * *

JOHN HABBERTON

Helen’s Babies

John Habberton, the author of “Helen’s Babies,” was born in Brooklyn, New York, on February 24, 1842. He enlisted in the army in 1862, and served through the Civil War, at the close of which he adopted journalism as a profession, becoming, in due course, literary editor of the “Christian Union.” His first and most popular story, “Helen’s Babies,” after being declined by various publishers, appeared in 1876, and more than a quarter of a million copies have been sold in America alone. According to Mr. Habberton himself, the story “grew out of an attempt to keep for a single day the record of the doings of a brace of boys of whom the author is half-owner.” Apart from a number of novels, Mr. Habberton has also written a “Life of George Washington,” and a play, “Deacon Cranket,” performed more than five hundred times.

I.—The Imps

The first cause of the existence of this book may be found in a letter, written by my sister, and received by me, Harry Burton, salesman of white goods, bachelor, aged

twenty-eight, just as I was trying to decide where I should spend a fortnight's vacation. She suggested, as I was always complaining of never having time to read, I should stay at her place, while she and her husband went on a fortnight's visit. She owned she would feel easier if she knew there was a man in the house.

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“Just the thing!” I ejaculated. Five minutes later I had telegraphed my acceptance, and had mentally selected books enough for a dozen vacations. I knew enough of Helen’s boys to be sure they would give one no annoyance. Budge, the elder, was five years of age, and had generally, during my flying visits, worn a shy, serious, meditative, noble face, and Toddie was a happy little know-nothing of three summers, with tangled yellow hair.

Three days later I hired a hackman to drive me from Hillcrest Station. Half a mile from my brother-in-law’s residence the horses shied violently, and the driver, after talking freely to them, remarked, “That was one of the Imps!”

As he spoke the offending youth came panting beside our carriage, and in a very dirty sailor-suit I recognised my nephew Budge. Then a smaller boy emerged from the bushes at the side of the road, and I beheld the unmistakable lineaments of Toddie.

“They’re my nephews!” I gasped.

“Budge,” I said, with all the sternness I could command; “do you know me?”

“Yes; you’re Uncle Harry. Did you bring us anything?”

“I wish I could have brought you some big whippings for behaving so badly. Get into this carriage.”

As they clambered up, I noticed that each one carried a very dirty towel, knotted tightly in the centre. After some moments’ disgusted contemplation of these rags, I asked Budge what these towels were for.

“They’re not towels, they’re dollies,” promptly answered my nephew.

“Goodness!” I exclaimed. “I should think your mother might buy you respectable dolls, and not let you appear in public with these loathsome rags.”

“We don’t like buyed dollies,” said Budge. “These dollies is lovely. Mine’s got blue eyes and Toddie’s has got brown eyes.”

“I want to shee your watch,” remarked Toddie, snatching the chain and rolling into my lap.

“Oh-oo-ee! So do I!” shouted Budge, hastening to occupy one knee, and in transit wiping his shoes on my trousers and the skirts of my coat.

A carriage containing a couple of ladies was rapidly approaching; I dropped my head to avoid meeting their glance, for my few minutes of contact with my dreadful nephews had made me feel inexpressibly un-neat. The carriage stopped. I heard my own name

spoken. There, erect, fresh, neat, bright-eyed, fair-faced, smiling, and observant, sat Miss Alice Mayton, a lady who for about a year I had been adoring from afar.

“When did you arrive, Mr. Burton?” she asked. “You’re certainly a happy-looking trio—-so unconventional! You look as if you had been having *such* a good time.”

“I—I assure you, Miss Mayton, that my experience has been the reverse of a pleasant one. If King Herod were yet alive I’d volunteer as an executioner.”

“You dreadful wretch!” exclaimed the lady. “Mother, let me make you acquainted with Mr. Burton, Helen Lawrence’s brother. How is your sister, Mr. Burton?”

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“I don’t know,” I replied; “she’s gone with her husband on a visit, and I’ve been silly enough to promise to give an eye to the place while they’re away.”

“Why, how delightful!” said Miss Mayton. “Such horses! Such flowers! Such a cook!”

“And such children!” said I, glaring at the Imps, and rescuing my handkerchief from Toddie.

“Why, they’re the best children in the world! Helen told me so. Children will be children, you know. I don’t wish to give any hints, but at Mrs. Clarkson’s, where we’re boarding, there’s not a flower in the whole garden. I break the Tenth Commandment every time I pass Colonel Lawrence’s. Good-bye.”

“Of course you’ll call,” said Miss Mayton, as the carriage started; “it’s dreadfully stupid here. No men, except on Sundays.”

I bowed assent. In the contemplation of all the shy possibilities my short chat with Miss Mayton had suggested, I had quite forgotten my dusty clothing and the two little living causes thereof.

II.—The Fate of a Bouquet

Next morning at breakfast Toddie remarked, “Ocken Hawwy, darsh an awfoo funny chunt upstairs. I show it to you after brepspup.”

“Toddie’s a silly little boy,” said Budge, “he always says brepspup for brekbux.”

“Oh, what does he mean by chunt, Budge?”

“I guess he means trunk,” replied my elder nephew.

Recollections of my childish delight in rummaging an old trunk caused me to smile sympathetically at Toddie, to his great delight.

A direful thought struck me. I dashed upstairs. Yes, he did mean my trunk. While a campaigner, I had learned to reduce packing to an exact science. Now, if I had an atom of pride in me, I might have glorified myself, for it certainly seemed as if the heap upon the floor could never have come out of one single trunk.

In the lid of my dressing-case lay my dress-coat, tightly rolled up. Snatching it up, with a violent exclamation, there dropped from it—one of these infernal dolls. A howl resounded from the doorway.

“You tookted my dolly out of her k’adle—want to wock my dolly oo-ee-ee!”

I called the girl, and asked where the key was that locked the door between my room and the children's.

"Please sir, Toddie threw it down the well."

I removed the lock and told the coachman to get ready at once to drive to Paterson, where the nearest locksmith lived, by the hill road, one of the most beautiful roads in America.

Away went the horses, and up rose a piercing shriek and a terrible roar. I looked out hastily, only to see Budge and Toddie running after the carriage and crying pitifully. The driver stopped of his own accord—he seemed to know the children's ways and their results—and I helped them in, meekly hoping the eye of Providence was upon me.

That afternoon I devoted myself to making a bouquet for Miss Mayton, and a most delightful occupation I found it.

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Not that I was in love with Miss Mayton. A man may honestly and strongly admire a handsome, brilliant woman, and delight himself in trying to give her pleasure without feeling it necessary she shall give him herself in return.

My delight suddenly became clouded. What would folks say? Everybody knew where Mike was employed—everybody knew I was the only gentleman at present residing at Colonel Lawrence's. Ah, I had it.

I had seen in one of the library drawers a pasteboard box—just the size. I dropped my card into the bottom, neatly fitted in the bouquet, and went in search of Mike.

He winked cheeringly, and said he would do it "as clane as a whistle. Divil a man can see, but the angels, and they won't tell."

"Very well, Mike. Here's a dollar for you. You'll find the box on the hat-rack in the hall."

With a head full of pleasing fancies I went down to supper, and found my new friends unusually good. Their ride seemed to have toned down their boisterousness, and elevated their little souls. So when they invited me to put them to bed I gladly accepted. Toddie disappeared somewhere, and came back disconsolate.

"Can't find my doll's k'adle!" he whined.

"Never mind, old pet!" said I, soothingly, "uncle will ride you on his foot."

"But I want my dolly's k'adle, tawse my dolly's in it, and I want to shee her!"

"Don't you want me to tell you a story?"

For a moment Toddle's face indicated a terrible internal conflict between old Adam and Mother Eve; finally curiosity overpowered natural depravity, and Toddie muttered, "Yesh!"

Very soon a knock at the door interrupted me. "Come in!" I shouted.

In stepped Mike, with an air of the greatest secrecy, handed me a letter and *the* box. What could it mean? I hastily opened the envelope, while Toddie shrieked, "Oh, darsh my dolly's k'adle—dare tizh!" snatched and opened the box, and displayed—his doll!

My heart sickened as I read, "Miss Mayton herewith returns to Mr. Burton the package which has just arrived, with his card. She recognises the contents as a portion of the property of one of Mr. Burton's nephews, but is unable to understand why it should have been sent to her."

“Toddie!” I roared, as my younger nephew caressed his loathsome doll, “where did you get that box?”

“On the hat-wack,” he replied, with perfect fearlessness. “I keeps it in ze bookcase djawer, and somebody took it ‘way an’ put nasty ole flowers in it.”

“Where are those flowers?” I demanded.

Toddie looked up with considerable surprise, but promptly replied, “I froed ’em away—-don’t want no ole flowers in my dolly’s k’adle. That’s ze way she wocks—see?” And this horrible little destroyer of human hopes rolled that box back and forth with the most utter unconcern.

Of language to express my feeling to Toddie, I could find absolutely none. Within these few minutes I had discovered how very anxious I really was to merit Miss Mayton’s regard, and how very different was the regard I wanted from that which I had previously hoped might be accorded to me. Under my stern glance Toddie gradually lost interest in his doll, and began to thrust forth his piteous lower lip, and to weep copiously.

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“Dee Lord, not make me sho bad.” He even retired to a corner and hid his face in self-imposed penance.

“Never mind, Toddie,” said I sadly; “you didn’t mean to do it, I know.”

“I wantsh to love you,” sobbed Toddie.

“Well, come here, you poor little fellow.”

Toddie came to my arms, shed tears freely upon my shirt-front, and finally remarked, “Wantsh you to love me!”

I kissed Toddie, and petted him, and at length succeeded in quieting him. He looked earnestly, confidingly, in my eyes, and then said, “Kish my dolly, too!”

I obeyed. My forgiveness was complete, and so was my humiliation. I withdrew abruptly to write an apology.

III.—Budge, the Interpreter

On Monday morning I devoted myself to Toddie’s expiatory bouquet, in which I had the benefit of my nephews’ assistance and counsel, and took enforced part in the conversation.

At two o’clock I instructed Maggie to dress my nephews, and at three we started to make our call. As we approached, I saw Miss Mayton on the piazza. Handing the bouquet to Toddie, we entered the garden, when he shrieked, “Oh, there’s a cutter-grass!” and with the carelessness born of perfect ecstasy, dropped the bouquet.

I snatched it before it reached the ground, dragged him up to Miss Mayton, and told him to give the bouquet to the lady. As she stooped to kiss him, he wriggled off like a little eel, shouted “Tum on!” to his brother, and a moment later both were following the lawn-mower at a respectful distance.

“Bless the little darlings!” said Miss Mayton. “I do love to see children enjoying themselves!”

We settled down to a pleasant chat about books, pictures, music, and the gossip of our set. Handsome, intelligent, composed, tastefully dressed, she awakened to the uttermost every admiring sentiment and every manly feeling. When I began to take leave, Miss Mayton’s mother insisted that we should stay to dinner.

“For myself, I should be delighted, Mrs. Mayton,” said I, “but my nephews have hardly learned company manners yet.”

“Oh, I’ll take care of the little dears,” said Miss Mayton. “They’ll be good with me, I know.”

She insisted, and the pleasure of submitting to her will was so great that I would have risked even greater mischief. The soup was served, and Toddie immediately tilted his plate so that part of its contents sought refuge in the folds of Miss Mayton’s dainty, snowy dress. She treated that wretched boy with the most Christian forbearance during the rest of the meal.

When the dessert was finished, she quickly excused herself, and I removed Toddie to a secluded corner, and favoured him with a lecture which caused him to howl pitifully, and compelled me to caress him and undo all the good I had done.

I awaited Miss Mayton’s reappearance to offer an apology for Toddie, and to make my adieus. The other ladies departed in twos and threes, and left us without witnesses.

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Suddenly she appeared, and, whatever was the cause, she looked queenly. She dropped into a chair, and the boys retired to the end of the piazza to make experiments on a large Newfoundland dog, while I, the happiest man alive, talked to the glorious woman before me, and enjoyed her radiant beauty. The twilight came and deepened, and our voices unconsciously dropped to lower tones, and her voice seemed purest music.

Suddenly a small shadow came between, and the voice of Budge remarked, “Uncle Harry ’spects you, Miss Mayton.”

“Suspects me! Of what, pray?” exclaimed the lady, patting my nephew’s cheek.

“Budge,” said I—I felt my voice rising nearly to a scream—“Budge, I must beg you to respect the sanctity of confidential communications.”

“What is it, Budge?” persisted Miss Mayton. “You know the old adage, Mr. Burton, ‘Children and fools speak the truth.’ Of what does he suspect me, Budge?”

“’Tain’t *sus*pect at all,” said Budge; “it’s espect.”

“Expect?” echoed Miss Mayton.

“Respect is what the boy is trying to say, Miss Mayton,” I interrupted. “Budge has a terrifying faculty for asking questions, and the result of some of them this morning was my endeavour to explain the nature of the respect in which gentlemen hold ladies.”

“Yes,” said Budge; “I know all about it. Only Uncle Harry don’t say it right. What he calls respect *I* calls *love*.”

“Miss Mayton,” I said hastily, earnestly, “Budge is a marplot, but he is a very truthful interpreter, for all that. Whatever my fate may be, do not——”

“I want to talk some,” observed Budge. “You talk all the whole time. I—when I loves anybody I kisses them.” Miss Mayton gave a little start, and my thoughts followed each other with unimagined rapidity. She was not angry, evidently. Could it be that——? I bent over her, and acted on Budge’s suggestion. She raised her head slightly, and I saw that Alice Mayton had surrendered at discretion. Taking her hand, I offered to the Lord more fervent thanks than He had ever heard from me in church. Then Budge said, “I wants to kiss you, too.” And I saw my glorious Alice snatch the little scamp into her arms and treat him with more affection than I had ever imagined was in her nature.

Suddenly two or three ladies came upon the piazza.

“Come, boys!” said I. “Then I’ll call with the carriage to-morrow at three, Miss Mayton. Good-evening.”

That night I wrote to my sister to inform her that the scales had fallen from my eyes—I saw clearly that my nephews were angels. And I begged to refer her to Alice Mayton for collateral evidence.

IV.—The Fruit of My Visit

A few days later I had a letter from my sister to say she had been recalling a fortnight's experience they once had of courtship in a boarding-house, so had determined to cut short her visit and hurry home. Friday morning they intended to arrive—blessings on their thoughtful hearts! And this was Friday. I hurried into the boys' room and shouted, "Toddie! Budge! Who do you think is coming to see you this morning?"

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“Who?” asked Budge.

“Organ-grinder?” queried Toddie.

“No; your papa and mamma.”

Budge looked like an angel at once, but Toddie murmured mournfully, “I fought it wash an organ-grinder.”

“Oh, Uncle Harry,” said Budge, in a perfect delirium of delight, “I believe if my papa and mamma had stayed away any longer I believe I would *die*. I’ve been so lonesome for them that I haven’t known what to do. I’ve cried whole pillowsful about it, right here in the dark.”

“Why, my poor old fellow,” said I, picking him up and kissing him. “Why didn’t you come and tell Uncle Harry, and let him try to comfort you?”

“I couldn’t,” said Budge. “When I gets lonesome, it feels as if my mouth was all tied up, and a big, great stone was right in here.” And Budge put his hand on his chest.

“If a big tone wash inshide of me,” said Toddie, “I’d take it out and frow it at the shickens.”

“Toddie,” I said, “aren’t you glad papa and mamma are coming?”

“Yesh,” said Toddie. “Mamma always bwings me candy fen she goes anyfere.”

During the hour which passed before it was time to start for the depot, my sole attention was devoted to keeping the children from soiling their clothes, but my success was so little, I lost my temper utterly.

“Harness the horse, Mike,” I shouted.

“An’ the goat, too,” added Budge.

Five minutes later I was seated in the carriage.

“Are you all ready, boys?” I asked.

“In a minute,” said Budge; “soon as I fix this. Now,” he continued, getting into his seat and seizing the reins and whip, “go ahead!”

“Wait a minute, Budge. Put down that whip, and don’t touch the goat with it once. I’m going to drive very slowly; all you need do is to hold the reins.”

“All right,” said Budge; “but I like to look like mans when I drive.”

The horses went at a gentle trot, and the goat followed very closely. When within a minute of the depot the train swept in. I gave the horses the whip, looked, and saw the boys close behind me. Nothing but the sharpest of turns saved me from a severe accident. As it was, I heard two hard thumps upon the wooden wall, and two frightful howls, and saw both my nephews mixed up on the platform, while the driver of the stage growled in my ear, “What in thunder did you let ’em hitch that goat to your axletree for?”

How the goat’s head and shoulders maintained their normal connection during the last minute of my drive, I leave naturalists to explain. Fortunately, the children had struck on their heads, and the Lawrence-Burton skull is a marvel of solidity. I set them on their feet, promised them all the candy they could eat for a week, and hurried them to the other side of the depot. Budge rushed at Tom, exclaiming, “See my goat, papa?”

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Helen was somewhat concerned about the children, but found time to look at me with so much of sympathy, humour, affection, and condescension that I really felt relieved when we reached the house. And how gloriously the rest of the day passed off! We had a delightful little lunch, and Tom brought up a bottle of Roederer, and we drank to “her and her mother.” Then Helen proposed, “The makers of the match—Budge and Toddie,” which was honoured with bumpers. The gentlemen toasted did not respond, but stared so curiously I sprang from my chair and kissed them soundly, while Helen and Tom exchanged significant glances.

Young as they are, I find frequent reason to be jealous of them, but artifice alone can prevent them monopolising the time of an adorable being of whose society I cannot possibly have too much. She insists that, when the ceremony takes place in December, they shall officiate as groomsmen, and I have no doubt she will carry her point In fact, when I retire for the night without first seeking their room, and putting a grateful kiss on their unconscious lips, my conscience upbraids me with base ingratitude. To think I might yet be a hopeless bachelor had it not been for them, is to overflow with gratitude to the Giver of Helen’s Babies.

* * * * *

LUDOVIC HALEVY

The Abbe Constantin

Ludovic Halevy, born in Paris on January 1, 1834, was a nephew of Jacques Francois Halevy, the famous operatic composer. Beginning life in the Civil Service, he himself achieved considerable distinction as a dramatic author, “Frou-Frou,” written in collaboration with Meilhac, being one of the greatest theatrical successes of his century. He soon, however, forsook the drama for fiction. His first novel, “Monsieur and Madame Cardinal,” published in 1873, gave ample promise of the inventive genius and gift of characterisation that were fully realised nine years later in “L’Abbe Constantin.” The tale, an exquisite study of French provincial life, came as a distinct revelation of French life and character to English readers. It has reached 240 editions, and has been translated into all European languages. In 1886 Halevy was elected to the French Academy. He died on May 8, 1908.

I.—“The Good Days Are Gone"

With footstep firm and strong, despite his weight of years, an old priest was walking along a dusty country road one sunny day in May 1881. It was more than thirty years since the Abbe Constantin had first become *cure* of the little village sleeping there in the sunny plain of France, beside a dainty stream called the Lizotte. He had been walking for a quarter of an hour along the wall of the Chateau de Longueval. As he reached the

massive entrance gates he stopped and gazed sadly at two immense bills pasted on the pillars. They announced the sale by auction that day of the Longueval estate, divided into four lots: (1) The castle, with all its grounds and parks; (2) the farm of Blanche-Couronne, 700 acres; (3) the farm of Rozeraie, 500 acres; (4) the forest and woods of Mionne, 900 acres. The reserve prices totalled the respectable sum of 2,050,000 francs!

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So that magnificent estate, which for two centuries had passed intact from father to son in the Longueval family, was to be divided. The bills announced, it was true, that after the preliminary sale of the four lots the highest bidder might bid for the whole estate. But it was an enormous sum, and no purchaser was likely to present himself.

The Marquise de Longueval, dying six months since, had left three heirs, her grandchildren, two of whom were under age, so that the estate had to be put up for sale. Pierre, the eldest, an extravagant young man of twenty-three, had foolishly squandered half his money, and was quite unable to re-purchase Longueval.

It was twelve o'clock. In an hour the chateau would have a new master. Who would he be? Who could take the place of the marquise, the old friend of the country cure, and the kindly friend of all the villagers. The old priest walked on, thinking sadly of the habits of thirty years suddenly interrupted. Every Thursday and every Sunday he had dined at the chateau. How much had they made of him! Cure of Longueval! All his life he had been that, had dreamed of nothing else. He loved his little church, the little village, and his little vicarage.

Still in pensive mood, he was passing the park of Lavardens when he heard some one calling him. Looking up, he saw the Countess of Lavardens and her son Paul. She was a widow; her son a handsome young man, who had made a bad start in the world and now contented himself by spending some months in Paris every year, when he dissipated the annual allowance from his mother, and returned home for the rest of the year to loaf about in idleness or in pursuit of stupid sports.

"Where are you off to, Monsieur le Cure?" asked the countess.

"To Souvigny, to learn the result of the sale."

"Stay here with us. M. de Larnac is there, and will hasten back with the news. But I can tell you who are the new owners of the castle."

At this the abbe turned into the gates of the countess's grounds, and joined that lady and her son on the terrace of their house. The new owners, it appeared, were to be M. de Larnac, M. Gallard, a rich Paris banker, and the countess herself, for the three had agreed to purchase it between them.

"It is all settled," the lady assured him. But presently M. de Larnac arrived with the news that they had been unable to buy it, as some American had paid an enormous sum for the entire estate. The person who was now to be the great lady of Longueval was named Madame Scott.

M. de Larnac had some further particulars to add. He had heard that the Scotts were great upstarts, and that the new owner of the castle had actually been a beggar in New

York. A great lawsuit had resulted in favour of her and her husband, making them the owners of a silver-mine.

“And we are to have such people for neighbours!” exclaimed the countess. “An adventuress, and no doubt a Protestant, Monsieur le Cure!”

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The abbe was very sore at heart, and, never doubting but that the new mistress of the castle would be no friend of his, he took his way homeward. In his imagination he saw this Madame Scott settled at the castle and despising his little Catholic church and all his simple services to the quiet village folk.

He was still brooding over the unhappy fate of Longueval when his godson, Jean Reynaud—son of his old friend Dr. Reynaud—to whom he had been as good as a father, and who was worthy of the old priest's love, dismounted at his door. For Jean was now a lieutenant in the artillery stationed in the district, and much of his leisure was spent at the abbe's house. Jean tried to console him by saying that even though this American, Madame Scott, were not a Catholic, she was known to be generous, and would no doubt give him money for the poor.

II.—The New Parishioners

The abbe and his godson were in the garden next day, when they heard a carriage stop at the gate. Two ladies alighted, dressed in simple travelling costumes. They came into the garden, and the elder of the two, who seemed to be no more than twenty-five, came up to the Abbe Constantin saying, with only the slightest foreign accent, "I am obliged to introduce myself, M. le Cure. I am Madame Scott, in whose name yesterday the castle and estate were bought, and if it is no inconvenience I should be glad to take five minutes of your time." Then, turning to her companion, she said, "This is my sister, Miss Bettina Percival, as you may have guessed."

Greatly agitated, the abbe bowed his respects, and led into his little vicarage the new mistress of Longueval and her sister. The cloth had been laid for the simple meal of the old priest and the lieutenant, and the ladies seemed charmed with the humble comfort of the place.

"Look now, Susie," said Miss Bettina, "isn't this just the sort of vicarage you hoped it would be?"

"And the abbe also, if he will allow me to say so," said Madame Scott. "For what did I say in the train this morning, Bettina, and only a little while ago in the carriage?"

"My sister said to me, M. le Cure," said Miss Percival, "that she desired, above all things, that the abbe should not be young, nor melancholy, nor severe, but that he should be white-haired and gentle and good."

"And that is you exactly, M. le Cure," said Madame Scott brightly. "I find you just as I had hoped, and I trust you may be as well pleased with your new parishioners."

"Parishioners!" exclaimed the abbe. "But then you are Catholics?"

“Certainly we are Catholics!” And noting the surprise of the old abbe, she went on to say, “Ah, I understand! Our name and our country made you expect we should be Protestants and unfriendly to you and your people. But our mother was a Canadian and a Catholic, of French origin, and that is why my sister and I speak French with just a little foreign accent. My husband is a Protestant, but he leaves me full liberty, and so my two children are being educated in my own faith. And that is why we have come to see you the first day we have arrived.”

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The good old priest was overwhelmed by the news, but his joy almost brought tears to his eyes when the ladies each presented him with a thousand francs, and promised five hundred francs a month for the poor. He had never handled so much money in all his life before.

“Why, there will be no poor left in all the district!” he stammered.

“And we should be glad if that were so,” said Madame Scott, “for we have plenty, and we could not do better with it.”

Then followed the happiest little dinner party that had ever taken place beneath the abbe’s roof. Madame Scott explained how her husband had bought the chateau as a surprise for her, and that neither she nor her sister had seen it until that morning.

“Now, tell me,” she suggested, “what they said about the new owner.” The old priest blushed, and was at a loss to answer. “Well, you are a soldier,” she continued, turning to Lieutenant Reynaud, “and you will tell me. Did they say that I had been a beggar?”

“Yes, I heard that said.”

“And that I had been a performer in a travelling circus?”

“That also I heard said,” he admitted.

“I thank you for your frankness; and now let me tell you that, while I can see nothing in either case that would be any disgrace to me, the story does not happen to be true. I have known what it is to be poor, for my parents died eight years ago, leaving us only a great lawsuit, but my father’s last wish was that we should fight it to the end. With the aid of the son of one of his old friends, now my husband, we fought and won. That is how I came into my fortune. The stories you have heard were invented by spiteful Paris journalists.”

After the ladies had taken their departure for Paris, the Abbe Constantin was as happy as he had so lately been miserable. And as for Lieutenant Reynaud, the vision of their fresh and charming faces was with him all through the military manoeuvres in which he was now engaged. But as both of them were equally charming in his mind, he concluded he could not have fallen in love, or he would have known which he admired the more.

He did not know how many were the suitors in Paris for Miss Bettina, and possibly if he had seen the sisters among the fashionable people of that gay city he would never have given them a second thought, for he was a true son of the country, this healthy and manly young officer, whose tastes were as simple as the surroundings in which he had grown up demanded.

Miss Bettina, indeed, had only to say the word, and she might have been the Princess Romanelli. “And I should like to be a princess, for the name sounds well,” she said to herself. “Oh, if I only loved him!” There were many men of rank and title who would have been glad to have married the wealthy young American lady, but she found herself in love with none of them, and now she was looking forward to the fourteenth of June, when she and her sister were to leave Paris for Longueval. During their stay at the castle they were to entertain many friends, but for ten days they were to be free to roam the woods and fields, and forget the distractions of their fashionable life in the capital.

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“But you forget,” said Madame Scott, on their way to Longueval, “that we are to have two people to dinner to-night.”

“Ah, but I shall be glad to welcome both of them—particularly the young lieutenant,” Bettina confessed, with a touch of shyness.

III.—Friendship Grows

Great alterations had been made at the castle during the month that had elapsed. The rooms had been refurnished, the stables and coach-houses were stocked, the pleasure-grounds made trim and beautiful, and servants were busy everywhere. When the abbe and Jean arrived, they were ushered in by two tall and dignified footmen, but Madame Scott received them with all the frankness she had shown at the vicarage, and presented her son Harry and her daughter Bella, who were six and five years old. Then Miss Percival joined them, and presently they were all talking together like old friends. But the happiest of all was Abbe Constantin. He felt at home again—too much at home—and when coffee was served on the terrace in front of the chateau after dinner, he lost himself in an agreeable reverie. Then—terrible catastrophe!—he fell into his old habit, and sank into an after dinner doze, as he had so often done in the days of the marquise.

Jean and Bettina found much to say to each other, and as the ladies were looking forward to riding round the estates, Jean, who rode every day for exercise, promised to join them. It was quite clear that Miss Bettina was glad to see them both—“particularly the young lieutenant!” And when Madame Scott and her sister walked up the avenue, after having accompanied Jean and the abbe to the gate, Bettina confessed that she expected to be scolded for being so friendly with Jean.

“But I shall not scold you,” Madame Scott said, “for he has made a favourable impression on me from the first. He inspires me with confidence.”

“That is just how I feel towards him,” said Bettina quietly.

As for Jean, he talked so much to Paul about his visit that that gay young man accused him of having fallen in love, but, of course, that was mere nonsense! There was no fear of Jean falling in love! For a poor lieutenant could never dream of winning an heiress for his wife. When next he met Bettina they had a very long talk about their people, and it appeared that they were both descendants of French peasants. That was why Jean loved the country folk around Longueval. And when he had served his time in the army, he thought he would retire on half-pay—an old colonel, perhaps—and come back to live there.

“Always quite alone?” asked Bettina.

“Why, I hope not.”

“Oh, then you intend to marry!”

“Well, one may think of that, though one need not always be seeking to marry.”

“Yet there are some who look for it, I know, and I have heard that you might have married more than one girl with a handsome fortune if you had wished.”

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“And how do you know that?” asked Jean.

“Monsieur le Cure told me. I soon found that nothing makes your godfather happier than to talk of you, and in our morning walks he tells me your history. Tell me why you refused these good marriages.”

“Simply because I thought it better not to marry at all than to marry without love,” was Jean’s frank avowal.

“I think so, too,” said Bettina.

She looked at him. He looked at her, and suddenly, to the great surprise of both, they found nothing more to say. Fortunately, at this moment Harry and Bella burst into the room with an invitation to see their ponies.

IV.—Bettina’s Confession

Three weeks, during which Longueval has been crowded with visitors, have passed, and the time has come for Jean to take the road for the annual artillery practice. He will be away for twenty days, and, while he wishes to be off, he wonders how those twenty days will pass without a sight of Bettina, for now he frankly adores her. He is happy and he is miserable. He knows by every action and every word that she loves him as truly as he loves her. But he feels it his duty to fight against his own heart’s wish, lest the penniless lieutenant might be thought to covet the riches of the young heiress.

But he could not drag himself away without one last meeting. Yet when he saw how anxious Bettina was to please him and make him happy with her friendship, he was afraid to hold her in his arms lest he might be tempted to tell her how full his heart was with love for her. She excused herself to Paul de Lavardens so that she might give his dance to Jean, but Jean declined the favour on the plea that he was not feeling well, and, to save himself, he hastened off without even shaking her hand.

But all this only told his secret the more clearly to the heart that loved him.

“I love him, dear Susie,” said Bettina that night, “and I know that he loves me for myself; not for the money I possess.”

“You are sure, my dear?”

“Yes; for he will not speak; he tries to avoid me. My horrid money, which attracts others to me, is the thing that keeps him from declaring his love.”

“Be very sure, my dear, for you know you might have been a marchioness or a princess if you had wished. You are sure you will not mind being plain Madame Reynaud?”

“Absolutely; for I love him!”

“Now let me make a proposal,” Bettina went on. “Jean is going away to-morrow; I shall not see him for three weeks, and that will be time to know my own mind. In three weeks may I go and ask him myself if he will have me for his wife? Tell me, Susie, may I?”

Of course her sister could but consent, and Bettina was happy.

Next morning she had a wild desire to wave Jean a good-bye. In the pouring rain she made her way through the woods to the terrace by the road, her dress torn by the thorns, and her umbrella lost, to wave to him as he passed, saying to herself that this would show him how dear he was in her thoughts.

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Mr. Scott had come from Paris before Jean was back, and he, too, approved of Bettina's plan, for they wished her to marry only one she truly loved. But when the lieutenant came back with his regiment, he had made up his mind to avoid meeting Bettina, and had even decided to exchange into another regiment. He refused an invitation to the chateau, but the good abbe begged of him not to leave the district.

"Wait a little, until the good God calls me. Do not go now."

Jean urged that honour made it clear to him he should go away. The abbe told him that he was quite sure Bettina's heart was all for him as truly as he believed Jean's love was all for her. Her money, Jean confessed, was the great drawback, as it might make others think lightly of his love for her. Besides, he was a soldier, and he could not condemn her to the life of a soldier's wife.

The abbe was still trying to convince his godson, when there came a knock at the door, and the old man, opening the door, admitted—Bettina!

She went straight to Jean and took him by both hands, saying, "I must go to him first, for less than three weeks ago he was suffering!" The young lieutenant stood speechless. "And now to you, M. le Cure, let me confess. But do not go away, Jean, for it is a public confession. What I have to say I would have said to-night at the chateau, but Jean has declined our invitation, and So I come here to say it to M. le Cure."

"I am listening, mademoiselle," stammered the cure.

"I am rich, M. le Cure, and, to speak the truth, I like my money very much. I like it selfishly, so to say, for the joy and pleasure I have in giving. I have always said to myself, 'My husband must be worthy of sharing this fortune,' and I have also said, 'I want to love the man who will be my husband!' And now I am coming to my confession.... Here is a man who for two months has done all he could to hide from me that he loves me.... Jean, do you love me?"

"Yes," murmured Jean, his eyes cast down like a criminal, "I love you."

"I knew it." Bettina lost a little of her assurance; her voice trembled slightly. She continued, however, with an effort. "M. le Cure, I do not blame you entirely for what has happened, but certainly it is partly your fault."

"My fault?"

"Yes, your fault. I am certain you have spoken to Jean too much of me, much too much. And then you have told me too much of him. No, not too much, but quite enough! I had so much confidence in you that I began to consider him a little more closely. I began to compare him with those who, for more than a year, have sought my hand. It seemed to me that he was their superior in every way. Then, there came a

day... an evening... three weeks ago, the eve of your departure, Jean, and I found I loved you. Yes, Jean, I love you!... I beg you, Jean, be still; do not come near me.... I have still something to say, more important than all. I know that you love me, but if you are to marry me I want your reason to sanction it. Jean, I know you, and I know to what I should bind myself in becoming your wife. I know what duties, what sacrifices, you have to meet in your calling. Jean, do not doubt it, I would not turn you from any one of these duties, these sacrifices. Never! Never would I ask you to give up your career.

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“And now, M. le Cure, it is not to him but to you that I speak. Tell me, should he not agree to be my husband?”

“Jean,” said the old priest gravely, “marry her. It is your duty, and it will be your happiness.”

Jean took Bettina in his arms, but she gently freed herself, and said to the abbe, “I wish—I wish your blessing.” And the old priest replied by kissing her paternally.

One month later the abbe had the happiness of performing the marriage ceremony in his little church, where he had consecrated all the happiness and goodness of his life.

* * * * *

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

The Scarlet Letter

Nathaniel Hawthorne, American novelist and essayist, was born on July 4, 1804, at Salem, Massachusetts. His father, a master mariner, died early, and the boy grew up in a lonely country life with his mother. He graduated at Bowdoin College, but his literary impulse had already declared itself, and he retired to Salem to write, unsuccessfully for many years. Later he held subordinate official positions in the custom-house at Salem, and lived for a few months in the Brook Farm socialistic community. Severing his connection with the Civil Service in 1841, it was Nathaniel Hawthorne’s intention to devote himself entirely to literature. In this he was unsuccessful, and in a short while was forced to accept a position in the custom-house again, this time as surveyor in his native town of Salem. It was during this period he wrote “The Scarlet Letter,” published in 1850, which immediately brought him fame, and still remains the most popular of his novels. Hawthorne himself has described how the story came to be written. The discovery of an old manuscript by a former surveyor, and a rag of scarlet cloth, which, on careful examination, assumed the shape of a letter—the capital A—gave a reasonably complete explanation of the whole affair of “one Hester Prynne, who appeared to have been rather a noteworthy personage in the view of our ancestors.” Nathaniel Hawthorne died on May 18, 1864.

I.—The Pedestal of Shame

The grass-plot before the jail in Prison Lane, on a certain summer morning, not less than two centuries ago, was occupied by a pretty large number of the inhabitants of Boston, all with their eyes intently fastened on the iron-clamped oaken door.

The door of the jail being flung open from within, there appeared, in the first place, the grim presence of the town-beadle, and following him a young woman who bore in her arms a baby of some three months old.

The young woman was tall, and those who had known Hester Prynne before were astonished to perceive how her beauty shone out. On the breast of her gown, in fine red cloth, surrounded with an elaborate embroidery and fantastic flourishes of gold thread, appeared the letter A, and it was that scarlet letter which drew all eyes, and, as it were, transfigured the wearer.

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A lane was forthwith opened through the crowd of spectators. Preceded by the beadle, and attended by an irregular procession of stern-browed men and unkindly visaged women, Hester Prynne set forth towards the place appointed for her punishment. It was no great distance from the prison door to the market-place, and in spite of the agony of her heart, Hester passed with almost a serene deportment to the scaffold where the pillory was set up.

The crowd was sombre and grave, and the unhappy prisoner sustained herself as best a woman might, under the heavy weight of a thousand unrelenting eyes.

One man, small in stature, and of a remarkable intelligence in his features, who stood on the outskirts of the crowd, attracted the notice of Hester Prynne, and he in his turn bent his eyes on the prisoner till, seeing she appeared to recognise him, he slowly raised his finger and laid it on his lips.

Then, touching the shoulder of a townsman who stood next to him, he said, “I pray you, good sir, who is this woman, and wherefore is she here set up to public shame?”

“You must needs be a stranger, friend,” said the townsman, “else you would surely have heard of Mistress Hester Prynne, and her evil doings. She hath raised a great scandal in godly Master Dimmesdale’s church. The penalty thereof is death. But the magistracy, in their great mercy and tenderness of heart, have doomed Mistress Prynne to stand only a space of three hours on the platform of the pillory, and for the remainder of her natural life to wear a mark of shame upon her bosom.”

“A wise sentence!” remarked the stranger gravely. “It irks me, nevertheless, that the partner of her iniquity should not at least stand on the scaffold by her side. But he will be known—he will be known!”

Directly over the platform on which Hester Prynne stood was a kind of balcony, and here sat Governor Bellingham, with four sergeants about his chair, and ministers of religion.

Mr. John Wilson, the eldest of these clergymen, first spake, and then urged a younger minister, Mr. Dimmesdale, to exhort the prisoner to repentance and to confession. “Speak to the woman, my brother,” said Mr. Wilson.

The Rev. Mr. Dimmesdale was a man of high native gifts, whose eloquence and religious fervour had already wide eminence in his profession. He bent his head, in silent prayer, as it seemed, and then came forward.

“Hester Prynne,” said he, “if thou feelest it to be for thy soul’s peace, I charge thee to speak out the name of thy fellow-sinner and fellow-sufferer. Be not silent from any mistaken pity and tenderness for him, for, believe me, though he were to step down

from a high place, and stand there beside thee, on thy pedestal of shame, yet better were it so than to hide a guilty heart through life."

Hester only shook her head.

"She will not speak," murmured Mr. Dimmesdale. "Wondrous strength and generosity of a woman's heart!"

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Hester Prynne kept her place upon the pedestal of shame with an air of weary indifference. With the same hard demeanour she was led back to prison.

That night the child at her boson writhed in convulsions of pain, and the jailer brought in a physician, whom he announced as Mr. Roger Chillingworth, and who was none other than the stranger whom Hester had noticed in the crowd.

He took the infant in his arms and administered a draught, and its moans and convulsive tossings gradually ceased.

“Hester,” said he, when the jailer had withdrawn, “I ask not wherefore thou hast fallen into the pit. It was my folly and thy weakness. What had I—a man of thought, the bookworm of great libraries—to do with youth and beauty like thine own? I might have known that in my long absence this would happen.”

“I have greatly wronged thee,” murmured Hester.

“We have wronged each other,” he answered. “But I shall seek this man whose name thou wilt not reveal, as I seek truth in books, and sooner or later he must needs be mine. I shall contrive naught against his life. Let him live! Not the less shall he be mine. One thing, thou that wast my wife, I ask. Thou hast kept his name secret. Keep, likewise, mine. Let thy husband be to the world as one already dead, and breathe not the secret, above all, to the man thou wottest of?”

“I will keep thy secret, as I have his.”

II.—A Pearl of Great Price

When her prison-door was thrown open, and she came forth into the sunshine, Hester Prynne did not flee.

On the outskirts of the town was a small thatched cottage, and there, in this lonesome dwelling, Hester established herself with her infant child. Without a friend on earth who dared to show himself, she, however, incurred no risk of want. She possessed an art that sufficed to supply food for her thriving infant and herself—the art of needlework.

By degrees her handiwork became what would now be termed the fashion. She bore on her breast, in the curiously embroidered letter, a specimen of her skill, and her needlework was seen on the ruff of the governor; military men wore it on their scarfs, and the minister on his bands.

As time went on, the public attitude to Hester changed. Human nature, to its credit, loves more readily than it hates. Hester never battled with the public, but submitted uncomplainingly to its worst usage, and so a species of general regard had ultimately grown up in reference to her.

Hester had named the infant “Pearl,” as being of great price, and little Pearl grew up a wondrously lovely child, with a strange, lawless character. At times she seemed rather an airy sprite than human, and never did she seek to make acquaintance with other children, but was always Hester’s companion in her walks about the town.

At one time some of the leading inhabitants of the place sought to deprive Hester of her child; and at the governor’s mansion, whither Hester had repaired, with some gloves which she had embroidered at his order, the matter was discussed in the mother’s presence by the governor and his guests—Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Arthur Dimmesdale, and old Roger Chillingworth, now established as a physician of great skill in the town.

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“God gave me the child!” cried Hester. “He gave her in requital of all things else which ye have taken from me. Ye shall not take her! I will die first! Speak thou for me,” she cried turning to the young clergyman, Mr. Dimmesdale. “Thou wast my pastor. Thou knowest what is in my heart, and what are a mother’s rights, and how much the stronger they are when that mother has but her child and the scarlet letter! I will not lose the child! Look to it!”

“There is truth in what she says,” began the minister. “God gave her the child, and there is a quality of awful sacredness between this mother and this child. It is good for this poor, sinful woman that she hath an infant confided to her care—to be trained up by her to righteousness, to remind her and to teach her that, if she bring the child to heaven, the child also will bring its parent thither. Let us then leave them as Providence hath seen fit to place them!”

“You speak, my friend, with a strange earnestness,” said old Roger Chillingworth, smiling at him.

“He hath adduced such arguments that we will even leave the matter as it now stands,” said the governor. “So long, at least, as there shall be no further scandal in the woman.”

The affair being so satisfactorily concluded, Hester Prynne, with Pearl, departed.

III.—The Leach and his Patient

It was at the solemn request of the deacons and elders of the church in Boston that the Rev. Mr. Dimmesdale went to Roger Chillingworth for professional advice. The young minister’s health was failing, his cheek was paler and thinner, and his voice more tremulous with every successive Sabbath.

Roger Chillingworth scrutinised his patient carefully, and, accepted as the medical adviser, determined to know the man before attempting to do him good. He strove to go deep into his patient’s bosom, delving among his principles, and prying into his recollections.

After a time, at a hint from old Roger Chillingworth, the friends of Mr. Dimmesdale effected an arrangement by which the two men were lodged in the same house; so that every ebb and flow of the minister’s life-tide might pass under the watchful eye of his anxious physician.

Old Roger Chillingworth, throughout life, had been calm in temperament, of kindly affections, and ever in the world a pure and upright man. He had begun an investigation, as he imagined, with the severe integrity of a judge, desirous only of truth. But, as he proceeded, a terrible fascination seized the old man within its grip, and

never set him free again until he had done all its bidding. He now dug into the poor clergyman's heart, like a miner searching for gold. "This man," the physician would say to himself at times, "pure as they deem him, hath inherited a strong animal nature from his father or his mother. Let us dig a little farther in the direction of this vein."

Henceforth Roger Chillingworth became not a spectator only, but a chief actor in the poor minister's inner world. And Mr. Dimmesdale grew to look with unaccountable horror and hatred at the old physician.

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And still the minister's fame and reputation for holiness increased, even while he was tortured by bodily disease and the black trouble of his soul.

More than once Mr. Dimmesdale had gone into the pulpit, with a purpose never to come down until he should have spoken the truth of his life. And ever he put a cheat upon himself by confessing in general terms his exceeding vileness and sinfulness. One night in early May, driven by remorse, and still indulging in the mockery of repentance, the minister sought the scaffold, where Hester Prynne had stood. The town was all asleep. There was no peril of discovery. And yet his vigil was surprised by Hester and her daughter, returning from a death-bed in the town, and presently by Roger Chillingworth himself.

"Who is that man?" gasped Mr. Dimmesdale, in terror. "I shiver at him, Hester. Canst thou do nothing for me? I have a nameless horror of the man!"

Hester remembered her promise and was silent.

"Worthy sir," said the physician, when he had advanced to the foot of the platform, "pious Master Dimmesdale! Can this be you? Come, good sir, I pray you, let me lead you home! You should study less, or these night-whimseys will grow upon you."

"I will go home with you," said Mr. Dimmesdale.

And now Hester Prynne resolved to do what might be in her power for the victim whom she saw in her former husband's grip. An opportunity soon occurred when she met the old physician stooping in quest of roots to concoct his medicines.

"When we last spake together," said Hester, "you bound me to secrecy touching our former relations. But now I must reveal the secret. He must discern thee in thy true character. What may be the result I know not. So far as concerns the overthrow or preservation of his fair fame and his earthly state, and perchance his life, he is in thy hands. Nor do I—whom the scarlet letter has disciplined to truth—nor do I perceive such advantage in his living any longer a life of ghastly emptiness, that I shall stoop to implore thy mercy. Do with him as thou wilt! There is no good for him, no good for me, no good for thee! There is no good for little Pearl!"

"Woman, I could well-nigh pity thee!" said Roger Chillingworth. "Peradventure, hadst thou met earlier with a better love than mine, this evil had not been. I pity thee, for the good that has been wasted in thy nature!"

"And I thee," answered Hester Prynne, "for the hatred that has transformed a wise and just man to a fiend! Forgive, if not for his sake, then doubly for thine own!"

"Peace, Hester, peace!" replied the old man with gloom. "It is not granted me to pardon. It is our fate. Now go thy ways, and deal as thou wilt with yonder man."

IV.—Revelation

A week later Hester Prynne waited in the forest for the minister as he returned from a visit to his Indian converts. He walked slowly, and, as he walked, kept his hand over his heart.

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“Arthur Dimmesdale! Arthur Dimmesdale!” she cried out.

“Who speaks?” answered the minister. “Hester! Hester Prynne! Is it thou?” He fixed his eyes upon her and added, “Hester, hast thou found peace?”

“Hast thou?” she asked.

“None! Nothing but despair! What else could I look for, being what I am, and leading such a life as mine?”

“You wrong yourself in this,” said Hester gently. “Your sin is left behind you, in the days long past. But Arthur, an enemy dwellest with thee, under the same roof. That old man—the physician, whom they call Roger Chillingworth—he was my husband! Forgive me. Let God punish!”

“I do forgive you, Hester,” replied the minister. “May God forgive us both!”

They sat down, hand clasped in hand, on the mossy trunk of a fallen tree.

It was Hester who bade him hope, and spoke of seeking a new life beyond the seas, in some rural village in Europe.

“Oh, Hester,” cried Arthur Dimmesdale, “I lack the strength and courage to venture out into the wide, strange world alone.”

“Thou shalt not go alone!” she whispered. Before Mr. Dimmesdale reached home he was conscious of a change of thought and feeling; Roger Chillingworth observed the change, and knew that now in the minister’s regard he was no longer a trusted friend, but his bitterest enemy.

A New England holiday was at hand, the public celebration of the election of a new governor, and the Rev. Arthur Dimmesdale was to preach the election sermon.

Hester had taken berths in a vessel that was about to sail; and then, on the very day of holiday, the shipmaster told her that Roger Chillingworth had also taken a berth in the same vessel.

Hester said nothing, but turned away, and waited in the crowded market-place beside the pillory with Pearl, while the procession re-formed after public worship. The street and the market-place absolutely bubbled with applause of the minister, whose sermon had surpassed all previous utterances.

At that moment Arthur Dimmesdale stood on the proudest eminence to which a New England clergyman could be exalted. The minister, surrounded by the leading men of

the town, halted at the scaffold, and, turning towards it, cried, “Hester, come hither! Come, my little Pearl!”

Leaning on Hester’s shoulder, the minister, with the child’s hand in his, slowly ascended the scaffold steps.

“Is not this better,” he murmured, “than what we dreamed of in the forest? For, Hester, I am a dying man. So let me make haste to take my shame upon me.”

“I know not. I know not.”

“Better? Yea; so we may both die, and little Pearl die with us.”

He turned to the market-place and spoke with a voice that all could hear.

“People of New England! At last, at last I stand where seven years since I should have stood. Lo, the scarlet letter which Hester wears! Ye have all shuddered at it! But there stood one in the midst of you, at whose hand of sin and infamy ye have not shuddered! Stand any here that question God’s judgement on a sinner? Behold a dreadful witness of it!”

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With a convulsive motion he tore away the ministerial gown from before his breast. It was revealed! For an instant the multitude gazed with horror on the ghastly miracle, while the minister stood with a flush of triumph in his face. Then, down he sank upon the scaffold. Hester partly raised him, and supported his head against her bosom. Old Roger Chillingworth knelt beside him.

“Thou hast escaped me!” he repeated more than once.

“May God forgive thee!” said the minister. “Thou, too, hast deeply sinned!”

He fixed his dying eyes on the woman and the child.

“My little Pearl,” he said feebly, “thou wilt kiss me. Hester, farewell. God knows, and He is merciful! His will be done! Farewell.”

That final word came forth with the minister’s expiring breath. The multitude, silent till then, broke out in a strange, deep voice of awe and wonder.

* * * * *

After many days there was more than one account of what had been witnessed on the scaffold. Most of the spectators testified to having seen, on the breast of the unhappy minister, a scarlet letter imprinted in the flesh. Others denied that there was any mark whatever on his breast, more than on a new-born infant’s. According to these highly respectable witnesses the minister’s confession implied no part of the guilt of Hester Prynne, but was to teach us that we were all sinners alike. Old Roger Chillingworth died and bequeathed his property to little Pearl.

For years the mother and child lived in England, and then Pearl married, and Hester returned alone to the little cottage by the forest.

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The House of the Seven Gables

“The House of the Seven Gables,” published in 1851, was written by Nathaniel Hawthorne directly after “The Scarlet Letter,” and though not equal to that remarkable book, was full worthy of its author’s reputation, and brought no disappointment to those who looked for great things from his pen. It seemed to James Russell Lowell “the highest art” to typify, “in the revived likeness of Judge Pyncheon to his ancestor the colonel, that intimate relationship between the present and the past in the way of ancestry and descent, which historians so carefully overlook.” Here, as in “The Scarlet Letter,” Hawthorne is unsparing in his analysis of the meaning of early American Puritanism—its intolerance and its strength.

I.—The Old Pyncheon Family

Half-way down a by-street of one of our New England towns stands a rusty wooden house, with seven acutely-peaked gables, and a huge clustered chimney in the midst. The street is Pyncheon Street; the house is the old Pyncheon House; and an elm tree before the door is known as the Pyncheon elm.

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Pyncheon Street formerly bore the humbler appellation of Maule's Lane, from the name of the original occupant of the soil, before whose cottage door it was a cow-path. In the growth of the town, however, after some thirty or forty years, the site covered by the rude hovel of Matthew Maule (originally remote from the centre of the earlier village) had become exceedingly desirable in the eyes of a prominent personage, who asserted claims to the land on the strength of a grant from the Legislature. Colonel Pyncheon, the claimant, was a man of iron energy of purpose. Matthew Maule, though an obscure man, was stubborn in the defense of what he considered his right. The dispute remained for years undecided, and came to a close only with the death of old Matthew Maule, who was executed for the crime of witchcraft.

It was remembered afterwards how loudly Colonel Pyncheon had joined in the general cry to purge the land from witchcraft, and had sought zealously the condemnation of Matthew Maule. At the moment of execution—with the halter about his neck, and while Colonel Pyncheon sat on horseback grimly gazing at the scene—Maule had addressed him from the scaffold, and uttered a prophecy. "God," said the dying man, pointing his finger at the countenance of his enemy, "God will give him blood to drink!"

When it was understood that Colonel Pyncheon intended to erect a spacious family mansion on the spot first covered by the log-built hut of Matthew Maule the village gossips shook their heads, and hinted that he was about to build his house over an unquiet grave.

But the Puritan soldier and magistrate was not a man to be turned aside from his scheme by dread of the reputed wizzard's ghost. He dug his cellar, and laid deep the foundations of his mansion; and the head-carpenter of the House of the Seven Gables was no other than Thomas Maule, the son of the dead man from whom the right to the soil had been wrested.

On the day the house was finished Colonel Pyncheon bade all the town to be his guests, and Maude's Lane—or Pyncheon Street, as it was now called—was thronged at the appointed hour as with a congregation on its way to church.

But the founder of the stately mansion did not stand in his own hall to welcome the eminent persons who presented themselves in honour of the solemn festival, and the principal domestic had to explain that his master still remained in his study, which he had entered an hour before.

The lieutenant-governor took the matter into his hands, and knocked boldly at the door of the colonel's private apartment, and, getting no answer, he tried the door, which yielded to his hand, and was flung wide open by a sudden gust of wind.

The company thronged to the now open door, pressing the lieutenant-governor into the room before them.

A large map and a portrait of Colonel Pyncheon were conspicuous on the walls, and beneath the portrait sat the colonel himself in an elbow chair, with a pen in his hand.

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A little boy, the colonel's grandchild, now made his way among the guests, and ran towards the seated figure; then, pausing halfway, he began to shriek with terror. The company drew nearer, and perceived that there was blood on the colonel's cuff and on his beard, and an unnatural distortion in his fixed stare. It was too late to render assistance. The iron-hearted Puritan, the relentless persecutor, the grasping and strong-willed man, was dead! Dead in his new house!

Colonel Pyncheon's sudden and mysterious end made a vast deal of noise in its day. There were many rumours, and a great dispute of doctors over the dead body. But the coroner's jury sat upon the corpse, and, like sensible men, returned an unassailable verdict of "Sudden Death."

The son and heir came into immediate enjoyment of a considerable estate, but a claim to a large tract of country in Waldo County, Maine, which the colonel, had he lived, would undoubtedly have made good, was lost by his decease. Some connecting link had slipped out of the evidence, and could not be found. Still, from generation to generation, the Pyncheons cherished an absurd delusion of family importance on the strength of this impalpable claim; and from father to son they clung with tenacity to the ancestral house for the better part of two centuries.

The most noted event in the Pyncheon annals in the last fifty years had been the violent death of the chief member of the family—an old and wealthy bachelor. One of his nephews, Clifford, was found guilty of the murder, and was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment. This had happened thirty years ago, and there were now rumours that the long-buried criminal was about to be released. Another nephew had become the heir, and was now a judge in an inferior court. The only members of the family known to be extant, besides the judge and the thirty years' prisoner, were a sister of the latter, wretchedly poor, who lived in the House of the Seven Gables by the will of the old bachelor, and the judge's single surviving son, now travelling in Europe. The last and youngest Pyncheon was a little country girl of seventeen, whose father—another of the judge's cousins—was dead, and whose mother had taken another husband.

II.—The House without Sunshine

Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon was reduced to the business of setting up a pretty shop, and that in the Pyncheon house where she had spent all her days. After sixty years of idleness and seclusion, she must earn her bread or starve, and to keep shop was the only resource open to her.

The first customer to cross the threshold was a young man to whom old Hepzibah let certain remote rooms in the House of the Seven Gables. He explained that he had looked in to offer his best wishes, and to see if he could give any assistance.

Poor Hepzibah, when she heard the kindly tone of his voice, began to sob.

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“Ah, Mr. Holgrave,” she cried, “I never can go through with it! Never, never, never! I wish I were dead in the old family tomb with all my forefathers—yes, and with my brother, who had far better find me there than here! I am too old, too feeble, and too hopeless! If old Maule’s ghost, or a descendant of his, could see me behind the counter to-day, he would call it the fulfilment of his worst wishes. But I thank you for your kindness, Mr. Holgrave, and will do my utmost to be a good shopkeeper.”

On Holgrave asking for half a dozen biscuits, Hepzibah put them into his hand, but rejected the compensation.

“Let me be a lady a moment longer,” she said, with a manner of antique stateliness. “A Pyncheon must not—at all events, under her forefathers’ roof—receive money for a morsel of bread from her only friend.”

As the day went on the poor lady blundered hopelessly with her customers, and committed the most unheard-of errors, so that the whole proceeds of her painful traffic amounted, at the close, to half a dozen coppers.

That night the little country cousin, Phoebe Pyncheon, arrived at the gloomy old house. Hepzibah knew that circumstances made it desirable for the girl to establish herself in another home, but she was reluctant to bid her stay.

“Phoebe,” she said, on the following morning, “this house of mine is but a melancholy place for a young person to be in. It lets in the wind and rain, and the snow, too, in the winter time; but it never lets in the sunshine! And as for myself, you see what I am—a dismal and lonesome old woman, whose temper is none of the best, and whose spirits are as bad as can be. I cannot make your life pleasant, Cousin Phoebe; neither can I so much as give you bread to eat.”

“You will find me a cheerful little body,” answered Phoebe, smiling, “and I mean to earn my bread. You know I have not been brought up a Pyncheon. A girl learns many things in a New England village.”

“Ah, Phoebe,” said Hepzibah, sighing, “it is a wretched thought that you should fling away your young days in a place like this. And, after all, it is not even for me to say who shall be a guest or inhabitant of the old Pyncheon house. Its master is coming.”

“Do you mean Judge Pyncheon?” asked Phoebe, in surprise.

“Judge Pyncheon!” answered her cousin angrily. “He will hardly cross the threshold while I live. You shall see the face of him I speak of.”

She went in quest of a miniature, and returned and placed it in Phoebe’s hand.

“How do you like the face?” asked Hepzibah.

“It is handsome; it is very beautiful!” said Phoebe admiringly. “It is as sweet a face as a man’s can be or ought to be. Who is it, Cousin Hepzibah?”

“Did you never hear of Clifford Pyncheon?”

“Never. I thought there were no Pyncheons left, except yourself and our Cousin Jaffrey, the judge. And yet I seem to have heard the name of Clifford Pyncheon. Yes, from my father, or my mother. But hasn’t he been dead a long while?”

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“Well, well, child, perhaps he has,” said Hepzibah, with a sad, hollow laugh; “but in old houses like this, you know, dead people are very apt to come back again. And, Cousin Phoebe, if your courage does not fail you, we will not part soon. You are welcome to such a home as I can offer you.”

III.—Miss Hepzibah’s Guests

The day after Phoebe’s arrival there was a constant tremor in Hepzibah’s frame. With all her affection for a young cousin there was a recurring irritability.

“Bear with me, my dear child!” she cried; “bear with me, for I love you, Phoebe; and truly my heart is full to the brim! By-and-by I shall be kind, and only kind.”

“What has happened?” asked Phoebe. “What is it that moves you so?”

“Hush! He is coming!” whispered Hepzibah. “Let him see you first, Phoebe; for you are young and rosy, and cannot help letting a smile break out. He always liked bright faces. And mine is old now, and the tears are hardly dry on it. Draw the curtain a little, but let there be a good deal of sunshine, too. He has had but little sunshine in his life, poor Clifford; and, oh, what a black shadow! Poor—poor Clifford!”

There was a step in the passage-way, above stairs. It seemed to Phoebe the same that she had heard in the night, as in a dream. Very slowly the steps came downstairs, and paused for a long time at the door.

Hepzibah, unable to endure the suspense, rushed forward, threw open the door, and led in the stranger by the hand. At the first glance Phoebe saw an elderly man, in an old-fashioned dressing gown, with grey hair, almost white, of an unusual length. The expression of his countenance seemed to waver, glimmer, and nearly to die away, and feebly to recover itself again.

“Dear Clifford,” said Hepzibah, “this is our Cousin Phoebe, Arthur’s only child, you know. She has come from the country to stay with us a while, for our old house has grown to be very lonely now.”

“Phoebe? Arthur’s child?” repeated the guest. “Ah, I forget! No matter. She is very welcome.” He seated himself in the place assigned him, and looked strangely around. His eyes met Hepzibah’s, and he seemed bewildered and disgusted. “Is this you, Hepzibah?” he murmured sadly. “How changed! how changed!”

“There is nothing but love here, Clifford,” Hepzibah said softly—“nothing but love. You are at home.”

The guest responded to her tone by a smile, which but half lit up his face. It was followed by a coarser expression, and he ate his food with fierce voracity and asked for "more—more!"

That day Phoebe attended to the shop, and the second person to enter it was a gentleman of portly figure and high respectability.

"I was not aware that Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon had commenced business under such favourable auspices," he said, in a deep voice, "You are her assistant, I suppose?"

"I certainly am," answered Phoebe. "I am a cousin of Miss Hepzibah, on a visit to her."

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“Her cousin, and from the country?” said the gentleman, bowing and smiling. “In that case we must be better acquainted, for you are my own little kinswoman likewise. Let me see, you must be Phoebe, the only child of my dear Cousin Arthur. I am your kinsman, my dear. Surely you must have heard of Judge Pyncheon?”

Phoebe curtsied, and the judge bent forward to bestow a kiss on his young relative. But Phoebe drew back; there was something repulsive to her in the judge’s demonstration, and on raising her eyes she was startled by the change in Judge Pyncheon’s face. It had become cold, hard, and immitigable.

“Dear me! What is to be done now?” thought the country girl to herself. “He looks as if there were nothing softer in him than a rock, nor milder than the east wind.”

Then all at once it struck Phoebe that this very Judge Pyncheon was the original of a miniature which Mr. Holgrave—who took portraits, and whose acquaintance she had made within a few hours of her arrival—had shown her yesterday. There was the same hard, stern, relentless look on the face. In reality, the miniature was copied from an old portrait of Colonel Pyncheon which hung within the house. Was it that the expression had been transmitted down as a precious heirloom, from that Puritan ancestor, in whose picture both the expression, and, to a singular degree, the features, of the modern judge were shown as by a kind of prophecy?

But as it happened, scarcely had Phoebe’s eyes rested again on the judge’s countenance than all its ugly sternness vanished, and she found herself almost overpowered by the warm benevolence of his look. But the fantasy would not quit her that the original Puritan, of whom she had heard so many sombre traditions, had now stepped into the shop.

“You seem to be a little nervous this morning,” said the judge. “Has anything happened to disturb you—anything remarkable in Cousin Hepzibah’s family—an arrival, eh? I thought so! To be an inmate with such a guest may well startle an innocent young girl!”

“You quite puzzle me, sir!” replied Phoebe. “There is no frightful guest in the house, but only a poor, gentle, child-like man, whom I believe to be Cousin Hepzibah’s brother. I am afraid that he is not quite in his sound senses; but so mild he seems to be that a mother might trust her baby with him. He startle me? Oh, no, indeed!”

“I rejoice to hear so favourable and so ingenious an account of my Cousin Clifford,” said the benevolent judge. “It is possible that you have never heard of Clifford Pyncheon, and know nothing of his history. But is Clifford in the parlour? I will just step in and see him. There is no need to announce me. I know the house, and know my Cousin Hepzibah, and her brother Clifford likewise. Ah, there is Hepzibah herself!”

Such was the case. The vibrations of the judge's voice had reached the old gentlewoman in the parlour, where Clifford sat slumbering in his chair.

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“He cannot see you,” said Hepzibah, with quivering voice. “He cannot see visitors.”

“A visitor—do you call me so?” cried the judge. “Then let me be Clifford’s host, and your own likewise. Come at once to my house. I have often invited you before. Come, and we will labour together to make Clifford happy.”

“Clifford has a home here,” she answered.

“Woman,” broke out the judge, “what is the meaning of all this? Have you other resources? Take care, Hepzibah, take care! Clifford is on the brink of as black a ruin as ever befel him yet!”

From within the parlour sounded a tremulous, wailing voice, indicating helpless alarm.

“Hepzibah!” cried the voice. “Entreat him not to come in. Go down on your knees to him. Oh, let him have mercy on me! Mercy!”

The judge withdrew, and Hepzibah, deathly white, staggered towards Phoebe.

“That man has been the horror of my life,” she murmured. “Shall I never have courage enough to tell him what he is?”

IV.—The Spell is Broken

The shop thrived under Phoebe’s management, and the acquaintance with Mr. Holgrave ripened into friendship.

Then, after some weeks, Phoebe went away on a temporary visit to her mother, and the old house, which had been brightened by her presence, was once more dark and gloomy.

It was during this absence of Phoebe’s that Judge Pyncheon once more called and demanded to see Clifford.

“You cannot see him,” answered Hepzibah. “Clifford has kept his bed since yesterday.”

“What! Clifford ill!” said the judge, starting. “Then I must, and will see him!”

The judge explained the reason for his urgency. He believed that Clifford could give the clue to the dead uncle’s wealth, of which not more than a half had been mentioned in his will. If Clifford refused to reveal where the missing documents were placed, the judge declared he would have him confined in a public asylum as a lunatic, for there were many witnesses of Clifford’s simple childlike ways.

“You are stronger than I,” said Hepzibah, “and you have no pity in your strength. Clifford is not now insane; but the interview which you insist upon may go far to make him so. Nevertheless, I will call Clifford!”

Hepzibah went in search of her brother, and Judge Pyncheon flung himself down in an old chair in the parlour. He took his watch from his pocket and held it in his hand. But Clifford was not in his room, nor could Hepzibah find him. She returned to the parlour, calling out to the judge as she came, to rise and help find Clifford.

But the judge never moved, and Clifford appeared at the door, pointing his finger at the judge, and laughing with strange excitement.

“Hepzibah,” he said, “we can dance now! We can sing, laugh, play, do what we will! The weight is gone, Hepzibah—gone off this weary old world, and we may be as lighthearted as little Phoebe herself! What an absurd figure the old fellow cuts now, just when he fancied he had me completely under his thumb!”

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Then the brother and sister departed hastily from the house, and left Judge Pyncheon sitting in the old house of his forefathers.

Phoebe and Holgrave were in the house together when the brother and sister returned, and Holgrave had told her of the judge's sudden death. Then, in that hour so full of doubt and awe, the one miracle was wrought, without which every human existence is a blank, and the bliss which makes all things true, beautiful, and holy shone around this youth and maiden. They were conscious of nothing sad or old.

Presently the voices of Clifford and Hepzibah were heard at the door, and when they entered Clifford appeared the stronger of the two.

"It is our own little Phoebe! Ah! And Holgrave with her!" he exclaimed. "I thought of you both as we came down the street. And so the flower of Eden has bloomed even in this old, darksome house to-day."

A week after the judge's death news came of the death of his son, and so Hepzibah became rich, and so did Clifford, and so did Phoebe, and, through her, Holgrave.

It was far too late for the formal vindication of Clifford's character to be worth the trouble and anguish involved. For the truth was that the uncle had died by a sudden stroke, and the judge, knowing this, had let suspicion and condemnation fall on Clifford, only because he had himself been busy among the dead man's papers, destroying a later will made out in Clifford's favour, and because it was found the papers had been disturbed, to avert suspicion from the real offender he had let the blame fall on his cousin.

Clifford was content with the love of his sister and Phoebe and Holgrave. The good opinion of society was not worth publicly reclaiming.

It was Holgrave who discovered the missing document the judge had set his heart on obtaining.

"And now, my dearest Phoebe," said Holgrave, "how will it please you to assume the name of Maule? In this long drama of wrong and retribution I represent the old wizzard, and am probably as much of a wizzard as ever my ancestor was."

Then, with Hepzibah and Clifford, Phoebe and Holgrave left the old house for ever.

* * * * *

ROBERT HICHENS

The Garden of Allah

The son of a clergyman, Mr. Robert Smythe Hichens, born at Speldhurst, Kent, England, on November 14, 1864, was originally intended to follow a musical career, but after some years abandoned music for journalism. His first long novel was written and published at the age of seventeen. It attracted little or no attention, and has long been out of print. A trip to Egypt in 1893 resulted in a burning desire to become a novelist, and his brilliant satire, “The Green Carnation,” followed. The book was written in a month, and at once established its author’s name and fame. “The Garden of Allah,” of all Mr. Hichens’ works

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the most typical of his genius, appeared in 1905. “The intellectual grip of the story,” says one critic, “cannot be denied, for it completely conquers the critical sense, and the ideas of the author insinuate themselves, as it were, among one’s inmost thoughts.” Yet Mr. Hichens’ stories are popular, not only with literary connoisseurs, but also with the general public, inasmuch as they owe their fascination not so much to an extreme refinement of art as to their freshness of imagination and dramatic intensity. This epitome of the “Garden of Allah” has been prepared by Mr. Hichens himself.

I.—The Home of Peace

On an autumn evening, Domini Enfilden leaned on the parapet of a verandah of the Hotel du Desert at Beni-Mora, in Southern Algeria, gazing towards the great Sahara, which was lit up by the glory of sunset. The bell of the Catholic Church chimed. She heard the throbbing of native drums in the village near by. Tired with her long journey from England, she watched and listened while the twilight crept among the palms, and the sandy alleys grew dark.

Thirty-two, an orphan, unmarried, strong, fearless, ardent, but a deeply religious woman and a Catholic, Domini had passed through much mental agony. Her mother, Lady Rens, a member of one of England’s oldest Catholic families, but half Hungarian on the mother’s side, had run away when Domini was nineteen with a Hungarian musician, leaving her only child with her despairing and abandoned husband. Lord Rens had become a Catholic out of love for his wife. When he was deserted by her, he furiously renounced his faith, and eventually died blaspheming. In vain through many years he had tried to detach his daughter from the religion of her guilty mother, now long since dead. Domini had known how to resist; but the cruel contest had shaken her body and soul.

Now free, alone, she had left England to begin a new life far away from the scene of her misery. Vaguely she had thought of the great desert, called by the Arabs “The Garden of Allah,” as the home of peace. She had travelled there to find peace. That day, at the gate of the desert, she had met a traveller, Doris Androvsky, a man of about thirty-six, powerfully built, tanned by the sun. When she was about to get into the train at the station of El Akbara this man had rudely sprung in before her. The train had begun to move, and Domini had sprung into it almost at the risk of her life. Androvsky had not offered to help her, had not said a word of apology. His *gaucherie* had almost revolted Domini. Nevertheless, something powerful, mournful, passionate, and sincere in his personality had affected her, roused her interest.

Silently they had come into the desert together, strangers, almost at enmity the one with the other. They were now staying in the same hotel in this oasis in the desert of Sahara.

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In coming to the hotel, Domini had seen a curious incident. Androvsky, with a guide who carried his bag, was walking before her down the long public garden, when in the distance there appeared the black figure of the priest of Beni-Mora advancing slowly towards them. When Androvsky saw the priest he had stopped short, hesitated, then, despite the protests of his guide, had abruptly turned down a side path and hurried away. He had fled from the man of prayer.

Now, as the twilight fell, Domini thought of this incident, and when she heard Androvsky's heavy tread upon the stairs of the verandah, the sharp closing of the French window of his room, she was filled with a vague uneasiness.

Next day she visited a wonderful garden on the edge of the desert belonging to a Count Anteoni, a recluse who loved the Arabs and spent much of his time among them. There, standing with the count by the garden wall at the hour of the Mohammedan's prayer, she had seen Androvsky again. He was in the desert with a Nomad. The cry of the *muezzin* went up to the brazen sky. The Nomad fell on his knees and prayed. Androvsky started, gazed, shrank back, then turned and strode away like one horrified by some grievous vision. Domini said to the count, "I have just seen a man flee from prayer; it was horrible."

He answered her, very gravely, "The man who is afraid of prayer is unwise to set foot beyond the palm-trees, for the desert is the garden of Allah."

That evening Domini and Androvsky spoke to each other for the first time, on the top of a tower where they had come to see the sunset. Domini spoke first, moved by a strange look of loneliness, of desolation, in Androvsky's eyes. He replied in a low voice, and asked her pardon for his rude conduct at the station. Then, abruptly, he descended the tower and disappeared.

At night she visited a dancing house to see the strange dances of the desert. She found Androvsky there, watching the painted women as if half fascinated, half horrified by them. Irena, a girl who had been banished from Beni-Mora for threatening to murder an Arab of whom she was jealous, but had been permitted to return, discovering him among the audience, stabbed him. There was a violent scene, during which Androvsky, forcing his way through the desert men, protected Domini from the crush. The crowd rushed out, leaving them alone together. Androvsky insisted on escorting Domini back to the hotel.

II.—Defying Allah in Allah's Garden

The acquaintance thus unconventionally began between them continued, and ripened into a strange friendship. Domini was a magnificent horsewoman. Finding that Androvsky did not know how to ride, she gave him lessons. Together they galloped over the desert sands; together they visited the Saharan villages, hidden in the groves

of date palms behind the brown earthen walls of the oasis; together watched the burning sunsets of Africa; at meal-times they met in the hotel; in the evenings they sat upon the verandah, and heard the Zouaves singing in chorus, the distant murmur of the tom-toms.

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Domini became profoundly interested in Androvsky, but her interest was complicated by wonder at his peculiarities, at his uncouth manners, his strange silences, his ignorance of life and of social matters, his distrust of others, his desire to keep aloof from all human beings, except herself. The good priest, now her intimate friend, Count Anteoni, also her friend and respectful admirer, were ill at ease with him. He had tried to avoid them, but Domini, anxious to bring some pleasure into his life, had introduced him to them at a luncheon given by the count in his garden, despite Androvsky's dogged assertion that he disliked priests, and did not care for social intercourse.

At this lunch Androvsky had been brusque, on the defensive, almost actively disagreeable. And when, after the priest's departure, he left Domini alone with Count Anteoni, she felt almost relieved. Count Anteoni summoned a sand-diviner to read Domini's fate in the sand. This man—a thin, fanatical Eastern, with piercing and cruel eyes—spread out his sand brought from the tomb of a Mohammedan saint, and prophesied. He declared that he saw a great sand-storm, and in it a train of camels waiting by a church. From the church came the sound of music, nearly drowned by the roar of the wind. In the church the real life of Domini was beginning. The music ceased; darkness fell. Then the diviner saw Domini, with a companion, mounted on one of the camels, and disappearing into the storm towards the south. The face of her companion was hidden. Finally he saw Domini far out in the desert among great dunes of white sand. In her heart there was joy. It was as if all the date palms bore their fruit together, and in all the desert places water-springs burst forth. But presently a figure came towards her, walking heavily; and all the dates shrivelled upon the palms, and all the springs dried up. Sorrow and terror were there beside her.

At this point in the diviner's prophecy Domini stopped him. Afterwards she explained to Anteoni that she felt as if another's fate was being read in it as well as her own, as if to listen any more might be to intrude upon another's secret.

Upon the following day Anteoni left Beni-Mora to make a long desert journey to a sacred city called Amara. Domini went to his garden at dawn to see him off. Before departing he warned Domini to beware of Androvsky. She asked him why. He answered that Androvsky seemed to him a man who was at odds with life, with himself, with his Creator, a man who was defying Allah in Allah's garden. When Anteoni had gone, Domini, in some perplexity of spirit, and moved by a longing for sympathy and help, visited the priest in his house near the church. The priest, indirectly, also warned her against Androvsky, and a little later frankly, told her that he felt an invincible dislike to him.

"I have no reason to give," said the priest. "My instinct is my reason. I feel it my duty to say that I advise you most earnestly to break off your acquaintance with Monsieur Androvsky."

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Domini said, “It is strange; ever since I have been here I have felt as if everything that has happened had been arranged beforehand, as if it had to happen, and I feel that, too, about the future.”

“Count Anteoni’s fatalism!” exclaimed the priest. “It is the guiding spirit of this land. And you, too, are going to be led by it. Take care! You have come to a land of fire, and I think you are made of fire.”

The warnings of Anteoni and the priest made an impression on Domini. She was conscious of how the outside world would be likely to regard her acquaintance with Androvsky. Suddenly she saw Androvsky as some strange and ghastly figure of legend; as the wandering Jew met by a traveller at cross roads, and distinguished for an instant by an oblique flash of lightning; as the shrouded Arab of the Eastern tale, who announces coming disaster to the wanderers in the desert by beating a death-roll on a drum amid the sands.

And she felt upon her the heavy hand of some strange, perhaps terrible, fate.

III.—The Eternal Song of Love

That same night, accompanied by Batouch, Domini rode out into the desert to see the rising of the moon, and there met Androvsky. He had followed them on horseback. Domini dismissed Batouch at Androvsky’s reiterated request. When they were alone in the sands, Androvsky told Domini that he had needed to be with her as he had something to tell her. On the morrow he was going away from Beni-Mora.

His face, while he said this, was turned from Domini, and his voice sounded as if it spoke to some one at a distance, some one who can hear as man cannot hear.

Domini said little. But at the sound of his words it seemed to her as if all outside things she had ever known had foundered; as if with them had foundered, too, all the bodily powers that were of the essence of her life. And the desert, which she had so loved, was no longer to her the desert, sand with a soul in it, blue distances full of a music of summons, but only a barren waste of dried-up matter, featureless, desolate, ghastly with the bones of things that had died.

She rode back with Androvsky to Beni-Mora in a silence like that of death.

But this parting, decreed by the man, was not to be. In the desert these two human beings had grown to love each other, with a love that had become a burning passion. And next day when, in the garden of Count Anteoni, Androvsky came to say farewell to Domini, his love broke all barriers. He sank on the sand, letting his hands slip down till they clasped Domini’s knees.

“I love you!” he said. “I love you. But don’t listen to me. You mustn’t hear it. You mustn’t. But I must say it. I can’t go till I say it. I love you! I love you!”

“I am listening,” she said. “I must hear it.”

Androvsky rose up, put his hands behind Domini, held her, set his lips on hers, pressing his whole body against hers.

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“Hear it!” he said, muttering against her lips. “Hear it! I love you! I love you!”

In the recesses of the garden Larbi, that idle gardener, played upon his little flute his eternal song of love, and from the desert, beyond the white wall, there rose an Arab’s voice singing a song of the Sahara, “No one but God and I knows what is in my heart!”

IV.—A Nomad’s Honeymoon

As the sand-diviner had foretold, Domini and Androvsky were married in the church of Beni-Mora, and by the priest who had warned Domini to have nothing more to do with Androvsky. A terrible sand-storm was raging, and the desert was blotted out. Nevertheless, when the ceremony was over, the bride and bridegroom mounted upon a camel, and with their attendants, set out for their desert honeymoon. Standing before the door of the church, the good priest watched them go, with fear in his heart, and that night in his humble home, kneeling before his crucifix, he prayed long and earnestly for all wanderers in the desert.

Isolated from all who knew them, free from all social ties, nomads, as are the Bedouins who make their dwelling for ever amid the vast and burning sands, Domini and Androvsky entered upon their married life. And at first one of them was happy as few are ever happy. Domini loved completely, trusted completely, lived with a fulness, a completeness she had never known till now. That Androvsky almost worshipped her, she knew. His conduct to her was perfect. And yet there were times when Domini felt as if a shadow rose between them, as if, even with her, in some secret place of his soul Androvsky was ill at ease, as if sometimes he suffered, and dared not tell his suffering.

One day, in their wanderings, they came to a desolate place called Mogar, and camped on a sandhill looking over a vast stretch of dunes. Towards evening Androvsky descended into the plain to shoot gazelle, leaving Domini alone. While he was away a French officer, with two men of the Zouaves, rode slowly up. They were nearly starving and terribly exhausted, having been lost in a sand-storm for three days and nights.

Pitying their sufferings, Domini insisted on entertaining them. The men must sup with the Arabs, the officer must dine with herself and Androvsky. The officer accepted with gratitude, and went off to make his toilet. When Androvsky returned, Domini told him of the officer’s arrival, and when he saw the three places laid for dinner in the tent, he seemed profoundly disturbed. He asked the officer’s name. Domini told him Trevignac.

“Trevignac!” he exclaimed.

Then, hearing the soldiers coming, he turned away; abruptly and disappeared into the bedroom tent.

Trevignac came up, and in a few minutes Androvsky reappeared. The two men gazed at each other for an instant. Then Domini introduced them, and they all sat down to dinner. Conversation was uneasy. Androvsky was evidently ill at ease; Trevignac was distrait at moments, strangely watchful of his host at other moments. Dinner over, Domini left the two men together to smoke, and went out on to the sand. She met an Arab carrying coffee and a liqueur to the tent.

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“What’s that, Ouardi?” she asked, touching the bottle.

He told her it was an African liqueur.

“Take it in,” she said.

And she strolled away to the bonfire to listen to the fantasia the Arabs were making in honour of the soldiers.

When she returned to the tent, she found her husband alone in it, standing up, with a quantity of fragments of glass lying at his feet. Near him was the coffee, untasted. Trevignac was gone. She asked for an explanation. He gave her none. The fragments of glass were all that remained of the bottle which had contained the liqueur.

At dawn Domini met Trevignac riding away with his soldiers. He saluted her, bidding his men ride on. As he gazed at her, she seemed to see horror in his eyes. Twice he tried to speak, but apparently could not bring himself to do so. He looked towards the tent where Androvsky was sleeping, then at Domini; then, as if moved by an irresistible impulse, he leaned from his saddle, made over Domini the sign of the cross, and rode away into the desert.

V.—I Have Insulted God

From that day Androvsky’s strange misery of the soul, strange horror of the world, increased. Domini felt that he was secretly tormented. She tried to make him happier; she even told him that she believed he often felt far away from God, and that she prayed each day for him.

“Boris,” she said, “if it’s that, don’t be too sad. It may all come right in the desert. For the desert is the garden of Allah.”

He made her no answer.

At last in their journeying they came to the sacred city of Amara, and camped in the white sands beyond it.

This was the place described by the sand-diviner, and here Domini knew that her love was to be crowned, that she would become a mother. She hesitated to tell her husband, for in this place his misery and fear of men seemed mounting to a climax. Nevertheless, as if in a frantic attempt to get the better of his mental torture, he had gone off, saying he wanted to see the city.

While he was away, Domini was visited first by Count Anteoni, who told her that he had joined the Mohammedan religion, and was at last happy and at peace; secondly, when night had fallen, by the priest of Amara. This man was talkative and genial, fond of the

good things of life. Domini offered him a cigar. He accepted it. An Arab brought coffee, and the same African liqueur which had been taken to the tent on the night when Trevignac had dined with Domini and Androvsky.

When the priest was about to drink some of it, he suddenly paused, and put the glass down. Domini leant forward.

“Louarine,” she said, reading the name on the bottle. “Won’t you have some?”

“The fact is, madame,” began the priest, with hesitation, “this liqueur comes from the Trappist monastery of El Largani.”

“Yes?”

“It was made by a monk and priest to whom the secret of its manufacture belonged. At his death he was to confide the secret to another whom he had chosen. But the monks of El Largani will never earn another franc by Louarine when what they have in stock is exhausted.”

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“The monk died suddenly?”

“Madame, he ran away from the monastery after being there in the eternal silence for twenty years, after taking the final vows.”

“How horrible!” said Domini. “That man must be in hell now, in the hell a man can make for himself by his own act.”

As she spoke, Androvsky appeared by the tent door. He was looking frightfully ill, and like a desperate man. When the priest had gone, Domini told Androvsky about the liqueur and the disappearance of the Trappist monk. As she spoke, his face grew more ghastly. He stood rigid, as if with horror.

“Poor, poor man!” she said, as she finished her story.

“You—you pity that man then?” murmured Androvsky.

“Yes,” she replied. “I was thinking of the agony he must be enduring if he is still alive.”

Androvsky seemed painfully moved, and almost as if he were on the verge of some passionate outburst of emotion; and something like a deep voice far down in the loving heart of Domini said to her, “If you really love, be fearless. Attack the sorrow which stands like a figure of death between you and your husband. Drive it away. You have a weapon—faith— use it!”

At last she summoned all her courage, all her faith, and she forced from Androvsky the confession of what it was which held him in perpetual misery, even in freedom, even with her, whom he loved beyond and above all human beings.

“Domini,” he said, “you want to know what it is that makes me unhappy even in our love—desperately unhappy. It is this. I believe in God, I love God, I have insulted God. I have tried to forget God, to deny Him, to put human love higher than love for Him. But always I am haunted by the thought of God, and that thought makes me despair. Once, when I was young, I gave myself to God solemnly. I have broken the vows I made! I gave myself to God as a monk.”

“You are the Trappist!” she whispered. “You are the monk from the monastery of El Largani who disappeared after twenty years?”

“Yes,” he said, “I am he.”

Standing there in the sands, while the world was wrapped in sleep, Androvsky told Domini the whole story of his life in the monastery, of his innocent happiness there, and of the events which woke up within him the mad longing to see life and the world, and to know the love of woman. He told her of his secret departure by night from the

monastery, of his journey to the desert in search of complete and savage liberty. He told her how he had fought against his growing love for her, how he had tried to leave her; how, at the last moment in the garden by night, his passion for her had conquered him and driven him to her feet. He told her how the officer, Trevignac, had known him long ago in the monastery, and had recognised him when the Arab brought in the liqueur which he had made. He kept nothing from her.

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“That last day in the garden,” he said finally, “I thought I had conquered myself, and it was in that moment that I fell for ever. When I knew you loved me, I could fight no more. You have seen me, you have lived with me, you have divined my misery. But don’t think, Domini, that it ever came from you. It was the consciousness of my lie to you, my lie to God, that—that—I can’t tell you—I can’t tell you—you know.”

He looked into her face, then turned to go away into the desert.

“I’ll go! I’ll go!” he muttered.

Then Domini spoke.

“Boris!” she said.

He stopped.

“Boris, now at last you can pray.”

She went into the tent, and left him alone. He knew that in the tent she was praying for him. He stood, trying to listen to her prayer, then, with an uncertain hand, he felt in his breast. He drew out a wooden cross, given to him by his mother when he entered the monastery. He bent down his head, touched it with his lips, and fell upon his knees in the desert.

From that night, Domini realised that her duty was plain before her. Androvsky was still at heart a monk, and she was a fervently religious woman. She put God above herself, above her poor, desperate, human love, above Androvsky and his passionate love for her. She put the things of eternity before the things of time. She never told Androvsky of the child that was coming.

After he had made his confession to the priest of Beni-Mora who had married them, she led him to the monastery door, and there they parted for ever on earth, to be reunited, as both believed, in heaven.

And now, in the garden of Count Anteoni, which has passed into other hands, a little boy may often be seen playing.

Sometimes, when twilight is falling over the Sahara, his mother calls him to her, to the white wall from which she looks out over the desert.

“Listen, Boris,” she whispers.

The little boy leans his face against her breast, and obeys.

An Arab is passing below on the desert track, singing to himself, as he goes towards his home in the oasis, “No one but God and I knows what is in my heart.”

The mother whispers the words to herself. The cool wind of the night blows over the vast spaces of the Sahara and touches her cheek, reminding her of her glorious days of liberty, of the passion that came to her soul like fire in the desert.

But she does not rebel, for always, when night falls, she sees the form of a man praying, one who once fled from prayer in the desert; she sees a wanderer who at last has reached his home.

* * * * *

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

Elsie Venner

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Oliver Wendell Holmes, essayist, poet, scientist, and one of the most lovable men who have adorned the literature of the English tongue, was born at Cambridge, Massachusetts, Aug. 29, 1809, of a New England family with a record in which he took great pride. After studying medicine at Harvard, he went to Europe on a prolonged tour, and, returning, took his M.D., and became a popular professor of anatomy. He had some repute as a graceful poet in his student days. "Elsie Venner," at first called "The Professor's Story," was published in 1861, and was the first sustained work of fiction that came from the pen of Oliver Wendell Holmes. Illumined by admirable pictures of life and character in a typical New England town, the book itself is a remarkable study of heredity—a study only relieved by the author's kindly humour. The unfortunate child, doomed before her birth to suffer from the fatal bite of a rattlesnake—an incident unduly extravagant in some critics' opinions—and only throwing off the evil influence on her death-bed, is one of the most pathetic figures in all American literature. It was not until seven years later that "Elsie Venner" was followed by another novel, "The Guardian Angel," a story which is worked out on the same lines of thought as the former. Holmes died on October 7, 1894.

I.—The Eyes of Elsie Venner

Mr. Bernard Langdon, duly certificated, had accepted the invitation from the Board of Trustees of the Apollinean Female Institute, a school for the education of young ladies, situated in the nourishing town of Rockland.

Rockland is at the foot of a mountain, and a horrible feature of this mountain was the region known as Rattlesnake Ledge, which was still tenanted by those horrible reptiles in spite of many a foray by the townspeople.

That the brood was not extirpated there was a melancholy proof in the year 184—, when a young married woman, detained at home by the state of her health, was bitten in the entry of her own house by a rattlesnake which had found its way down from the mountain. Owing to the almost instant employment of powerful remedies, the bite did not prove immediately fatal, but she died within a few months of the time when she was bitten.

It was on a fine morning that Mr. Langdon made his appearance, as master for the English branches, in the great school-room of the Apollinean Institute. The principal, Mr. Silas Peckham, carried him to the desk of the young lady assistant, Miss Darley by name, and introduced him to her. The young lady assistant had to point out to the new master the whole routine of the classes, and Mr. Langdon had a great many questions to ask relating to his new duties. The truth is, the general effect of the school-room, with its scores of young girls, was enough to confuse a young man like Mr. Langdon, and he may be pardoned for asking Miss Darley questions about his scholars as well as about their lessons.

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He asked who one or two girls were, and being answered, went on, “And who and what is that sitting a little apart there—that strange, wild-looking girl?”

The lady teacher’s face changed; one would have said she was frightened or troubled. The girl did not look up; she was winding a gold chain about her wrist, and then uncoiling it as if in a kind of reverie. Miss Darley drew close to the master, and placed her hand so as to hide her lips.

“Don’t look at her as if we were talking about her,” she whispered softly, “that is Elsie Venner.”

A girl of about seventeen, tall, slender, was Elsie Venner. Black, piercing eyes, black hair, twisted in heavy braids, a face that one could not help looking at for its beauty, yet that one wanted to look away from, and could not, for those diamond eyes.

Those eyes were fixed on the lady teacher one morning not long after Langdon’s arrival. Miss Darley turned her own away, and let them wander over the other scholars. But the diamond eyes were on her still. She turned the leaves of several of her books, and finally, following some ill-defined impulse which she could not resist, left her place, and went to the young girl’s desk.

“What do you want of me, Elsie Venner?” It was a strange question to put, for the girl had not signified that she wished the teacher to come to her.

“Nothing,” she cried. “I thought I could make you come.” The girl spoke in a low tone, a kind of half-whisper.

Bernard Langdon experienced the power of those diamond eyes one particular day that summer.

He had made up his mind to explore the dreaded Rattlesnake Ledge of the mountain, to examine the rocks, and perhaps to pick up an adventure in the zoological line; for he had on a pair of high, stout boots, and he carried a stick in his hand.

High up on one of the precipitous walls of rock he saw some tufts of flowers, and knew them for flowers Elsie Venner had brought into the school-room. Presently on a natural platform where he sat down to rest, he found a hairpin.

He rose up from his seat to look round for other signs of a woman’s visits, and walked to the mouth of a cavern and looked into it. His look was met by the glitter of two diamond eyes, shining out of the darkness, but gliding with a smooth, steady motion towards the light, and himself. He stood fixed, struck dumb, staring back into them with dilating pupils and sudden numbness of fear that cannot move. The two sparks of light came forward until they grew to circles of flame, and all at once lifted themselves up as if in angry surprise.

Then, for the first time, thrilled in Mr. Bernard's ears the dreadful sound that nothing which breathes can hear unmoved—the long, singing whir, as the huge, thick-bodied reptile shook his many-jointed rattle. He waited as in a trance; and while he looked straight into the flaming eyes, it seemed to him that they were losing their light and terror, that they were growing tame and dull. The charm was dissolving, the numbness passing away, he could move once more. He heard a light breathing close to his ear, and, half turning, saw the face of Elsie Venner, looking motionless into the reptile's eyes, which had shrunk and faded under the stronger enchantment of her own.

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From that time Mr. Bernard was brought into new relations with Elsie. He was grateful; she had led him out of danger, and perhaps saved him from death, but he shuddered at the recollection of the whole scene. He made up his mind that, come what might, he would solve the mystery of Elsie Venner, sooner or later.

II.—Cousin Richard Venner

Richard Venner had passed several of his early years with his uncle Dudley Venner at the Dudley mansion, the playmate of Elsie, being her cousin, two or three years older than herself. His mother was a lady of Buenos Ayres, of Spanish descent, and had died while he was in his cradle. A self-willed, capricious boy, he was a rough playmate for Elsie.

But Elsie was the wilder of these two motherless children. Old Sophy— said to be the granddaughter of a cannibal chief—who watched them in their play and their quarrels, always seemed to be more afraid for the boy than the girl.

“Massa Dick, don’ you be too rough wi’ dat girl! She scratch you las’ week, ‘n’ some day she bite you; ‘n’ if she bite you, Massa Dick——” Old Sophy nodded her head ominously, as if she could say a great deal more.

Elsie’s father, whose fault was to indulge her in everything, found that it would never do to let these children grow up together. A sharper quarrel than usual decided this point. Master Dick forgot old Sophy’s caution, and vexed the girl into a paroxysm of wrath, in which she sprang at him, and bit his arm. Old Dr. Kettredge was sent for, and came at once when he heard what had happened.

He had a good deal to say about the danger there was from the teeth of animals or of human beings when enraged, and he emphasised his remarks by the application of a pencil of lunar caustic to each of the marks left by the sharp white teeth.

After this Master Dick went off on his travels, which led him into strange places and stranger company; and so the boy grew up to youth and early manhood.

There came a time when the young gentleman thought he would like to see his cousin again, and wrote inviting himself to the Dudley mansion.

Doctor Kettredge could see no harm in the visit when Dudley Venner consulted him. Her father was never easy about Elsie. He could not tell the old doctor *all* he knew. In God’s good time he believed his only daughter would come to her true nature; her eyes would lose that frightful, cold glitter, and that faint birth-mark which encircled her neck—-her mother swooned when she first saw it—would fade wholly out.

“Let her go to the girls’ school, by all means,” the doctor had said, when that was first talked about. “Anything to interest her. Friendship, love, religion—whatever will set her nature to work.”

When Dudley Venner mentioned his nephew’s arrival, the doctor only said, “Let him stay a while; it gives her something to think about.” He thought there was no danger of any sudden passion springing up between two such young persons.

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So Mr. Richard came, and the longer he stayed the more favourably the idea of a permanent residence in the mansion-house seemed to impress him. The estate was large and of great value, and there could not be a doubt that the property had largely increased. It was evident there was an abundant income, and Cousin Elsie was worth trying for. On the other hand, what was the matter with her eyes, that they sucked your life out of you in that strange way? And what did she always wear a necklace for? Besides, her father might last for ever or take it into his head to marry again.

He prolonged his visit until his presence became something like a matter of habit. In the meantime he found that Elsie was getting more constant in her attendance at school, and learned, on inquiry, that there was a new master, a handsome young man. The handsome young man would not have liked the look that came over Dick Venner's face when he heard this fact mentioned.

For Mr. Richard had decided that he must have the property, that this was his one great chance in life. The girl might not suit him as a wife. Possibly. Time enough to find out after he had got her. That Elsie now regarded him with indifference, if not aversion, he could not conceal from himself. The young man at the school was probably at the bottom of it. "Cousin Elsie in love with a Yankee schoolmaster!"

But for a long time Dick Venner could get no positive evidence of any sentiment between Elsie and the schoolmaster. At one time he would be devoured by suspicion, at another he would laugh himself out of them.

His jealousy at last broke out, when he and Elsie were alone, in a questioning reference to Mr. Langdon.

Elsie coloured, and then answered, abruptly and scornfully, "Mr. Langdon is a gentleman, and would not vex me as you do."

"A gentleman!" Dick answered, with the most insulting accent. "A gentleman! Come, Elsie; you've got the Dudley blood in your veins, and it doesn't do for you to call this poor sneaking schoolmaster a gentleman!"

He stopped short. Elsie's bosom was heaving, the faint flush of her cheek was becoming a vivid glow. There was no longer any doubt in his mind. Elsie Venner loved Bernard Langdon. The sudden conviction, absolute, overwhelming, rushed upon him.

Elsie made no answer, but glided out of the room and slid away to her own apartment. She bolted the door, and drew her curtains close. Then she threw herself on the floor, and fell into a dull, slow ache of passion, without tears, almost without words.

Dick realised that he had reached a fearful point. He could not give up the great Dudley property. Therefore, the school-master must be got rid of, and by self-destruction.

Mr. Bernard Langdon must be found, suspended to the branch of a tree, somewhat within a mile of the Apollinean Institute.

III.—The Perilous Hour

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Old Doctor Kettredge had advised Bernard Langdon to go in for pistol-shooting, and had even presented him with a small, beautifully finished revolver. “I want you to carry this,” he said, “and more than that, I want you to practise with it often, so that it may be seen and understood that you are apt to have a pistol about you.”

This was at the conclusion of a conversation between the doctor and Mr. Bernard concerning Elsie Venner.

“Elsie interests me,” said the young man, “interests me strangely. I would risk my life for her, but I do not love her. If her hand touches mine, it is not a thrill of passion I feel running through me, but a very different emotion.”

“Mr. Langdon,” said the doctor, “you have come to this country town without suspicion, and you are moving in the midst of perils. Keep your eyes open, and your heart shut. If, through pitying that girl, you ever come to love her, you are lost. If you deal carelessly with her, beware! This is not all. There are other eyes on you beside Elsie Venner’s. Go armed in future.”

Mr. Bernard thought the advice very odd, but he followed it, and soon became known as an expert at revolver-shooting. On the day when Dick Venner had decided that the schoolmaster must be found hanged, Bernard Langdon went out as usual for the evening walk. He thrust his pistol, which he had put away loaded, into his pocket before starting.

The moon was shining at intervals, for the night was partially clouded. There seemed to be nobody stirring, but presently he detected the sound of hoofs, and, looking forward, saw a horseman coming in his direction. When the horseman was within a hundred and fifty yards of him, the moon shone out suddenly, and revealed each of them to the other. The rider paused for a moment, then suddenly put his horse to the full gallop, and dashed towards him, rising at the same instant in his stirrups and swinging something round his head. It was a strange manoeuvre, so strange and threatening that the young man cocked his pistol, and waited to see what mischief all this meant. He did not wait long. As the rider came rushing towards him he made a rapid motion, and something leaped five-and-twenty feet through the air in Mr. Bernard’s direction. In an instant he felt a ring, as of a rope or thong, settle upon his shoulders. There was no time to think, he would be lost in another second. He raised his pistol and fired—not at the rider, but at the horse. His aim was true; the horse gave one bound and fell lifeless, shot through the head. The lasso was fastened to his saddle, and his last bound threw Mr. Bernard violently to the earth, where he lay motionless, as if stunned.

In the meantime, Dick Venner, who had been dashed down with his horse, was trying to extricate himself; one of his legs was held fast under the animal, the long spur on his boot having caught in the saddle-cloth. He found, however, that he could do nothing with his right arm, his shoulder having been in some way injured in his fall. But his

Southern blood was up, and, as he saw Mr. Bernard move as if he were coming to his senses, he struggled violently to free himself.

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“I’ll have the dog yet!” he said; “only let me get at him with the knife!”

He had just succeeded in extricating his imprisoned leg, and was ready to spring to his feet, when he was caught firmly by the throat, and looking up, saw a hayfork within an inch of his breast.

“Hold on there! What’n thunder ‘r’ y’ abaout, y’ darned Portagee?” said a sharp, resolute voice.

Dick looked from the weapon to the person who held it, and saw Abel Stebbins, the doctor’s man, standing over him.

“Let me up! Let me up!” he cried in a low, hurried voice. “I’ll give you a hundred dollars in gold to let me go. The man a’n’t hurt—don’t you see him stirring? He’ll come to himself in two minutes. Let me up! I’ll give you a hundred and fifty dollars in gold, now, here on the spot, and the watch out of my pocket; take it yourself, with your own hands!”

“Ketch me lett’n go!” was Abel’s emphatic answer.

Mr. Bernard was now getting first his senses, and then some few of his scattered wits together.

“Who’s hurt? What’s happened?” he asked, staring about him.

Then he felt something about his neck; and putting his hands up, found the loop of the lasso. Abel quickly slipped the noose over Mr. Bernard’s head, and put it round the neck of the miserable Dick Venner, who, with his disabled arm, felt resistance was hopeless.

The party now took up the line of march for old Dr. Kettredge’s house, Abel carrying Langdon’s pistol, and leading Dick Venner, Bernard Langdon holding the hayfork. He was still half-stunned, and felt it was all a dream, when they reached the house.

“My mind is confused,” he told the doctor. “I’ve had a fall.”

“Sit down, sit down,” the doctor said. “Abel will tell me about it. Slight concussion of the brain. Can’t remember very well for an hour or two—will come right by to-morrow!”

Dick Venner’s shoulder was out of joint, the doctor found; he replaced it in a very few minutes. That night the doctor drove Dick forty miles at a stretch, out of the limits of the state.

He had implored them to let him go, and Mr. Bernard was quite willing that no further proceedings should be taken.

IV.—The Secret is Whispered

A week after Dick Venner's departure Elsie went off at the accustomed hour to the school. She had none of the hard, wicked light in her eyes that morning, and looked gentle, but dreamy.

At the end of the school hours, when the girls had all gone out, Elsie came up to Mr. Bernard, and said, in a very low voice, "Will you walk towards my home with me to-day?"

So they walked along together on their way towards the Dudley mansion.

"I have no friend," Elsie said all at once. "Nobody loves me but one old woman—old Sophy!"

"I am your friend, Elsie. Tell me what I can do to render your life happier."

"Love me!" said Elsie Venner.

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Mr. Bernard turned pale.

“Elsie,” he said presently, “I do love you, as a sister with sorrows of her own—as one whom I would save at the risk of my happiness and life. Give me your hand, dear Elsie, and trust me that I will be as true a friend to you as if we were children of the same mother!”

Elsie gave him her hand mechanically, and he pressed it gently. They walked almost in silence the rest of the way.

It was all over with poor Elsie. She went at once to her own room when they reached the mansion-house, and never left it.

They sent for the old doctor, and he ordered some remedies, saying he would call the next day, hoping to find her better. But the next day came, and the next, and still Elsie was on her bed—feverish, restless, and silent.

“Send me Helen Darley,” she said at last, on the fourth day.

And Helen came. Dudley Venner followed her into the room.

“She is your patient,” he said, “except while the doctor is here.”

Helen Darley often tried in those days and nights, when she sat by Elsie’s bed, to enter into the sick girl’s confidence and affections, but there was always something that seemed inexplicable in the changes of mood. So Helen determined to ask old Sophy some questions.

“How old is Elsie?”

“Eighteen years this las’ September.”

“How long ago did her mother die?”

“Eighteen year ago this October.”

Helen was silent for a moment. Then she whispered,

“What did her mother die of, Sophy?”

The old woman caught Helen by the hand and clung to it, as if in fear.

“Don’t never speak in this house ’bout what Elsie’s mother died of!” she said. “God has made Ugly Things wi’ death in their mouths, Miss Darlin’, an’ He knows what they’re for.

But my poor Elsie! To have her blood changed in her before—It was in July mistress got her death, but she liv' till three week after my poor Elsie was born."

She could speak no more; she had said enough. Helen remembered the stories she had heard on coming to the village. Now she knew the secret of the fascination which looked out of the cold, glittering eyes.

A great change came over Elsie in the last few days. It seemed to her father as if the malign influence which had pervaded her being had been driven forth or exorcised.

"It's her mother's look!" said old Sophy. "It's her mother's own face right over again. She never look' so before—the Lord's hand is on her! His will be done!"

But Elsie's heart was beating more feebly every day. One night, with sudden effort, she threw her arms round her father's neck, kissed him, and said, "Good-night, my dear father!"

Then her head fell back upon her pillow, and a long sigh breathed through her lips.

Elsie Venner was dead!

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In the following summer Mr. Dudley Venner married Miss Helen Darley. Mr. Bernard Langdon returned to college, resumed his medical studies, took his degree as Doctor of Medicine, and he now also is married.

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THOMAS HUGHES

Tom Brown's Schooldays

"Tom Brown's Schooldays" has been called by more than one critic the best story of schoolboy life ever written, and three generations of readers have endorsed the opinion. Its author, Thomas Hughes, born at Uffington, Berkshire, England, Oct. 19, 1822, was himself, like his hero, both a Rugby boy under Dr. Arnold and the son of a Berkshire squire, but he denied that the story was in any real sense autobiographical. Matthew Arnold and Arthur H. Clough, the poet, were Hughes's friends at school, and in later life he became associated with Charles Kingsley and Frederick Denison Maurice on what was called the Christian Socialist movement. A barrister by profession, Thomas Hughes became a county court judge, and lived for many years in that capacity at Chester. Besides "Tom Brown's Schooldays," published in 1857, Hughes also wrote "Tom Brown at Oxford" (1861), biographies of Livingstone, Bishop Fraser, and Daniel Macmillan, and a number of political, religious and social pamphlets. He died on March 22, 1896.

I.—Tom Goes to Rugby

Squire Brown, J.P. for the county of Berks, dealt out justice and mercy, in a thorough way, and begat sons and daughters, and hunted the fox, and grumbled at the badness of the roads and the times. And his wife dealt out stockings and shirts and smock frocks, and comforting drinks to the old folks with the "rheumatiz," and good counsel to all.

Tom was their eldest child, a hearty, strong boy, from the first given to fighting with and escaping from his nurse, and fraternising with all the village boys, with whom he made expeditions all round the neighbourhood.

Squire Brown was a Tory to the backbone; but, nevertheless, held divers social principles not generally supposed to be true blue in colour; the foremost of which was the belief that a man is to be valued wholly and solely for that which he is himself, apart from all externals whatever. Therefore, he held it didn't matter a straw whether his son associated with lords' sons or ploughmen's sons, provided they were brave and honest. So he encouraged Tom in his intimacy with the village boys, and gave them the run of a close for a playground. Great was the grief among them when Tom drove off with the squire one morning, to meet the coach, on his way to Rugby, to school.

It had been resolved that Tom should travel down by the Tally-ho, which passed through Rugby itself; and as it was an early coach, they drove out to the Peacock Inn, at

Islington, to be on the road. Towards nine o'clock, the squire, observing that Tom was getting sleepy, sent the little fellow off to bed, with a few parting words, the result of much thought.

"And now, Tom, my boy," said the squire, "remember you are going, at your own earnest request, to be chucked into this great school, like a young bear, with all your troubles before you—earlier than we should have sent you, perhaps. You'll see a great many cruel blackguard things done, and hear a deal of foul, bad talk. But never fear. You tell the truth, and keep a brave, kind heart, and never listen to or say anything you wouldn't have your mother or sister hear, and you'll never feel ashamed to come home, or we to see you."

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The mention of his mother made Tom feel rather choky, and he would have liked to hug his father well, if it hadn't been for his recent stipulation that kissing should now cease between them, so he only squeezed his father's hand, and looked up bravely, and said, "I'll try, father!"

At ten minutes to three Tom was in the coffee-room in his stockings, and there was his father nursing a bright fire; and a cup of coffee and a hard biscuit on the table.

Just as he was swallowing the last mouthful, Boots looks in, and says, "Tally-ho, sir!" And they hear the ring and rattle as it dashes up to the Peacock.

"Good-bye, father; my love at home!" A last shake of the hand. Up goes Tom, the guard holding on with one hand, while he claps the horn to his mouth. Toot, toot, toot! Away goes the Tally-ho into the darkness.

Tom stands up, and looks back at his father's figure as long as you can see it; and then comes to an anchor, and finishes his buttonings and other preparations for facing the cold three hours before dawn. The guard muffles Tom's feet up in straw, and puts an oat-sack over his knees, but it is not until after breakfast that his tongue is unloosed, and he rubs up his memory, and launches out into a graphic history of all the performances of the Rugby boys on the roads for the last twenty years.

"And so here's Rugby, sir, at last, and you'll be in plenty of time for dinner at the schoolhouse, as I tell'd you," says the old guard.

Tom's heart beat quick, and he began to feel proud of being a Rugby boy when he passed the school gates, and saw the boys standing there as if the town belonged to them.

One of the young heroes ran out from the rest, and scrambled up behind, where, having righted himself with, "How do, Jem?" to the guard, he turned round short to Tom, and began, "I say, you fellow, is your name Brown?"

"Yes," said Tom, in considerable astonishment.

"Ah, I thought so; my old aunt, Miss East, lives somewhere down your way in Berkshire; she wrote that you were coming to-day and asked me to give you a lift!"

Tom was somewhat inclined to resent the patronising air of his new friend, a boy of just about his own age and height, but gifted with the most transcendent coolness and assurance, which Tom felt to be aggravating and hard to bear, but couldn't help admiring and envying, especially when my young lord begins hectoring two or three long loafing fellows, and arranges with one of them to carry up Tom's luggage.

“You see,” said East, as they strolled up to the school gates, “a good deal depends on how a fellow cuts up at first. You see I’m doing the handsome thing by you, because my father knows yours; besides, I want to please the old lady—she gave me half-a-sov. this half, and perhaps’ll double it next if I keep in her good books.”

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Tom was duly placed in the Third Form, and found his work very easy; and as he had no intimate companion to make him idle (East being in the Lower Fourth), soon gained golden opinions from his master, and all went well with him in the school. As a new boy he was, of course, excused fagging, but, in his enthusiasm, this hardly pleased him; and East and others of his young friends kindly allowed him to indulge his fancy, and take their turns at night, fagging and cleaning studies. So he soon gained the character of a good-natured, willing fellow, ready to do a turn for anyone.

II.—The War of Independence

The Lower Fourth was an overgrown Form, too large for any one man to attend to properly, consequently the elysium of the young scamps who formed the staple of it. Tom had come up from the Third with a good character, but he rapidly fell away, and became as unmanageable as the rest. By the time the second monthly examination came round, his character for steadiness was gone, and for years after, he went up the school without it, and regarded the masters, as a matter of course, as his natural enemies. Matters were not so comfortable in the house, either. The new praeposters of the Sixth Form were not strong, and the big Fifth Form boys soon began to usurp power, and to fag and bully the little boys.

One evening Tom and East were sitting in their study, Tom brooding over the wrongs of fags in general and his own in particular.

“I say, Scud,” said he at last, “what right have the Fifth Form boys to fag us as they do?”

“No more right than you have to fag them,” said East, without looking up from an early number of “Pickwick.” Tom relapsed into his brown study, and East went on reading and chuckling.

“Do you know, old fellow, I’ve been thinking it over, and I’ve made up my mind I won’t fag except for the Sixth.”

“Quite right, too, my boy,” cried East. “I’m all for a strike myself; it’s getting too bad.”

“I shouldn’t mind if it were only young Brooke now,” said Tom; “I’d do anything for him. But that blackguard Flashman——”

“The cowardly brute!” broke in East.

“Fa-a-ag!” sounded along the passage from Flashman’s study.

The two boys looked at one another.

“Fa-a-ag!” again. No answer.

“Here, Brown! East! You young skulks!” roared Flashman. “I know you’re in! No shirking!”

Tom bolted the door, and East blew out the candle.

“Now, Tom, no surrender!”

Then the assault commenced. One panel of the door gave way to repeated kicks, and the besieged strengthened their defences with the sofa. Flashman & Co. at last retired, vowing vengeance, and when the convivial noises began again steadily, Tom and East rushed out. They were too quick to be caught, but a pickle-jar, sent whizzing after them by Flashman narrowly missed Tom’s head. Their story was soon told to a knot of small boys round the fire in the hall, who nearly all bound themselves not to fag for the Fifth, encouraged and advised thereto by Diggs—a queer, very clever fellow, nearly at the top of the Fifth himself. He stood by them all through and seldom have small boys had more need of a friend.

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Flashman and his associates united in “bringing the young vagabonds to their senses,” and the whole house was filled with chasings, sieges, and lickings of all sorts.

One evening, in forbidden hours, Brown and East were in the hall, chatting by the light of the fire, when the door swung open, and in walked Flashman. He didn’t see Diggs, busy in front of the other fire; and as the boys didn’t move for him, struck one of them, and ordered them all off to their study.

“I say, you two,” said Diggs, rousing up, “you’ll never get rid of that fellow till you lick him. Go in at him, both of you! I’ll see fair play.”

They were about up to Flashman’s shoulder, but tough and in perfect training; while he, seventeen years old, and big and strong of his age, was in poor condition from his monstrous habits of stuffing and want of exercise.

They rushed in on him, and he hit out wildly and savagely, and in another minute Tom went spinning backwards over a form; and Flashman turned to demolish East, with a savage grin. But Diggs jumped down from the table on which he had seated himself.

“Stop there!” shouted he. “The round’s over! Half minute time allowed! I’m going to see fair. Are you ready, Brown? Time’s up!”

The small boys rushed in again; Flashman was wilder and more flurried than ever. In a few moments over all three went on the floor, Flashman striking his head on a form. But his skull was not fractured, as the two youngsters feared it was, and he never laid a finger on them again. But whatever harm a spiteful tongue could do them, he took care should be done. Only throw dirt enough, and some will stick. And so Tom and East, and one or two more, became a sort of young Ishmaelites. They saw the praeposters cowed by or joining with the Fifth and shirking their own duties; and so they didn’t respect them, and rendered no willing obedience, and got the character of sulky, unwilling fags. At the end of the term they are told the doctor wants to see them. He is not angry only very grave. He explains that rules are made for the good of the school and must and shall be obeyed! He should be sorry if they had to leave, and wishes them to think very seriously in the holidays over what he has said. Good-night!

III.—The Turn of the Tide

The turning point of our hero’s school career had now come, and the manner of it was as follows.

Tom and East and another Schoolhouse boy rushed into the matron’s room in high spirits when they got back on the first day of the next half-year. She sent off the others, but kept Tom to tell him Mrs. Arnold wished him to take a new boy to share the study he

had hoped to share with East. She had told Mrs. Arnold she thought Tom would be kind to him, and see that he wasn't bullied.

In the far corner of the room he saw a slight, pale boy, who looked ready to sink through the floor. The matron watched Tom for a minute, and saw what was passing in his mind.

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“Poor little fellow,” she said, almost in a whisper. “His father’s dead, and his mamma—-such a sweet, kind lady—almost broke her heart at leaving him. She said one of his sisters was like to die of a decline—— "

“Well, well,” burst in Tom, “I suppose I must give up East. Come along, young ’un! What’s your name? We’ll go and have supper, and then I’ll show you our study.”

“His name’s George Arthur,” said the matron. “I’ve had his books and things put into the study, which his mamma has had new papered, and the sofa covered, and new curtains. And Mrs. Arnold told me to say she’d like you both to come up to tea with her.”

Here was an announcement for Master Tom! He was to go up to tea the first night, just as if he were of importance in the school world instead of the most reckless young scapegrace among the fags. He felt himself lifted on to a higher moral platform at once; and marched off with his young charge in tow in monstrous good humour with himself and all the world. His cup was full when Dr. Arnold, with a warm shake of the hand, seemingly oblivious of all the scrapes he had been getting into, said, “Ah, Brown, you here! I hope you left all well at home. And this is the little fellow who is to share your study? Well, he doesn’t look as we should like to see him. You must take him some good long walks, and show him what little pretty country we have about here.”

The tea went merrily off, and everybody felt that he, young as he was, was of some use in the school world, and had a work to do there. When Tom was recognised coming out of the private door which led from the doctor’s house, there was a great shout of greeting, and Hall at once began to question Arthur.

“What a queer chum for Tom Brown,” was the general comment. And it must be confessed that so thought Tom himself as he lighted the candle in their study, and surveyed the new curtains with much satisfaction.

“I say, Arthur, what a brick your mother is to make us so cosy! But look here now, you must answer straight up when the fellows speak to you. If you’re afraid, you’ll get bullied. And don’t you ever talk about home or your mother or sisters.”

Poor little Arthur looked ready to cry.

“But please, mayn’t I talk about home to you?”

“Oh, yes, I like it. But not to boys you don’t know. What a jolly desk!”

And soon Tom was deep in Arthur’s goods and chattels, and hardly thought of his friends outside till the prayer-bell rang.

He thought of his own first night there when he was leading poor little Arthur up to No. 4, and showing him his bed. The idea of sleeping in a room with strange boys had clearly

never crossed his mind before. He could hardly bare to take his jacket off. However, presently off it came, and he paused and looked at Tom, who was sitting on his bed, talking and laughing.

“Please, Brown,” he whispered, “may I wash my face and hands?”

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“Of course, if you like,” said Tom, staring. “You’ll have to go down for more water if you use it all.” On went the talk and laughter. Arthur finished his undressing, and looked round more nervously than ever. The light burned clear, the noise went on. This time, however, he did not ask Tom what he might or might not do, but dropped on his knees by his bedside to open his heart to Him who heareth the cry of the tender child, or the strong man.

Tom was unlacing his boots with his back towards Arthur, and looked up in wonder at the sudden silence. Then two or three boys laughed, and one big, brutal fellow picked up a slipper and shied it at the kneeling boy. The next moment the boot Tom had just taken off flew straight at the head of the bully.

“If any other fellow wants the other boot,” said Tom, stepping on to the floor, “he knows how to get it!”

At this moment the Sixth Form boy came in, and not another word could be said. Tom and the rest rushed into bed, and finished unrobing there. Sleep seemed to have deserted the pillow of poor Tom. The thought of his promise to his mother came over him, never to forget to kneel at his bedside and give himself up to his Father before he laid his head on the pillow from which it might never rise; and he lay down gently, and cried as if his heart would break. He was only fourteen years old.

Next morning he was up and washed and dressed just as the ten-minutes bell began, and then in the face of the whole room knelt down to pray. Not five words could he say; he was listening for every whisper in the room. What were they all thinking of him? At last, as it were from his inmost heart, a still, small voice seemed to breathe: “God be merciful to me, a sinner.” He repeated the words over and over again, and rose from his knees comforted and humbled, and ready to face the whole school. It was not needed; two other boys had already followed his example. Before either Tom or Arthur left the Schoolhouse there was no room in which it had not become the regular custom.

IV.—Tom Brown’s Last Match

The curtain now rises on the last act of our little drama. Eight years have passed, and it is the end of the summer half-year at Rugby. The boys have scattered to the four winds, except the Eleven, and a few enthusiasts who are permitted to stay to see the result of the cricket matches. For this year the return matches are being played at Rugby, and to-day the great event of the year, the Marylebone match, is being played. I wish I had space to describe the whole match; but I haven’t, so you must fancy it all, and let me beg to call your attention to a group of three eagerly watching the match. The first, evidently a clergyman, is carelessly dressed, and looks rather used up, but is bent on enjoying life as he spreads himself out in the evening sun. By his side, in white flannel shirt and trousers, and the captain’s belt, sits a strapping

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figure near six feet high, with ruddy, tanned face and a laughing eye. He is leaning forward, dandling his favourite bat, with which he has made thirty or forty runs to-day. It is Tom Brown, spending his last day as a Rugby boy. And at their feet sits Arthur, with his bat across his knees. He is less of a boy, in fact, than Tom, if one may judge by the thoughtfulness of his face, which is somewhat paler than we could wish, but his figure is well-knit and active, and all his old timidity has disappeared, and is replaced by silent, quaint fun, as he listens to the broken talk, and joins in every now and then. Presently he goes off to the wicket, with a last exhortation from Tom to play steady and keep his bat straight.

“I’m surprised to see Arthur in the Eleven,” says the master.

“Well, I’m not sure he ought to be for his play,” said Tom; “but I couldn’t help putting him in. It will do him so much good, and you can’t think what I owe him!”

The master smiled. Later he returned to the subject

“Nothing has given me greater pleasure,” he said, “than your friendship for him. It has been the making of you both.”

“Of me, at any rate,” answered Tom. “It was the luckiest chance in the world that sent him to Rugby and made him my chum.”

“There was neither luck nor chance in that matter,” said the master. “Do you remember when the Doctor lectured you and East when you had been getting into all sorts of scrapes?”

“Yes; well enough,” said Tom. “It was the half-year before Arthur came.”

“Exactly so,” said the master. “He was in great distress about you both, and after some talk, we both agreed that you in particular wanted some object in the school beyond games and mischief. So the Doctor looked out the best of the new boys, and separated you and East in the hope that when you had somebody to lean on you, you’d be steadier yourself, and get manliness and thoughtfulness. He has watched the experiment ever since with great satisfaction.”

Up to this time Tom had never fully given in to, or understood, the Doctor. He had learnt to regard him with love and respect, and to think him a very great and wise and good man. But as regarded his own position in the school, he had no idea of giving anyone credit but himself.

It was a new light to Tom to find that besides teaching the Sixth, and governing and guiding the whole school, editing classics, and writing histories, the great headmaster

had found time to watch over the career even of him, Tom Brown, and his particular friends. However, the Doctor's victory was complete from that moment. It had taken eight long years to do it, but now it was done thoroughly.

The match was over.

Tom said good-bye to his tutor, and marched down to the Schoolhouse.

Next morning he was in the train and away for London, no longer a schoolboy.

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Tom Brown at Oxford

“Tom Brown at Oxford,” a continuation of “Tom Brown’s Schooldays,” was published in 1861, but, like most sequels, it failed to achieve the wide popularity of its famous predecessor. Although the story, perhaps, lacks much of the freshness of the “Schooldays,” it nevertheless conveys an admirable picture of undergraduate life as it was in the middle of the nineteenth century. Notwithstanding the changes that have taken place since then, it is still remarkably full of vitality, and the description of the boat races, and the bumping of Exeter and Oriel by St. Ambrose’s boat might well have been written to-day. In spite of its defects, the story, with its vigorous morals, is worthy to rank with anything that came from the pen of Tom Hughes, the great apostle of muscular Christianity.

I.—St. Ambrose’s College

In the Michaelmas term, after leaving school, Tom went up to matriculate at St. Ambrose’s College, Oxford, but did not go up to reside till the following January.

St. Ambrose’s College was a moderate-sized one. There were some seventy or eighty undergraduates in residence when our hero appeared there as a freshman, of whom a large proportion were gentleman-commoners, enough, in fact, to give the tone to the college, which was decidedly fast.

Fewer and fewer of the St. Ambrose men appeared in the class-lists or among the prize men. They no longer led the debates in the Union; the boat lost place after place on the river; the eleven got beaten in all the matches. But now a reaction had begun. The fellows recently elected were men of great attainments, chosen as the most likely persons to restore, as tutors, the golden days of the college.

Our hero, on leaving school, had bound himself solemnly to write all his doings to the friend he had left behind him, and extracts from his first letter from college will give a better idea of the place than any account by a third party.

“Well, first and foremost, it’s an awfully idle place—at any rate, for us freshmen. Fancy now, I am in twelve lectures a week of an hour each. There’s a treat! Two hours a day; and no extra work at all. Of course, I never look at a lecture before I go in; I know it all nearly by heart, and for the present the light work suits me, for there’s plenty to see in this place. We keep very gentlemanly hours. Chapel every morning at eight, and evening at seven. You must attend once a day, and twice on Sundays, and be in gates at twelve o’clock. And you ought to dine in hall perhaps four days a week. All the rest of your time you do just what you like with.

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“My rooms are right up in the roof, with a commanding view of tiles and chimney-pots. Pleasant enough, separated from all mankind by a great iron-clamped outer door; sitting-room, eighteen by twelve; bedroom, twelve by eight; and a little cupboard for the scout. Ah, Geordie, the scout is an institution! Fancy me waited on and valeted by a stout party in black, of quiet, gentlemanly planners. He takes the deepest interest in my possessions and proceedings, and is evidently used to good society, to judge by the amount of crockery and glass, wines, liquors, and grocery which he thinks indispensable for my due establishment. He waits on me in hall, where we go in full fig of cap and gown at five, and get very good dinners, and cheap enough.

“But, after all, the river is the feature of Oxford, to my mind. I expect I shall take to boating furiously. I have been down the river three or four times already with some other freshmen, and it is glorious exercise, that I can see, though we bungle and cut crabs desperately at present.”

Within a day or two of the penning of this epistle, Tom realised one of the objects of his young Oxford ambition, and succeeded in embarking in a skiff by himself. He had been such a proficient in all the Rugby games that he started off in the full confidence that, if he could only have a turn or two alone, he should satisfy not only himself but everybody else that he was a heaven-born oar. But the truth soon began to dawn upon him that pulling, especially sculling, does not, like reading and writing, come by nature. However, he addressed himself manfully to his task; savage, indeed, but resolved to get down to Sandford and back before hall-time, or perish in the attempt. Fortunately, the prudent boatman had embarked our hero in one of the safest of the tubs, and it was not until he had zig-zagged down Kennington reach, slowly indeed, and with much labour, that he heard energetic shouts behind him. The next minute the bows of his boat whirled round, the old tub grounded, and then, turning over, shot him out on to the planking of the steep descent into the small lasher. The rush of water was too strong for him, and rolling him over, plunged him into the pool below.

After the first moment of astonishment and fright, Tom left himself to the stream, holding his breath hard, and, paddling gently with his hands, soon came to the surface, and was about to strike out for the shore when he caught sight of a skiff coming, stern foremost, down the descent after him. Down she came, as straight as an arrow, into the tumult below, the sculler sitting upright, and holding his skulls steadily in the water. For a moment she seemed to be going under, but righted herself, and glided swiftly into the still water, while the sculler glanced round till he caught sight of our hero’s half-drowned head.

“Oh, there you are!” he said, looking much relieved, “Swim ashore; I’ll look after your boat.”

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So Tom swam ashore, and stood there dripping and watching the other righting his tub and collecting the sculls and bottom-boards floating here and there in the pool. Tom had time to look him well over, and was well satisfied with the inspection. There was that in his face that hit Tom's fancy, and made him anxious to know him better. There were probably not three men in the university who would have dared to shoot the lasher in the state it was then.

It was settled, at Tom's earnest request, that he should pull the sound skiff up—his old tub was leaking considerably—while his companion sat in the stern and coached him. Tom poured out his thanks for his new tutor's instructions, which were given so judiciously that he was conscious of improving at every stroke.

He disappeared, however, while Tom was wrangling with the manager as to the amount of damage done to the tub, and when Tom, to his joy, saw him come into hall to dinner he took no notice of Tom's looks of recognition. He learned from his neighbour that his name was Hardy, that he was one of the servitors, a clever fellow, but a very queer one. Tom resolved to waylay him as soon as hall was over; but Hardy avoided him.

II.—Summer Term

Jervis, the captain of the St. Ambrose Boat Club; Miller, the cox; and Smith, commonly known as Diogenes Smith—from a habit he had of using his hip-bath as an armchair—-were determined to make a success of the boat, and Tom had the good fortune to get a place in the college eight—an achievement which is always a feather in the cap of a freshman.

When the summer term came Miller at once took the crew in hand.

Then came the first night of the races, and at half-past three Tom was restless and distracted, knowing that two hours and a half had got to pass before it was time to start for the boats.

However, at last the time slipped away, and the captain and Miller mustered their crew at the college gates, and walked off to the river. Half the undergraduates of Oxford streamed along with them. No time was lost on arrival at the barge in the dressing-room, and in two minutes the St. Ambrose eight were all standing, in flannel trousers, silk jerseys, and jackets, at the landing-place.

Then the boat swung steadily down past the mouth of the Cherwell, and through the Gut to the starting-place. Hark! The first gun!

All the boats have turned, crowds of men on the bank are agitated with the coming excitement.

Jervis, quiet and full of confidence, looks round from his seat—he is stroking—takes a sliced lemon from his pocket, puts a small piece into his mouth, and passes it on.

“Jackets off,” says Miller. And the jackets are thrown on shore, and gathered up by the boatman.

“Eight seconds more only!” Miller calls out. “Look out for the flash! Remember, all eyes in the boat!”

There it comes at last, the flash of the starting gun. The boat breaks away with a bound and a dash. The oars flash in the water, and the boat leaps forward.

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For the first ten strokes Tom was in too great fear of making a mistake to feel or hear or see. But as the crew settled down into the well-known long sweep, consciousness returned, and, amid all the babel of voices on the bank, he could hear Hardy yelling, “Steady! Well pulled! Steady!”

And now the St. Ambrose boat is well away from the boat behind, and as it nears the Gut, it is plainly gaining on Exeter—the boat in front.

“You’re gaining!” Miller mutters; and the captain responds with a wink.

Shouts come from the bank. “Now, St. Ambrose!” “Now, Exeter!”

In another moment both boats are in the Gut, and Miller, motionless as a statue till now, calls out, “Give it her, boys! Six strokes, and we are into them!” Old Jervis lashes his oar through the water, the boat answers to the spurt, and Tom feels a little shock, and hears a grating sound, as Miller shouts, “Unship oars, bow and three.” The nose of the St. Ambrose boat glides quietly up the side of the Exeter, the first bump has been made.

Two more bumps were made on the next two nights, and bets were laid freely that St. Ambrose would bump Oriel and become head of the river. But the Oriel crew were mostly old oars, seasoned in many a race, and one or two in the St. Ambrose boat were getting “stale.”

Something had to be done, and when Drysdale—a gentleman-commoner—resenting Miller’s strictures on his performance at No. 2, declined to row any more, Tom suggested that Hardy would row if he were asked.

Hardy, shy and proud because of his poverty, was little known in St. Ambrose; but a fast friendship had grown up between him and Tom Brown, and he was glad enough to come into the boat at the captain’s request.

The change in the boat made all the difference. Hardy was out sculling every day on the river, and was consequently in good training. He was, besides, a man of long, muscular arms.

It was a great race. Inch by inch St. Ambrose gained on Oriel, creeping up slowly but surely, but the bump was not made till both boats were close on the winning-post. So near a shave was it! As for the scene on the bank, it was a hurly-burly of delirious joy.

St. Ambrose was head of the river!

III.—A Crisis

There was a certain inn, called the Choughs, where the St. Ambrose men were in the habit of calling for ale on their way back from the river; and it had become the correct

thing for Ambrosians to make much of Miss Patty, the landlady's niece. Considering the circumstances, it was a wonder Patty was not more spoilt than was the case. As it was, Hardy had to admit that the girl held her own well, without doing or saying anything unbecoming a modest woman. But he was convinced that Tom was in her toils, and after pondering what he ought to do, decided to speak plainly.

Tom had gone into Hardy's rooms according to his custom, after hall; and Hardy at once opened fire concerning the Choughs.

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“Brown, you’ve no right to go to that place,” he said abruptly.

“Why?” said Tom.

“You know why,” said Hardy.

“Why am I not to go to the Choughs? Because there happens to be a pretty barmaid there? All our crew go, and twenty other men besides.”

“Yes; but do any of them go in the sort of way you do? Does she look at any one of them as she does at you?”

“You seem to know a great deal about it,” said Tom. “How should I know?”

“That’s not fair or true, or like you, Brown,” said Hardy. “You do know that that girl doesn’t care a straw for the other men who go there. You do know that she is beginning to care for you. I’ve taken it on myself to speak to you about this, and I shouldn’t be your friend if I shirked it. You shan’t go on with this folly, this sin, for want of warning.”

“So it seems,” said Tom doggedly. “Now I think I’ve had warning enough. Suppose we drop the subject?”

“Not yet,” said Hardy firmly. “There are only two endings to this sort of business, and you know it as well as I.”

“A right and a wrong one—eh? And because I’m your friend, you assume that my end will be the wrong one?”

“I say the end *must* be the wrong one here! There’s no right end. Think of your family. You dare not tell me that you will marry her!”

“I *dare* not tell you!” said Tom, starting up. “I dare tell any man anything I please!”

“I say again,” went on Hardy, “you *dare* not say you mean to marry her! You don’t mean it! And, as you don’t, to kiss her in the passage as you did tonight——”

“So you were sneaking behind to watch me?” burst out Tom.

Hardy only answered calmly and slowly, “I will not take these words from any man! You had better leave my rooms!”

The next minute Tom was in the passage; the next striding up and down the side of the inner quadrangle in the peace of the pale moonlight.

The following day, and for many days, neither Hardy nor Tom spoke to one another. Both were wretched, and both feared lest others should notice the quarrel.

Tom went more and more to the Choughs, and Patty noticed a change in the youth—a change that half-fascinated and half-repelled her.

Then, for the next few days, Tom plunged deeper and deeper downwards. He left off pulling on the river, shunned his old friends, and lived with a set of men who were ready enough to let him share all their brutal orgies.

Drysdale, with whom Tom had been on good terms, noted the difference, and advised him “to cut the Choughs business.”

“You’re not the sort of a fellow to go in for this kind of thing,” he said. “I’ll be hanged if it won’t kill you, or make a devil of you before long! Make up your mind to cut the whole concern, old fellow!”

“I’m awfully wretched, Drysdale,” was all Tom could say.

All the same, Tom could not follow Drysdale’s advice at once and break off his visits to the Choughs altogether.

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The real crisis was over. He had managed to pass through the eye of the storm, and was drifting into the skirts of it, conscious of an escape from utter shipwreck.

His visits to the Choughs became shorter; he never stayed behind now after the other men, and avoided interviews with Patty alone as diligently as he had sought them before.

Patty, unable to account for this fresh change of manner, was piqued, and ready to revenge herself in a hundred little ways. If she had been really in love with him it would have been a different matter; but she was not. In the last six weeks she certainly had often had visions of the pleasures of being a lady and keeping servants, but her liking was not more than skin deep.

Of late, indeed, she had been much more frightened than attracted by the conduct of her admirer, and really felt it a relief, notwithstanding her pique, when he retired into a less demonstrative state.

Before the end of that summer term Tom had it made up with Hardy, and it was Hardy who, at Tom's request, called in at the Choughs, just to see how things were going on. Tom saw at a glance that something had happened when Hardy appeared again.

"What is it? She is not ill?" he said quickly.

"No; quite well, her aunt says."

"You didn't see her, then?"

"No the fact is, she has gone home."

IV.—The Master's Term

The years speed by, bringing their changes to St. Ambrose. Hardy is a fellow and tutor of the college in Tom's second year, and Drysdale has been requested to remove his name from the books. Tom is all for politics now, and the theories he propounds in the Union gain him the name of Chartist Brown.

In his third year, Hardy often brought him down from high talk of "universal democracy" and "the good cause" by insisting on making the younger man explain what he really meant. And though Tom suffered under this severe treatment, in the end he generally came round to acknowledge the reasonableness of Hardy's methods of argument.

It was a trying year to Tom, this third and last year; full of large dreams and small performances, of hopes and struggles, ending in failure and disappointment. The common pursuits of the place had lost their freshness, and with it much of their charm. He was beginning to feel himself in a cage, and to beat against the bars of it.

Squire Brown was passing through Oxford, and paid his son a visit in the last term.

Tom gave a small wine-party, which went off admirably, and the squire enlarged upon the great improvement in young men and habits of the university, especially in the matter of drinking. Tom had only opened three bottles of port. In his time the men would have drunk certainly not less than a bottle a man.

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But as the squire walked back to his hotel he was deeply moved at the Radical views his son now held. He could not understand these new notions of young men, and thought them mischievous and bad. At the same time, he was too fair a man to try to dragoon his son out of anything which he really believed. The fact had begun to dawn on the squire that the world had changed a good deal since his time; while Tom, on his part, valued his father's confidence and love above his own opinions. By degrees the honest beliefs of father and son no longer looked monstrous to one another, and the views of each of them were modified.

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One more look must be taken at the old college. Our hero is up in the summer term, keeping his three weeks' residence, the necessary preliminary to an M.A. degree. We find him sitting in Hardy's rooms; tea is over, scouts out of college, candles lighted, and silence reigning, except when distant sounds of mirth come from some undergraduates' rooms on the opposite side of the quad.

"Why can't you give a fellow his degree quietly," says Tom, "without making him come and kick his heels here for three weeks?"

"You ungrateful dog! Do you mean to say you haven't enjoyed coming back, and sitting in dignity in the bachelors' seats in chapel and at the bachelors' table in hall, and thinking how much wiser you are than the undergraduates? Besides your old friends want to see you, and you ought to want to see them."

"Well, I'm very glad to see you again, old fellow. But who else is there I care to see? My old friends are gone, and the youngsters look on me as a sort of don, and I don't appreciate the dignity. You have never broken with the place. And then you always did your duty, and have done the college credit. You can't enter into the feelings of a fellow who wasted three parts of his time here."

"Come, come, Tom! You might have read more, certainly, and taken a higher degree. But, after all, I believe your melancholy comes from your not being asked to pull in the boat."

"Perhaps it does. Don't you call it degrading to be pulling in the torpid in one's old age?"

"Mortified vanity! It's a capital boat. I wonder how we should have liked to have been turned out for some bachelor just because he had pulled a good oar in his day?"

"Not at all. I don't blame the youngsters. By the way, they're an uncommonly nice set. Much better behaved in every way than we were. Why, the college is a different place altogether. And as you are the only new tutor, it must have been your doing. Now I want to know your secret?"

"I've no secret, except taking a real interest in all that the men do, and living with them as much as I can. You may guess it isn't much of a trial to me to steer the boat down, or run on the bank and coach the crew. And now the president of St. Ambrose himself comes out to see the boat. But I don't mean to stop up more than another year now at the outside. I have been tutor nearly three years, and that's about long enough."

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The talk went on until the clock struck twelve.

“Hallo!” said Tom. “Time for me to knock out, or the old porter will be in bed. Good-night!”

“Good-night!”

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VICTOR HUGO

Les Miserables

Victor Marie Hugo, the great French poet, dramatist, and novelist, was born at Besancon, on February 26, 1802. He wrote verses from boyhood, and after minor successes, achieved reputation with “Odes et Poesies,” 1823. Hugo early became the protagonist of the romantic movement in French literature. In 1841 he was elected to the Academy. From 1845 he took an increasingly active part in politics, with the result that from 1852 to 1870 he lived in exile, first in Jersey and then in Guernsey. “Les Miserables” is not only the greatest of all Victor Hugo’s productions, but is in many respects the greatest work of fiction ever conceived. An enormous range of matter is pressed into its pages—by turn historical, philosophical, lyrical, humanitarian—but running through all the change of scene is the tragedy and comedy of life at its darkest and its brightest, and of human passions at their worst and at their best. It is more than a novel. It is a magnificent plea for the outcasts of society, for those who are crushed by the mighty edifice of social order. Yet throughout it all there is the insistent note of the final triumph of goodness in the heart of man. The story appeared in 1862, when Hugo was sixty years old, and was written during his exile in Guernsey. It was translated before publication into nine languages, and published simultaneously in eight of the principal cities of the world. Hugo died on May 22, 1885. (See also Vol. XVII.)

I.—Jean Valjean, Galley-Slave

Early in October 1815, at the close of the afternoon, a man came into the little town of D ——. He was on foot, and the few people about looked at him suspiciously. The traveller was of wretched appearance, though stout and robust, and in the full vigour of life. He was evidently a stranger, and tired, dusty, and wearied with a long day’s tramp.

But neither of the two inns in the town would give him food or shelter, though he offered good money for payment.

He was an ex-convict—that was enough to exclude him.

In despair he went to the prison, and asked humbly for a night's lodging, but the jailer told him that was impossible unless he got arrested first.

It was a cold night and the wind was blowing from the Alps; it seemed there was no refuge open to him.

Then, as he sat down on a stone bench in the marketplace and tried to sleep, a lady coming out of the cathedral noticed him, and, learning his homeless state, bade him knock at the bishop's house, for the good bishop's charity and compassion were known in all the neighbourhood.

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At the man's knock the bishop, who lived alone with his sister, Madame Magloire, and an old housekeeper, said "Come in;" and the ex-convict entered.

He told them at once that his name was Jean Valjean, that he was a galley-slave, who had spent nineteen years at the hulks, and that he had been walking for four days since his release. "It is the same wherever I go," the man went on. "They all say to me, 'Be off!' I am very tired and hungry. Will you let me stay here? I will pay."

"Madame Magloire," said the bishop, "please lay another knife and fork. Sit down, monsieur, and warm yourself. We shall have supper directly, and your bed will be got ready while we are supping."

Joy and amazement were on the man's face; he stammered his thanks as though beside himself.

The bishop, in honour of his guest, had silver forks and spoons placed on the table.

The man took his food with frightful voracity, and paid no attention to anyone till the meal was over. Then the bishop showed him his bed in an alcove, and an hour later the whole household was asleep.

Jean Valjean soon woke up again.

For nineteen years he had been at the galleys. Originally a pruner of trees, he had broken a baker's window and stolen a loaf one hard winter when there was no work to be had, and for this the sentence was five years. Time after time he had tried to escape, and had always been recaptured; and for each offence a fresh sentence was imposed.

Nineteen years for breaking a window and stealing a loaf! He had gone into prison sobbing and shuddering. He came out full of hatred and bitterness.

That night, at the bishop's house, for the first time in nineteen years, Jean Valjean had received kindness. He was moved and shaken. It seemed inexplicable.

He got up from his bed. Everyone was asleep, the house was perfectly still.

Jean Valjean seized the silver plate-basket which stood in the bishop's room, put the silver into his knapsack, and fled out of the house.

In the morning, while the bishop was breakfasting, the gendarmes brought in Jean Valjean. The sergeant explained that they had met him running away, and had arrested him, because of the silver they found on him.

“I gave you the candlesticks, too!” said the bishop; “they are silver. Why did not you take them with the rest of the plate?” Then, turning to the gendarmes, “It is a mistake.”

“We are to let him go?” said the sergeant.

“Certainly,” said the bishop.

The gendarmes retired.

“My friend,” said the bishop to Jean Valjean, “here are your candlesticks. Take them with you.” He added in a low voice, “Never forget that you have promised me to use this silver to become an honest man. My brother, you belong no longer to evil, but to good.”

Jean Valjean never remembered having promised anything. He left the bishop’s house and the town dazed and stupefied. It was a new world he had come into.

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He walked on for miles, and then sat down by the roadside to think.

Presently a small Savoyard boy passed him, and as he passed dropped a two-franc piece on the ground.

Jean Valjean placed his foot upon it. In vain the boy prayed him for the coin. Jean Valjean sat motionless, deep in thought.

Only when the boy had gone on, in despair, did Jean Valjean wake from his reverie.

He shouted out, “Little Gervais, little Gervais!” for the boy had told him his name. The lad was out of sight and hearing, and no answer came.

The enormity of his crime came home to him, and Jean Valjean fell on the ground, and for the first time in nineteen years he wept.

II.—Father Madeleine

On a certain December night in 1815 a stranger entered the town of M——, at the very time when a great fire had just broken out in the town hall.

This man at once rushed into the flames, and at the risk of his own life saved the two children of the captain of gendarmes. In consequence of this act no one thought of asking for his passport.

The stranger settled in the town; by a happy invention he improved the manufacture of the black beads, the chief industry of M——, and in three years, from a very small capital, he became a rich man, and brought prosperity to the place.

In 1820, Father Madeleine, for so the stranger was called, was made Mayor of M—— by unanimous request, an honour he had declined the previous year. Before he came everything was languishing in the town, and now, a few years later, there was healthy life for all.

Father Madeleine employed everybody who came to him. The only condition he made was—honesty. From the men he expected good-will, from the women, purity.

Prosperity did not make Father Madeleine change his habits. He performed his duties as mayor, but lived a solitary and simple life, avoiding society. His strength, although he was a man of fifty, was enormous. It was noticed that he read more as his leisure increased, and that as the years went by his speech became gentler and more polite.

One person only in all the district looked doubtfully at the mayor, and that was Javert, inspector of police.

Javert, born in prison, was the incarnation of police duty—implacable, resolute, fanatical. He arrived in M—— when Father Madeleine was already a rich man, and he felt sure he had seen him before.

One day in 1823 the mayor interfered to prevent Javert sending a poor woman, named Fantine, to prison. Fantine had been dismissed from the factory without the knowledge of M. Madeleine; and her one hope in life was in her little girl, whom she called Cosette. Now, Cosette was boarded out at the village of Montfermeil, some leagues distance from M——, with a family grasping and dishonest, and to raise money for Cosette's keep had brought Fantine to misery and sickness.

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The mayor could save Fantine from prison, he could not save her life; but before the unhappy woman died she had delivered a paper to Mr. Madeleine authorising him to take her child, and Mr. Madeleine had accepted the trust.

It was when Fantine lay dying in the hospital that Javert, who had quite decided in his own mind who M. Madeleine was, came to the mayor and asked to be dismissed from the service.

“I have denounced you, M. le Maire, to the prefect of police at Paris as Jean Valjean, an ex-convict, who has been wanted for the robbery of a little Savoyard more than five years ago.”

“And what answer did you receive?”

“That I was mad, for the real Jean Valjean has been found.”

“Ah!”

Javert explained that an old man had been arrested for breaking into an orchard; that on being taken to the prison he had been recognised by several people as Jean Valjean, and that he, Javert, himself recognised him. To-morrow he was to be tried at Arras, and, as he was an ex-convict, his sentence would be for life.

Terrible was the anguish of M. Madeleine that night. He had done all that man could do to obliterate the past, and now it seemed another was to be taken in his place. The torture and torment ended. In the morning M. Madeleine set out for Arras.

M. Madeleine arrived before the orchard-breaker was condemned. He proved to the court’s astonishment that he, the revered and philanthropic Mayor of M——, was Jean Valjean, and that the prisoner had merely committed a trivial theft. Then he left the court, returned to M——, removed what money he had, buried it, and arranged his affairs.

A few days later Jean Valjean was sent back to the galleys at Toulon, and with his removal the prosperity of M—— speedily collapsed. This was in July 1823. In November of that year the following paragraph appeared in the Toulon paper:

“Yesterday, a convict, on his return from rescuing a sailor, fell into the sea and was drowned. His body has not been found. His name was registered as Jean Valjean.”

III.—A Hunted Man

At Christmas, in the year 1823, an old man came to the village of Montfermeil, called at the inn, paid money to the rascally innkeeper, Thenardier, and carried off little Cosette to Paris.

The old man rented a large garret in an old house, and Cosette became inexpressibly happy with her doll and with the good man who loved her so tenderly.

Till then Jean Valjean had never loved anything. He had never been a father, lover, husband, or friend. When he saw Cosette, and had rescued her, he felt his heart strangely moved. All the affection he had was aroused, and went out to this child. Jean Valjean was fifty-five and Cosette eight, and all the love of his life, hitherto untouched, melted into a benevolent devotion.

Cosette, too, changed. She had been separated from her mother at such an early age that she could not remember her. And the Thenardiers had treated her harshly. In Jean Valjean she found a father, just as he found a daughter in Cosette.

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Weeks passed away. These two beings led a wonderfully happy life in the old garret; Cosette would chatter, laugh, and sing all day.

Jean Valjean was careful never to go out in the daytime, but he began to be known in the district as “the mendicant who gives away money.” There was one old man who sat by some church steps, and who generally seemed to be praying, whom Jean Valjean always liked to relieve. One night when Jean Valjean had dropped a piece of money into his hand as usual, the beggar suddenly raised his eyes, stared hard at him, and then quickly dropped his head. Jean Valjean started, and went home greatly troubled. The face which he fancied he had seen was that of Javert.

A few nights later Jean Valjean found that Javert had taken lodgings in the same house where he and Cosette lived. Taking the child by the hand, he at once set out for fresh quarters. They passed through silent and empty streets, and crossed the river, and it seemed to Jean Valjean that no one was in pursuit. But soon he noticed four men plainly shadowing him, and a shudder went over him. He turned from street to street, trying to escape from the city, and at last found himself entrapped in a *cul-de-sac.* What was to be done?

There was no time to turn back. Javert had undoubtedly picketed every outlet. Fortunately for Jean Valjean, there was a deep shadow in the street, so that his own movements were unseen.

While he stood hesitating, a patrol of soldiers entered the street, with Javert at their head. They frequently halted. It was evident that they were exploring every hole and corner, and one might judge they would take a quarter of an hour before they reached the spot where Jean Valjean was. It was a frightful moment. Capture meant the galleys, and Cosette lost for ever. There was only one thing possible—to scale the wall which ran along a wide portion of the street. But the difficulty was Cosette; there was no thought of abandoning her.

First, Jean Valjean procured a rope from the lamppost, for the lamps had not been lit that night owing to the moonlight. This he fastened round the child, taking the other end between his teeth. Half a minute later he was on his knees on the top of the wall. Cosette watched him in silence. All at once she heard Jean Valjean saying in a very low voice, “Lean against the wall. Don’t speak, and don’t be afraid.”

She felt herself lifted from the ground, and before she had time to think where she was she found herself on the top of the wall.

Jean Valjean grasped her, put the child on his back, and crawled along the wall till he came to a sloping roof. He could hear the thundering voice of Javert giving orders to the patrol to search the *cul-de-sac* to the end.

Jean Valjean slipped down the roof, still carrying Cosette, and leaped on the ground. It was a convent garden he had entered.

On the other side of the wall the clatter of muskets and the imprecations of Javert resounded; from the convent came a hymn.

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Cosette and Jean Valjean fell on their knees. Presently Jean Valjean discovered that the gardener was an old man whose life he had saved at M------, and who, in his gratitude, was prepared to do anything for M. Madeleine.

It ended in Cosette entering the convent school as a pupil, and Jean Valjean being accepted as the gardener's brother. The good nuns never left the precincts of their convent, and cared nothing for the world beyond their gates.

As for Javert, he had delayed attempting an arrest, even when his suspicions had been aroused, because, after all, the papers said the convict was dead. But once convinced, he hesitated no longer.

His disappointment when Jean Valjean escaped him was midway between despair and fury. All night the search went on; but it never occurred to Javert that a steep wall of fourteen feet could be climbed by an old man with a child.

Several years passed at the convent.

Jean Valjean worked daily in the garden, and shared the hut and the name of the old gardener, M. Fauchelevent. Cosette was allowed to see him for an hour every day.

The peaceful garden, the fragrant flowers, the merry cries of the children, the grave and simple women, gradually brought happiness to Jean Valjean; and his heart melted into gratitude for the security he had found.

IV.—Something Higher than Duty

For six years Cosette and Jean Valjean stayed at the convent; and then, on the death of the old gardener, Jean Valjean, now bearing the name of Fauchelevent, decided that as Cosette was not going to be a nun, and as recognition was no longer to be feared, it would be well to remove into the city.

So a house was taken in the Rue Plumet, and here, with a faithful servant, the old man dwelt with his adopted child. But Jean Valjean took other rooms in Paris, in case of accidents.

Cosette was growing up. She was conscious of her good looks, and she was in love with a well-connected youth named Marius, the son of Baron Pontmercy.

Jean Valjean learnt of this secret love-making with dismay. The idea of parting from Cosette was intolerable to him.

Then, in June 1832, came desperate street fighting in Paris, and Marius was in command of one of the revolutionary barricades.

At this barricade Javert had been captured as a spy, and Jean Valjean, who was known to the revolutionaries, found his old, implacable enemy tied to a post, waiting to be shot. Jean Valjean requested to be allowed to blow out Javert's brains himself, and permission was given.

Holding a pistol in his hand, Jean Valjean led Javert, who was still bound, to a lane out of sight of the barricade, and there with his knife cut the ropes from the wrists and feet of his prisoner.

"You are free," he said. "Go; and if by chance I leave this place alive, I am to be found under the name of Fauchelevent, in the Rue de l'Homme-Arme, No. 7."

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Javert walked a few steps, and then turned back, and cried, “You worry me. I would rather you killed me!”

“Go!” was the only answer from Jean Valjean.

Javert moved slowly away; and when he had disappeared Jean Valjean discharged his pistol in the air.

Soon the last stand of the insurgents was at an end, and the barricade destroyed. Jean Valjean, who had taken no part in the struggle, beyond exposing himself to the bullets of the soldiers, was unhurt; but Marius lay wounded and insensible in his arms.

The soldiers were shooting down all who tried to escape. The situation was terrible.

There was only one chance for life—underground. An iron grating, which led to the sewers, was at his feet. Jean Valjean tore it open, and disappeared with Marius on his shoulders.

He emerged, after a horrible passage through a grating by the bank of the river, only to find there the implacable Javert!

Jean Valjean was quite calm.

“Inspector Javert,” he said, “help me to carry this man home; then do with me what you please.”

A cab was waiting for the inspector. He ordered the man to drive to the address Jean Valjean gave him. Marius, still unconscious, was taken to his grandfather’s house.

“Inspector Javert,” said Jean Valjean, “grant me one thing more. Let me go home for a minute; then you may take me where you will.”

Javert told the driver to go to Rue de l’Homme-Arme, No. 7.

When they reached the house, Javert said, “Go up; I will wait here for you!”

But before Jean Valjean reached his rooms Javert had gone, and the street was empty.

Javert had not been at ease since his life had been spared. He was now in horrible uncertainty. To owe his life to an ex-convict, to accept this debt, and then to repay him by sending him back to the galleys was impossible. To let a malefactor go free while he, Inspector Javert, took his pay from the government, was equally impossible. It seemed there was something higher and above his code of duty, something he had not come into collision with before. The uncertainty of the right thing to be done destroyed Javert,

to whom life had hitherto been perfectly plain. He could not live recognising Jean Valjean as his saviour, and he could not bring himself to arrest Jean Valjean.

Inspector Javert made his last report at the police-station, and then, unable to face the new conditions of life, walked slowly to the river and plunged into the Seine, where the water rolls round and round in an endless whirlpool.

Marius recovered, and married Cosette; and Jean Valjean lived alone. He had told Marius who he was—Jean Valjean, an escaped convict; and Marius and Cosette gradually saw less and less of the old man.

But before Jean Valjean died Marius learnt the whole truth of the heroic life of the old man who had rescued him from the lost barricade. For the first time he realised that Jean Valjean had come to the barricade only to save him, knowing him to be in love with Cosette.

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He hastened with Cosette to Jean Valjean's room; but the old man's last hour had come.

"Come closer, come closer, both of you," he cried. "I love you so much. It is good to die like this! You love me too, my Cosette. I know you've always had a fondness for the poor old man. And you, M. Pontmercy, will always make Cosette happy. There were several things I wanted to say, but they don't matter now. Come nearer, my children. I am happy in dying!"

Cosette and Marius fell on their knees, and covered his hands with kisses.

Jean Valjean was dead!

* * * * *

Notre Dame de Paris

Victor Hugo was already eminent as one of the greatest dramatic poets of his day before he gave to the world, in 1831, his great tragic romance, "Notre Dame de Paris," of which the original title was "The Hunchback of Notre Dame." Hugo has said that the story was suggested to him by the Greek word *anagke* (Fate), which one day he discovered carved on one of the towers of the famous cathedral. "These Greek characters," he says, "black with age and cut deep into the stone with the peculiarities of form and arrangement common to the Gothic caligraphy that marked them the work of some hand in the Middle Ages, and above all the sad and mournful meaning which they expressed, forcibly impressed me." In "Notre Dame" there is all the tenderness for sorrow and sympathy for the afflicted, which found even fuller and deeper expression thirty years later in "Les Miserables"; while as a study of the life of Paris of the Middle Ages, and of the great church after which the romance is called, the book is still unrivalled.

I.—The Hunchback of Notre Dame

It was January 6, 1482, and all Paris was keeping the double festival of Epiphany and the Feast of Fools.

The Lord of Misrule was to be elected, and all who were competing for the post came in turn and made a grimace at a broken window in the great hall of the Palace of Justice. The ugliest face was to be acclaimed victor by the populace, and shouts of laughter greeted the grotesque appearances.

The vote was unanimous in favour of the hunchback of Notre Dame. He had but stood at the window, and at once had been elected. The square nose, the horseshoe shaped

mouth, the one eye, overhung by a bushy red eyebrow, the forked chin, and the strange expression of amazement, malice, and melancholy—who had seen such a grimace?

It was only when the crowd had carried away the Lord of Misrule in triumph that they understood that the grimace was the hunchback's natural face. In fact, the entire man was a grimace. Humpbacked, an enormous head, with bristles of red hair; broad feet, huge hands, crooked legs; and, with all this deformity, a wonderful vigour, agility, and courage. Such was the newly chosen Lord of Misrule—a giant broken to pieces and badly mended.

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He was recognised by the crowd in the streets, and shouts went up.

“It is Quasimodo, the bell-ringer! Quasimodo, the hunchback of Notre Dame!”

A pasteboard tiara and imitation robes were placed on him, and Quasimodo submitted with a sort of proud docility. Then he was seated upon a painted barrow, and twelve men raised it to their shoulders; and the procession, which included all the vagrants and rascals of Paris, set out to parade the city.

There was a certain rapture in this journey for Quasimodo. For the first time in his life he felt a thrill of vanity. Hitherto humiliation and contempt had been his portion; and now, though he was deaf, he could enjoy the plaudits of the mob—mob which he hated because he felt that it hated him.

Suddenly, as Quasimodo passed triumphantly along the streets, the spectators saw a man, dressed like a priest, dart out and snatch away the gilded crosier from the mock pope.

A cry of terror rose. The terrible Quasimodo threw himself from his barrow, and everyone expected to see him tear the priest limb from limb. Instead, he fell on his knees before the priest, and submitted to have his tiara torn from him and his crosier broken.

The fraternity of fools determined to defend their pope so abruptly dethroned; but Quasimodo placed himself in front of the priest, put his fists up, and glared at his assailants, so that the crowd melted before him.

Then, at the grave beckoning of the priest, Quasimodo followed, and the two disappeared down a narrow side street.

The one human being whom Quasimodo loved was this priest, Claude Frollo, Archbishop of Paris. And this was quite natural. For it was Claude Frollo who had found the hunchback—a deserted, forsaken child left in a sack at the entrance to Notre Dame, and, in spite of his deformities, had taken him, fed him, adopted him, and brought him up. Claude Frollo taught him to speak, to read, and to write, and had made him bell-ringer at Notre Dame.

Quasimodo grew up in Notre Dame. Cut off from the world by his deformities, the church became his universe, and his gratitude was boundless when he was made bell-ringer.

The bells had made him deaf, but he could understand by signs Claude Frollo’s wishes, and so the archdeacon became the only human being with whom Quasimodo could hold any communication. Notre Dame and Claude Frollo were the only two things in the world for Quasimodo, and to both he was the most faithful watchman and servant. In

the year 1482 Quasimodo was about twenty, and Claude Frollo thirty-six. The former had grown up, the latter had grown old.

II.—Esmeralda

On that same January 6, 1482, a young girl was dancing in an open space near a great bonfire in Paris. She was not tall but seemed to be, so erect was her figure. She danced and twirled upon an old piece of Persian carpet, and every eye in the crowd was riveted upon her. In her grace and beauty this gypsy girl seemed more than mortal.

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One man in the crowd stood more absorbed than the rest in watching the dancer. It was Claude Frollo, the archdeacon: and though his hair was grey and scanty, in his deep-set eyes the fire and spirit of youth still sparkled.

When the young girl stopped at last, breathless, the people applauded eagerly.

“Djali,” said the gypsy, “it’s your turn now.” And a pretty little white goat got up from a corner of the carpet.

“Djali, what month in the year is this?”

The goat raised his forefoot and struck once upon the tambourine held out to him.

The crowd applauded.

“Djali, what day of the month is it?”

The goat struck the tambourine six times.

The people thought it was wonderful.

“There is sorcery in this!” said a forbidding voice in the crowd. It was the voice of the priest Claude Frolic.

Then the gypsy began to take up a collection in her tambourine, and presently the crowd dispersed.

Later in the day, when darkness had fallen, as the gypsy and her goat were proceeding to their lodgings, Quasimodo seized hold of the girl and ran off with her.

“Murder! Murder!” shrieked the unfortunate gypsy.

“Halt! Let the girl go, you ruffian!” exclaimed, in a voice of thunder, a horseman who appeared suddenly from a cross street. It was a captain of the King’s Archers, armed from head to foot, and sword in hand.

He tore the gypsy girl from the arms of the astonished Quasimodo, and placed her across his saddle. Before the hunchback could recover from his surprise, a squadron of royal troops, going on duty as extra watchmen, surrounded him, and he was seized and bound.

The gypsy girl sat gracefully upon the officer’s saddle, placing both hands upon the young man’s shoulders, and gazing at him fixedly. Then breaking the silence, she said tenderly, “What is your name, M. l’Officier?”

“Captain Phaebus de Chateaupers, at your service, my pretty maid!” said the officer, drawing himself up.

“Thank you.”

And while Captain Phaebus twirled his mustache, she slipped from his horse and vanished like a flash of lightning.

“The bird has flown, but the bat remains, captain,” said one of the troopers, tightening Quasimodo’s bonds.

Quasimodo being deaf, understood nothing of the proceedings in the court next day, when he was charged with creating a disturbance, and of rebellion and disloyalty to the King’s Archers.

The chief magistrate, also being deaf and at the same time anxious to conceal his infirmity, understood nothing that Quasimodo said.

The hunchback was sentenced to be taken to the pillory in the Greve, to be beaten, and to be kept there for two hours.

Quasimodo remained utterly impassive, while the crowd which yesterday had hailed him as Lord of Misrule now greeted him with hooting and derision.

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The pillory was a simple cube of masonry, some ten feet high, and hollow within. A horizontal wheel of oak was at the top, and to this the victim was bound in a kneeling posture. A very steep flight of stone steps led to the wheel.

All the people laughed merrily when Quasimodo was seen in the pillory; and when he had been beaten by the public executioner, they added to the wretched sufferer's misery by insults, and, occasionally, stones. There was hardly a spectator in the crowd that had not some grudge, real or imagined, against the hunchback bell-ringer of Notre Dame.

Quasimodo had endured the torturer's whip with patience, but he rebelled against the stones, and struggled in his fetters till the old pillory-wheel creaked on its timbers. Then, as he could accomplish nothing by his struggles, his face became quiet again.

For a moment the cloud was lightened when the poor victim saw a priest seated on a mule approach in the roadway. A strange smile came on the face of Quasimodo as he glanced at the priest; yet when the mule was near enough to the pillory for his rider to recognise the prisoner, the priest cast down his eyes, turned back hastily, as if in a hurry to avoid humiliating appeals, and not at all anxious to be greeted by a poor wretch in the pillory.

The priest was the archdeacon, Claude Frollo. The smile on Quasimodo's face became bitter and profoundly sad.

Time passed. He had been there at least an hour and a half, wounded, incessantly mocked, and almost stoned to death.

Suddenly he again struggled in his chains with renewed despair, and breaking the silence which he had kept so stubbornly, he cried in a hoarse and furious voice, "Water!"

The exclamation of distress, far from exciting compassion, only increased the amusement of the Paris mob. Not a voice was raised, except to mock at his thirst.

Quasimodo cast a despairing look upon the crowd, and repeated in a heartrending voice, "Water!"

Everyone laughed. A woman aimed a stone at his head, saying, "That will teach you to wake us at night with your cursed chimes!"

"Here's a cup to drink out of!" said a man, throwing a broken jug at his breast.

"Water!" repeated Quasimodo for the third time.

At this moment he saw the gypsy girl and her goat come through the crowd. His eye gleamed. He did not doubt that she, too, came to be avenged, and to take her turn at

him with the rest. He watched her nimbly climb the ladder. Rage and spite choked him. He longed to destroy the pillory; and had the lightning of his eye had power to blast, the gypsy girl would have been reduced to ashes long before she reached the platform. Without a word she approached the sufferer, loosened a gourd from her girdle, and raised it gently to the parched lips of the miserable man. Then from his eye a great tear trickled, and rolled slowly down the misshapen face, so long convulsed with despair.

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The gypsy girl smilingly pressed the neck of the gourd to Quasimodo's jagged mouth.

He drank long draughts; his thirst was feverish. When he had done, the poor wretch put out his black lips to kiss the hand which had helped him. But the girl, remembering the violent attempt of the previous night, and not quite free from distrust, withdrew her hand quickly.

Quasimodo fixed upon her a look of reproach and unspeakable sorrow.

The sight of this beautiful girl succouring a man in the pillory so deformed and wretched seemed sublime, and the people were immediately affected by it. They clapped their hands, and shouted, "Noel! Noel!"

Esmeralda—for that was the name of the gypsy girl—came down from the pillory, and a mad woman called out, "Come down! Come down! You will go up again!"

Presently Quasimodo was released, and the mob thereupon dispersed.

III.—The Archdeacon's Passion

In spite of the austerity of Claude Frollo's life, pious people suspected him of magic. His silence and secretiveness encouraged this feeling. He was known to be at work in the long hours of the night in his cell in Notre Dame, and he wandered about the streets like a spectre.

Whenever the gypsy girl placed her carpet within sight of Claude Frollo's cell and began to dance the priest turned from his books and, resting his head in his hands, gazed at her. Then he would go down into the public thoroughfares, lured on by some burning passion within.

Quasimodo, too, would desist from his bell-ringing to look at the dancing girl.

The hotter the fire of passion burned within the priest the farther Esmeralda moved from him. He discovered that she was in love with Captain Phoebus, her rescuer, and this knowledge added fuel to the flames.

One purpose now was clear to him. He would give up all for the dancing girl, and she should be his. But if Esmeralda refused to come to him, then the archdeacon resolved that she should die before she married anyone else. At any time he could have her arrested on the charge of sorcery, and the goat's tricks would easily procure a conviction.

Captain Phoebus, having invited Esmeralda to meet him at a wineshop, the priest followed the couple, and when the captain, to whom the girl was the merest diversion,

began to make love, Claude Frollo, unable to contain himself, rushed in unobserved and stabbed him.

Captain Phoebus was taken up for dead, and the priest vanished as silently as he had come. The soldiers of the watch found Esmeralda, and said, “This is the sorceress who has stabbed our captain.” So Esmeralda was brought to trial on the charge of witchcraft, and every day the priest from Notre Dame came into court.

It was a tedious process, for not only was the girl on trial, but the goat also, in accordance with the custom of the times, was under arrest.

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All that Esmeralda wanted to know was whether Phoebus was still alive, and she was told by the judges he was dying.

The indictment against her was “that with her accomplice, the bewitched goat, she did murder and stab, in league with the powers of darkness, by the aid of charms and spells, a captain of the king’s troops, one Phoebus de Chateaupers.” And it was vain that the girl denied vehemently her guilt.

“How do you explain the charge brought against you?” said the president.

“I have told you already I do not know,” said Esmeralda, in a broken voice. “It was a priest—a priest who is always pursuing me”

“That’s it,” said the president; “it is a goblin monk.”

The goat having performed his simple tricks in the presence of the court, and Esmeralda still refusing to admit her guilt, the president ordered her to be put to the question.

She was placed on the rack, and at the first turn of the screw promised to confess everything. Then the lawyers put a number of questions to her, and Esmeralda answered “Yes” in every case. It was plain that her spirit was utterly broken.

Then the court having read the confession, sentence was pronounced. She was to be taken to the Greve, where the pillory stood, and, in atonement for the crimes confessed, there hanged and strangled on the city gibbet, “and likewise this your goat.”

“It must be a dream,” the girl murmured, when she heard the sentence.

But, if Esmeralda had yielded at the first turn of the rack, nothing would make her yield to Claude Frollo when he came to see her in prison. In vain he promised her life and liberty if she would only agree to love him. In vain he reproached her with having brought disturbance and disquiet into his soul. All that Esmeralda could say was, “Have pity on me!—have pity on me!” But she would not give up Phoebus. And when the priest declared Phoebus was dead, she turned upon him and called him “monster and assassin!” Claude Frollo, unable to move her, decided to let her die, and the day of execution arrived. As for Captain Phoebus, he recovered; but, as he was about to be engaged to a young lady of wealth, he thought it better to say nothing about the gypsy girl.

But Esmeralda was not hanged that day. Just as the hangman’s assistants were about to do their work, Quasimodo, who had been watching everything from his gallery in Notre Dame, slid down by a rope to the ground, rushed at the two executioners, flung them to the earth with his huge fists, seized the gypsy girl, as a child might a doll, and

with one bound was in the church, holding her above his head, and shouting in a tremendous voice, “Sanctuary!”

“Sanctuary! Sanctuary!” The mob took up the cry, and ten thousand hands clapped approval.

The hangman stood stupefied. Within the precincts of Notre Dame the prisoner was secure; the cathedral was a sure refuge, all human justice ended at its threshold.

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IV.—The Attack on Notre Dame

Quasimodo did not stop running and shouting “Sanctuary!” till he reached a cell built over the aisles in Notre Dame. Here he deposited Esmeralda carefully, untied the ropes which bruised her arms, and spread a mattress on the floor; then he left her, and returned with a basket of provisions.

The girl lifted her eyes to thank him, but could not utter a word, so frightful was he to look at. Quasimodo only said, “I frighten you because I am ugly. Do not look at me, then, but listen. All day you must stay here, at night you can walk anywhere about the church. But, day or night, do not leave the church, or you will be lost. They would kill you, and I should die.” Then he vanished, but when she awoke next morning she saw him at the window of her cell.

“Don’t be frightened,” he said. “I am your friend. I only came to see if you were asleep. I am deaf, you did not know that? I never realised how ugly I was till now. I seem to you like some awful beast, eh? And you—you are a sunbeam!”

As the days went by calm returned to Esmeralda’s soul, and with calm had come the sense of security, and with security hope.

Two forces were now at work to remove her from Notre Dame.

The archdeacon, leaving Paris to avoid her execution, had returned—to learn where Esmeralda was situated. From his cell in Notre Dame he observed her movements, and, in his madness, jealous of Quasimodo’s service to her, resolved to have her removed. If she still refused him he would give her up to justice.

Esmeralda’s friends, all the gypsies, vagrants, cutthroats, and pick-pockets of Paris, to the number of six thousand, also resolved that they would forcibly rescue her from Notre Dame, lest some evil should overtake her. Paris at that time had neither police nor adequate city watchmen.

At midnight the monstrous army of vagrants set out, and it was not until they were outside the church that they lit their torches. Quasimodo, every night on the watch, at once supposed that the invaders had some foul purpose against Esmeralda, and determined to defend the church at all cost.

The battle raged furiously at the great west doors. Hammers, pincers, and crow-bars were at work outside. Quasimodo retaliated by heaving first a great beam of wood, and then stones and other missiles on the besiegers. Finally, when they had reared a tall ladder to the first gallery, and had crowded it with men, Quasimodo, by sheer force, pushed the ladder away, and it tottered and fell right back. The battle only ended on the

arrival of a large company of King's Archers, when the vagrants, defeated by Quasimodo, retired fighting.

While the battle raged Claude Frollo, with the aid of a disreputable young student of his acquaintance, persuaded Esmeralda to leave the church by a secret door at the back, and to escape by the river. The priest was so hidden in his cloak that the girl did not recognise him till they were alone in the city. In the Greve, at the foot of the public scaffold where the gallows stood, Claude Frollo made his last appeal.

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“Listen!” he said. “I have saved you, and I can save you altogether, if you choose. Choose between me and the gibbet!”

There was silence, and then Esmeralda said, “It is less horrible to me than you are.”

He poured out his soul passionately, telling her that his life was nothing without her love, but the girl never moved.

It was daylight now.

“For the last time, will you be mine?”

She answered emphatically, “No!”

Then he called out as loud as he could, and presently a body of armed men appeared. Soon the public hangman was aroused, and the execution which had been interrupted by Quasimodo’s heroic rescue was carried out.

Meantime, what of Quasimodo?

He had rushed to her cell when the king’s troops, having beaten off the vagrants, entered the church, and it was empty! Then he had explored every nook and cranny of Notre Dame, and again and again gone the round of the church. For an hour he sat in despair, his body convulsed by sobs.

Suddenly he remembered that Claude Frollo had a secret key, and decided that the priest must have carried her off.

At that very moment Claude returned to Notre Dame, after handing over Esmeralda to the hangman. Quasimodo watched him ascend to the balustrade at the top of the tower, and then followed him; the priest’s attention was too absorbed to hear the hunchback’s step.

Claude rested his arms on the balustrade, and gazed intently at the gallows in the Greve. Quasimodo tried to make out what it was the priest stared at, and then he recognised Esmeralda in the hangman’s arms on the ladder, and in another second the hangman had done his work.

A demoniac laugh broke from the livid lips of Claude Frollo; Quasimodo could not hear this laughter, but he saw it.

He rushed furiously upon the archdeacon, and with his great fists he hurled Claude Frollo into the abyss over which he leaned.

The archdeacon caught at a gutter, and hung suspended for a few minutes, and then fell—more than two hundred feet.

Quasimodo raised his eyes to the gypsy, whose body still swung from the gibbet; and then lowered them to the shapeless mass on the pavement beneath. “And these were all I have ever loved!” he said, sobbing.

He was never seen again in Notre Dame.

Some two years later, when there were certain clearances in the vault where the body of Esmeralda had been deposited, the skeleton of a man, deformed and twisted, was found in close embrace with the skeleton of a woman. A little silk bag which Esmeralda had always worn was around the neck of the skeleton of the woman.

* * * * *

The Toilers of the Sea

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Victor Hugo's third great romance, "The Toilers of the Sea" ("Les Travailleurs de la Mer"), published in 1866, was written during his exile in Guernsey. Of all Hugo's romances, both in prose and in verse, none surpasses this for sheer splendour of imagination and diction, for eloquence and sublimity of truth. It is, in short, an idyll of passion, adventure, and self-sacrifice. The description of the moods and mysteries of the sea is well-nigh incomparable; and not even in the whole of Hugo's works can there be found anything more vivid than Gilliatt's battle with the devil-fish. The scene of the story is laid in the Channel Islands, and the book itself is dedicated to the "Isle of Guernsey, severe yet gentle, my present asylum, my probable tomb." The story was immensely successful on its appearance, and was at once translated into several European languages.

I.—A Lonely Man

A Guernseyman named Gilliatt, who was avoided by his neighbours on account of lonely habits, and a certain love of nature which the suspicious people regarded as indicating some connection with the devil, was one day returning on a rising tide from his fishing, when he fancied he saw in a certain projection of the cliff a shadow of a man.

The place probably attracted Gilliatt's gaze because it was a favourite sojourn of his—a natural seat cut in the great cliffs, and affording a magnificent view of the sea. It was a place to which some uninitiated traveller would climb with delight from the shore and sit entranced by the scene before him, all oblivious of the rising ocean till he was completely cut off from escape. No shout would reach the ear of man from that desolate giant's chair in the rock.

Gilliatt steered his ship nearer to the cliff, and saw that the shadow was a man. The sea was already high. The rock was encircled. Gilliatt drew nearer. The man was asleep.

He was attired in black, and looked like a priest. Gilliatt had never seen him before. The fisherman wore off, skirted the rock wall, and, approaching so close to the dangerous cliff that by standing on the gunwale of his sloop he could touch the foot of the sleeper, succeeded in arousing him.

The man roused, and muttered, "I was looking about."

Gilliatt bade him jump into the boat. When he had landed this young priest, who had a somewhat feminine cast of features, a clear eye, and a grave manner, Gilliatt perceived that he was holding out a sovereign in a very white hand. Gilliatt moved the hand gently away. There was a pause. Then the young man bowed, and left him.

Gilliatt had forgotten all about this stranger, when a voice hailed him. It was one of the inhabitants, driving by quickly.

“There is news, Gilliatt—at the Bravees.”

“What is it?”

“I am too hurried to tell you the story. Go up to the house, and you will learn.”

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The Bravees was the residence of a man named Lethierry. He had raised himself to a position of wealth by starting the first steamboat between Guernsey and the coast of Normandy; he called this vessel La Durande; the natives, who prophesied evil of such a frightful invention, called it the Devil's Boat. But the Durande went to and fro without disaster, and Lethierry's gold increased. There was nothing in all the universe he loved so much as this marvellous ship worked by steam. Next to the Durande, he most loved his pretty niece Derouchette, who kept house for him.

One day as Gilliatt was walking over the snow-covered roads, Derouchette, who was ahead of him, had stopped for a moment, and stooping down, had written something with her finger in the snow. When the fisherman reached the place, he found that the mischievous little creature had written his name there. Ever since that hour, in the almost unbroken solitude of his life, Gilliatt had thought about Derouchette.

Now that he heard of news at the Bravees, the lonely man made his way to Lethierry's house, which was the nest of Derouchette.

The news was soon told. The Durande was lost! Presently, amid the details of the story—the Durande had been wrecked in a fog on the terrible rocks known as the Douvres—one thing emerged: the engines were intact. To rescue the Durande was impossible; but the machinery might still be saved. These engines were unique. To construct others like them, money was wanting; but to find the artificer would have been still more difficult. The constructor was dead. The machinery had cost two thousand pounds. As long as these engines existed, it might almost be said that there was no shipwreck. The loss of the engines alone was irreparable.

Now, if ever a dream had appeared wild and impracticable, it was that of saving the engines then embedded between the Douvres. The idea of sending a crew to work upon those rocks was absurd. It was the season of heavy seas. Besides, on the narrow ledge of the highest part of the rock there was scarcely room for one person. To save the engines, therefore, it would be necessary for a man to go to the Douvres, to be alone in that sea, alone at five leagues from the coast, alone in that region of terrors, for entire weeks, in the presence of dangers foreseen and unforeseen—without supplies in the face of hunger and nakedness, without companionship save that of death.

A pilot present in the room delivered judgment.

"No; it is all over. The man does not exist who could go there and rescue the machinery of the Durande."

"If I don't go," said the engineer of the lost ship, who loved those engines, "it is because nobody could do it"

"If he existed——" continued the pilot.

Derouchette turned her head impulsively, and interrupted.

“I would marry him,” she said innocently.

There was a pause. A man made his way out of the crowd, and standing before her, pale and anxious, said, “You would marry him, Miss Derouchette?”

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It was Gilliatt. All eyes were turned towards him. Lethierry had just before stood upright and gazed about him. His eyes glittered with a strange light. He took off his sailor's cap, and threw it on the ground; then looked solemnly before him, and without seeing any of the persons present, said Derouchette should be his. "I pledge myself to it in God's name!"

II.—The Prey of the Rocks

The two perpendicular forms called the Douvres held fast between them, like an architrave between two pillars, the wreck of the Durande. The spectacle thus presented was a vast portal in the midst of the sea. It might have been a titanic cromlech planted there in mid-ocean by hands accustomed to proportion their labours to the great deep. Its wild outline stood well defined against the clear sky when Gilliatt approached in his sloop.

The rocks, thus holding fast and exhibiting their prey, were terrible to behold. There was a menace in the attitude of the rocks. They seemed to be biding their time. Nothing could be more suggestive of haughtiness and arrogance: the conquered vessel, the triumphant abyss. The two rocks, still streaming with the tempest of the day before, were like two wrestlers sweating from a recent struggle. Up to a certain height they were completely bearded with seaweed; above this their steep haunches glittered at points like polished armour. They seemed ready to begin the strife again. The imagination might have pictured them as two monstrous arms, reaching upwards from the gulf, and exhibiting to the tempest the lifeless body of the ship. If Gilliatt had known how she came to be there, he might have been more awed by the tremendous spectacle. The cause was an accident, and yet a purposed act.

Clubin, the captain, as smug a hypocrite as ever scuttled a ship, had intended to run the Durande on the Hanways. His belt contained three thousand pounds. He meant to lose the ship on the Hanways, a mile from shore, and when the passengers had rowed away, pretending that he would go down with the ship, Clubin purposed to swim to land, get on board a pirate ship, and be off to the East. His little drama had been acted out; the boats had rowed away, everybody praising Captain Clubin, who would not abandon his ship. But when the fog cleared—horror of horrors!—Clubin found himself not on the Hanways, but on the Douvres; not one mile from shore, but five miles!

Clubin saw a ship in the distance. He determined to swim to a rock from which he could be seen, and make signals of distress. He undressed, leaving his clothing on deck. He retained nothing but his leather belt, and then, precipitating himself head first, plunged into the sea. As he dived from a height, he plunged heavily. He sank deep in the water, touched the bottom, skirted for a moment the submarine rocks, then struck out to regain the surface. At that moment he felt himself seized by one foot.

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But of all this Gilliatt, arriving at the Douvres, knew nothing. He was absorbed by the spectacle of the ship held in mid-air. And what did he find? The machinery was saved, but it was lost. The ocean saved it, only to demolish it at leisure—like a cat playing with her prey. Its fate was to suffer there, and to be dismembered day by day. It was to be the plaything of the savage amusements of the sea. For what could be done? That this vast block of mechanism and gear, at once massive and delicate, condemned to fixity by its weight, delivered up in that solitude to the destructive elements, could, under the frown of that implacable spot, escape from slow destruction seemed a madness even to imagine.

Gilliatt looked about him.

When he had made a lodging for himself, and had suffered the misfortune of losing the basket containing his provisions, Gilliatt considered his difficulties.

In order to raise the engine of the Durande from the wreck in which it was three-fourths buried, with any chance of success—in order to accomplish a salvage in such a place and such a season, it seemed almost necessary to be a legion of men. Gilliatt was alone. A complete apparatus of carpenter's and engineer's tools and implements were wanted. Gilliatt had a saw, a hatchet, a chisel, and a hammer. He wanted both a good workshop and a good shed; Gilliatt had not a roof to cover him. Provisions, too, were necessary on that bare rock, but he had not even bread.

Anyone who could have seen Gilliatt working on the rock during all that first week might have been puzzled to determine the nature of his operations. He seemed to be no longer thinking of the Durande or the two Douvres. He was busy only among the breakers. He seemed absorbed in saving the smaller parts of the shipwreck. He took advantage of every high tide to strip the reefs of everything that the ship-wreck had distributed among them. He went from rock to rock, picking up whatever the sea had scattered—tatters of sail-cloth, pieces of iron, splinters of panels, shattered planking, broken yards; here a beam, there a chain, there a pulley.

He lived upon limpets, hermit-crabs, and rain-water. He was surrounded by a screaming garrison of gulls, cormorants, and sea-mews. The deep boom of the waves among the caves and reefs was never out of his ears. By day he was roasted in the terrific heat which beat with pitiless force on this exposed pinnacle; at night he was chilled to the marrow by the cold of the open sea. And for ever he was hungry, thirsty—famished.

One day, in exploring for salvage some of the grottoes of his rock, Gilliatt came upon a cave within a cave, so beautiful with sea-flowers that it seemed the retreat of a sea-goddess. The shells were like jewels; the water held eternal moonlight. Some of the flowers were like sapphires. Standing in this dripping grotto, with his feet on the edge of a probably bottomless pool, Gilliatt suddenly became aware in

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the transparence of that water of the approach of some mystic form. A species of long, ragged band was moving amid the oscillation of the waves. It did not float, but darted about at its own will. It had an object; was advancing somewhere rapidly. The thing had something of the form of a jester's bauble with points, which hung flabby and undulating. It seemed covered with a dust incapable of being washed away by the water. It was more than horrible; it was foul. It seemed to be seeking the darker portion of the cavern, where at last it vanished.

Gilliatt returned to his work. He had a notion. Since the time of the carpenter-mason of Salbris, who, in the sixteenth century, without other helper than a child, his son, with ill-fashioned tools, in the chamber of the great clock at La Charite-sur-Loire, resolved at one stroke five or six problems in statics and dynamics inextricably intervolved—since the time of that grand and marvellous achievement of the poor workman, who found means, without breaking a single piece of wire, without throwing one of the teeth of the wheels out of gear, to lower in one piece, by a marvellous simplification, from the second story of the clock tower to the first, that massive clock, large as a room, nothing that could be compared with the project which Gilliatt was meditating had ever been attempted.

After incredible exertions, the machinery was ready for lowering into the sloop. Gilliatt had constructed tackle, a regulating gear, and made all sure. The long labour was finished; the first act had been the simplest of all. He could put to sea. To-morrow he would be in Guernsey.

But no. He had waited for the tide to lift the sloop as near to the suspended engines as possible, and now the funnel, which he had lowered with the paddle-boxes, prevented the sloop from getting out of the little gorge. It was necessary to wait for the tide to fall. Gilliatt drew his sheepskin about him, pulled his cap over his eyes, and lying down beside the engine, was soon asleep.

When he woke, it was to feel the coming of a storm. A fresh task was forced upon this famished man. It was necessary to build a breakwater in the gorge. He flew to this task. Nails driven into the cracks of the rocks, beams lashed together with cordage, cat-heads from the Durande, binding strakes, pulley-sheaves, chains—with these materials the haggard dweller of the rock built his barrier against the wrath of God.

Then the storm came.

III.—The Devil-Fish

When the awful rage of the storm had passed, and the barrier which he had repaired in the midst of the tempest hung like a broken arm across the gorge, Gilliatt, maddened by

hunger, took advantage of the receding tide to go in search of crayfish. Half naked, and with his open knife between his teeth, he sprang from rock to rock. In hunting a crab he found himself once more in the mysterious grotto that glittered with jewel-like flowers. He noticed a fissure above the level of the water. The crab was probably there. He thrust in his hand as far as he was able, and groped about in that dusky aperture.

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Suddenly he felt himself seized by the arm. A strange, indescribable horror thrilled through him.

Some living thing—thin, rough, flat, cold, slimy—had twisted itself round his naked arm. It crept upward towards his chest. Its pressure was like a tightening cord, its steady persistence like that of a screw. In less than a moment some mysterious spiral form had passed round his wrist and elbow, and had reached his shoulder. A sharp point penetrated beneath the arm-pit.

Gilliatt recoiled; but he had scarcely power to move. He was, as it were, nailed to the place. With his left hand, which was disengaged, he seized his knife, and made a desperate effort to withdraw his arm. He only succeeded in disturbing his persecutor, which wound itself still tighter. It was supple as leather, strong as steel, cold as night.

A second form—sharp, elongated, and narrow—issued out of the crevice, like a tongue out of monstrous jaws. It seemed to lick his naked body; then, suddenly stretching out, it became longer and thinner, as it crept over his skin, and wound itself round him. A terrible sense of anguish, comparable to nothing he had ever known, compelled all his muscles to contract. He felt upon his skin a number of flat, rounded points. It seemed as if innumerable suckers had fastened to his flesh, and were about to drink his blood.

A third long, undulating shape issued from the hole in the rock, felt about his body, lashed round his ribs like a cord, and fixed itself there. There was sufficient light for Gilliatt to see the repulsive forms which had entangled themselves about him. A fourth ligature, but this one swift as an arrow, darted towards his stomach.

These living things crept and glided about him; he felt the points of pressure, like sucking mouths, change their places from time to time.

Suddenly a large, round, flattened, glutinous mass shot from beneath the crevice. It was the centre! The thongs were attached to it like spokes to the nave of a wheel. In the middle of this slimy mass appeared two eyes. The eyes were fixed on Gilliatt.

He recognised the devil-fish.

Gilliatt had but one resource—his knife.

He knew that these frightful monsters are vulnerable in only one point—the head. Standing half naked in the water, his body lashed by the foul antennae of the devil-fish, Gilliatt looked at the devil-fish and the devilfish looked at Gilliatt.

With the devil-fish, as with a furious bull, there is a certain moment in the conflict which must be seized. It is the instant when the bull lowers its neck; it is the instant when the devil-fish advances its head. The movement is rapid. He who loses that moment is destroyed.

Suddenly it loosened another antenna from the rock, and darting it at him, seized him by the left arm. At the same moment it advanced its head.

Rapid as was this movement, Gilliatt, by a gigantic effort, plunged the blade of his knife into the flat, slimy substance, and with a movement like the flourish of a whip, described a circle round the eyes and wrenched off the head as a man would draw a tooth.

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The four hundred suckers dropped at once from the man and the rock. The mass sank to the bottom of the water.

Nearly exhausted, Gilliatt plunged into the water to heal by friction the numberless purple swellings which were pricking all over his body. He advanced up the recess. Something caught his eye. He approached nearer. The thing was a bleached skeleton; nothing was left but the white bones. Yes, something else. A leather belt and a tobacco-tin. On the belt Gilliatt read the name of Clubin; in the tobacco-tin, which he opened with his knife, he found three thousand pounds.

When Gilliatt reached his sloop, with this belt and box in his possession, he found, to his unspeakable horror, that she had been making water fast. Had he come an hour later he would have found nothing above water but the funnel of the steamer.

He slung a tarpaulin by chains overboard and hung it over the hole. Pressure of the sea held it tight. The wound was stanched. Gilliatt began to bale for dear life. As he emptied the hole the tarpaulin bulged in, as if a fist were pushing it from outside. He ran for his clothes; brought them, and stuffed them into the wound.

He was saved—for a few moments.

Death was certain. He had succeeded in the impossible, to fail in what a shipwright might have mended in a few minutes.

Upon that solitary rock he had been subjected by turns to all the varied and cruel tortures of nature. He had conquered his isolation, conquered hunger, conquered thirst, conquered cold, conquered fever, conquered labour, conquered sleep. A dismal irony was then the end of all. Gilliatt climbed to the top of the rock and gazed wildly into space. He had no clothing. He stood naked in the midst of that immensity.

Then, overwhelmed by the sense of that unknown infinity, like one bewildered by a strange persecution, confronting the shadows of night, in the midst of the murmur of the waves, the swell, the foam, the breeze, under that vast diffusion of force, having around him and beneath him the ocean, above him the constellations, under him the great unfathomable deep, he sank, gave up the struggle, laid down upon the rock, humbled, and uplifting his joined hands towards the terrible depths, he cried aloud, “Have mercy!”

When he issued from his swoon, the sun was high in a cloudless sky. The blessed heat had saved the poor, broken, naked man upon the rock. He rose up refreshed, and filled with divine energy. A day’s work sufficed to mend the gap in the sloop’s side. On the following day, dressed in the tattered garments which had stuffed the rent, with a favourable breeze and a good sea, Gilliatt pushed off from the Douvres.

IV.—Fate’s Last Blow

Gilliatt arrived in harbour at night. He went ashore in his rags, and hovered for a while about the darkness of Lethierry's house. Then he made his way into the garden, like an animal returning to its hole. He sat himself down and looked about him. He saw the garden, the pathways, the beds of flowers, the house, the two windows of Derouchette's chamber. He felt it horrible to be obliged to breathe; he did what he could to prevent it.

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To see those windows was almost too much happiness for Gilliatt.

Suddenly he saw her.

Derouchette approached. She stopped. She walked back a few paces, stopped again; then returned and sat upon a wooden bench. The moon was in the trees; a few clouds floated among the pale stars; the sea murmured to the shadows in an undertone.

Gilliatt felt a thrill through him. He was the most miserable and yet the happiest of men. He knew not what to do. His delirious joy at seeing her annihilated him. He gazed upon her neck—her hair.

A noise aroused them both—her from her reverie, him from his ecstasy. Someone was walking in the garden. It was the footsteps of a man. Derouchette raised her eyes. The footsteps drew nearer, then ceased. Accident had so placed the branches that Derouchette could see the newcomer while Gilliatt could not. He looked at Derouchette.

She was quite pale; her mouth was partly open, as with a suppressed cry of surprise. Her surprise was enchantment mingled with timidity. She seemed as if transfigured by that presence; as if the being whom she saw before her belonged not to this earth.

The stranger, who was to Gilliatt only a shadow, spoke. A voice issued from the trees, softer than the voice of a woman; yet it was the voice of a man. Gilliatt heard many words, then, “Mademoiselle, you are poor; since this morning I am rich. Will you have me for your husband? I love you. God made not the heart of man to be silent. He has promised him eternity with the intention that he should not be alone. There is for me but one woman on the earth; it is you. I think of you as of a prayer. My faith is in God, and my hope in you.”

Gilliatt heard them talking—the woman he loved, the man whose shadow lay upon the path. Presently he heard the invisible man exclaim: “Mademoiselle! You are silent.”

“What would you have me say?”

The man said, “I wait for your reply.”

“God has heard it,” answered Derouchette.

Then she went forward; a moment afterwards, instead of one shadow upon the path, there were two. They mingled together, and became one. Gilliatt saw at his feet the embrace of those two shadows.

Suddenly a noise burst forth at a distance. A voice was heard crying “Help!” and the harbour bell rang out on the night air.

It was Lethierry ringing the bell furiously. He had wakened, and seen the funnel of the Durande in the harbour. The sight had driven him almost crazy. He rushed out crying "Help!" and pulling the great bell of the harbour. Suddenly he stopped abruptly. A man had just turned the corner of the quay. It was Gilliatt. Lethierry rushed at him, embraced him, hugged him, cried over him, and dragged him into the lower room of the Bravees. "Give me your word that I am not crazy!" he kept crying. "It can't be true. Not a tap, not a pin missing. It is incredible. We have only to put in a little oil. What a revolution! You are my child, my son, my Providence. Brave lad! To go and fetch my good old engine. In the open sea among those cut-throat rocks. I have seen some strange things in my life; nothing like that."

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Gilliatt gave him the belt and the box containing the three thousand pounds stolen by Clubin. Again Lethierry was thrown into a wild amazement. “Did anyone ever see a man like Gilliatt?” he concluded. “I was struck down to the ground, I was a dead man. He comes and sets me up again as firm as ever. And all the while I was never thinking of him. He had gone clean out of my mind; but I recollect everything now. Poor lad! Ah, by the way, you know you are to marry Derouchette.”

Gilliatt leaned with his back against the wall, like one who staggers, and said, in a tone very low, but distinct, “No.”

Lethierry started. “How, no?”

“I do not love her.”

Lethierry laughed that idea to scorn. He was wild with joy. Gilliatt, his son, his preserver, should marry Derouchette—he, and none other. Neighbours had begun to flock in, roused by the bell. The room was crowded. Derouchette presently glided in, and was espied by Lethierry in the crowd. He seized her; told her the news. “We are rich again! And you shall marry the prodigy who has done this thing.” His eye fell upon the man who had followed Derouchette into the room; it was the young priest whom Gilliatt had rescued from the seat in the rock. “Ah, you are there, Monsieur le Cure,” exclaimed the old man; “you will marry these young people for us. There’s a fine fellow!” he cried, and pointed to Gilliatt.

Gilliatt’s appearance was hideous. He was in the condition in which he had that morning set sail from the rocks—in rags, his bare elbows showing through his sleeves, his beard long, his hair rough and wild, his eyes bloodshot, his skin peeling, his hands covered with wounds, his feet naked and torn. Some of the blisters left by the devil-fish were still visible upon his arms.

“This is my son-in-law!” cried Lethierry. “How he has struggled with the sea! He is all in rags. What shoulders! What hands! There’s a splendid fellow!”

But Lethierry did not know Gilliatt. The poor broken creature escaped from the room. He himself made all the arrangements for the marriage of the priest and Derouchette; he placed the special license in their hands, secured a priest for the purpose, and secured passages for them in the ship waiting in the roads for England.

When he had done all this, he made his way to the seat in the cliff, and sat there waiting to see the ship appear round the bight and disappear on the horizon.

The ship appeared with the slowness of a phantom. Gilliatt watched it. Suddenly a touch and a sensation of cold caused him to look down. The sea had reached his feet.

He lowered his eyes, then raised them again. The ship was quite near. The rock in which the rains had hollowed out this giant's seat was so completely vertical, and there was so much water at its base, that in calm weather vessels were able to pass without danger within a few cables' length.

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The ship was already abreast of the rock. Gilliatt could see the stir of life on the sunlit deck. The deck was as visible as if he had stood upon it. He saw bride and bridegroom sitting side by side, like two birds, warming themselves in the noonday sun. A celestial light was in those two faces formed by innocence. The silence was like the calm of heaven.

The vessel passed. He watched her till her masts and sails formed only a white obelisk, gradually decreasing against the horizon. He felt that the water had reached his waist. Sea-mews and cormorants flew about him restlessly, as if anxious to warn him of his danger.

The ship was rapidly growing less.

There was no foam around the rock where he sat; no wave beat against its granite sides. The water rose peacefully. It was nearly level with Gilliatt's shoulders.

The birds were hovering about him, uttering short cries. Only his head was now visible. The tide was nearly at the full. Evening was approaching.

Gilliatt's eyes continued fixed upon the vessel on the horizon. Their expression resembled nothing earthly. A strange lustre shone in their calm and tragic depths. There was in them the peace of vanished hopes, the calm but sorrowful acceptance of an end far different from his dreams. By degrees the dusk of heaven began to dawn in them, though gazing still upon the point in space. At the same moment the wide waters round the rock and the vast gathering twilight closed upon them.

At the moment when the vessel vanished on the horizon, the head of Gilliatt disappeared. Nothing now was visible but the sea.

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The Man Who Laughs

"The Man Who Laughs" ("L'Homme qui Rit") was called by its author "A Romance of English History," and was written during the period Hugo spent in exile in Guernsey. Like "The Toilers of the Sea," its immediate predecessor, the main theme of the story is human heroism, confronted with the superhuman tyranny of blind chance. As a passionate cry on behalf of the tortured and deformed, and the despised and oppressed of the world, "The Man Who Laughs" is irresistible. Of it Hugo himself says in the preface: "The true title of this book should be 'Aristocracy'"—inasmuch as it was intended as an arraignment of the nobility for their vices, crimes, and selfishness. "The Man Who Laughs" was first published in 1869.

I.—The Child

Ursus and Homo were old friends. Ursus was a man, Homo a wolf. The two went about together from town to town, from country-side to country-side. Ursus lived in a small van upon wheels which Homo drew by day and guarded by night.

Ursus was a juggler, a ventriloquist, a doctor, and a misanthrope. He was also something of a poet. The wolf and he had grown old together.

One bitterly cold night in January 1690, when Ursus and his van were at Weymouth, a small vessel put off from Portland. It contained a dozen people, and it left behind on the rock, and alone, a small boy.

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The people were called Comprachicos. They bought children, and understood how to mutilate and deform them, thus making them valuable for exhibition at fairs. But an act of parliament had just been passed to destroy the trade of the Comprachicos. Hence this flight from Portland, and the forsaking of the child.

The vessel was wrecked and all on board perished off the coast of France, but not before one of the passengers had inscribed on a piece of parchment the name of the child and the name of a certain English prisoner who could identify the child. This parchment was sealed in a bottle and left to the waves.

The child watched the disappearance of the boat. He was stupefied at finding himself alone; the men who had left him were the only people he had ever known, and they had failed him. He did not know where he was, but he knew that he must seek food and shelter. It was very cold and dark, and the boy was barefoot, but he made his way across Portland and the Chesil bank, and gained the mainland.

He found in the snow a footprint, and set out to follow it. Presently he heard a groan, and came to the end of the footprints. The woman, a beggar-woman who had lost her way, had uttered the groan. She had sunk down in the snow, and was dead when the boy found her. He heard a cry, and discovered a baby, wretched with cold, but still alive, clinging to its dead mother's breast.

The boy took the baby in his arms. Forsaken himself, he had heard the cry of distress, and wrapping the infant in his coat, he pursued his journey in the teeth of the freezing wind. Four hours had passed since the boat had sailed away; this baby was the first living person the boy had met.

Struggling along with his burden, the boy reached Weymouth, then a hamlet, and a suburb of the town and port of Melcombe Regis. He knocked at doors and windows; no one stirred. For one thing, everybody was asleep, and those who were awakened by the knock were afraid of opening a window, for fear of some sick vagabond being outside.

Suddenly the boy heard in the darkness a grinding of teeth and a growl. The silence was so dreadful that he was glad of the noise, and moved in the direction whence it came. He saw a carriage on wheels, with smoke coming out of the roof through a funnel, and a light within.

Something perceived his approach and growled furiously and tugged at its chain. At the same time a head was put out of a window in the van.

"Be quiet there!" said the head, and the noise ceased. "Is anyone there?" said the head again.

“Yes, I,” said the child.

“You? Who are you?”

“I am very tired and cold and hungry,” said the child.

“We can’t all be as happy as a lord. Go away!” said the head, and the window was shut down.

The child turned away in despair. But no sooner was the window shut than the door at the top of the steps opened, and the same voice called out from within the van, “Well, why don’t you come in? What sort of a fellow is this who is cold and hungry, and who stays outside?”

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The boy climbed up the three steps with difficulty, carrying the baby, and hesitated for a moment at the door. On the ceiling was written in large letters:

URSUS, PHILOSOPHER

It was the house of Ursus the child had come to. Homo had been growling, Ursus speaking.

The child made out near the stove an elderly man, who, as he stood, reached the roof of the caravan.

“Come in! Put down your bundle!” said Ursus. “How wet you are, and half frozen! Take off those rags, you young villain!”

He tore off the boy’s rags, clothed him in a man’s shirt and a knitted jacket, rubbed the boy’s limbs and feet with a woollen rag, found there was nothing frost-bitten, and gave him his own scanty supper to eat.

“I have worked all day and far into the night on an empty stomach,” muttered Ursus, “and now this dreadful boy swallows up my food. However, it’s all one. He shall have the bread, the potato, and the bacon, but I will have the milk.”

Just then the infant began to wail. Ursus fed it with the milk by means of a small bottle, took off the tatters in which it was wrapped, and swathed it in a large piece of dry, clean linen.

When the boy had finished his supper, Ursus asked him who he was, but he could get no answer save that he had been abandoned that night.

“But you must have relations, since you have this baby sister.”

“It is not my sister; it is a baby that I found.”

Ursus listened to the boy’s story. Then he brought out an old bearskin, laid it on a chest, placed the sleeping infant on this, and told the boy to lie down beside the baby. Ursus rolled the bearskin over the children, tucked it under their feet, and went out into the night to see if the woman could be saved.

He returned at dawn; his efforts had been fruitless. The boy had awakened at hearing Ursus, and for the first time the latter saw his face.

“What are you laughing at? You are frightful! Who did that to you?” said Ursus.

The boy answered, “I am not laughing. I have always been like this.”

Ursus turned away, and muttered, “I thought that sort of work was out of date.” He took down an old book, and read in Latin that, by slitting the mouth and performing other operations in childhood, the face would become a mask whose owner would be always laughing.

At that moment the infant awoke, and Ursus gave it what was left of the milk.

The baby girl was blind. Ursus had already decided that he and Homo would adopt the two children.

II.—Gwynplaine and Dea

Gwynplaine was a mountebank. As soon as he exhibited himself all who saw him laughed. His laugh created the laughter of others, though he did not laugh himself. It was his face only that laughed, and laughed always with an everlasting laugh.

Fifteen years had passed since the night when the boy came to the caravan at Weymouth, and Gwynplaine was now twenty-five. Ursus had kept the two children with him; the blind girl he called Dea. The boy said he had always been called Gwynplaine. Of course the two were in love.

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Gwynplaine adored Dea, and Dea idolised Gwynplaine.

“You are beautiful,” she would say to him. The crowd only saw his face; for Dea, Gwynplaine was the person who had saved her from the tomb, and who was always kind and good-tempered. “The blind see the invisible,” said Ursus.

The old caravan had given way to a great van—called the Green Box—drawn by a pair of stout horses. Gwynplaine had become famous. In every fair-ground the crowd ran after him.

In 1705 the Green Box arrived in London and was established at Southwark, in the yard of the Tadcaster Inn. A placard was hung up with the following inscription, composed by Ursus:

“Here can be seen Gwynplaine, deserted, when he was ten years old, on January 29, 1690, on the coast of Portland, by the rascally Comprachicos. The boy now grown up is known as ‘The Man who Laughs.’”

All Southwark came to see Gwynplaine, and soon people heard of him on the other side of London Bridge, and crowds came from the City to the Tadcaster Inn. It was not long before the fashionable world itself was drawn to the Laughing Man.

One morning a constable and an officer of the High Court summoned Gwynplaine to Southwark Gaol. Ursus watched him disappear behind the heavy door with a heavy heart.

Gwynplaine was taken down flights of stairs and dark passages till he reached the torture-chamber. A man’s body lay on the ground on its back. Its four limbs, drawn to four columns by chains, were in the position of a St. Andrew’s Cross. A plate of iron, with five or six large stones, was placed on the victim’s chest. On a seat close by sat an old man—the sheriff of the county of Surrey.

“Come closer,” said the sheriff to Gwynplaine. Then he addressed the wretched man on the floor, who for four days, in spite of torture, had kept silence.

“Speak, unhappy man. Have pity on yourself. Do what is required of you. Open your eyes, and see if you know this man.”

The prisoner saw Gwynplaine. Raising his head he looked at him, and then cried out, “That’s him! Yes—that’s him!”

“Registrar, take down that statement,” said the sheriff.

The cry of the prisoner overwhelmed Gwynplaine. He was terrified by a confession that was unintelligible to him, and began in his distress to stammer and protest his

innocence. “Have pity on me, my lord. You have before you only a poor mountebank __”

“I have before me,” said the sheriff, “Lord Fermain Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Hunkerville, and a peer of England!”

Then the sheriff, rising, offered his seat with a bow to Gwynplaine, saying, “My lord, will you please to be seated?”

III.—The House of Lords

Before he left the prison the sheriff explained to Gwynplaine how it was he was Lord Clancharlie.

The bottle containing the documents which had been thrown into the sea in January 1690 had at last come to shore, and had been duly received at the Admiralty by a high official named Barkilphedro.

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This document declared that the child abandoned by those on the sinking vessel was the only child of Lord Fermain Clancharlie, deceased. At the age of two it had been sold, disfigured, and put out of the way by order of King James II. Its parents were dead, and a man named Hardquanonne, now in prison at Chatham, had performed the mutilation, and would recognise the child, who was called Gwynplaine. Being about to die, the signatories to the document confessed their guilt in abducting the child, and could not, in the face of death, refrain from acknowledgment of their crime.

The prisoner Hardquanonne had been found at Chatham, and he had recognised Gwynplaine. Hardquanonne died of the tortures he had suffered, but just before his death he said, “I swore to keep the secret, and I have kept it as long as I could. We did it between us—the king and I. Silence is no longer any good. This is the man.”

What was the reason for the hatred of James II. to the child?

This. Lord Clancharlie had taken the side of Cromwell against Charles I., and had gone into exile in Switzerland rather than acknowledge Charles II. as king. On the death of this nobleman James II. had declared his estates forfeit, and the title extinct, believing that the heir was lost beyond possible recovery. On David Dirry-Moir, an illegitimate son of Lord Clancharlie, were the peerage and estates conferred, on condition that he married a certain Duchess Josiana, an illegitimate daughter of James II.

How was it Gwynplaine was restored to his inheritance?

Anne was Queen of England when the bottle was taken to the Admiralty in 1705, and shared with the high official whose business it was to attend to all flotsam and jetsam, a cordial dislike of Duchess Josiana. It seemed to the Queen an excellent thing that Josiana should have to marry this frightful man, and as for David Dirry-Moir he could be made an admiral. Anne consulted the Lord Chancellor privately, and he strongly advised, without blaming James II., that Gwynplaine must be restored to the peerage.

Gwynplaine, without having time to return to the Green Box, was carried off by Barkilphedro to one of his country houses, near Windsor, and bidden the next day take his seat in the House of Lords. He had entered the terrible prison in Southwark expecting the iron collar of a felon, and he had placed on his head the coronet of a peer. Barkilphedro had told him that a man could not be made a peer without his own consent; that Gwynplaine, the mountebank, must make room for Lord Clancharlie, if the peerage was accepted; and he had made his decision.

On awakening the next morning he thought of Dea. Then came a royal summons to appear in the House of Lords, and Gwynplaine returned to London in a carriage provided by the queen. The secret of his face was still unknown when he entered the House of Lords, for the Lord Chancellor had not been informed of the nature of the deformation. The investiture took place on the threshold of the House, then very ill-lit,

and two very old and half-blind noblemen acted as sponsors at the Lord Chancellor's request. The whole ceremony was enacted in a sort of twilight, for the Lord Chancellor was anxious to avoid any sensation.

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In less than half an hour the sitting was full. Gossip was already at work about the new Lord Clancharlie. Several peers had seen the Laughing Man, and they now heard that he was already in the Upper House; but no one noticed him until he rose to speak.

His face was terrible, and the whole House looked with horror upon him.

“What does all this mean?” cried the Earl of Wharton, an old and much respected peer. “Who has brought this man into the House? Who are you? Where do you come from?”

Gwynplaine answered, “I come from the depths. I am misery. My lords, I have a message for you.”

The House shuddered, but listened, and Gwynplaine continued.

“My lords, among you I am called Lord Fermain Clancharlie, but my real name is one of poverty—Gwynplaine. I have grown up in poverty; frozen by winter, and made wretched by hunger. Yesterday I was in the rags of a clown. Can you realise what misery means? Before it is too late try and understand that our system of society is a false one.”

But the House rocked with uncontrollable laughter at the face of Gwynplaine. In vain he pleaded with those who sat around him not to laugh at misery.

They refused to listen, and the sitting broke up in confusion, the Lord Chancellor adjourning the House. Gwynplaine went out of the House alone.

IV.—Night and the Sea

Ursus waited for some time after seeing Gwynplaine disappear within Southwark Gaol, then he returned sadly to Tadcaster Inn. That very night the corpse of Hardquanonne was brought out from the gaol and buried in the cemetery hard by, and Ursus, who had returned to the prison gate, watched the procession, and saw the coffin carried to the grave.

“They have killed him! Gwynplaine, my son, is dead!” cried Ursus, and he burst into tears.

The following morning the sheriff’s officer, accompanied by Barkliphedro, waited on Ursus, and told him he must leave Southwark, and leave England. The last hope in the soul of Ursus died when Barkilphedro said gravely that Gwynplaine was dead.

Ursus bent his head.

The sentence on Gwynplaine had been executed—death. His sentence was pronounced—exile. Nothing remained for Ursus but to obey. He felt as if in a dream.

Within two hours Ursus, Homo, and Dea were on board a Dutch vessel which was shortly to leave a wharf at London Bridge. The sheriff ordered the Tadcaster Inn to be shut up.

Gwynplaine found the vessel.

He had left the House of Lords in despair. He had made his effort, and the result was derision. The future was terrible. Dea was his wife, he had lost her, and he would be spurned by Josiana. He had lost Ursus, and gained nothing but insult. Let David take the peerage; he, Gwynplaine, would return to the Green Box. Why had he ever consented to be Lord Clancharlie?

He wandered from Westminster to Southwark, only to find the Tadcaster Inn shut up, and the yard empty. It seemed he had lost Ursus and Dea for ever. He turned and gazed into the deep waters by London Bridge. The river in its darkness offered a resting place where he might find peace.

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He got ready to mount the masonry and spring over, when he felt a tongue licking his hands. He turned, and Homo was behind him. Gwynplaine uttered a cry. Homo wagged his tail. Then the wolf led the way down a narrow platform to the wharf, and Gwynplaine followed him. On the vessel alongside the wharf was the old wooden tenement, very worm-eaten and rotten now, in which Ursus lived when the boy first came to him at Weymouth. Gwynplaine listened. It was Ursus talking to Dea.

“Be calm, my child. All will come right. You do not understand what it is to rupture a blood-vessel. You must rest. To-morrow we shall be at Rotterdam.”

“Father,” Dea answered, “when two beings have always been together from infancy, and that state is disturbed, death must come. I am not ill, but I am going to die.”

She raised herself on the mattress, crying in delirium, “He is no longer here, no longer here. How dark it is!” Gwynplaine came to her side, and Dea laid her hand on his head.

“Gwynplaine!” she cried.

And Gwynplaine received her in his arms.

“Yes, it is I, Gwynplaine. I am here. I hold you in my arms. Dea, we live. All our troubles are over. Nothing can separate us now. We will renew our old happy life. We are going to Holland. We will marry. There is nothing to fear.”

“I don’t understand it in the least,” said Ursus. “I, who saw him carried to the grave. I am as great a fool as if I were in love myself. But, Gwynplaine, be careful with her.”

The vessel started. They passed Chatham and the mouth of the Medway, and approached the sea.

Suddenly Dea got up.

“Something’s the matter with me,” she said. “What is wrong? You have brought life to me, my Gwynplaine, life and joy. And yet I feel as if my soul could not be contained in my body.”

She flushed, then became very pale, and fell. They lifted her up, and Dea laid her head on Gwynplaine’s shoulder. Then, with a sigh of inexpressible sadness, she said, “I know what this is. I am dying.” Her voice grew weaker and weaker.

“An hour ago I wanted to die. Now I want to live. How happy we have been! You will remember the old Green Box, won’t you, and poor blind Dea? I love you all, my father Ursus, and my brother Homo, very dearly. You are all so good. I do not understand what has happened these last two days, but now I am dying. Everything is fading

away. Gwynplaine, you will think of me, won't you? Come to me as soon as you can. Do not leave me alone long. Oh! I cannot breathe! My beloved!"

Gwynplaine pressed his mouth to her beautiful icy hands. For a moment it seemed as if she had ceased to breathe. Then her voice rang out clearly.

"Light!" she cried. "I can see!"

With that Dea fell back stiff and motionless on the mattress.

"Dead!" said Ursus.

And the poor old philosopher, crushed by his despair, bowed his head, and buried his face in the folds of the gown which covered Dea's feet. He lay there unconscious.

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Gwynplaine started up, stretched his hands on high, and said, “I come.”

He strode across the deck, towards the side of the vessel, as if beckoned by a vision. A smile came upon his face, such as Dea had just worn. One step more.

“I am coming, Dea; I am coming,” he said.

There was no bulwark, the abyss of waters was before him; he strode into it, and fell. The night was dark and heavy, the water deep. He disappeared calmly and silently. None saw nor heard him. The ship sailed on, and the river flowed out to the sea.

* * * * *

ELIZABETH INCHBALD

A Simple Story

The maiden name of Mrs. Inchbald, actress, novelist, dramatist, and society favourite, was Elizabeth Simpson, and she was the daughter of a farmer living near Bury St. Edmunds, where she was born on October 15, 1753. At the age of eighteen she ran away to London, under the influence of romantic expectations, which were realised by a sudden marriage with Joseph Inchbald, the actor. After seventeen years on the stage, without attaining conspicuous success, Mrs. Inchbald retired, and devoted herself to the writing of novels and plays and the collection of theatrical literature. Her first novel, written in 1791, was “A Simple Story.” With “Nature and Art,” a tale written later, it has kept a place among the fiction that is reprinted for successive generations. In later years Mrs. Inchbald lived quietly on her savings, retaining a flattering social position by her beauty and cleverness. She died on August 1, 1821.

I.—The Priest’s Ward

Dorriforth, bred at St. Omer’s in all the scholastic rigour of that college, was, by education and the solemn vows of his order, a Roman Catholic priest. He was about thirty, and refusing to shelter himself from the temptations of the layman by the walls of a cloister, but finding that shelter in his own prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, had lived in London near five years, when a gentleman with whom he had contracted a most sincere friendship died, and left him the sole guardian of his daughter, who was then eighteen.

It is in this place proper to remark that Mr. Milner was a member of the Church of Rome, but his daughter had been educated in her dead mother’s religion at a boarding-school for Protestants, whence she had returned with her little heart employed in all the endless pursuits of personal accomplishments, and her mind left without one ornament, except such as nature gave.

She had been visiting at Bath when her father died. Therefore, Mr. Dorriforth, together with Miss Woodley, the middle-aged niece of the widow lady, Mrs. Horton, who kept his house, journeyed midway to meet her. But when the carriage stopped at the inn-gate, and her name was announced, he turned pale—something like a foreboding of disaster trembled at his heart—and Miss Woodley was obliged to be the first to welcome his lovely charge—lovely beyond description.

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But the natural vivacity, the gaiety which report had given to Miss Milner, were softened by her recent sorrow to a meek sadness. The instant Dorriforth was introduced to her as her "guardian, and her deceased father's most beloved friend," she burst into tears, and kneeling before him, promised ever to obey him as a father. She told him artlessly she had expected him to be elderly and plain. He was somewhat embarrassed, but replied that she should find him a plain man in all his actions; and in the conversation which followed, in which she had somewhat lightly referred to his faith, begged that religion should not be named between them, for, as he had resolved never to persecute her, in pity she should be grateful, and not persecute him.

Among the many visitors who attended her levees during the following weeks was Lord Frederick Lawnly, whose intimacy with her Dorriforth beheld with alternate pain and pleasure. He wished to see his charge married, yet he trembled for her happiness under the care of a young nobleman immersed in all the vices of the town. His uneasiness made him desire her to forbid Lord Frederick's visits, who, alarmed, confounded, and provoked, remonstrated passionately.

"By heaven, I believe Mr. Dorriforth loves you himself, and it is jealousy which makes him treat me in this way!"

"For shame, my lord!" cried Miss Woodley, trembling with horror at the sacrilegious idea.

"Nay, shame to him if he is not in love!" answered his lordship. "For who but a savage could behold beauty like yours without owning its power? And surely when your guardian looks at you, his wishes------"

"Are never less pure," Miss Milner replied eagerly, "than those which dwell in the bosom of my celestial guardian."

At this moment Dorriforth entered the room.

"What's the matter?" cried he, looking with concern on his discomposure.

"A compliment paid by herself to you, sir," replied Lord Frederick, "has affected your ward in the manner you have seen." And then he changed the subject with an air of ridicule, while Miss Milner threw open the sash, and leaned her head from the window to conceal the embarrassment his implication had caused her.

Although Dorriforth was a good man, there was an obstinacy in his nature which sometimes degenerated into implacable stubbornness. The child of a sister once beloved, who married a young officer against her brother's consent, was left an orphan, destitute of all support but from his uncle's generosity; but, although Dorriforth maintained him, he would never see him. Miss Milner brought the boy to town once to present him to his uncle, but no sooner did he hear Harry Rushbrook's name than he

set him off his knee, and, calling for his hat, walked instantly from the house, although dinner had just been served.

About this time Miss Milner had the humiliation of having Miss Fenton held up to her as a pattern for her to follow; but, instead of being inspired to emulation, she was provoked to envy. Young, beautiful, elegant, Miss Fenton was betrothed to Lord Elmwood, Mr. Dorriforth's cousin; and Dorriforth, whose heart was not formed—at least, not educated—for love, beheld in her the most perfect model for her sex.

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Not to admire Miss Fenton was impossible. To find one fault with her was equally impossible, and yet to love her was unlikely. But Mr. Sandford, Dorriforth's old tutor, and rigid monitor and friend, adored her, and often, with a shake of his head and a sigh, would he say to Miss Milner, "No, I am not so hard upon you as your guardian. I only desire you to love Miss Fenton; to resemble her, I believe, is above your ability."

As a Jesuit, he was a man of learning, and knew the hearts of women as well as those of men. He saw Miss Milner's heart at the first view of her person, and beholding in that little circumference a weight of folly that he wished to eradicate, he began to toil in the vineyard, eagerly courting her detestation of him in the hope of also making her abominate herself. In the mortification of slights he was an expert, and humbled her in her own opinion more than a thousand sermons would have done. She would have been cured of all her pride had she not possessed a degree of spirit beyond the generality of her sex!

II.—The Priest Marries His Ward

Finding Dorriforth frequently perplexed by his guardianship, Mr. Sandford advised that a suitable match should immediately be sought for her; but she refused so many offers that, believing her affections were set upon Lord Frederick, he insisted that she should be taken into the country at once. Her ready compliance delighted Dorriforth, and for six weeks all around was the picture of tranquillity. Then Lord Frederick suddenly appeared at the door as she alighted from her coach, and seizing her hand, entreated her "not to desert him in compliance with the injunctions of monkish hypocrisy."

Dorriforth heard this, standing silently by, with a manly scorn upon his countenance; but on Miss Milner's struggling to release her hand, which Lord Frederick was devouring with kisses, with an instantaneous impulse he rushed forward and struck him a violent blow in the face. Then, leading her to her own chamber, covered with shame and confusion for what he had done, he fell on his knees before her, and earnestly "entreated her forgiveness for the indelicacy he had been guilty of in her presence."

To see her guardian at her feet struck her with a sense of impropriety as if she had seen a parent there. All agitation and emotion, she implored him to rise, and, with a thousand protestations, declared "that she thought the rashness of his action was the highest proof of his regard for her."

Finding that Lord Frederick had gone when he had resigned the care of his ward to Miss Woodley, Dorriforth returned to his own apartment with a bosom torn by excruciating sensations. He had departed from his sacred character, and the dignity of his profession and sentiments; he had treated with unpardonable insult a young nobleman whose only offence was love; he had offended and filled with horror a beautiful young woman whom it was his duty to protect from those brutal manners to which he himself had exposed her.

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The outcome of this incident was a duel, to prevent which Miss Milner deceived him by confessing a passion for Lord Frederick, although to Miss Woodley she avowed the real truth, that it was Dorriforth she loved.

“Do you suppose I love Lord Frederick? Do you suppose I *can* love him? Oh, fly, and prevent my guardian from telling him this untruth! This duel is horrible even beyond anything else! Oh, Miss Woodley, pity the agonies of my heart, my heart by nature sincere, when such are the fatal propensities it cherishes that I must submit to the grossest falsehoods rather than reveal the truth! Are you so blind,” she exclaimed, “as to believe I do not care for Mr. Dorriforth? Oh, Miss Woodley, I love him with all the passion of a woman, and with all the tenderness of a wife!”

“Silence!” cried Miss Woodley, struck with horror. Yet, amidst all her grief and abhorrence, pity was still predominant, and, seeing her friend’s misery, she did all she could to comfort her. But she was resolved that she should leave home, and, on pain of revealing her secret to Mr. Dorriforth, induced her to pay a visit of indefinite length to her friends at Bath.

There, in the melancholy that possessed her, Miss Woodley’s letters alone gave her consolation. In a short time her health became impaired; she was once in imminent danger, and during her delirium incessantly repeated her guardian’s name. Miss Woodley journeyed to her at once, and so did Dorriforth, who, through the death of his cousin, Lord Elmwood, had acquired his title and estates. On this account he had received a dispensation from his vow of celibacy, and was enjoined to marry. His ward felt a pleasure so exquisite on hearing this that the agitation of mind and person brought with it the sensation of exquisite pain; but, to her cruel grief, she found that he was, on the advice of his friends, already paying his addresses to Miss Fenton.

As if a poniard had thrust her to the heart, she writhed under this unexpected stroke; she felt, and she expressed anguish. Lord Elmwood was alarmed and shocked. But later, when, in his perplexity concerning his ward’s marriage, he induced Miss Woodley to tell him on whom Miss Milner’s choice was fixed, his vehemence filled her with alarm.

“For God’s sake, take care what you are doing! You are destroying my prospects of futurity, you are making this world too dear to me! I am transported by the tidings you have revealed—and yet, perhaps, I had better not have heard them!” he exclaimed. And then, to prevent further question, he hastened out of the room.

Within a few days he was her professed lover—she, the happiest of human beings—-Miss Woodley partaking in the joy. Mr. Sandford alone lamented with the deepest concern that Miss Fenton had been supplanted—and supplanted by Miss Milner.

Yet Miss Fenton was perhaps affected least of any by the change; she received everything with the same insipid smile of approbation, and the same cold indifference.

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III.—A Fatal Experiment

Lost in the maze of happiness that surrounded her, Miss Milner oftentimes asked her heart, “Are not my charms even more invincible than I ever believed them to be? Dorriforth, the grave, the pious, the anchorite Dorriforth, by their force is animated to all the ardour of the most impassioned lover; while the proud priest, the austere guardian, is humbled, if I but frown, into the veriest slave of love.” She then asked: “Why did I not keep him longer in suspense? He could not have loved me more, I believe, but my power over him might have been greater still. I am the happiest of women in the affection he has proved to me, but I wonder if it would exist under ill-treatment? If it would not, he still does not love me as I wish to be loved; if it would, my triumph, my felicity, would be enhanced.”

Thus the dear-bought experiment of being loved in spite of her faults—a glory proud women ever aspire to—was, at present, the ambition of Miss Milner. She, who, as Dorriforth’s ward had ever been gentle, and always obedient, became as a mistress, sometimes haughty, always insolent. He was surprised, but the novelty pleased him. Miss Milner, whom he tenderly loved, could put on no change that did not seem to become her. But at last her attempt to rouse his jealousy by again encouraging Lord Frederick hurt him beyond measure. In a letter releasing her from her engagement to him, and announcing his immediate departure for a long Continental tour, he begged her for the short time they were to remain together not to insult him with an open preference for another. By complying with this request she would give him to believe that she thought he had, at least, faithfully discharged some part of his duty.

She was struck to despair. Pride alone kept her from revealing her anguish, though her death should be the immediate consequence! But Sandford, who had hitherto been most inimical to her, on the evening before Lord Elmwood’s departure showed at last some kindness by entreating her to breakfast with them the following morning. There she sat silent, unable to eat, unable to speak, unable to move, until the moment for parting came. Then, unable to repress her tears as heretofore, as Elmwood took her hand in his, she suffered them to fall in torrents.

“What is all this?” cried Sandford, going up to them in anger.

They neither of them replied, or changed their situation.

“Separate this moment!” cried Sandford. “Or resolve to be separated only by—death! Lord Elmwood, do you love this woman?”

“More than my life!” he replied, with the most heartfelt accents.

He then turned to Miss Milner.

“Can you say the same by him?”

She spread her hands over her eyes, and exclaimed, “Oh, heavens!”

“I believe you can say so,” returned Sandford. “And in the name of God, and your own happiness, since this is the state of you both, let me put it out of your power to part?”

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On which he opened his book and—married them.

Nevertheless, on that joyful day which restored her lost lover to her hopes again, even on that very day after the ceremony was over, Miss Milner—with all the fears, the superstition of her sex—felt an excruciating shock when, looking on the ring Lord Elmwood had put upon her finger in haste, she perceived it was a mourning-ring.

IV.—Outcasts

Alas! in seventeen years the beautiful, beloved Miss Milner was no longer beautiful, no longer beloved, no longer virtuous.

Dorriforth, the pious, the good, the tender Dorriforth, was become a hard-hearted tyrant.

Miss Woodley had grown old, but less with years than grief.

The boy Harry Rushbrook had become a man and the apparent heir of Lord Elmwood's fortune, while his own daughter, his only child by his once-adored Miss Milner, he refused ever to see again, in vengeance to her mother's crime.

Sandford alone remained much as heretofore.

Lady Elmwood was a loved and loving bride seventeen years ago; now she lay on her death-bed. At thirty-five "her course was run." After four years of perfect happiness, Lord Elmwood was obliged to leave his wife and child while he went to visit his large estates in the West Indies. His voyage was tedious, his return delayed by serious illness, which a too cautious fear of her uneasiness prompted him to conceal. He was away three years.

It was no other than Lord Frederick Lawnly to whom Lady Elmwood sacrificed her own and her husband's future peace; she did not, however, elope with her paramour, but escaped to shelter herself in the most dreary retreat, where she partook of no comfort but the still unremitting friendship of Miss Woodley. Even her child she left behind, that she might be under her father's protection. Conceive, then, how sharp her agony was on beholding the child sent after her as the perpetual outcast of its father. Lord Elmwood's love to his wife had been extravagant—the effect of his hate was the same. Once more he met Lord Frederick in a duel, the effect of which was to leave his adversary so defaced with scars as never again to endanger the honour of a husband. He was himself dangerously wounded, yet nothing but the assurance that his opponent was slain could tear him from the field.

Now, after ten years of exile, the once gay, volatile Miss Milner lay dying with but one request to make—that her daughter should not suffer for her sin. Sandford was with her; by all the influence he ever had over Lord Elmwood, by his prayers, by his tears, he promised to implore him to own his child. She could only smile her thanks, but she was

sufficiently sensible of his words to make a sign as if she wished to embrace him; but, finding life leaving her fast, with a struggle she clung to her child, and died in her arms.

V.—His Daughter's Happiness

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Yet all that her mother's last appeal could obtain for the hapless Matilda, not as her child, but as the granddaughter of Mr. Milner, was the shelter of her father's roof on condition that she avoided his sight. When by accident or design he ever saw or heard from her, that moment his compliance with her mother's request ceased, and he abandoned her once more. Still, the joy of being, even in so remote a way, under her father's care, was extreme for her, though it was tempered with jealousy of Rushbrook—a feeling which even her noble heart could not completely quell—jealousy which was shared on her account by both Miss Woodley and Mr. Sandford, and frequently made them unjust to Harry, whom they regarded as an interloper.

But his passionate gratitude to Lady Elmwood, by whose entreaties he had been restored to his uncle's favour, had made him adore her daughter with an equal passion. He gazed with wonder at his uncle's insensibility to his own happiness, and would gladly have led him to the jewel he cast away, though even his own expulsion should be the fatal consequence.

At last, by accident, Lord Elmwood returned unexpectedly home when Matilda was descending the staircase, and, in her affright, she fell motionless into her father's arms. He caught her, as by the same impulse he would have caught anyone falling for want of aid. Yet, when he found her in his arms, he still held her there—gazed on her attentively—and pressed her to his bosom.

At length, trying to escape the snare into which he had been led, he was going to leave her on the spot where she fell, when her eyes opened, and she uttered, "Save me!" Her voice unmanned him. His long-restraining tears now burst forth, and, seeing her relapsing into the swoon, he called out eagerly to recall her. Her name did not, however, come to his recollection—nor any name but this—"Miss Milner, dear Miss Milner."

The sound did not awaken her; and now again he wished to leave her in this senseless state, that not remembering what had passed, she might escape the punishment.

But at this instant his steward passed, and into his hands he delivered his apparently dead child, his face agitated with shame, with pity, with anger, with paternal tenderness. On her recovery she was sent to a neighbouring farm, not more than thirty miles away, her father having given orders that it should be so.

Then a libertine lover of Lady Matilda's, finding her no longer under her father's protection, resolved to abduct her, and by raising an alarm of fire, caused all the inhabitants of the farmhouse to open the doors, when two men rushed in, and, with the plea of saving her from the flames, carried her away. News of this being taken to her father, he at once set out in pursuit, and reached her in her last agony of despair, folding her in his arms with the unrestrained fondness of a parent.

It was now the middle of November; and yet, as Matilda passed along, never to her did the sun shine so bright as upon this morning; never did her imagination comprehend that the human heart could feel happiness true and genuine as hers!

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Rushbrook had been detained at Elmwood during all this time, more from the persuasions, nay, prayers, of Sandford than the commands of Lord Elmwood. His uncle's summons for him to join them in town was, therefore, received with delight. Yet his joy was tempered by finding that it was to propose a matrimonial alliance that his uncle had sent for him; after a thousand fears, much confusion, and embarrassment, he at length frankly confessed his "heart was engaged, and had been so, long before his uncle offered to direct his choice."

On hearing on whom he had set his affections, Lord Elmwood immediately left the room for the apartment where Sandford, Miss Woodley, and Matilda were sitting, and cried with an angry voice, and with his countenance disordered, "Rushbrook has offended me beyond pardon. Go, Sandford, and tell him this instant to quit my house, and never dare to return."

But Matilda impeded him, and throwing her arms about his neck, cried, "Dear Mr. Sandford, do not!"

"How?" exclaimed her father.

She saw the impending frown, and knelt at his feet.

"Do you know what he has asked of me?" he asked.

"No," she replied, with the utmost innocence, "but whatever it is, my lord, though you do not grant it, yet pardon him for asking."

"Perhaps you would grant him what he has requested?" said her father.

"Most willingly, were it in my gift."

"It is," replied he. "Go to him in the library, and hear what he has to say; for on your will his fate shall depend."

Like lightning she flew out of the room; while even the grave Sandford smiled at the idea of their meeting. And whether the heart of Matilda could sentence Rushbrook to misery the reader is left to surmise; and if he supposes that it could *not* he has every reason to suppose that their wedded life was—a life of happiness.

* * * * *

G.P.R. JAMES

Henry Masterton

The son of a physician, George Payne Rainsford James was born in London on August 9, 1799. He began to write early, and, according to his own account, the volume of short stories published under the title of “A String of Pearls” was written before he was seventeen. As a contributor to the magazines and newspapers, his name came under the notice of Washington Irving, who encouraged him to produce, in 1823, his “Life of Edward the Black Prince.” “Richelieu,” his first novel, brought him warm praises from Sir Walter Scott, and, thus fortified, James, who had had ambitions for a political life, determined to continue his career as a novelist. His output of fiction was amazing—he was the author of upwards of a hundred novels. Of all his works perhaps his most characteristic is “Henry Masterton,” which appeared in 1832. More solid and less melodramatic than his other stories, it abounds in picturesque scenes, and has that pleasant spice of adventure that makes for good romance. He died on June 9, 1860.

I.—When Charles the First Was King

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In the earlier years of the reign of King Charles I., when already there were signs of those disorders which were the prelude to the Great Rebellion, one of the most prominent gentlemen at his majesty's court was a certain Lord Langleigh.

Bold and rash in the extreme, Lord Langleigh, though no man could doubt his whole-hearted devotion to his majesty, fell under the suspicion of the king's councillors. These suspicions were given a form and direction by Lord Ashkirk, an impoverished nobleman, who secretly lodged certain charges of treason against Lord Langleigh, and obtained, as the price of this betrayal, the wealth and the estate of Penford-bourne, that had belonged to his victim.

Tried by his peers, and found guilty on false evidence, Lord Langleigh awaited his death upon the scaffold in the prison-house of the Tower. While expecting his fate, he sent for his great friend, Lord Masterton, of Masterton House, Devonshire, to settle with him such details as were necessary for the future welfare of his motherless daughter. Lord Masterton immediately hastened to London and exerted all his influence in an endeavour to secure a pardon for his friend. But his efforts were in vain. At a last interview, he promised to undertake the charge of Lord Landleigh's infant daughter, Emily, and voluntarily pledged himself to see her married to his eldest son.

Then, on the morning of the execution, Langleigh contrived to escape from the Tower.

In the company of the captain of the Tower guard he reached a ship bound for the continent. The vessel was beset by a storm, and the only one of its occupants that was able to tell the tale of the terrible disaster was the captain of the guard, who, after exonerating everyone from a share in his prisoner's escape, died from exhaustion.

Meanwhile, Lord Ashkirk had secured the price of his treason, and was in the full enjoyment of the estates of Penford-bourne. Not even certain domestic troubles that occurred regarding the marriage of his daughter, Lady Eleanor, disturbed the serenity of his content. Before his accession to the property of Lord Langleigh, Lord Ashkirk had betrothed his daughter to his nephew, Walter Dixon, the son of a wealthy attorney, who had married the peer's sister. The arrival of two Popish gentlemen, Sir Andrew Fleming and M. du Tillet, caused him to alter his decision. Sir Andrew fell in love with the wonderful beauty of Lady Eleanor and easily persuaded Lord Ashkirk, himself a Cavalier and a papist, to cancel the marriage with Walter Dixon, who had joined the Parliamentary party. Lady Eleanor was duly united to Sir Andrew, and Walter Dixon, deprived of his bride and the succession to the Penford-bourne estate, determined to be revenged.

He found a means ready to his hand. Lady Eleanor pretended no affection for her husband, and took a special delight in exciting his angry jealousy. She accepted Du Tillet as a lover, and when Dixon, wounded in a duel with her husband, was carried into the house, she nursed him with so much apparent affection and attention that her

husband's wrath passed all bounds. A separation became necessary, and Sir Andrew Fleming consented to leave the woman whose love he could not win.

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Walter Dixon, so far satisfied, was yet determined to exact his full tale of vengeance, and secure the rich lands and estates of Penford-bourne. The death of Lord Ashkirk and the successful growth of the Parliamentary party appeared to give him the opportunity he so eagerly desired.

II.—A Web of Intrigue

At Masterton House, in Devonshire, Lord Masterton remained in retirement, though the Parliamentary party carried all before them. He would doubtless have continued to refrain from drawing his sword on behalf of his king, who had wronged and insulted him, had not circumstances forced his hand.

His tenantry were secretly armed and drilled, and, under the command of Frank, were marched eastwards to Kent, to join Lord Norwich and Hales, who were preparing a rising to rescue the king.

Frank, before leaving Masterton House, bade farewell to Lady Emily with that cold reserve and studied formality which was part of his character. The fact that she was betrothed to him by the commands of his father had failed to arose any passion in his breast. He was prepared, however, to fulfil the commands of Lord Masterton, though his heart was untouched. But the parting between his brother and Lady Emily was of a different character. Though out of loyalty to his brother no word of love had ever passed his lips, Henry was passionately devoted to the beautiful girl who had grown up with him under his father's roof. And there was no doubt as to which of the brothers it was to whom Lady Emily had given her affections.

The arrival of the little force in Kent brought the two brothers into the web of intrigue which was being spun by Walter Dixon. It was Dixon's object to prevent the union of Frank's forces with Lord Norwich. He had been promised the estates of Penford-bourne, should he succeed in his object and prove Lady Eleanor a malignant. In pursuance of this plan, he allowed himself to be taken prisoner by Henry Masterton, to whom he declared that he was really a Royalist in disguise.

His next step was to obtain for the brothers an invitation from Lady Eleanor to quarter themselves at Penford-bourne. Once he had settled them there, he obtained, through Frank Masterton's valet, a puritanical knave called Gabriel Jones, complete information as to their plans, which he was thus able to thwart.

At Penford-bourne Frank came under the spell of Lady Eleanor's beauty; all his duties were forgotten, and he lingered on by the side of the woman he loved. In vain Henry protested against his dereliction of duty. Frank refused to move, and it was not until his brother came in touch with Lord Norwich that circumstances compelled him to act. Lord Norwich was furious at Frank's conduct.

“I will give your brother one chance,” he said to Henry. “If he refuses that chance, I shall supersede him, and name you to the command. Here is the commission. If you succeed in persuading him to join me at once, you may burn it; if not, you must take the command, and march immediately.”

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Sadly, Henry returned to Penford-bourne. On the way, he overheard a conversation between Walter Dixon and Gabriel Jones, which made it clear that they were privy to a plot having for its object the ruin of Frank Masterton. He at once placed them both under arrest, and hastened to his brother's side. Frank obstinately determined not to move. Only the intervention of Lady Eleanor induced him to promise to set out the next day.

But on the morrow Frank had an affair of honour with a mysterious man in black, with whom he had quarrelled the night before.

Henry found him bleeding from two severe wounds, and then having issued instructions for him to be removed to the house, rejoined his regiment, and at once gave the order to march.

He reached Lord Norwich to find all his trouble in vain. Disaster had dissolved the forces of the Cavaliers, and Lord Norwich had reluctantly decided to abandon the attempt, and, disbanding his men, made the best of his way into Essex. In the excitement of these events Walter Dixon effected his escape.

On his way back to Penford-bourne, Henry learned that Lady Eleanor's husband was still alive. He at once used this information to induce Frank to leave the side of Lady Eleanor, and, in spite of his wounds, to accompany him back to Devonshire. As the lovers parted, Henry overheard their last words.

"Then I rely on you," said Frank, in a hasty voice. "You will not, surely you will not fail me?"

"By all I hold dear on earth and beyond the earth," she replied, in low, thrilling tones.

III.—Days of Gloom

To Lord Masterton Frank related the story of how he had been wounded in the early part of the campaign and had been compelled to hand over the command of his regiment to his brother. This piece of fiction set all awkward questions at rest, and the old lord, satisfied that his son and heir had covered himself with honour, hastened to arrange for his nuptials with Lady Emily.

Both to Henry and to the girl these were days of gloom, but Frank, on the other hand, was strangely happy and content. His passion for Lady Eleanor was still unabated, and though, to gratify his father, he had consented to marry Lady Emily, he had already taken such steps to prevent their union as would leave his share in the matter undiscovered.

Dixon, though he had carried out his part of the bargain, had been disgusted to discover that the Council of State, on some specious excuse, refused to grant him the estates of Penford-bourne.

The day of the wedding arrived. By some secret arrangement with the officiating clergyman, the service was unduly protracted. But at last those words were reached which, if uttered, would make Frank and Lady Emily one. Then, suddenly, armed men burst into the chapel and, reading their warrant, demanded the arrest of Frank Masterton, as a malignant lately in arms in Kent. The bridegroom offered no resistance. But it was different with Lord Masterton. He boldly called upon the guests present to draw their swords. A scuffle took place. Suddenly, from the gallery above, the voice of Gabriel Jones gave the order to fire. A volley rang out, and Lord Masterton fell dead at the feet of his son.

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In the confusion, Henry seized Lady Emily, and shooting down Gabriel Jones, escaped through a secret passage into the grounds. There he lay hidden for some days, and then, when the coast was clear, secured a passage in a smuggling ship for himself and Lady Emily, and her aunt, Lady Margaret. Arrived in France, he placed the ladies in a convent at Dinan, and made his way to England again, under an assumed name as a commercial traveller for a French house, to learn the fate of his brother.

Arrived in London, he obtained some news of his brother from a goldsmith who had acted as the family banker for years past. Through the assistance of Lady Eleanor, Frank Masterton had been set at liberty and had taken his departure in the company of that lady to Paris. Thither, Henry determined to follow them.

Before setting out, he paid a business call at a merchant's house, where he found a man of distinguished appearance, whom he discovered to be General Ireton. Hearing that Henry was bound for France, Ireton asked him whether he would deliver a letter for him to General St. Maur. It was a most important communication, he declared, insomuch as it was the payment of a debt to a man to whom he owed much.

Warned by a footstep on the stairs, Ireton requested Henry to retire into the adjoining room, as he had some business to transact. Through the door, Henry heard the well-known voice of General Dixon. He was complaining bitterly that Ireton had not carried out his promise, and handed him over the estates of Penford-bourne.

"We have no excuse for sequestrating the estates," replied Ireton.

Walter Dixon was furious, declared that he had been made a tool of, and, threatening Ireton, announced his intention of going to France. As soon as he had taken his departure, Henry was summoned from the other room, and being bidden to hold his tongue if he had heard anything, was informed by Ireton that he would visit him that night with the package he had requested him to deliver to General St. Maur.

Some hours later, when it was dark, Henry received his visitor; but the unexpected arrival of the goldsmith, who addressed Henry by his real name, disclosed his identity. Finding, however, that he intended him no ill, Ireton questioned him closely as to what had brought him to London.

"To see whether I might not render some aid to my brother," Henry replied, "after having placed the Lady Emily in safety."

"She was never in danger," replied Ireton quietly. "I would take good care of that. I will still trust you with my commission. The time may come when you will thank me for so doing."

With that he turned and left the room.

IV.—The Mysterious Monk

Chance ordained it that Henry Masterton should cross the Channel on the same boat which was carrying General Dixon to France. The latter, with what General Ireton had called “his blunt hypocrisy,” frankly related to Henry the motives that had influenced him in the part that he had played.

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Arrived at Calais, the two men journeyed some part of the way together, and before they separated Henry discovered something of the real character of his companion by his familiarity with certain broken-down Cavaliers, who, having lost all right to the title of gentlemen in their own country, eked out a living by brigandage in France. After they had separated, Henry lost his way, and arriving at night, drenched through with the rain, at a certain chateau, begged its hospitality for a night.

He was led into the dining-room, and introduced to another guest who was there—a Benedictine monk.

That night, while Henry lay in bed, he was startled to see the monk standing by his side. He had come, he said, to ask him several questions. In particular he wished to know whether his brother Frank had married Lady Emily Langleigh. When Henry related how the marriage had been prevented, the Benedictine suddenly sprang to his feet in a fury of rage. When calmer, he asked Henry whether Frank had come to France alone; but on this subject the young man preserved a discreet silence, and after a few more questions, which proved the monk's extraordinary familiarity with all Walter Dixon's intrigues at Penford-bourne, he left the room.

The following day, Henry bade farewell to his courteous host, and made his way to Dinan. There he found that the convent in which he had left the two ladies had been burnt down; and he learnt that a strange gentleman had called before this disaster, and had taken Lady Emily and Lady Margaret away.

Bitterly disappointed, Henry made his way to Paris, where he found the city in the throes of a civil war. Becoming unintentionally mixed up in a petty skirmish between the court party and the Frondes, he was badly wounded, and narrowly escaped hanging as an enemy of the Frondeurs.

Meanwhile, Frank Masterton, or Lord Masterton as he now was, was living what he had fondly imagined would be the ideal life with the girl he loved; but already he found it an illusion. His loss of honour, his consciousness that his conduct was discreditable, plunged him into bitter fits of remorse, from which he vainly sought relief by a round of gaiety. Lady Eleanor saw these signs with terror and despair. Though she had accomplished her desire, her life was unbearable; daily she grew more miserable. At last she determined to end her earthly sufferings. In her chamber she swallowed the fatal dose of poison with which, against such a day, she had provided herself.

As she lay in the throes of death it chanced that Henry Masterton arrived, having at length found his brother's place of residence. Henry at once did everything possible to save Lady Eleanor's life, but, seeing that the dark shadow deepened every moment, he hastened to fetch a priest.

In the street he came upon the Benedictine, talking to Walter Dixon, and bidding him follow, led him to the bedside of Lady Eleanor, and left him alone with the dying woman.

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Bending over her, the monk solemnly asked her if she had anything on her mind which she wished to confess.

He pressed a cup to her lips; and in a slow, gasping voice she laid bare the story of her life, and then went on to relate her feelings at her first meeting with Frank Masterton.

“When we parted, and I thought of the man to whom I was bound for life, what fearful feelings came across my bosom! Sir Andrew Fleming my husband! Was it possible? I called to remembrance his look, his harshness, his jealousy, and, oh, God! oh, God! how I did hate that man!”

“Woman, woman!” exclaimed the monk, rising up from his seat, and casting back the cowl from his head, “Oh, God! oh, God! how I did love you!”

Lady Eleanor’s eyes fixed full upon his face. Before her stood, in the garb of a Benedictine monk, Sir Andrew Fleming, her husband. For a second she looked at him imploringly; then, with fearful strength, she rose from her recumbent position, and clasping her hands as if in the act of prayer, sank down upon her knees at his feet. A low moan escaped from her lips. She fell forward on the ground, and the spirit departed for ever from its clay.

The monk grasped his forehead with his hand, gazing at her with mingled feelings of love, anger, sorrow, and despair; then, raising the body in his arms, he placed it on the couch, and bending over it, three times printed a long kiss upon the pale lips. Then, with his right hand thrust into his robe, he rushed out of the room.

Outside in the hall there came towards him Lord Masterton, General Dixon, and Henry. A look of deadly, concentrated hate came into Sir Andrew Fleming’s eyes. For a moment he paused; then, drawing a dagger from his bosom, he flung himself on Lord Masterton, and, with one blow, stretched him dead at his feet.

“Villain!” cried Walter Dixon. “Atrocious villain!”

With the rapidity of lightning he drew his sword, and at once passed it through the body of the assassin.

To Walter Dixon, this scene of carnage, which he had planned with elaborate care, seemed to ensure his long delayed possession of the Penford-bourne estates. Lady Eleanor was dead; her husband, Sir Andrew had fallen by his hand, and there were no lives now between him and his rightful possession of the property. But once more he was doomed to disappointment.

As soon as he had an opportunity Henry sought out General St. Maur, and handed him the package he had received from Ireton. The general pressed him to stay to dinner, and while the meal progressed, extracted from him something of his story. When the

meal was nearly over, the door suddenly opened, and a dog rushed to him, barking joyously. It was his own dog—the dog he had brought with him from Masterton House, and left with Lady Emily! How had it come there? Amazed, he was about to ask for an explanation, when Lady Emily herself stood before him. In another moment the lovers were in one another's arms.

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Henry, astonished as he was at these events, was still more surprised when he learnt that General St. Maur was really Lord Langleigh, the father of Emily. He had not, as all the world had thought, been drowned in his escape from the Tower. In the wreck, he had succeeded in saving not only his own life, but the life of a young man named Ireton. Ireton had never forgotten the debt, and now, in the package which Henry had brought over from England, had endeavoured to repay it. He had persuaded the Council that the estates of Penford-bourne had been improperly sequestrated by King Charles, and should be returned to their lawful owner, Lord Langleigh; and the letter contained a decree of the Council once more granting him his lands and title.

When Walter Dixon heard of these events, which again snatched the prize for which he had attempted so much from his lips, he determined on yet another effort to achieve his object. Bribing two men to assist him in the deed, he lured Lord Langleigh into an ambush. Only the prompt arrival of Henry Masterton prevented the success of this foul deed; and it was Dixon himself who fell a victim.

Lord Langleigh, too good a Cavalier, courteously refused the offers of the Council of State, and remained in France until the Restoration, when, with Henry, now Lord Masterton, and his wife, Lady Emily, he returned to Penford-bourne to spend the remainder of his days in his native land.

* * * * *

SAMUEL JOHNSON

Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia

Samuel Johnson was born at Lichfield in Staffordshire, on September 18, 1709, and died in London, December 13, 1784. In Volume IX of THE WORLD'S GREATEST BOOKS appears an epitome of Boswell's famous "Life of Johnson." "The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia," was written by Dr. Johnson in order to meet the expenses incurred by his mother's illness and death. According to Boswell, the work was composed in the evenings of one week, and the sheets sent to the printers exactly as they left his hands, without even being read over by the author himself. It was published during the early part of 1759, Johnson receiving for it the sum of L100, and a further amount of L25 when it came to a second edition. Of all Johnson's works, "Rasselas" was apparently the most popular. By 1775 it reached its fifth edition, and has since been translated into many languages. The work is more of a satire on optimism and on human life in general than a novel, and perhaps is little more than a ponderous dissertation on Johnson's favourite theme, the "vanity of human wishes." As to its actual merits, Johnson's contemporaries differed widely, some proclaiming him a pompous pedant with a passion for words of six syllables and more, others delighting in those passages in which weighty meaning was illustrated with splendour and vigour.

I.—Life in the Happy Valley

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Rasselas was the fourth son of the mighty emperor in whose dominions the father of waters begins his course, whose bounty pours down the streams of plenty, and scatters over the world the harvests of Egypt.

According to the custom which has descended from age to age among the monarchs of the torrid zone, the prince was confined in a private palace, with the other sons and daughters of Abyssinian royalty, till the order of succession should call him to the throne.

The place which the wisdom, or policy, of antiquity had designed for the residence of the princes was a spacious valley in the kingdom of Amhara, surrounded on every side by mountains of which the summits overhang the middle part. The only passage by which it could be entered was a cavern that passed under a rock, of which it had long been disputed whether it was the work of nature or of human industry. The outlet of the cavern was concealed by a thick wood, and the mouth, which opened into the valley, was closed with gates of iron, forged by the artificers of ancient days, so massive that no man, without the help of engines, could open or shut them.

From the mountains on every side rivulets descended that filled all the valley with verdure and fertility, and formed a lake in the middle, inhabited by fish of every species, and frequented by every fowl whom nature has taught to dip the wing in water.

The valley, wide and fruitful, supplied its inhabitants with all the necessaries of life, and all delights and superfluities were added at the annual visit which the emperor paid his children, when the iron gate was opened to the sound of music; and during eight days every one that resided in the valley was required to propose whatever might contribute to make seclusion pleasant, to fill up the vacancies of attention, and to lessen the tediousness of time. Every desire was immediately gratified. Such was the appearance of security and delight which this retirement afforded that they to whom it was new always desired that it might be perpetual; and as those on whom the iron gate had once closed were never suffered to return, the effect of longer experience could not be known.

Here the sons and daughters of Abyssinia lived only to know the soft vicissitudes of pleasure and repose. The sages who instructed them told them of nothing but the miseries of public life, and described all beyond the mountains as regions of calamity where discord was always raging, and where man preyed upon man. These methods were generally successful. Few of the princes had ever wished to enlarge their bounds; they rose in the morning and lay down at night, pleased with each other and with themselves. All but Rasselas, who, in the twenty-sixth year of his age, began to withdraw himself from the pastimes and assemblies, and to delight in solitary walks and silent meditation. His attendants observed the change, and endeavoured to renew his love of pleasure; but he neglected their officiousness and repulsed their invitations.

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One day his old instructor began to lament the change which had been lately observed in him, and to inquire why he so often retired from the pleasures of the palace to loneliness and silence.

“I fly from pleasure,” said the prince, “because pleasure has ceased to please. I am lonely because I am miserable, and am unwilling to cloud with my presence the happiness of others.”

“You, sir,” said the sage, “are the first who has complained of misery in the Happy Valley. I hope to convince you that your complaints have no real cause. Look round and tell me which of your wants is without supply. If you want nothing, how are you unhappy?”

“That I want nothing,” said the prince, “or that I know not what I want, is the cause of my complaint. If I had only known a want, I should have a certain wish, and that wish would excite endeavour for its satisfaction. I have already enjoyed too much. Give me something to desire.”

“Sir,” said the old man, “if you had seen the miseries of the world, you would know how to value your present state.”

“Now,” said the prince, “you have given me something to desire. I shall long to see the miseries of the world, since the sight of them is necessary to happiness.”

II.—The Escape Into the Outer World

The stimulus of this new desire—the desire of seeing the world—soon had its effect in making Rasselas no longer gloomy and unsociable. Considering himself as master of a secret stock of happiness, he affected to be busy in all the assemblies and schemes of diversion, because he supposed the frequency of his presence necessary to the success of his purposes. He retired gladly to privacy, because in picturing to himself that world which he had never seen he had now a subject of thought.

Thus passed twenty months of his life; he busied himself so intensely in visionary bustle that he forgot his real solitude. But one day the consciousness of his own folly and inaction pierced him deeply. He compared twenty months with the life of man. “The period of human existence,” said he, “may be reasonably estimated at forty years, of which I have mused away the four-and-twentieth part.”

These sorrowful meditations fastened upon his mind; he passed four months in resolving to lose no more time in idle resolves. Then, awakening to more vigorous exertion, he for a few hours regretted his regret, and from that time bent his whole mind upon the means of escaping from the Valley of Happiness.

He now found that it would be very difficult to effect that which it was very easy to suppose effected. He passed week after week in clambering the mountains, but found all the summits inaccessible by their prominence. The iron gate was not only secured with all the power of art, but was always watched by successive sentinels. In these fruitless researches he spent ten months. The time, however, passed cheerfully away, for he met a thousand amusements which beguiled his labour and diversified his thought.

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A little while afterwards he began to cherish hopes of escaping from the valley by quite a different way. Among the artists allowed there, to labour for the accommodation and pleasure of its inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanic powers, who had contrived many engines both of use and recreation. He interested the prince in a project of flying, and undertook to construct a pair of wings, in which he would himself attempt an aerial flight. But, alas! when in a year's time the wings were ready, and their contriver waved them and leaped from the little promontory on which he had taken his stand, he merely dropped into the lake, his wings only serving to sustain him in the water.

The prince was not much afflicted by this disaster, and he soon forgot any disappointment he had felt in the society and conversation of a new artist—a poet called Imlac—who delighted him by the narrative of his travels and dealings with men in various parts of Africa and Asia.

"Hast thou here found happiness at last?" asked Rasselas. "Tell me, without reserve, art thou content with thy condition, or dost thou wish to be again wandering and inquiring? All the inhabitants of this valley celebrate their lot, and at the annual visit of the emperor invite others to partake of their felicity. Is this felicity genuine or feigned?"

"Great prince," said Imlac, "I shall speak the truth. I know not one of all your attendants who does not lament the hour when he entered this retreat. I am less unhappy than the rest, because I have a mind replete with images, which I can vary and combine at pleasure. The rest, whose minds have no impression but the present moment, are either corroded by malignant passions, or sit steeped in the gloom of perpetual vacancy."

"What passions can infect those," said the prince, "who have no rivals? We are in a place where impotence precludes malice, and where all envy is repressed by community of enjoyments."

"There may be community of material possessions," said Imlac, "but there can never be community of love or of esteem. It must happen that one will please more than another. He that knows himself despised will always be envious, and still more envious and malevolent if he is condemned to live in the presence of those who despise him. The invitations by which the inhabitants of the valley allure others to a state which they feel to be wretched proceed from the natural malignity of hopeless misery. I look with pity on the crowds who are annually soliciting admission to captivity, and wish that it were lawful for me to warn them of their danger."

Upon this hint, Rasselas opened his whole heart to Imlac, who, promising to assist him to escape, proposed the plan of piercing the mountain. A suitable cavern having been found, the two men worked arduously at their task, and within a few days had

accomplished it. A few more days passed, and Rasselas and Imlac, with the prince's sister, Nekayah, had gone by ship to Suez, and thence to Cairo.

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III.—The Search for Happiness

The prince and princess, who carried with them jewels sufficient to make them rich in any place of commerce, gradually succeeded in mixing in the society of the city; and for some time the former, who had been wont to ponder over what *choice of life* he should make, thought choice needless because all appeared to him really happy.

Imlac was unwilling to crush the hope of inexperience. Till one day, having sat awhile silent, “I know not,” said Rasselas, “what can be the reason that I am more unhappy than any of my friends. I see them perpetually and unalterably cheerful, but feel my own mind restless and uneasy. I am unsatisfied with those pleasures which I seem most to court. I live in the crowds of jollity, not so much to enjoy company as to shun myself, and am only loud and merry to conceal my sadness.”

“Every man,” said Imlac, “may, by examining his own mind, guess what passes in the minds of others. When you feel that your own gaiety is counterfeit, it may justly lead you to suspect that of your companions not to be sincere. Envy is commonly reciprocal. We are long before we are convinced that happiness is never to be found, and each believes it to be possessed by others, to keep alive the hope of obtaining it for himself.”

“This,” said the prince, “may be true of others, since it is true of me; yet whatever be the general infelicity of man, one condition is more happy than another, and wisdom surely directs us to take the least evil in the *choice of life*.”

“Very few,” said the poet, “live by choice. Every man is placed in the present condition by causes which acted without his foresight, and with which he did not always willingly co-operate; and, therefore, you will rarely meet one who does not think the lot of his neighbour better than his own.”

Rasselas resolved, however, to continue his experiments on life. As he was one day walking in the street, he saw a spacious building, which all were, by the open doors, invited to enter. He found it a hall of declamation, and listened to a sage who discoursed with great energy on the conquest of the passions, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained this important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the fool of hope; is no more emaciated by envy, inflamed by anger, emasculated by tenderness, or depressed by grief. Receiving permission to visit this philosopher—having, indeed, purchased it by presenting him with a purse of gold—-Rasselas returned home with joy to Imlac.

“I have found,” said he, “a man who, from the unshaken throne of rational fortitude, looks down on the scenes of life changing beneath him. I will learn his doctrines and imitate his life.”

“Be not too hasty,” said Imlac, “to trust or to admire the teachers of morality; they discourse like angels, but they live like men.”

Imlac’s caution turned out to be wise, for when the prince paid his visit a few days afterwards, he found the philosopher weeping over the death of his only daughter, and refusing to be comforted by any of the consolations that truth and reason could afford.

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Still eager upon the same inquiry, and resolving to discover whether that felicity which public life could not afford was to be found in solitude, Rasselas determined to visit a hermit who lived near the lowest cataract of the Nile and filled the whole country with the fame of his sanctity, Imlac and the princess agreeing to accompany him. On the third day they reached the cell of the holy man, who was desired to give his direction as to a choice of life.

“He will most certainly remove from evil,” said the prince, “who shall devote himself to that solitude which you have recommended by your example.”

“I have no desire that my example should gain any imitators,” replied the hermit. “In my youth I professed arms, and was raised by degrees to the highest military rank. At last, being disgusted by the preferments of a younger officer, I resolved to close my life in peace, having found the world full of snares, discord, and misery. For some time after my retreat I rejoiced like a tempest-beaten sailor at his entrance into the harbour. When the pleasure of novelty went away, I employed my hours in examining the plants and minerals of the place. But that inquiry is now grown tasteless and irksome, and I have been for some time unsettled and distracted. I am sometimes ashamed to think that I could not secure myself from vice but by retiring from the exercise of virtue, and begin to suspect that I was rather impelled by resentment than led by devotion into solitude. I have been long comparing the evils with the advantages of society, and resolve to return into the world to-morrow.”

They accompanied him back to the city, on which, as he approached it, he gazed with rapture.

A day or two later Rasselas was relating his interview with the hermit at an assembly of learned men, who met at stated intervals to compare their opinions.

“The way to be happy,” said one of them, “is to live according to nature, in obedience to that universal and unalterable law with which every heart is originally impressed; which is not written on it by precept, but engraven by design, not instilled by education, but infused at our nativity.”

When he had spoken, he looked round him with a placid air, and enjoyed the consciousness of his own beneficence.

“Sir,” said the prince, with great modesty, “as I, like all the rest of mankind, am desirous of felicity, my closest attention has been fixed upon your discourse. I doubt not the truth of a position which so learned a man has so confidently advanced. Let me only know what it is to live according to nature.”

“When I find young men so humble and so docile,” said the philosopher, “I can deny them no information which my studies have enabled me to afford. To live according to

nature is to act always with due regard to the fitness arising from the relations and qualities of causes and effects; to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity; to co-operate with the general disposition and tendency of the present system of things."

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The prince soon found that this was a sage whom he should understand less as he heard him longer. He therefore bowed, and was silent; and the philosopher, supposing him satisfied, departed with the air of a man who had co-operated with the present system.

IV.—Happiness They Find Not

Rasselas returned home full of reflections, and finding that Imlac seemed to discourage a continuance of the search, began *to* discourse more freely with his sister, who had yet the same hope with himself.

“We will divide the task between us,” said she. “You shall try what is to be found in the splendour of courts, and I will range the shades of humbler life.”

Accordingly, the prince appeared next day, with a splendid retinue, at the court of the bassa. But he soon found that the lives of courtiers are a continual succession of plots and detections, stratagems and escapes, faction and treachery. Many of those who surrounded the bassa were sent only to watch him, and to report his conduct to the sultan. At last the letters of revocation arrived, the bassa was carried in chains to Constantinople, and in a short time the sultan that had deposed him was murdered by the Janissaries.

The princess, who, in the meantime, had insinuated herself into many private families, proved equally unsuccessful in her inquiries. She found not one house that was not haunted by some fury that destroyed its quiet.

“In families where there is or is not poverty,” said she, “there is commonly discord. The love of parents and children seldom continues beyond the years of infancy; in a short time the children become rivals to their parents. Each child endeavours to appropriate the esteem or fondness of the parents, and the parents betray each other to their children. The opinions of children and parents, of the young and the old, are naturally opposite, by the contrary effects of hope and despondence, of expectation and experience. Age looks with anger on the temerity of youth; and youth with contempt on the scrupulosity of age.”

“Surely,” said the prince, “you must have been unfortunate in your choice of acquaintance. I am unwilling to believe that the most tender of all relations is thus impeded in its effects by natural necessity.”

“Domestic discord,” answered she, “is not inevitably necessary; but it is not easily avoided. We seldom see that a whole family is virtuous. The good and the evil cannot well agree; the evil can yet less agree with one another, and even the virtuous fall sometimes to variance when their virtues are of different kinds. As for those who live single, I never found that their prudence ought to raise envy. They dream away their

time without friendship and without fondness, and are driven to rid themselves of the day, for which they have no use, by childish amusements and vicious delights. They act as beings under the constant sense of some known inferiority, that fills their minds with rancour, and their tongues with censure."

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“I cannot forbear to flatter myself,” said Rasselas, “that prudence and benevolence will make marriage happy. What can be expected but disappointment and repentance from a choice made in the immaturity of youth, in the ardour of desire, without judgment, without foresight, without inquiry after conformity of opinions, similarity of manners, rectitude of judgment, or purity of sentiment. From these early marriages proceed the rivalry of parents and children.

“The son is eager to enjoy the world before the father is willing to forsake it, and there is hardly room at once for two generations. The daughter begins to bloom before the mother can be content to fade, and neither can forbear to wish for the absence of the other. Surely all these evils may be avoided by that deliberation and delay which prudence prescribes to irrevocable choice.”

“And yet,” said Nekayah, “I have been told that late marriages are not eminently happy. It has generally been determined that it is dangerous for a man and woman to suspend their fate upon each other at a time when opinions are fixed and habits are established, when friendships have been contracted on both sides, and when life has been planned into method.”

At this point Imlac entered, and having refused to talk upon the subject of their discourse, persuaded them to visit the great pyramid.

“I consider this mighty structure,” said he, as they reposed in one of its chambers, “as a monument of the insufficiency of human enjoyments. A king, whose power is unlimited, and whose treasures surmount all real and imaginary wants, is compelled to solace, by the erection of a pyramid, the satiety of dominion and tastelessness of pleasures, and to amuse the tediousness of declining life by seeing thousands labouring without end, and one stone, for no purpose, laid upon another.”

Soon afterwards the prince told Imlac that he intended to devote himself to science, and to pass the rest of his days in retirement.

“Before you make your final choice,” answered Imlac, “you ought to examine its hazards, and to converse with some of those who are grown old in the company of themselves.”

He then introduced him to a learned astronomer, who had meditated over his science and over visionary schemes for so long that he believed that he possessed the regulation of the weather, and the distribution of the seasons.

A visit made subsequently to the catacombs tended still further to give a grave and sombre direction to the thoughts of the party.

“How gloomy,” said Rasselas, “would be these mansions of the dead to him who did not know that he should never die; that what now acts shall continue its agency, and what now thinks shall think on forever. Those that lie here stretched before us, the wise and the powerful of ancient times, warn us to remember the shortness of our present state; they were, perhaps, snatched away while they were busy, like us, in the choice of life.”

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“To me,” said the princess, “the choice of life is become less important; I hope, hereafter, to think only on the choice of eternity.”

It was now the time of the inundations of the Nile, and the searchers for happiness were, of necessity, confined to their house. Being, however, well supplied with materials for talk, they diverted themselves with comparisons of the different forms of life which they had observed, and with various schemes of happiness which each of them had formed— schemes which now they well knew would never be carried out.

They deliberated with Imlac what was to be done, and finally resolved, when the inundation should cease, to return to Abyssinia.

* * * * *

MAURUS JOKAI

Timar’s Two Worlds

Maurus Jokai, by common consent the greatest Hungarian novelist of the nineteenth century, was born at Komarom on February 19, 1825. Trained for the law, as an advocate he achieved the distinction of winning his first case. The drudgery of a lawyer’s office, however, proved uncongenial to him, and fired by the success of his first play, “The Jew Boy” ("Zsido fiu"), he went to Pest, where he devoted himself to journalism, in due course becoming editor of “Eletkepek,” a leading Hungarian literary periodical. At the outbreak of the Revolution of 1848, he threw himself in with the supporters of the national cause. From that time until his death—which occurred on May 4, 1904—Jokai identified himself considerably with politics. Of all his novels perhaps, “Az arany ember” ("A Man of Gold"), translated into English under the title of “Timar’s Two Worlds,” takes the highest place. Its reputation has long since spread outside the boundaries of Hungary, and the story itself—a rare combination of descriptive power, humour, and pathos—has exercised no small influence upon European fiction of the romantic order.

I.—How Ali Saved his Daughter

A mountain-chain, pierced through from base to summit—a gorge four miles in length walled in by lofty precipices; and between these walls flows the Danube in its rocky bed.

At this time there were no steamers on the Danube, but a vessel, called the St. Barbara, approaches, drawn against the stream by thirty-two horses. The fate of the vessel lies in the hands of two men—the pilot and the captain.

The name of the captain is Michael Timar. He is a man of about thirty, with fair hair and dreary blue eyes.

At the door of the ship's cabin sits a man of fifty, smoking a Turkish chibouque. Euthemio Trikaliss is the name under which he is registered in the way-book, and he is the owner of the cargo. The ship itself belongs to a merchant of Komorn called Athanas Brazovics.

Out of one of the cabin windows looks the face of a young girl, Timea, the daughter of Euthemio, and the face is as white as marble. Timea and her father are the only passengers of the St. Barbara.

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When the captain lays aside his speaking-trumpet he has time to chat with Timea, who understands only modern Greek, which the captain speaks fluently.

It is always a dangerous voyage, for the current is fierce and the rocks are death-traps. To-day, too, the St. Barbara was pursued by a Turkish gunboat. But the vessel makes its way safely, in spite of current and rocks, and the Turkish gunboat gives up the chase.

Three days later the St. Barbara has reached the island of Orsova; the plains of Hungary are to the north of the river, Servia to the south.

Provisions had run short, and Timar decided to go on shore. There were no signs of human habitation at first, but Timar's sharp eyes had discovered a faint smoke rising above the tops of the poplars. He worked his way in a small skiff through the reeds, reached dry land, pushed through hedges and bushes, and then stood transfixed with admiration.

A cultivated orchard of some five or six acres was before him, and beyond that a flower-garden, full of summer bloom.

Timar went up through the orchard and flower garden to a cottage, built partly in the rock, and covered with creepers. A huge, black Newfoundland dog was lying before the door.

A woman's voice answered Timar's "good-morning," and the dog raised no objection to the captain going indoors.

"It never hurts good people," said the woman.

Timar explained his mission. The wind had brought his vessel to a standstill; he was short of provisions, and he had two passengers who would be grateful for shelter on land for the night.

The woman promised him food and a room for his passengers in exchange for grain, and at her word the dog brought him by a better path to the river.

Presently Timar was back again with Euthemio and Timea, and now a young girl appeared, whom the housewife called Noemi.

Before supper was over, the growling of the dog announced a new arrival, and a man of youthful appearance, who introduced himself as Theodor Krisstyan, an old friend of the lady of the house, whom he called Madame Therese, entered and made himself quickly at home. It was plain that his hostess both feared and disliked Theodor, while Timar, who had met him before, regarded him as a spy in the pay of the Turkish government.

In the morning the wind had gone down, Theodor had vanished, and Timar and his passengers prepared to renew their journey.

Therese told Timar her story before he left; how she and her daughter Noemi had lived there for twelve years, and who the objectionable Theodor was. Then she added, in a whisper, “I fancy this man Krisstyan’s visit was either on your account, or that of the other gentleman. Be on your guard if either of you dread the discovery of a secret.”

Trikaliss looked very gloomy when he heard the stranger had left before sunrise, and the following night he called Timar to his cabin.

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“I am dying,” he said. “I want to die—I have taken poison. Timea will not wake till all is over. My true name is not Euthemio Trikaliss, but Ali Tschorbadschi. I was once governor of Candia, and then treasurer in Stamboul. You know there is a revolution proceeding in Turkey; my turn was coming. Not that I was a conspirator, but the treasury wanted my money and the seraglio my daughter. Death is easy for me, but I will not let my daughter go into the harem nor myself be made a beggar. Therefore I hired your vessel, and loaded it with grain. The owner, Athanas Brazovics, is a connection of mine; I have often shown him kindness, he can return it now. By a miracle we got safely through the rocks and whirlpools of the river, and eluded the pursuit of the Turkish brigantine, and now I stumble over a straw into my grave.

“That man who followed us last evening was a spy of the Turkish government. He recognised me, and sealed my fate. The government would not demand me from Austria as a political refugee, but as a thief. This is unjust, for what I took was my own. But I am pursued as a thief, and Austria gives up escaped thieves if Turkish spies can trace them. By dying I can save my daughter and her property. Swear to me by your faith and your honour you will carry out my instructions. Here in this casket is about a thousand ducats. Take Timea to Athanas Brazovics, and beg him to adopt my daughter. Give him the money, he must spend it on the education of the child, and give him also the cargo, and beg him to be present when the sacks are emptied. You understand?”

The dying man looked in Timar’s face, and struggled for breath. “Yes—the Red Crescent!” he stammered. “The Red Crescent!” Then the death-throes closed his lips—one struggle, and he was a corpse.

II.—Timor Tempted and Fallen

When the St. Barbara had nearly reached Komorn it struck an uprooted tree, lying in ambush under water, and immediately began to sink. It is absolutely impossible to save a vessel wrecked in this way. The crew all left the sinking craft, and Timar rescued Timea, and with her the casket with the thousand ducats.

Then the captain drove off with the fatherless girl to the house of Athanas Brazovics in the town of Komorn.

At first Athanas kissed Timea very heartily, but when he learnt that his vessel was lost, and all Timea’s property, except the thousand ducats, and the wheat sacks—now spoilt by water—he altered his tune.

He and his wife Sophie decided that Timea should live with them as an adopted child, and at the same time attend on their daughter Athalie as a waiting-maid. Athalie and her mother treated the poor girl with scornful contempt.

As for Timar, Athanas turned on him savagely, as though the captain could have prevented the wreck!

On the advice of his friend, Lieutenant Katschuka, who was betrothed to Athalie, Timar purchased the sunken grain next day when it was put up for auction, buying the whole cargo for 10,000 gulden. “You will do the poor orphan a good turn if you buy it,” said the lieutenant. “Otherwise, the value of the cargo will all go in salvage.”

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Timar at once made arrangements for hauling up the sacks, and for the immediate drying and grinding of the corn, and all day labourers were at work on the wreck.

At nightfall Timar, left alone, noticed one sack differently marked from the rest—marked with a red crescent! Within this was a long leathern bag. He broke it open and found it full of diamonds, emeralds, and sapphires richly set in girdles and bracelets and rings. A whole heap of unset diamonds were in an agate box. The whole treasure was worth at least 1,000,000 gulden. The St. Barbara had carried a million on board!

“To whom does this treasure belong?”

Timar put the question to himself, and answered it.

“Why, whom should it belong to but you? You bought the sunken cargo, just as it is, with the sacks and the grain. If the treasurer stole the jewels from the sultan, the sultan probably stole them in his campaigns.”

“And Timea?”

“Timea would not know how to use the treasure, and her adopted father would absorb it, and get rid of nine-tenths of it. What would be the result if Timea gets it? She would be a rich lady, and would not cast a look at you from her height. Now things are the other way—you will be a rich man and she a poor girl. You do not want the treasure for yourself. You will invest it profitably, and when you have earned with the first million a second and a third, you will go to the poor girl and say, ‘There, take it—it is all yours; and take me, too.’ You only wish to become rich in order to make her happy.”

The moon and the waves cried to Timar, “You are rich—you are a made man!”

But when it was dark an inward voice whispered,

“You are a thief!”

From that day all Timar’s undertakings flourished, and step by step he reached the summit of an ordinary successful business man’s ambition— the title of nobility. At the same time Brazovics, who had treated Timar with brutal inconsiderateness because of the wreck of the St. Barbara, went steadily down-hill, borrowing and embezzling trust monies in his fall.

Lieutenant Katschuka had declared all along that he could not marry Athalie without a dowry, and when the wedding day arrived, Brazovics, unable to face his creditors, and knowing himself bankrupt, penniless, and fraudulent, committed suicide. Katschuka immediately declared the engagement at an end. In his heart he had long wearied of Athalie, and looked with desire on Timea. The orphan girl from the first had loved the lieutenant with silent, unspoken affection.

When the Brazovics' house was put up for sale Timar bought it outright, furniture and all, and then said to Timea, "From this day forth you are the mistress of this house. Everything in it belongs to you, all is inscribed in your name. Accept it from me. You are the owner of the house, and if there is a little shelter for me in your heart, and you did not refuse my hand—then I should be only too happy."

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Timea gave her hand to Timar, and said in a low, firm voice, “I accept you as my husband, and will be a faithful and obedient wife.”

This man had always been so good to her. He had never made sport of her nor flattered her, and he had saved her life on the Danube when the St. Barbara was sinking. He had given her all her heart could desire except one thing, and that belonged to another.

III.—The Ownerless Island

On his betrothal to Timea a great burden was lifted from the soul of Timar. Since the day when the treasure of Ali Tschorbadschi had enabled him to achieve power and riches, Timar had been haunted by the voice of self-accusation; “This money does not belong to you—it was the property of an orphan. You are a man of gold! You are a thief!”

But now the defrauded orphan had received back her property. Only Timar forgot that he had demanded in exchange the girl’s heart.

Timea promised to be a faithful and obedient wife, but on the wedding-day when Timar said, “Do you love me?” she only opened wide her eyes, and asked, “What is love?”

Timar found he had married a marble statue; and that all his riches would not buy his wife’s love. He became wretched, conscious that his wife was unhappy, that he was the author of their mutual misery.

Then, in the early summer, Timar went off from Komorn to shoot water-fowl. He meant to go to the ownerless island at Ostrova—it was three years since that former visit.

Therese and Noemi welcomed him cordially at the island, and Timar forgot his troubles when he was with them. Therese told him her story; how her husband, ruined by the father of Theodor Krisstyan and by Athanas Brazovics, had committed suicide, and how, forsaken and friendless, she had brought her child to this island, which neither Austria nor Turkey claimed, and where no tax-collector called. With her own hands she had turned the wilderness into a paradise, and the only fear she had was that Theodor Krisstyan, who had discovered her retreat, might reveal it to the Turkish government.

Therese had no money and no use for it, but she exchanged fruit and honey for grain, salt, clothes, and hardware, and the people with whom she bartered were not inclined to gossip about her affairs.

So no news concerning the island ever went to Vienna, Komorn, or Constantinople, and the fact of Timar’s great prosperity had not reached the islanders. He was welcomed as a hard-working man, and Therese did not know that Timar had been powerful enough to get a ninety years’ lease of the island from both Turkish and Austrian governments;

perhaps no very difficult matter, as the existence of the island was unknown, and there were fees to be paid over the concession.

When he told her what he had done, Noemi threw her arms round his neck.

Theodor Krisstyan was furious, but Timar procured him a post in Brazil, and for a long time the disreputable spy was too far off to be troublesome.

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And now on this island Timar found health and rest. It became his home, and for the summer months every year he would slip away from Komorn, and no one, not even Timea, guessed his secret. When he returned Timea's cold white face was still an unsolved riddle to her husband. She would greet him kindly, but never was there any token that she loved him. Timar's ever-increasing business operations were excuse for his long absences, but all the same the double life he was leading made him ill. He could not tell Timea of Therese and Noemi, and he could not tell them on the island that he was married.

Timea, on her side, devoted herself more and more to her husband's business in his absence, and when Major Katschuka once called and asked her if she could not arrange for a divorce, she answered gently, "My husband is the noblest man in the world. Should I separate from him who has no one but me to love him? Am I to tell him that I hate him, I who owe everything to him, and who brought him no dowry but a loveless heart?"

Timar learnt from Athalie, who lived in Timea's house, of this reply, and felt more in despair than ever. He wanted Timea to be happy, she had never been his wife except in name, for he had been waiting for her love.

And he wanted to go away, and leave all his riches behind, and settle on the island. Now more than ever was he wanted on the island, for Therese had died of heart failure, and the years had made Noemi a woman.

IV.—"My Name is Nobody"

It was winter, and Timar had gone off alone to a house that belonged to him near a frozen lake. He felt the time had come for flight, but whither?

Theodor Krisstyan had turned up again. In Brazil he had heard a story of Ali Tschorbadschi's jewels from an old criminal from Turkey, and he had returned to blackmail Timar. But he did not find him till Timar was at the frozen lake.

Krisstyan's story was not true. Timar knew that the accusations were false as he listened to the vagabond's indictment. He had not "killed" Timea's father, nor "stolen" his treasure. But he had played a false game, and his position was a false one. Krisstyan demanded a change of raiment, and Timar let him take clothes and shirts. But at last the blackmailer's demands became too insolent, and Timar drove him out of the house.

And now it seemed to Timar that his own career was finished. This ruffian Krisstyan could expose the foundation of his wealth, and how could he live discredited before the world?

On the frozen water there were great fissures between the blocks of ice. Within the waves of the lake death would come quickly. Timar walked out on the ice, and there before him the head of Theodor Krisstyan rose in the water and then sank. The spy had not known the treachery of the fissures.

Timar fled to the ownerless island, and when the corpse of Krisstyan was discovered, in an advanced stage of decomposition, Timea declared she recognized her husband's clothes.

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So the body of Theodor Krisstyan was buried with great pomp, and a year later Timea married Major Katschuka, and then, haunted by the doubt whether her first husband was really dead, pined away.

No blessing rested on the wealth Timar left behind him. The only son Timea bore to the major was a great spendthrift, and in his hands the fabulous wealth vanished as quickly as it had grown.

* * * * *

And what is passing meanwhile on the ownerless island?

Forty years have passed since Timar's disappearance from Komorn, and the island is now a complete model farm. Recently, a friend of mine, an ardent naturalist, took me to the island. I had heard as a child of Timar and his wealth.

Every inch of ground is utilised or serves to beautify the place. The tobacco grown here has the most exquisite aroma, and the beehives look from a distance like a small town with many-shaped roofs.

It is easy to see that the owner of the island understands luxury, and yet that owner never has a farthing to call his own; no money ever enters the island. Those however, who need the exports know also the requirements of the islanders, and bring them for barter.

The whole colony consisted of one family, and each was called only by his Christian name. The six sons of the first settler had married women of the district, and the numbers of grandchildren and great-grandchildren already exceeded forty, but the island maintained them all. Poverty was unknown; they lived in luxury; each knew some trade, and if they had been ten times as many, their labour would have supported them.

When we arrived on the island, the nominal head of the family, a well-built man of forty, received us cordially, and in the evening presented us to his parents.

When my name was mentioned to the old man he looked long at me, and a visible colour rose in his cheeks. I began to tell him of what was going on in the world, that Hungary was now united to Austria, and that the taxes were very heavy.

He blew a cloud from his pipe, and the smoke said, "My island has nothing to do with that, we have no taxes here."

I told him of wars, financial panics, the strife of religion and politics, and the smoke seemed to say, "We wage war with no one here. Thank God, we have no money here and no elections or ministers."

Presently the old man asked me where I was born, and what my profession was? And when I told him that I wrote romances, he said, “Guess my story. There was once a man who left a world in which he was admired and respected, and created a second world in which he was loved.”

“May I venture to ask your name?” I said.

The old man seemed to grow a head taller; then, raising his trembling hands, he laid them on my head. And it seemed to me as if once, long, long before those same hands had rested on my head when childish curls covered it, and that I had seen that noble face before.

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“My name is Nobody,” he replied to my question; and after that night I saw him no more during our stay on the island.

The privileges granted by two governments to the owner of the island will last for fifty years more. And who knows what may happen to the world in fifty years?

* * * * *

COULSON KERNAHAN

A Dead Man’s Diary

Coulson Kernahan, born at Ilfracombe, England, Aug. 1, 1858, is a son of Dr. James Kernahan, M.A. He has contributed largely to periodicals, and has written in many veins, alternating serious and religious works with sensational novels, and literary criticism with humour and sport. It is by his imaginative booklets—now collected in one volume under the title of “Visions”—that he is best known. These booklets have circulated literally “by the million,” and have been translated into no fewer than sixteen languages, including Chinese. “A Dead Man’s Diary” appeared anonymously in 1890, and attracted unusual attention, the authorship being attributed, among others, to Harold Frederic and Robert Buchanan. Since then “A Dead Man’s Diary”—of which Mr. J.M. Barrie, in reviewing it, said, “The vigour of the book is great, and the author has such a gift of intensity that upon many readers it will have mesmeric effect”—has gone through innumerable editions, in England and in America.

I.—The Ghost of the Past

Some years ago I became so seriously ill that I was pronounced dying, and, finally, dead. Dead to all intents and purposes I remained for two days, when, to the astonishment of the physicians, I exhibited symptoms of returning vitality, and in a week was convalescent.

Of the moments preceding my passing I recollect only that there came over me a strange and sudden sense of loss, as though some life-element had gone out from me. Of pain there was none, nor any mental anxiety.

I recollect only an ethereal lightness of limb, and a sense of soul-emancipation and peace, a sense of soul-emancipation such as one might feel were he to awaken on a sunny summer morning to find that sorrow and sin were gone from the world for ever, a peace ample and restful as the hallowed hush and awe of twilight, without the twilight’s tender pain.

Then I seemed to be sinking slowly and steadily through still depths of sun-steeped, light-filled waters that sang in my ears with a sound like a sweet, sad sobbing and

soaring of music, and through which there swam up to me, in watered vistas of light, scenes of sunny seas and shining shores where smiling isles stretched league beyond league afar.

And so life ebbed away, until there came a time when the outward and deathward-setting tide seemed to reach its climax, and when I felt myself swept shoreward and lifeward again on the inward-setting tide of that larger life into which I had died.

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My next recollection is that the events of my past life were rising before me. The hands on the dial of time went back a score of years, and I was a young man of twenty-one, living in chambers off Holborn. One evening there burst over London a fearful thunderstorm, and hearing a knock at my door, I opened it, to find a beautiful girl named Dorothy, the daughter of the housekeeper, standing there. Terrified by the lightning, and finding herself alone, she begged to be allowed to remain until her mother's return.

The words had scarcely passed her lips before there came another blinding flash of lightning, followed almost instantaneously by a terrific crash of thunder. With a cry of passion and fear, she flung her arms around me, and the next moment I found myself pressing her to my heart and telling her, amid a score of burning kisses, that I loved her.

Almost immediately afterwards, we heard the opening of doors, which indicated her mother's home-coming; but, before leaving, Dorothy told me that the room immediately above mine was her own. Of the hell-born thought which rose in my mind as I listened she, I am sure, had no suspicion. Need I tell the remainder of my story? I think not.

* * * * *

You may wonder, perhaps, why I recall circumstances that happened so many years ago. You would cease to wonder had you seen the ghost of the past rise up to call upon God and His Christ for judgment upon the betrayer. For this was my first glimpse of hell; this was my day of judgment. The recording angel of my awakened conscience showed me my sin, and the ruin my sin had wrought, as God sees, and I realised that —But no! I am sick, I am fainting! I cannot—I cannot write more.

II.—The Secret of Man's Destiny

"When anyone dies," I had been told in childhood, "he goes either to heaven or to hell, according to whether he has been a good or bad man," and I recollect being not a little troubled as to what became of the people whose virtues were about equally matched with their vices. When I opened my eyes in that ante-chamber of the spirit-world into which I have had admittance I discovered that heaven and hell as separate places have no existence, for the good, the bad, and the indifferent exist together exactly as they exist here. I do not say that there will be no day of harvesting in which the tares shall finally be separated from the wheat. On that point, as on many others, I am ignorant. Men and women whom I know on earth speak of the dead—"the changed"—as being perfected in knowledge and as having solved for ever "the great secret." That is not my experience.

So far from "the great secret," the secret of man's destiny and God's Being, becoming known at death, the facts as I found them are that these remain almost as great a mystery after death as before.

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Even in hell (I use the word as indicating mental or physical suffering—in my case, the former—not with any local significance) there are moments when the anguish-stricken spirit is mercifully allowed a temporary reprieve. Such a moment occurred after the first awful paroxysm of self-loathing and torture which I experienced when my past life was made known to me in its true colours, and it was in this saner and comparatively painless interval that I met one whom I had known on earth as a woman of the purest life and character. Being still under the impression that I was in hell in the sense in which I had been accustomed to think of that place, I started back upon seeing her, and cried out in astonishment, "You here! *You*! And in Hades!"

"Where else should I be except where Arthur is?" she answered quietly, and I then remembered a worthless brother of that name to whom she was passionately attached. "Even Dives in the parable," she went on, "was unable to forget the five brethren he had left behind him, and cried out amid the flames, asking that Lazarus be sent to warn them, lest they, too, came to that place of torment. Is it likely, then, that any wife, mother, or sister, worthy the name, would be content to remain idle in heaven, knowing that a loved one was in hell and in agony? We are told that after His death Christ preached to the spirits in prison, and I believe that He came here to hell in search of the so-called lost."

"Tell me," I said, "you who are in heaven, if you are perfectly happy."

"You are not altogether wrong in calling this heaven," she replied, "although it is little more than the antechamber between earth and heaven. It is my heaven at present, but it will not be my heaven always, any more than it will be always your hell, and although it is heaven, it is not *the* heaven. When I was on earth, I longed for heaven, *not that I might be delivered from sorrow, but from sinfulness*; and I think I may say that I am as happy here as my failures will let me be."

"Your failures!" I exclaimed. "I thought we had done with failures."

"You remember the text in the Koran," she said. "'Paradise is under the shadow of swords.' Here, as on earth, there is no progress without effort, and here, too, there are difficulties to be overcome. Yet even on earth there was one element in the strife which lent dignity even to our failures. Sin and shame are, after all, only human; the effort and determination to overcome them are divine. Ceasing to be an angel, Satan became a devil. Man falls, and even in his fall retains something of God."

After a time we fell to talking of the past, and, mentioning the name of the very noblest man I have ever known, a man who made possible the purity of Sir Galahad, made possible the courage of Coeur de Lion—I had almost said made possible the sinfulness of Christ—I inquired whether she had seen him in Paradise.

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“As yet,” she answered, “I know only one of the many circles into which the spirit-world seems naturally to resolve it. But I suspect that if you and I could see where he is, we should find him infinitely nearer to the Father-heart of the universe than I at least can for countless ages hope to attain!”

“What do you mean by ’circles’?” I said. “Is each human soul on its arrival here assigned a fitting place and level among his or her spiritual fellows?”

“There is some such gathering of like to like as that of which you speak,” she answered. “The majority begin in a lower circle, and remain there until they are fitted to move onward to a higher sphere. Others take a place in that higher sphere immediately, and some few are led into the Holy Presence straightway.”

And then her voice seemed to sound to me like the voice of one in the far distance; I felt the darkness closing in upon me on every side, and knew that my hour of punishment was again at hand.

III.—DEAD SOULS

Of all the faces which I saw in hell, there was one which had for me a fascination. It was that of a beautiful woman, queenly of manner, fair of figure as a fullblown lily, and with those dark eyes that seem to shine out from soul-depths, deep as the distant heaven, and yet may mean no more than the shallow facing of quicksilver behind a milliner’s mirror.

On earth she had deliberately set herself to win and to break the heart of a trusting lad, and the punishment of her sin was that she should now love him with the same intense but hopeless passion with which he had loved her. “My heart is broken,” I heard her sob, “and in hell one cannot die of a broken heart. If I had loved him, and he me, and he had died, I could have borne it, knowing that I should meet him hereafter; but to live loveless through eternity, that is the thought which kills me.”

Another sight which I saw was that of a desolate plain, low-lying and unlighted, in the centre of which there roamed one who called out as if in search of a companion, but to whom there came no answer save the echo of his own voice. A more lonely and lifeless spot I have never seen. The silence seemed sometimes to oppress him like a presence, for, with a half-affrighted and despairing cry, he set off at a panic-stricken run, as if seeking to escape this silence by flight; but, notwithstanding his haste, he made no progress, for he was but moving round and round in a circle. Once, when he passed near me, I heard him cry out: “Is there no living soul in all this void and voiceless desert?” And, as he hurried by, I recognised him as a man whom I had often heard say on earth that hell would not be hell to him so long as he and his boon companions were together.

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Another whom I saw in Hades I should—save for his pitiable effort to escape observation—have passed unnoticed. His pitfall in life had been love of approbation, which was so strong that he was never happy except in perpetually endeavoring to pass himself off for that which he knew he was not. The only aim of his existence had been to win the approval of others, and, lo! one morning he awoke in Hades to find himself the despised of the despised, and the laughing stock of the very Devil. I saw few more pitiable sights than that of this wretched creature, slinking shamefacedly through hell, and wincing, as from a blow, at the glance of every passer.

During my wanderings I had reason to ask one whom I had known on earth concerning the fate of an old acquaintance of his own.

“I will tell you all I know, of the man about whom you ask,” he said, “but first let me explain that my sorest hindrance on earth was unbelief. Once, when I might have believed, I would not, and my punishment is that now, when I would believe, I cannot, but am for ever torn by hideous apprehension and doubt. Moreover, there are many things which, clear and plain as they may be to the faithful of heart and to the believing, are to my doubting eyes wrapt around in mystery. Into these mysteries it has been ordained as part of my punishment that I shall ever desire to look, and of all these mysteries there is none which fills me with such horror and dread as the mystery of the dead who die.”

“Of the dead who die!” I said. “What do you mean by those strange words? Surely all who die are dead.”

“They are my words,” he cried excitedly, and with a hysterical laugh. “The words I use to myself when I think of the mystery which they strove so carefully to conceal from me, but which for all their cunning I have discovered. When first I came here, I saw, either in hell or in heaven, the faces of most of the dead whom I had known on earth, but some faces there were—the man of whom you ask was one—which I missed, and from that time to this I have never seen. ‘Where, then, are they?’ I asked myself, ’since neither earth, hell, nor heaven knows them more? Has God some fearful fate in store for sinners, which may one day fall upon me as it has already fallen upon them?’ And so I set myself to discover what had become of these missing faces, and you shall hear the result.

“When you and I were children, we were taught that every human being is born with an immortal soul. But they did not tell us that just as neglected diseases can kill the body, so unchecked sin can kill the soul. But it is so, and that is what I meant when I said that he of whom you asked was ‘of the dead who die.’

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“You shake your head, and mutter that I am mad. Well, perhaps I am mad—mad with the horror of my unbelief; but why should it not be as I say? When God made man He made a creature to whom it was given to choose for himself between good and evil. But God knew that some of those He had thus made would deliberately choose evil, that some few would indeed sin away all trace of their Divine origin. God did not *will* it so, for He made us men, not machines, and the evil we do is of our own choosing; but God *fore-knew* it, and, foreknowing that, God owed it to Himself not to call into being a creature the result of whose creation would be that creature’s eternal misery. Hence it was that He decreed that those for whom there could be no hope of heaven should die out at their deaths like the brutes. Our life is from God, and may not God take His own again? And could anything better happen to many people whom you and I have known on earth than that they should be allowed to die out, and the very memory of them to pass away for ever?”

I was convinced that he was mad—mad, as he had himself hinted, with the horror of his unbelief.

“And I am one of them,” he exclaimed. “I am of the dead who die! I have bartered away life, faith, and happiness for Dead Sea fruit; I, who once was young, and not altogether as I now am, a soulless creature of clay! For I can remember the time when flowers, pictures, beautiful faces, and music set stirring emotions within me, in which it seemed that I saw hidden away in the depths of my own heart the shining form of a white-robed soul-maiden, who cried out to me: ’Ah, cannot you make your life as pure and beautiful as the flowers and the music, that so you may set me free?’

“But I chose the ignoble part, and gave myself up, body and soul, to evil and unbelief. And often in the hour when I was tempted to some shameful action I seemed to see the white arms of the soul-maiden uplifted in piteous entreaty to heaven, but at last the time came when her voice was silent, and when I knew that I had thrust her down into a darkness whence she would never again come forth!

“And now the very soul of me is dead, and I know not but that at any moment I may flicker out like a spent taper, and become as one of the dead who die!”

IV.—On the Brink of the Pit

At last there came a time, even in hell, when the burden of my sin lay so heavily upon me that I felt, if succour there was none, the very soul of me must die.

Of myself, save for the continual crying out of my soul after its lost purity, I scarcely cared to think. It was for Dorothy that I never ceased to sorrow, and—sinner though I was—to pray. I saw then, pictured forth in all their horror, the inevitable consequences of the wrong I had done her. I saw her, with the sense of her sin as yet but fresh upon her, shrinking from every glance, and fancying that she read the knowledge of her guilt

in every eye. I saw her not knowing where to turn for refuge from swiftly advancing shame and understanding no more of this life of ours than a foolish lost lamb, wandering farther and farther in the nightfall.

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And then—driven out from their midst by the very Christian women who should have been the first to have held out a hand to save—I saw her turn away with a heart hardened into indifference, and plunge headlong into a bottomless gulf of ignominy and sin. Nor did the vision pass until, out of that seething vortex of lust and infamy, I saw arise the black phantom of a lost soul crying out unto God and His Christ for judgment upon the betrayer.

As these hideous spectres of the past came before me, I fell to the ground, borne down by a burden of agony greater even than the very damned in hell can bear. But even as I fell, that burden was lifted and borne away from me, and then I saw, as in a vision, One kneeling in prayer. And I, who had cried out that I could bear the burden of my sin no longer, saw that upon Him was laid, not only my sin, but the sins of the whole world, and that He stooped of His own accord to receive them. And as I looked upon the Divine dignity of that agonised form—forsaken of His Father that we might never be forsaken—I saw great beads of blood break out like sweat upon His brow, and I heard wrung from Him a cry of such unutterable anguish as never before rose from human lips. And at that cry the vision passed, and I awoke to find myself in hell once more, but in my heart there was a stirring as of the wings of hope—the hope which I had deemed dead for ever.

Could it be—O God of mercy! was it possible that even now it might not be too late?—-that there was indeed One Who could make my sin as though it had never been?

But to this hope there succeeded a moment when the agonised thought, “How if there be no Christ?” leapt out at me, like the darkness which looms but the blacker for the lightning-flash; a moment when hell got hold of me again, and a thousand gibbering devils arose to shriek in my ear: “And though there be a Christ, is it not now too late?”

I reeled at that cry, and the darkness once more closed in around. A horde of hideous thoughts, the very spawn of hell, swarmed like vermin in my mind; there was the breath as of a host of contending fiends upon my face; a hundred hungry hands seemed to lay hold on me, and to strive to drag me down and down to a bottomless pit that opened at my very feet, and into which I felt myself slipping. With a great cry to God I strove to rise, but my strength failed me, and I had fallen back into the abyss had not one, white-robed as the morning, come suddenly to succour me by stretching forth a hand of aid; and so—beating and battling like a drowning man for breath—I fought my way out, and fell sobbing and faint upon the pit’s brink. And with a great cry of anguish I prayed aloud, “Lord Christ! I am foul and sinful! I do not know that I love Thee! I do not even know that I have repented of my sins! I only know that I cannot do the things I would do, and that I can never undo the evil I have done. But I come to Thee, Lord Jesus, I come to Thee as Thou biddest me. Send me not away, O Saviour of sinners.”

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As I made an end of praying, I looked up and saw standing beside me One, thorn-crowned and with wounded side, *Whose features were the features of a man, but Whose face was the face of God*.

And as I looked upon that face I shrank back dazed, and breathless, and blinded—-shrank back with a cry like the cry of one smitten of the lightning; for beneath the wide white brows there shone out eyes, before the awful purity of which my sin-stained soul seemed to scorch and to shrivel like a scroll in a furnace. But as I lay, lo! there came a tender touch upon my head, and a voice in my ear that whispered, “Son.”

And as the word died away into a silence like the hallowed hush of listening angels, and I stretched forth my arms with a cry of unutterable longing and love, I say that He held one by the hand—even the one who had plucked me out of the abyss into which I had fallen—and I saw that it was Dorothy—Dorothy whom He had sought out and saved from the shame to which my sin had driven her, and whom He had sent to succour me, that so He might set upon my soul the seal of His pardon and of His peace.

* * * * *

CHARLES KINGSLEY

Alton Locke

Charles Kingsley, English novelist, poet, and clergyman, was born June 12, 1819, and died Jan. 23, 1875. The son of the rector of Chelsea, London, Kingsley went from King’s College, London, to Cambridge, taking his B.A. degree in 1842, and becoming rector of Eversley in 1844. He was made one of the Queen’s chaplains in 1859, and in 1873 was appointed canon of Westminster. After publishing “Village Sermons” and “The Saint’s Tragedy,” Kingsley took part with F.D. Maurice in the Christian Socialist movement of 1848, attacking the horrible sweating then rife in the tailoring trade, calling attention to the miserable plight of the agricultural labourer, and the need for sanitary reform in town and country. In “Alton Locke, Tailor and Poet,” first published in 1849, Kingsley writes from the point of view of the earnest artisan of sixty years ago, and the success of the book, following the author’s pamphlet on “Cheap Clothes and Nasty,” did much to stimulate social and philanthropic work in London and other great industrial centres. Various editions of the novels of Kingsley are obtainable.

I.—A Sweating Shop

I am a cockney among cockneys.

My earliest recollections are of a suburban street; of his jumble of little shops and little terraces.

My mother was a widow. My father, whom I cannot recollect, was a small retail tradesman in the city. He was unfortunate, and when he died, as many small tradesmen do, of bad debts and a broken heart, he left us beggars, and my mother came down and lived penuriously enough in that suburban street.

My mother moved by rule and method; by God's law, as she considered, and that only. She seldom smiled. She never commanded twice without punishing. And yet she kept the strictest watch over our morality.

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Sometimes on a Sunday evening the ministers of the Baptist chapel would come in to supper after the meeting. The elder was a silver-haired old man, who loved me; and I loved him, too, for there were always lollipops in his pocket for me and for my only sister Susan. The other was a younger man, tall and dark. He preached a harsher doctrine than his gentler colleague, and was much the greater favourite at the chapel. I hated him; and years later he married my sister.

When I had turned thirteen, my father's brother, who had risen in wealth, and now was the owner of a first-rate grocery business in the City and a pleasant villa at Herne Hill, and had a son preparing for Cambridge, came to visit us. When he had gone my mother told me, very solemnly and slowly, that I was to be sent to a tailor's workrooms the next day.

What could my uncle make me but a tailor—or a shoemaker? A pale, consumptive boy, all forehead and no muscle.

With a beating heart I shambled along by my mother's side to Mr. Smith's shop, in a street off Piccadilly, and here Mr. Smith handed me over to Mr. Jones, the foreman, with instructions to "take the young man upstairs to the workroom."

I stumbled after Mr. Jones up a dark, narrow, iron staircase till we emerged through a trap-door into a garret at the top of the house. I recoiled with disgust at the scene before me; and here I was to work—perhaps through life! A low room, stifling me with the combined odours of human breath and perspiration, stale beer, the sweet sickly smell of gin, and the sour and hardly less disgusting one of new cloth. On the floor, thick with dust and dirt, scraps of stuff and ends of thread, sat some dozen haggard, untidy, shoeless men, with a mingled look of care and recklessness that made me shudder. The windows were tight-closed to keep out the cold winter air, and the condensed breath ran in streams down the panes.

The foreman turned to one of the men, and said, "Here, Crossthwaite, take this younker and make a tailor of him. Keep him next you, and prick him with your needle if he shirks."

Mechanically, as if in a dream, I sat down, and as the foreman vanished a burst of chatter rose. A tall, sharp-nosed young man bawled in my ear, "I say, young 'un, do you know why we're nearer heaven here than our neighbours?"

"Why?" I asked.

"Acause we're the top of the house in the first place, and next place yer'll die here six months sooner nor if yer worked in the room below. Concentrated essence of man's flesh is this here as you're a-breathing. Cellar workroom we calls Rheumatic Ward, acause of the damp. Ground floor's Fever Ward—your nose'd tell yer why if you

opened the back windy. First floor's Ashmy Ward—don't you hear 'um now through the cracks in the boards, apuffing away like a nest of young locomotives? And this here most august and uppercrust cock-loft is the Consumptive Hospital. First you begins to cough, then you proceeds to expectorate, and then when you've sufficiently covered the poor dear shivering backs of the hairystocracy—

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Die, die, die,
Away you fly,
Your soul is in the sky!

as the hinspired Shakespeare wittily remarks."

And the ribald lay down on his back, stretched himself out, and pretended to die in a fit of coughing, which last was, alas! no counterfeit, while poor I, shocked and bewildered, let my tears fall fast upon my knees.

I never told my mother into what pandemonium I had fallen, but from that time my great desire was to get knowledge. I fancied that getting knowledge I should surely get wisdom, and books, I thought, would tell me all I needed.

That was how it was I came to know Sandy Mackaye, whose old book-shop I used to pass on my walk homeward. One evening, as I was reading one of the books on his stall, the old man called me in and asked me abruptly my name, and trade, and family.

I told him all, and confessed my love of books. And Mackaye encouraged me, and taught me Latin, and soon had me to lodge in his old shop, for my mother in her stern religion would not have me at home because I could not believe in the Christianity which I heard preached in the Baptist chapel.

II.—I Move Among the Gentlefolks

The death of our employer threw many of us out of work, for the son who succeeded to the business determined to go ahead with the times, and to that end decided to go in for the "show-trade"; which meant an alteration in the premises, the demolition of the work-rooms, and the giving out of the work to be made up at the men's own homes.

Mackaye would have me stay with him.

"Ye'll just mind the shop, and dust the books whiles," he said.

But this I would not do, for I thought the old man could not afford to keep me in addition to himself. Then he suggested that I should go to Cambridge and see my cousin, with a view to getting the poems published which I had been writing ever since I started tailoring.

"He's bound to it by blude," said Sandy; "and I'm thinking ye'd better try to get a list o' subscribers."

So to Cambridge I went.

It was some time since I had seen my cousin George, and at our last meeting he had taken me to the Dulwich Gallery. It was there that two young ladies, one so beautiful that I was dazzled, and an elderly clergyman, whom my cousin told me was a dean, had spoken to me about the pictures, and that interview marked a turning point in my life. When I got to Cambridge, and had found my cousin's rooms, I was received kindly enough.

"You couldn't have got on at tailoring—much too sharp a fellow for that," he said, on hearing my story. "You ought to be at college, if one could only get you there. Those poems of yours—you must let me have them and look over them, and I dare say I shall be able to persuade the governor to do something with them."

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Lord Lynedale came to my cousin's rooms next day—George told me plainly that he made friends with those who would advance him when he was a clergyman—and taking an interest in a self-educated author, bade me bring my poems to the Eagle and ask for Dean Winnstay. Lord Lynedale was to marry Dean Winnstay's niece. When I arrived at the Eagle, the first person I saw was Lillian—for so her father, the dean, called her—the younger lady, my heroine of the Dulwich Gallery, looking more beautiful than ever. I could have fallen down—fool that I was!—and worshipped— what? I could not tell you, for I cannot tell even now.

The dean smiled recognition, bade me sit down, and disposed my papers on his knee. I obeyed him, trembling, my eyes devouring my idol, forgetting why I had come, seeing nothing but her, listening for nothing but the opening of those lips.

"I think I may tell you at once that I am very much surprised and gratified with your poems," said the old gentleman.

"How very fond of beautiful things you must be, Mr. Locke," said Lillian, "to be able to describe so passionately the longing after them!"

I stammered out something about working-men having very few opportunities of indulging the taste for—I forget what.

"Ah, yes! I dare say it must be a very stupid life. So little opportunity, as he says. What a pity he is a tailor, papa! Such an unimaginative employment! How delightful it would be to send him to college and make him a clergyman!"

Fool that I was! I fancied—what did I not fancy?—never seeing how that very "*he*" bespoke the indifference—the gulf between us. I was not a man, an equal, but a thing—a subject, who was to be talked over and examined, and made into something like themselves, of their supreme and undeserved benevolence.

"Gently! Gently, fair lady!" said the dean. "We must not be as headlong as some people would kindly wish to be. If this young man really has a proper desire to rise to a higher station, and I find him a fit object to be assisted in that praiseworthy ambition, why, I think he ought to go to some training college. Now attend to me, sir! Recollect, if it should be in our power to assist your prospects in life, you must give up, once and for all, the bitter tone against the higher classes which I am sorry to see in your MSS. Next, I think of showing these MSS. to my publisher, to get opinion as to whether they are worth printing just now. Not that it is necessary that you should be a poet. Most active minds write poetry at a certain age. I wrote a good deal, I recollect, myself. But that is no reason for publishing."

At this point Lillian fled the room, to my extreme disgust. But still the old man prosed.

“I think, therefore, that you had better stay with your cousin for the next week. I hear from Lord Lynedale that he is a very studious, moral, rising young man, and I only hope that you will follow his good example. At the end of the week I shall return home, and then I shall be glad to see more of you at my house at D——. Good-morning!”

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My cousin and I stayed at D—— long enough for the dean to get a reply from the publishers concerning my poems. They thought that the sale of the book might be greatly facilitated if certain passages of a strong political tendency were omitted; they were somewhat too strong for the present state of the public taste.

On the dean's advice, I weakly consented to have the book emasculated. Next day I returned to town, for Sandy Mackaye had written me a characteristic note telling me that he could deposit any trash I had written in a paper called the "Weekly Warwhoop."

Before I went from D——, my cousin George warned me not to pay so much attention to Miss Lillian if I wished to stand well with Eleanor, the dean's niece, who was to marry Lord Lynedale. He left me suspecting that he had remarked Eleanor's wish to cool my admiration for Lillian, and was willing, for his own purposes, to further it.

III.—Riot and Imprisonment

At last my poems were printed and published, and I enjoyed the sensation of being a real live author. What was more, my book "took" and sold, and was reviewed favourably in journals and newspapers.

It struck me that it would be right to call upon the dean, and so I went to his house off Harley Street. The good old man congratulated me on my success, and I saw Lillian, and sat in a delirium of silent joy. Lord Lynedale had become Lord Ellerton, and I listened to the praises that were sung of the newly married couple—for Eleanor had become Lady Ellerton, and had entered fully into all her husband's magnificent philanthropic schemes—a helpmeet, if not an oracular guide.

After this, I had an invitation to tea in Lillian's own hand, and then came terrible news that Lord Ellerton had been killed by a fall from his horse, and that the dean and Miss Winnstay had left London; and for three years I saw them no more.

What happened in those three years?

Mackaye had warned me not to follow after vanity. He was a Chartist, and with him and Crossthwaite, my old fellow-workman, I was vowed to the Good Cause of the Charter. Now I found that I had fallen under suspicion.

"Can you wonder if our friends suspect you?" said Crossthwaite. "Can you deny that you've been off and on lately between flunkeydom and the Cause, like a donkey between two bundles of hay? Have you not neglected our meetings? Have you not picked all the spice out of your poems? Though Sandy is too kind-hearted to tell you, you have disappointed us both miserably, and there's the long and short of it."

I hid my face in my hands. My conscience told me that I had nothing to answer.

Mackaye, to spare me, went on to talk of the agricultural distress, and Crossthwaite explained that he wanted to send a deputation down to the country to spread the principles of the Charter.

“I will go,” I said, starting up. “They shall see I do care for the Cause. Where is the place?”

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“About ten miles from D——.”

“D——!” My heart sank. If it had been any other spot! But it was too late to retract.

With many instructions from our friends and warnings from Mackaye, I started next day on my journey. I arrived in the midst of a dreary, treeless country, and a little pert, snub-nosed shoemaker met me, and we walked together across the open down towards a circular camp, the earthwork, probably, of some old British town.

Inside it, some thousand or so of labouring people, all wan and haggard, with many women among them, were swarming restlessly round a single large block of stone.

I made my way to the stone, and listened as speaker after speaker poured out a string of incoherent complaints. Only the intense earnestness gave any force to the speeches.

I noticed that many of the crowd carried heavy sticks, and pitchforks, and other tools which might be used as fearful weapons; and when a fierce man with a squint asked who would be willing to come “and pull the farm about the folks’ ears,” I felt that now or never was the time for me to speak. If once the spirit of mad, aimless riot broke loose, I had not only no chance of a hearing, but every likelihood of being implicated in deeds which I abhorred.

I sprang on the stone, assured them of the sympathy of the London working-men, and explained the idea of the Charter.

To all which they answered surlily that they did not know anything about politics—that what they wanted was bread.

In vain I went on, more vehement than ever; the only answer was that they wanted bread. “And bread we will have!”

“Go, then!” I cried, losing my self-possession. “Go, and get bread! After all, you have a right to it. There are rights above all laws, and the right to live is one.”

I had no time to finish. The murmur swelled into a roar for “Bread! Bread!” And amid yells and execrations, the whole mass poured down the hill, sweeping me away with them. I was shocked and terrified at their threats. I shouted myself hoarse about the duty of honesty; warned them against pillage and violence; but my voice was drowned in the uproar. I felt I had helped to excite them, and dare not, in honour, desert them; and trembling, I went on, prepared to see the worst.

A large mass of farm buildings lay before us, and the mob rushed tumultuously into the yard—just in time to see an old man on horseback gallop hatless away.

“The old rascal’s gone! And he’ll call up the yeomanry! We must be quick, boys!” shouted one.

The invaders entered the house, and returned, cramming their mouths with bread, and chopping asunder flitches of bacon. The granary doors were broken open, and the contents were scrambled for, amid immense waste, by the starving wretches.

Soon the yard was a pandemonium, as the more ruffianly part of the mob hurled furniture out of windows, or ran off with anything they could carry. The ricks had been fired, and the food of man, the labour of years, devoured in aimless ruin, when some one shouted: “The yeomanry!” And at that sound a general panic ensued.

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I did not care to run. I was utterly disgusted, disappointed, with myself—the people. I just recollect the tramp of the yeomanry horses, and a clear blade gleaming in the air, and after that I recollect nothing—till I awoke and found myself lying on a truckle-bed in D—— gaol, and a warder wrapping my head with wet towels.

Mackaye engaged an old compatriot as attorney at the trial, and I was congratulated on "only getting three years."

The weary time went by. Week after week, month after month, summer after summer, I scored the days off, like a lonely schoolboy, on the pages of a calendar.

Not till I was released did I learn from Sandy Mackaye that my cousin George was the vicar of his church, and that he was about to marry Lillian Winnstay.

IV.—In Exile

Brave old Sandy Mackaye died on the morning of the tenth of April, 1848, the day of the great Chartist demonstration at Kennington Common. Mackaye had predicted failure, and every one of his predictions came true. The people did not rise. Whatever sympathy they had with us, they did not care to show it. The meeting broke up pitiably piecemeal, drenched and cowed, body and soul, by pouring rain.

That same night, after wandering dispiritedly in the streets by the river, I was sick with typhus fever.

I know not for how long my dreams and delirium lasted, but I know that at last I sank into a soft, weary, happy sleep.

Then the spell was snapped. My fever and my dreams faded away together, and I woke to the twittering of the sparrows and the scent of the poplars, and found Eleanor, Lady Ellerton, and her uncle sitting by my bed, and with them Crossthwaite's little wife.

I would have spoken, but Eleanor laid her finger on her lips, and taking her uncle's arm, glided from the room.

Slowly, and with relapses into insensibility, I passed, like one who recovers from drowning, through the painful gate of birth into another life.

Crossthwaite and his wife, as they sat by me, tender and careful nurses both, told me in time that to Eleanor I owed all my comforts. "She's an angel out of heaven," he said. "Ah, Alton, she was your true friend all the time, and not that other one, if you had but known it."

I could not rest till I had heard more of Lady Ellerton.

“Why, then, she lives not far off. When her husband died, she came, my wife Katie tells me, and lived for one year down somewhere in the East End, among the needlewomen. And now she’s got a large house hereby, with fifty or more in it, all at work together, sharing the earnings among themselves, and putting into their own pockets the profits which would have gone to their tyrants; and she keeps the accounts for them, and gets the goods sold, and manages everything, and reads to them while they work, and teaches them every day.”

Crossthwaite went on to speak of Mackaye.

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“When old Mackaye’s will was read, he had left L400 he’d saved, to be parted between you and me, on condition that we’d go and cool down across the Atlantic, and if it hadn’t been for your illness, I’d have been in Texas now.”

Often did I see Eleanor in those days of convalescence, but it was not till a month had gone by that I summoned courage to ask after my cousin. Eleanor looked solemnly at me.

“Did you not know it? He is dead—of typhus fever. He died three weeks ago; and not only he, but the servant who brushed his clothes, and the shopman who had a few days before brought him a new coat home.”

“How did you learn all this?”

“From Mr. Crossthwaite, who found out that you most probably caught your fever from a house near Blackfriars, and in that house this very coat had been turned out, and had covered a body dead of typhus.”

Half unconscious, I stammered Lillian’s name inquiringly.

“She is much changed; sorrow and sickness—for she, too, has had the fever—have worn her down. Little remains now of that loveliness——”

“Which I idolised in my folly.”

“I tried to turn you from your dream. I knew there was nothing there for your heart to rest upon. I was even angry with you for being the *protege* of anyone but myself.”

* * * * *

Eleanor bade me go, and I obeyed her, and sailed—and here I am. And she bade me write faithfully the story of my life, and I have done so.

Yes, I have seen the land! Like a purple fringe upon the golden sea. But I shall never reach the land. Weaker and weaker, day by day, with bleeding lungs and failing limbs, I have travelled the ocean paths. The iron has entered too deeply into my soul.

* * * * *

This is an extract from a letter by John Crossthwaite.

“Galveston, Texas, October, 1848.

“And now for my poor friend, whose papers, according to my promise to him, I transmit to you. On the very night on which he seems to have concluded them—an hour after

we had made the land—we found him in his cabin, dead, resting peacefully as if he had slumbered."

* * * * *

Hereward the Wake

With, the appearance of "Hereward the Wake," sometimes called "Hereward, the Last of the English," Kingsley brought to a close a remarkable series of works of fiction. Although the story was not published until 1866, the germ of it came to Kingsley, according to Mrs. Kingsley's "Memoirs" of her husband, during the summer of 1848, while on a visit to Crowland Abbey, near Peterborough, with the Rev. F.D. Maurice. As its title implies, the romance is suggested by the life and adventures of Hereward, a Saxon yeoman who flourished about 1070. The story itself perhaps does not move along with the same spirit and vigour that characterise Kingsley's earlier works; it shows, nevertheless, that he had lost none of his cunningness for dramatic situations, nor his vivid powers of visualising scenes and events of the past.

I.—Hereward Seeks His Fortune

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In the year of Canute's death was born Hereward, second son of Leofric, Earl of Mercia, and Godiva. At the age of eighteen he was a wild, headstrong, passionate lad, short in stature, but very broad, and his eyes were one blue and one grey. Always in trouble with authority, the climax came when he robbed Herluin, steward of Peterborough, of a sum of sixteen silver pennies collected for the use of the monastery, and for this exploit he was outlawed.

Accordingly, he left his home and went north, to Siward, who was engaged in war with Macbeth, and for aught we know he may have helped to bring great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill. However that may be, he stayed in Scotland with one Gilbert of Ghent, at whose house, among other doughty deeds, single-handed he slew a mighty white bear that escaped from captivity, incidentally saving the life of a pretty little maiden named Alftruda, and earning the hatred of the other men, who had not dared to face the bear.

Finding Scotland a little uncomfortable in consequence, he went to Cornwall, taking with him only his faithful servant Martin, and there at the court of Alef, a Danish kinglet, he had cause to kill a local celebrity, a giant named Ironhook, who was betrothed to Alef's daughter, though much against her will, she being in love with Sigtryg, son of Ranald, king of Waterford.

So Hereward went to Waterford with a ring and a message from the princess, returning later with Sigtryg, only to find that Alef had betrothed his daughter afresh to Hannibal of Marazion, and the wedding ceremony was actually proceeding when they arrived. An ambush was laid for the returning bridal party, Hannibal duly accounted for, and the princess carried off to Waterford, where they

> Prepared another wedding
> With all their hearts so full of glee.

Earl Leofric dead, Hereward determined to take the risk of returning home, to which end he begged two ships from Ranald and set sail. Thrown by a storm on the Flanders coast, he and all his men were like to have been knocked on the head, after the friendly custom of the times, but for the intervention of Arnoul, grandson of Baldwin of Flanders.

Entering his service, Hereward assisted Baldwin in an argument with Eustace of Guisnes, who differed with his lord on the question of payment of certain dues, and so keenly did he reason that the difference of opinion was satisfactorily composed—from Baldwin's point of view.

Anon a war with Holland claimed attention, but in the meantime Hereward had fallen in love with a most beautiful damsel named Torfrida, niece of the Abbot of St. Berlin, reputed a sorceress. Her favour he won in the lists from Sir Ascelin, to whom she had

committed it, and upon him she bestowed it, together with her love and a suit of magic armour, through which no sword could pierce.

Then Hereward went off to Holland, and there he encountered Dirk Hammerhand, from whom to take a buffet was never to need another, and bought from him his famous mare Swallow, the price agreed on being the half of what Hereward had offered and a box on the ear.

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“Villain!” groaned Dirk as he lay on the ground. “It was I who was to give the buffet, not thou!”

“Art mad?” said Hereward, as he coolly picked up the coins which Dirk had scattered in his fall. “It is the seller’s business to take, and the buyer’s to give.”

In Holland Hereward remained a year, but as, under the terms of a wager made in a boastful mood, he went through the campaign without any armour and without changing his clothes, it was a disreputable looking man with many a wound who returned to Bruges, where, at the court of Adela, a jest was played on Torfrida by the countess, not without the privity of Hereward.

For before all her ladies Adela took her to task for having so long remained unmarried. Then, forming the assembly into a court of love, she asked the ladies what punishment should be meted out. One said one thing, one another.

“Marry her to a fool,” said Richilda.

“Too common a misfortune,” said the Lady of France. “No,” said she. “We will marry her to the first man who enters the castle.”

And from her sentence there was no appeal. Married poor Torfrida must be, and to the first man who happened in, be he who he might. And the first man was a ragged beggarman, with whom, when he was introduced into the presence, Torfrida was preparing to deal in her own way with a little knife, be the cost what it might, when she recognised the eye of grey and the eye of blue.

II.—Hereward Encounters Some Old Friends

In the spring it was hey for the war again, whence Hereward returned in November to find himself the father of a daughter and the recipient of letters from Harold of England and William of Normandy, both asking his assistance. Regarding Harold as a usurper, Hereward bluntly told him so. To William his reply was equally decisive, but less uncompromising. “When William is King of all England, Hereward will put his hands between his and be his man.”

Whereat William laughed. “It is a fair challenge from a valiant man,” he said to the messenger. “The day shall come when I shall claim it.”

In Bruges one day Hereward found Gilbert of Ghent, who for reasons of his own had come thither with his ward Alftruda, and mightily disappointed was Gilbert to find him married; for he had a scheme whereby Hereward should marry Alftruda, and he should share her dowry, which was great. Alftruda, too, was mightily displeased, as she seemed one whom Hereward thought the most beautiful he had ever beheld; indeed, for one moment he even forgot Torfrida, and gazed at her spellbound. The only remark she

vouchsafed to her former preserver was a whispered “So you could not wait for me,” and then passed on to marry Dolfin, Gospatric’s eldest son; and Gilbert pursued his way to France to join the Norman.

After that news came thick and fast.

News of Harold Hardraada sailing to England with a mighty host, of how the Gonfanon of St. Peter had come to Rouen, of William of Normandy’s preparations at St. Pierre sur Dive, of the Norsemen landing in the Humber. Anon the news of Stamford Bridge and Hardraada’s death, and lastly news of Senlac, and the death of the other Harold.

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For well-nigh three years after these great happenings Hereward stayed in Flanders, grieving for the woes that had come upon his native land. Not that he sat moping all the time, for some deed of arms was ever on hand to afford distraction; but in the main his thoughts all turned on schemes for freeing England from the French tyrant. But not till Gyda, Harold's widowed mother, came to Baldwin for sanctuary did he take any overt action.

By skilful flattery, not unmixed with truth, she persuaded him that he was the man destined to free England once more; and so one morning he set out alone, accompanied only by Martin Lightfoot and a dozen house-carles, to spy out the land and see what might be done. Within a week he landed at Boston, only to find that Bourne, his home, had been bestowed upon the cook of Gilbert of Ghent, and that at that moment his younger brother's head was decorating the gable of the hall.

And so to Bourne went Hereward by night, and burst in upon the Frenchmen during a drunken carouse: in the morning there were fifteen heads upon the gable to replace the one that he had taken down overnight. Forthwith he returned to Flanders, having bestowed his mother in safety at Crowland Abbey, with a promise to his countrymen of the Fens that he would return to aid them shortly.

III.—Hereward in England

Having settled his affairs in Flanders, in due time he landed once more in the Wash with Torfrida and the child and two shiploads of stout fighters, with whom he went through Fenland raising an army. In the spring came Sweyn with his Danes, all eager for plunder; and Hereward had much ado to prevent them from plundering Crowland Abbey, only succeeding by promising them a richer booty in Peterborough.

So Peterborough they took and sacked, but at Peterborough Hereward found Alftruda, who had left her husband, and rescued her from the Danes during the sack of the minster. And, looking upon her extraordinary beauty, for the second time he forgot Torfrida; but for all that he sent her for safety to old Gilbert of Ghent, who had thrown in his lot with William, and was now at Lincoln. Having done with Peterborough, and later with Stamford, the army marched to Ely and there encamped.

And in Ely a great council was held, after which Sweyn and all his Danes returned home. For as Sweyn truly said, "While William the Frenchman is king by the sword, and Edgar the Englishman king by proclamation of earls and thanes, there seems no room here for Sweyn, nephew of Canute, king of kings." To which Hereward could advance no good reason to prove that there was. Anon came William of Ely, and built a floating bridge a full half-mile in length across the black abyss of mud and reeds that yawned between the island and the mainland. But the bridge was unable to bear the weight of all the French who crowded on to it; the fastenings at the shore-end broke, and the

bridge itself overturned, so that all upon it were thrown into the mud and miserably drowned.

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Whereon William withdrew his forces to Brandon for a space, and Hereward, being minded to find out for himself what next was purposed against the island, followed him thither, with shorn hair and beard, and disguised as a travelling potter. Anon he came to William's palace with his good mare Swallow, bearing on her back a load of crockery. At the palace he narrowly escaped recognition, being sent to the kitchen, where he got into a quarrel with the scullions. In consequence of which he was haled before William himself, who quickly detected that he was other than he pretended.

"Look you," said William, "you are no common churl—you have fought too well for that; show me your arm."

Hereward drew up his sleeve.

"Potters do not carry sword-scars like these, nor are they tattooed like English thanes. Hold up thy head, man, and let me see thy throat.

"Aha! so I suspected. There is fair ladies' work there. Is not this he who was said to be so like Hereward? Very good. Put him in ward till I come back from hunting, but do him no harm. For were he Hereward himself, I should be right glad to see Hereward safe and sound; my man at last, and earl of all between Humber and the Fens." Whereupon Hereward was clapped into an outhouse, whence he escaped forthwith by the simple device of cutting off the head of the man sent to fetter him, and the good mare Swallow bore him back to Ely in safety.

A little later William came again to Ely and built a stronger bridge, but this the English destroyed by fire, with many of the French on it, setting the reeds aflame on the windward side of it.

Some other scheme must now be thought out, and the one that pleased William most was to send to the monks a proclamation that, unless they submitted within a week, all their lands and manors outside the island would be confiscated. Furthermore, that if Hereward would submit he should have his lands in Bourne, and a free pardon for himself and all his comrades.

To which message Sir Ascelin and Ivo Taillebois, not being over desirous of having Hereward as a neighbour, saw fit to add a clause exempting Torfrida from the amnesty, but that she should be burnt on account of her abominable and notorious sorceries.

When the proclamation arrived, Hereward was away foraging. He came back in hot haste when he heard of it, but not fast enough; for ere they were in sight of the minster tower they were aware of a horse galloping violently towards them through the dusk, and on its back were Torfrida and her daughter. The monks had surrendered the island rather than lose their lands.

The French were already in Ely.

And now is Hereward to the greenwood gone, to be a bold outlaw, and the father of all outlaws, who held those forests for two hundred years from the Fens to the Scottish border, and with some four hundred men he ranged up the Bruneswald, dashing out to the war cry of “A Wake! A Wake!” and laying waste with fire and sword; that is, such towns as were in the hands of Frenchmen.

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Now, Hereward had been faithful to Torfrida, a virtue most rare in those days, and he loved her with an overwhelming adoration—as all true men love. And for that very reason he was the more aware that his feeling for Alftruda was strangely like his feeling for Torfrida; and yet strangely different. Wherefore, when it befell that once on a day there came riding to Hereward in the Bruneswald a horseman who handed to him a letter, the sight of Alftruda's signature at the end sent a strange thrill through him. There was naught in it that he should not have read—it was but to tell him that the French were upon him, the *posse comitatus* of seven counties were rising, and so forth. Continuing, the letter told him that Dolfin had been slain on the Border, and William and Gilbert of Ghent were going to marry her to Ascelin, and that, having saved her twice, she feared that Hereward could not save her a third time; concluding with an entreaty to submit to William, hinting that an opportunity presented itself now which might never recur.

The messenger took back the answer. "Tell your lady that I kiss her hands and feet; that I cannot write, for outlaws carry no pen or ink. But that what she has commanded, that will I perform." Having showed the letter to Torfrida, they agreed that it were well to take precautions, and withdrew into the heart of the forest.

Alftruda's warning was both timely and true, for anon came Ivo Taillebois, who had taken to wife Hereward's niece Lucia, and Abbot Thorold, of Peterborough, who had an old score to wipe off in connection with Hereward's last visit to his abbey, and Sir Ascelin, his nephew, and many another. And they rode gaily through the greenwood, where presently they found Hereward, to their sorrow, for of their number some returned home only after payment of ransom, and others never returned at all. And of the former were Abbot Thorold and Ascelin; and the ransom that Hereward exacted for those two was thirty thousand silver marks. Whereby Hereward was enabled to put a spoke in Ascelin's wheel.

"Eh? How, most courteous victor?" said Sir Ascelin.

"Sir Ascelin is not a very wealthy gentleman?"

Ascelin laughed assent.

"*Nudus intravi, nudus exeo*—England; and I fear now this mortal life likewise."

"But he looked to his rich uncle the abbot to further a certain marriage project of his. And, of course, neither my friend, Gilbert of Ghent, nor my enemy, William of Normandy, are likely to give away so rich an heiress without some gratification in return."

IV.—The Last of the English

Thereafter they lived for two years in the forest, and neither Torfrida nor Hereward was the better for them. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, and a sick heart is but too apt to be a peevish one. So there were fits of despondency, jars, mutual recriminations. Furthermore, that first daughter was Torfrida's only child, and she knew almost as well as he how hard that weighed on Hereward. In him the race of Leofric, of Godiva, of Earl Oslac, would become extinct, and the girl would marry—whom? Who but some French conqueror, or at best some English outlaw? What wonder if he longed for a son to pass his name down to future generations?

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And one day Martin Lightfoot came with another letter to Hereward, which he delivered to Torfrida, who learned from him that it came from Alftruda. She bade him deliver it to Hereward, to whom it was addressed, the which he did; but she noticed that this letter Hereward never mentioned to her, as he had done the former.

A month later Martin came again.

“There is another letter come; it came last night,” said he.

“What is that to thee or me? My lord has his state secrets. Is it for us to pry into them? Go.”

“I thought—I thought—”

“Go, I say!”

There was a noise of trampling horses outside. The men were arming and saddling, and Hereward went with them, saying that he would be back in three days.

After he had gone she found, close to where his armour had hung, a letter from Alftruda. It congratulated Hereward on having shaken himself free from the fascinations of “that sorceress.” It said that all was settled with King William; Hereward was to come to Winchester. She had the king’s writ for his safety ready to send to him; the king would receive him as his liegeman. Alftruda would receive him as her husband. Archbishop Lanfranc had made difficulties about the dissolution of his marriage with Torfrida, but gold would do all things at Rome; and so forth.

When this was read, after a night of frenzy, to Crowland Torfrida went under the guidance of Martin, and laid her head upon the knees of the Lady Godiva.

“I am come, as you always told me I should do. But it has been a long way hither, and I am very tired.”

And at Crowland remained Martin, donning a lay brother’s frock that he might the better serve his mistress. And to Crowland, after three days, came Leofric, the renegade priest, who had been with Hereward in the greenwood, and with him the child.

And so it came that when Hereward returned, as he had said, after three days, he found neither wife nor child, and to Crowland he too went, but came away even as he had gone. But with Torfrida he had no word, nor with Godiva, for both refused him audience.

So Hereward went to Winchester, and with him forty of his knights, and placed his hands between the hands of William, and swore to be his man.

And William walked out of the hall leaning on Hereward's shoulder, at which all the Normans gnashed their teeth with envy.

And thereafter Hereward married Alftruda, after the scruples of Holy Church had been duly set at rest.

Then Hereward lived again at Bourne, and tried to bring forgetfulness by drink—and drink brought boastfulness; for that he had no more the spirit left to do great deeds, he must needs babble of the great deeds which he had done, and hurl insult and defiance at his Norman neighbours. And in the space of three years he had become as intolerable to those same neighbours as they were intolerable to him, and he was fain to keep up at Bourne the same watch and ward that he had kept up in the forest.

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And Judith came to Bourne, and besought Alftruda to accompany her to Crowland, where she would visit the tomb of Waltheof, her husband. And Alftruda went with her, taking a goodly company of knights to be her escort, while Hereward remained at Bourne with few to guard it.

And knowing this, to Bourne came Ascelin and Taillebois, Evermue, Raoul de Dol, and many another Norman, and burst in upon Hereward in some such fashion as he had done himself some ten years earlier. “Felons,” he shouted, “your king has given me his truce! Is this your French law? Is this your French honour? Come on, traitors all, and get what you can of a naked man; you will buy it dear. Guard my back, Winter!”

And with his constant comrade at his back, he dashed right at the press of knights:

> And when his lance did break in hand
> Full fell enough he smote with brand.

And now he is all wounded, and Winter, who fought at his back, is fallen on his face, and Hereward stands alone within a ring of eleven corpses. A knight rushes in, to make a twelfth, cloven through the helm; but with the blow Hereward’s blade snaps short, and he hurls it away as his foes rush in. With his shield he beat out the brains of two, but now Taillebois and Evermue are behind him, and with four lances through his back he falls, to rise no more.

So perished the last of the English.

* * * * *

Hypatia

In “Hypatia,” published in 1853, after passing through “Fraser’s Magazine,” Kingsley turned from social problems in England to life in Egypt in the fifth century, taking the same pains to give the historical facts of the old dying Roman world as he did to describe contemporary events at home. The moral of “Hypatia,” according to its author, is that “the sins of these old Egyptians are yours, their errors yours, their doom yours, their deliverance yours. There is nothing new under the sun.”

I.—The Laura

In the 413th year of the Christian era, some 300 miles from Alexandria, the young monk Philammon was sitting on the edge of a low range of inland cliffs, crested with drifting sand. Behind him the desert sand waste stretched, lifeless, interminable, reflecting its lurid blare on the horizon of the cloudless vault of blue. Presently he rose and wandered along the cliffs in search of fuel for the monastery from whence he came, for Abbot Pambo’s laura at Scetis.

It lay pleasantly enough, that lonely laura, or lane of rude Cyclopean cells, under the perpetual shadow of the southern walls of crags, amid its grove of ancient date-trees. And a simple, happy, gentle life was that of the laura, all portioned out by rules and methods. Each man had food and raiment, shelter on earth, friends and counsellors, living trust in the continual care of Almighty God. Thither had they fled out of cities, out of a rotten, dying world of tyrants and slaves, hypocrites and wantons, to ponder undisturbed on duty and on judgment, on death and eternity.

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But to Philammon had come an insatiable craving to know the mysteries of learning, to see the great roaring world of men. He felt he could stay no longer, and on his return he poured out his speech to Abbot Pambo.

“Let me go! I am not discontented with you, but with myself. I knew that obedience is noble, but danger is nobler still. If you have seen the world, why should not I? Cyril and his clergy have not fled from it.”

Abbot Pambo sought counsel with the good brother Aufugus, and then bade Philammon follow him.

“And thou wouldst see the world, poor fool? Thou wouldst see the world?” said the old man when the abbot had left them alone together.

“I would convert the world!”

“Thou must know it first. Here I sit, the poor unknown old monk, until I die. And shall I tell thee what that world is like? I was Arsenius, tutor of the emperor. There at Byzantium I saw the world which thou wouldst see, and what I saw thou wilt see. Bishops kissing the feet of parricides. Saints tearing saints in pieces for a word. Falsehood and selfishness, spite and lust, confusion seven times confounded. And thou wouldst go into the world from which I fled?”

“If the harvest be at hand, the Lord needs labourers. Send me, and let that day find me where I long to be, in the forefront of the battle of the Lord.”

“The Lord’s voice be obeyed. Thou shalt go. Here are letters to Cyril, the patriarch. Thou goest of our free will as well as thine own. The abbot and I have watched thee long, knowing that the Lord had need of such as thee elsewhere. We did but prove thee, to see, by thy readiness to obey, whether thou were fit to rule. Go, and God be with thee. Covet no man’s gold or silver. Neither eat flesh nor drink wine, but live as thou hast lived—a Nazarite of the Lord. The papyrus boat lies at the ferry; thou shalt descend in it. When thou hast gone five days’ journey downward, ask for the mouth of the canal of Alexandria. Once in the city, any monk will guide thee to the archbishop. Send us news of thy welfare by some holy mouth. Come.”

Silently they paced together down the glen to the lonely beach of the great stream. Pambo was there, and with slow and feeble arms he launched the canoe. Philammon flung himself at the old men’s feet, and besought their blessing and their forgiveness.

“We have nothing to forgive. Follow thou thine inward call. If it be the flesh, it will avenge itself; if it be of the Spirit, who are we that we should fight against God? Farewell!”

A few minutes more, and the youth and his canoe were lessening down the rapid stream in the golden summer twilight.

II.—Hypatia, Queen of Paganism

On his first morning in Alexandria, Philammon heard praises of Hypatia from a fruit porter who showed him the way to the archbishop's house. Hypatia, according to his guide, was the queen of Alexandria, a very unique and wonderful person, the fountain of classic wisdom.

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Later in the day, after he had presented himself to Archbishop Cyril, Philammon learnt from an old priest, and from a fanatical monk named Peter, that the very name of Hypatia was enough to rouse the clergy to a fury of execration. It seemed that Orestes, the Roman governor of the city, although nominally a Christian, was the curse of the Alexandrian Church; and Orestes visited Hypatia, whose lectures on heathen philosophy drew all the educated youth of the place.

Philammon's heart burned to distinguish himself at once. There were no idols now to break, but there was philosophy.

"Why does not some man of God go boldly into the lecture-room of the sorceress, and testify against her?" he asked.

"Do it yourself, if you dare," said Peter. "We have no wish to get our brains knocked out by all the profligate young gentlemen in the city."

"I will do it," said Philammon.

The archbishop gave permission.

"Only promise me two things," he said. "Promise me that, whatever happens, you will not strike the first blow, and that you will not argue with her. Contradict, denounce, defy. But give no reasons. If you do you are lost. She is subtler than the serpent, skilled in all the tricks of logic, and you will became a laughing-stock, and run away in shame."

"Ay," said Peter, bitterly, as he ushered Philammon out. "Go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper, young fool! Ay, go, and let her convert you. Touch the accursed thing, like Achan, and see if you do not end by having it in your tent."

And with this encouraging sentence the two parted, and Philammon, on the following morning, followed the train of philosophers, students, and fine gentlemen to Hypatia's lecture-room.

Philammon listened to Hypatia in bewilderment, attracted by the beauty of the speaker, the melody of her voice, and the glitter of her rhetoric. As she discoursed on truth a sea of new thoughts and questions came rushing in on his acute Greek intellect at every sentence. A hostile allusion to the Christian Scriptures aroused him, and he cried out, "It is false, blasphemous! The Scriptures cannot lie!"

There was a yell at this. "Turn the monk out!" "Throw the rustic through the window!" cried a dozen young gentlemen. Several of the most valiant began to scramble over the benches up to him, and Philammon was congratulating himself on the near approach of a glorious martyrdom, when Hypatia's voice, calm and silvery, stifled the noise and tumult in a moment.

“Let the youth listen, gentlemen. He is but a monk and a plebeian, and knows no better; he has been taught thus. Let him sit here quietly, and perhaps we may be able to teach him otherwise.”

And, without even a change of tone, she continued her lecture.

Philammon sprang up the moment that the spell of her voice was taken off him, and hurried out through the corridor into the street. But he had not gone fifty yards before his friend the fruit porter, breathless with running, told him that Hypatia called for him. “Thereon, her father, commands thee to be at her house—here—to-morrow at the third hour. Hear and obey.”

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Cyril heard Philammon's story and Hypatia's message with a quiet smile, and then dismissed the youth to an afternoon of labour in the city, commanding him to come for his order in the evening.

But in the evening, Peter, already jealous of Cyril's interest in Philammon, and enraged at any toleration being extended to Hypatia, refused to let the youth enter the archbishop's house, and then struck him full in the face. The blow was intolerable, and in an instant Peter's long legs were sprawling on the pavement, while he bellowed like a bull to all the monks that stood by, "Seize him! The traitor! The heretic! He holds communion with heathens! And he was in Hypatia's lecture-room this morning!"

A rush took place at the youth, but Philammon's blood was up. The ring of monks were baying at him like hounds round a bear, and, against such odds, the struggle would be desperate. He turned and forced his way to the gate, amid a yell of derision which brought every drop of blood in his body into his cheeks.

"Let me leave this court in safety! God knows whether I am a heretic; and the archbishop shall know of your iniquity. I will not cross this threshold again until Cyril himself sends for me to shame you!"

He strode on in his wrath some hundred yards or more before he asked himself where he was going. Gradually one fixed idea began to glimmer through the storm—to see Hypatia and convert her. He had Cyril's leave. It must be right. That would justify him—to bring back, in the fetters of the Gospel, the Queen of Heathendom. Yes, there was that left to live for.

III.—Pandemonium

Philammon did not convert Hypatia, but he became her favourite pupil. And Hypatia, dreaming that the worship of the old gods might be restored, and her philosophy triumph over Christianity, received daily visits from Orestes, the governor, and entered into his plans—to her undoing.

For Orestes had an idea of becoming emperor, and of purchasing the favour of the populace by a show of gladiators. To win Hypatia for himself, he promised to restore the heathen games, and Hypatia, caring nothing for Orestes, but always longing for the revival of the old religion, promised, against her better judgment, to bear him company on the day of the festival, and to sit by his side, and even to acclaim him emperor.

The success of Orestes' plot depended on the success of a bigger rebellion—the attempt of Heraclian, Count of Africa, to conquer Rome. Heraclian had been defeated, and this was known to Cyril, but Orestes was misled by false intelligence, and counted on Heraclian's victory for his own triumph.

When the day of the spectacle arrived, to the horror and surprise of Philammon, Hypatia herself sat by the side of the Roman prefect, while, on the stage before them, a number of Libyan prisoners fought fiercely for their lives, only to be butchered in the end by the professional gladiators.

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The sleeping devil in the hearts of the brutalised multitude burst forth at the sight, and with jeers and applause the hired ruffians were urged on to their work of blood.

Then a shameless exhibition of Venus followed, and Philammon could bear no more. For Venus was his sister, long parted from him in childhood, and only in the last few days had he learnt of his relationship to Pelagia, the lady who had consented to act the part of the Goddess of Love, and who was betrothed to Amal, the leader of the band of Goths. He rushed down through the dense mass of spectators, leaped the balustrade into the orchestra below, and tore across to the foot of the stage.

“Pelagia! Sister! My sister! Have mercy on me! On yourself! I will hide you! Save you! We will flee together out of this infernal place! I am your brother! Come!”

She looked at him one moment with wide, wild eyes. The truth flashed on her. And she sprang from the platform into his arms, and then, covering her face with both her hands, sank down among the bloodstained sand.

A yell ran along the vast circle. Philammon was hurried away by the attendants, and Pelagia, her face still hidden by her hands, walked slowly away and vanished among the palms at the back of the stage. A cloud, whether of disgust or disappointment, now hung upon every brow, and there was open murmuring at the cruelty and heathenry of the show. Hypatia was utterly unnerved. Orestes alone rose to the crisis.

In a well-studied oration he declared that Heraclian the African was conquerer of Rome, and a roar of hired applause supported him. Then the prefect of the guards encouraged the city authorities to salute Orestes as emperor, and Hypatia, amid shouts of her aristocratic scholars, rose and knelt before him, writhing inwardly with shame and despair.

At the same moment a monk’s voice shouted from the highest tiers in the theatre, “It is false! False! You are tricked! Heraclian was utterly routed; Cyril has known it, every Jew has known it, for a week past. So perish all the enemies of the Lord, caught in their own snare!”

For a minute an awful silence fell on all who heard; and then arose a tumult, which Orestes in vain attempted to subdue. The would-be emperor summoned his guards around him and Hypatia, and made his way out as best he could, while the multitude melted away like snow before the rain, to find every church placarded by Cyril with the particulars of Heraclian’s ruin.

Two days later, when Hypatia went to give her farewell lecture to her pupils—for all hope was dead—a mob of monks and their followers seized her, dragged her into the church of the Caesareum, and there, before the great, still figure of Christ, Peter struck her down, and the mob tore her limb from limb.

IV.—Back to the Desert

Philammon had done his best, struggling in vain, to pierce the dense mass of people, and save Hypatia. He had been wedged against a pillar, unable to move, in the great church.

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The little fruit porter, alone of all her disciples, fought his way through the mob, only to be thrown down the steps.

When all was over in the church, and Hypatia was dead, and the mob had rushed out, Philammon sank down exhausted outside, and the little porter burst out into a bitter agony of human tears.

“She is with the gods,” said the porter at last.

“She is with the God of gods,” answered Philammon.

Then he felt that he must arise and flee for his life. He had gone forth to see the world, and he had seen it. Arsenius was in the right after all. Home to the desert. But first he would go himself, alone, and find Pelagia, and implore her to flee with him.

* * * * *

Abbot Pambo, as well as Arsenius, had been dead several years; the abbot’s place was filled, by his own dying command, by a hermit from the neighbouring deserts, who had made himself famous for many miles round by his extraordinary austerities, his ceaseless prayers, and his loving wisdom.

While still in the prime of his manhood, he was dragged, against his own entreaties, to preside over the laura of Scetis. The elder monks considered it an indignity to be ruled by so young a man; but the monastery throve and grew rapidly under his government. His sweetness, patience, and humility, and, above all, his marvellous understanding of the doubts and temptations of his own generation, soon drew around him all whose sensitiveness or waywardness had made them unmanageable in the neighbouring monasteries.

Never was the young Abbot Philammon heard to speak harshly of any human being, and he stopped, by stern rebuke, any attempt to revile either heretics or heathens.

One thing was noted, that there mingled always with his prayers the names of two women. And when some worthy elder, taking courage from his years, dared to hint kindly that this caused some scandal to the weaker brethren, “It is true,” answered he. “Tell my brethren that I pray nightly for two women, both of them young, both of them beautiful; both of them beloved by me more than I love my own soul; and tell them that one of the two was an actress, and the other a heathen.” The old monk laid his hand on his mouth and retired.

The remainder of his history it seems better to extract from an unpublished fragment of the lives of the saints.

“Now when the said abbot had ruled the monastery of Scetis seven years with uncommon prudence, he called one morning to him a certain ancient brother, and said: ’Make ready for me the divine elements, that I may consecrate them, and partake thereof with all my brethren, ere I depart hence. For know assuredly that within the seventh day, I shall migrate to the celestial mansions.’ And the abbot, having consecrated, distributed among his brethren, reserving only a portion of the most holy bread and wine; and then, having bestowed on them all the kiss of peace, he took the paten and chalice in his hands, and went forth from the monastery towards the desert; whom the whole fraternity followed weeping. And having arrived at the foot of a certain mountain, he stopped, and blessing them, dismissed them, and so ascending, was taken away from their eyes.

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“But the eldest brother sent two of the young men to seek their master, who, meeting with a certain Moorish people, learnt that a priest, bearing a paten and chalice, had passed before them a few days before, crossing the desert in the direction of the cave of the holy Amma.

“And they inquiring who this Amma might be, the Moors answered that some twenty years ago there had arrived in those mountains a woman more beautiful than had ever before been seen in that region, who, after distributing among them the rich jewels which she wore, had embraced the hermit’s life, and sojourned upon the highest peak of a neighbouring mountain.

“Then the two brothers, determining to proceed, arrived upon the summit of the said mountain.

“There in an open grave, guarded by two lions, lay the body of Philammon, the abbot; and by his side, wrapped in his cloak, the corpse of a woman of exceeding beauty, such as the Moors had described. And by the grave-side stood the paten and the chalice, emptied of their divine contents. Whereupon, filling in the grave with all haste, they returned weeping to the laura.

“Now, before they returned, one of the brethren, searching the cave wherein the holy woman dwelt, found nothing there, saving one bracelet of gold, of large size and strange workmanship, engraven with foreign characters, which no one could decipher.

“And it came to pass years afterwards that certain wandering barbarians of the Vandalic race saw this bracelet in the laura of Scetis, and pretended that it had belonged to a warrior of their tribe.”

* * * * *

So be it. Pelagia and Philammon, like the rest, went to their own place; to the only place where such in such days could find rest; to the desert and the hermit’s cell.

Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone, whether at Hypatia or Pelagia, Cyril or Philammon.

* * * * *

Two Years Ago

Kingsley’s “Two Years Ago” has been said by his son to be the only novel, pure and simple, that ever came from the pen of the famous writer, Published in 1857, it was begun two years earlier while staying at Bideford. At this time Kingsley was deeply interested in the Crimean War, and many thousands of copies of his pamphlet, “Brave

Words to Brave Soldiers," were distributed to the army. His military tastes no doubt go a long way towards explaining his doctrine in "Two Years Ago" that the war was to exercise a great regenerating influence in English life. Although the story is in many respects weaker than its predecessors, it nevertheless abounds in brilliant and vivid word-paintings, the descriptions of North Devon scenery being probably unsurpassed in English prose.

I.—Tom Thurnall's Wanderings

To tell my story I must go back sixteen years to the days when the pleasant old town of Whitbury boasted of forty coaches a day, instead of one railway, and set forth how there stood two pleasant houses side by side in its southern suburb.

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In one of these two houses lived Mark Armsworth, banker, solicitor, land agent, and justice of the peace. In the other lived Edward Thurnall, esquire, doctor of medicine, and consulting physician of all the countryside. These two men were as brothers, both were honest and kind-hearted men.

Dr. Thurnall was sitting in his study, settled to his microscope, one beautiful October morning, and his son Tom stood gazing out of the bay window.

Tom, who had been brought up in his father's profession, was of that bull-terrier type so common in England; sturdy, middle-sized, deep-chested, broad-shouldered, his face full of shrewdness and good nature, and of humour withal. It was his last day at home; tomorrow he was leaving for Paris.

Presently Mark Armsworth came in, and Tom was seen cantering about the garden with a weakly child of eight in his arms.

"Mark, the boy's heart cannot be in the wrong place while he is so fond of little children."

"If she grows up, doctor, and don't go to join her poor dear mother up there, I don't know that I'd wish her a better husband than your boy."

"It would be a poor enough match for her."

"Tut! She'll have the money, and he the brains. Doctor, that boy'll be a credit to you; he'll make a noise in the world, or I know nothing. And if his fancy holds seven years hence, and he wants still to turn traveller, let him. If he's minded to go round the world, I'll back him to go, somehow, or I'll eat my head, Ned Thurnall!"

So Tom carried Mary about all the morning, and next day went to Paris, and soon became the best pistol shot and billiard-player in the Quartier Latin. Then he went to St. Mumpsimus's Hospital in London, and became the best boxer therein, and captain of the eight-oar, besides winning prizes and certificates without end, and becoming in time the most popular house-surgeon in the hospital; but nothing could keep him permanently at home. Settle down in a country practice he would not. Cost his father a farthing he would not. So he started forth into the wide world with nothing but his wits and his science, an anatomical professor to a new college in some South American republic. Unfortunately, when he got there, he found that the annual revolution had just taken place, and that the party who had founded the college had all been shot. Whereat he whistled, and started off again, no man knew whither.

"Having got round half the world, daddy," he wrote home, "it's hard if I don't get round the other half."

With which he vanished into infinite space, and was only heard of by occasional letters dated from the Rocky Mountains, the Spanish West Indies, Otaheite, Singapore, the

Falkland Islands, and all manner of unexpected places, sending home valuable notes, zoological and botanical.

At last when full four years were passed and gone since Tom started for South America, he descended from the box of the day-mail at Whitbury, with a serene and healthful countenance, shouldered his carpet-bag, and started for his father's house.

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He walked in, and hung up his hat in the hall, just as if he had come in from a walk. Not finding the old man, he went into Mark Armsworth's, frightening out of her wits a pale, ugly girl of seventeen, whom he discovered to be his old playfellow, Mary. However, she soon recovered her equanimity, and longed to throw her arms round his neck as of old, and was only restrained by the thought that she was grown a great girl now. She called her father, and all the household, and after a while the old doctor came home, and the fatted calf was killed, and all made merry over the return of this altogether unrepentant prodigal son.

Tom Thurnall stayed a month at home, and then went to America, whence he wrote home in about six months. Then came a long silence, and then a letter from California; and then letters more regularly from Australia. Sickened with California life, he had crossed the Pacific once more, and was hard at work in the diggings, doctoring and gold-finding by turns.

"A rolling stone gathers no moss," said his father.

"He has the pluck of a hound, and the cunning of a fox," said Mark, "and he'll be a credit to you yet."

So the years slipped on till the autumn of 1853. And then Tom, at the diggings at Ballarat, got a letter from Mary Armsworth.

"Your father is quite well in health, but his eyes have grown much worse, and the doctors are afraid that he has little chance of recovering the sight, at least of the left eye. And something has happened to the railroad in which he had invested so much, and he has given up the old house. He wants you to come home; but my father has entreated him to let you stay. You know, while we are here, he is safe."

Tom walked away slowly into the forest. He felt that the crisis of his life was come.

"I'll stay here and work," he said to himself finally, "till I make a hit or luck runs dry, and then home and settle; and, meanwhile, I'll go down to Melbourne tomorrow, and send the dear old dad two hundred pounds."

And there sprang up in him at once the intensest yearning after his father and the haunts of his boyhood, and the wildest dread that he should never see them.

II.—The Wreck

Half the village of Aberalva is collected on the long sloping point of a cliff. Sailors wrapped in pilot-cloth, oil-skinned coast guardsmen, women with their gowns turned over their heads, while every moment some fresh comer stumbles down the slope and asks, "Where's the wreck?" A shift of wind, a drift of cloud, and the moon flashes out a moment.

“There she is, sir,” says Brown, the head-boatman to the coastguard lieutenant.

Some three hundred yards out at sea lies a long, curved, black line, amid the white, wild leaping hills of water. A murmur from the crowd.

“A Liverpool clipper, by the lines of her.”

“God help the poor passengers, then!” sobs a woman. “They’re past our help.”

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A quarter of an hour passes.

“God have mercy!” shouts Brown. “She’s going!”

The black curve coils up, and then all melts away into the white seething waste.

The coastguard lieutenant settles down in his macintoshes, knowing that his duty is not to leave as long as there is a chance of saving—not a life, for that was past all hope, but a chest of clothes or a stick of timber.

And with the coastguardsmen many sailors stayed. Old Captain Willis stays because Grace Harvey, the village schoolmistress, is there, sitting upon a flat slope of rock, a little apart from the rest, with her face resting on her hands, gazing intently out into the wild waste.

“She’s not one of us,” says old Willis. “There’s no saying what’s going on there in her. Maybe she’s praying; maybe she sees more than we do, over the sea there.”

“Look at her now! What’s she after?” Brown replies.

The girl had raised her head, and was pointing toward the sea. Then she sprang to her feet with a scream.

“A man! A man! Save him!”

As she spoke a huge wave rolled in, and out of it struggled, on hands and knees, a human figure. He looked wildly up and around, and lay clinging with outstretched arms over the edge of the rock.

“Save him!” she shrieked again, as twenty men rushed forward—and stopped short. The man was fully thirty yards from them, but between them and him stretched a long, ghastly crack, some ten feet wide, with seething cauldrons within.

Ere they could nerve themselves for action, the wave had come, half-burying the wretched mariner, and tearing across the chasm.

The schoolmistress took one long look, and as the wave retired, rushed after it to the very brink of the chasm, and flung herself on her knees.

“The wave has carried him across the crack, and she’s got him!” screamed old Willis. And he sprang upon her, and caught her round the waist.

“Now, if you be men!” shouted he, as the rest hurried down.

“Now, if you be men; before the next wave comes!” shouted big Jan, the fisherman. “Hands together, and make a line!” And he took a grip with one hand of the old man’s waistband, and held out the other for who would to seize.

Strong hand after hand was clasped, and strong knee after knee dropped almost to the rock, to meet the coming rush of water.

It came, and surged over the man and the girl, and up to old Willis’s throat, and round the knees of Jan and his neighbour; and then followed the returning out-draught, and every limb quivered under the strain; but when the cataract had disappeared, the chain was still unbroken.

“Saved!” and a cheer broke from all lips save those of the girl herself—she was as senseless as he whom she had saved.

Gently they lifted each, and laid them on the rock; and presently the schoolmistress was safe in bed at her mother’s house. And the man, weak, but alive, had been carried triumphantly up to the door of Dr. Heale, which having been kicked open, the sailors insisted on carrying him right upstairs, and depositing him on the best spare bed, saying, “If you won’t come to your patients, doctor, your patients shall come to you.”

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The man grumbled when he awoke next morning at being thrown ashore with nothing in the world but an old jersey and a bag of tobacco, two hundred miles short of the port where he hoped to land with L1,500 in his pocket.

To Dr. Heale, and to the Rev. Frank Headley, the curate, who called upon him, he mentioned that his name was Tom Thurnall, F.R.C.S.

Later in the day Tom met the coastguard lieutenant and old Captain Willis on the shore, and the latter introduced him to “Miss Harvey, the young person who saved your life last night.”

Tom was struck by the beauty of the girl at once, but after thanking her, said gently, “I wish to tell you something which I do not want publicly talked of, but in which you may help me. I had nearly L1,500 about me when I came ashore last night, sewed in a belt round my waist. It is gone.”

Grace turned pale, and her lips quivered. She turned to her mother and Captain Willis.

“Belt! Mother! Uncle! What is this? The gentleman has lost a belt!”

“Dear me! A belt! Well, child, that’s not much to grieve over, when the Lord has spared his life,” said her mother, somewhat testily.

Grace declared the money should be found, and Tom vowed to himself he would stay in that little Cornish village of Aberalva until he had recovered it.

So after writing to some old friends at St. Mumpsimus’s Hospital to send him down some new drugs, and to his father, he settled down as Dr. Heale’s assistant; and Dr. Heale being addicted to brandy and water, there was plenty of room for assistance.

III.—The Cholera

Tom Thurnall had made up his mind in June 1854, that the cholera ought to visit Aberalva in the course of the summer, and, of course, tried his best to persuade people to get ready for their ugly visitor; but in vain. The collective ignorance, pride, laziness, and superstition of the little town showed a terrible front to the newcomer.

“Does he think we was all fools afore he came here?”

That was the rallying cry of the enemy, and sanitary reform was thrust out of sight.

But Lord Minchampstead, who owned the neighbouring estates of Pentremochyn, on Mark Armsworth’s advice, got Tom to make a report on the sanitary state of his cottages, and then acted on the information.

Frank Headley backed up Tom in his sanitary crusade, the coastguard lieutenant proved an unexpected ally, and Grace Harvey promised that she would do all she could.

Tom wrote up to London and detailed the condition of the place to the General Board of Health, and the Board returned, for answer, that, as soon as cholera broke out in Aberalva, they would send down an inspector.

Then in August it came, and Tom Beer, the fisherman, and one of the finest fellows in the town, was dead after two hours' illness.

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Up and down the town the foul fiend sported, now here, now there, fleshing his teeth on every kind of prey. He has taken old Beer's second son, and now clutches at the old man himself; then across the street to Jan Beer, his eldest; but he is driven out from both houses by chloride of lime, and the colony of the Beers has peace awhile. The drunken cobbler dies, of course; but spotless cleanliness and sobriety do not save the mother of seven children, who has been soaking her brick floor daily with water from a poisoned well, defiling where she meant to clean. Youth does not save the buxom lass who has been filling herself with unripe fruit.

And yet sots and fools escape where wise men fall; weakly women, living amid all wretchedness, nurse, unharmed, strong men who have breathed fresh air all day.

Headley and Grace and old Willis, and last, but not least, Tom Thurnall, these and three or four brave women, organised themselves into a band, and commenced at once a visitation from house to house, saving thereby many a life. But within eight-and-forty hours it was as much as they could do to attend to the acute cases.

Grace often longed to die, but knew that she should not die till she had found Tom's belt, and was content to wait.

Tom just thought nothing about death and danger at all, but, always cheerful, always busy, yet never in a hurry, went up and down, seemingly ubiquitous. Sleep he got when he could, and food as often as he could; into the sea he leapt, morning and night, and came out fresher every time; the only person in the town who seemed to grow healthier, and actually happier, as the work went on, in that fearful week.

The battle is over at last, and Tom is in London at the end of September, ready to go to war as medical officer to the Turks. The news of Alma has just arrived.

But he pays a visit to Whitbury first, and there Lord Minchampstead sees him, and his lordship expresses satisfaction at the way Tom conducted the business at Pentremochyn, and offers him a post of queen's messenger in the Crimea, which Tom accepts with profuse thanks.

Before Tom left for the East old Mark Armsworth took him aside, and said, "What do you think of the man who marries my daughter?"

"I should think," quoth Tom, wondering who the happy man could be, "that he would be lucky in possessing such a heart."

"Then be as good as your word, and take her yourself. I've watched you, and you'll make her a good husband."

Tom was too astonished and puzzled to reply. He had never thought that he had found such favour in his old playfellow Mary Armsworth's eyes.

It was a terrible temptation. He knew the plain English of L50,000, and Mark Armsworth's daughter, a good house, a good consulting practice, and, above all, his father to live with him.

And then rose up before his imagination the steadfast eyes of Grace Harvey, and seemed to look through and through his inmost soul, as through a home which belonged of right to her, and where no other woman must dwell, or could dwell; for she was there and he knew it; and knew that, even if he never married till his dying day, he should sell his soul by marrying anyone but her.

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So Tom told old Mark it was impossible, because he was in love with another woman. And then just as he was packing up next morning came a note from Mark Armsworth and a cheque for L500, “To Thomas Thurnall, Esq., for behaving like a gentleman.” And Tom went Eastward Ho!—two years ago.

IV.—Christmas Eve

It was in September, after Tom had left, that Grace found the missing belt. Her mother had hidden it in a cave on the shore, and Grace, following her there, came upon the hiding-place. The shock of detection brought out the disease against which Mrs. Harvey had taken so many precautions, and within two days the unhappy woman was dead.

Grace sold all her mother’s effects, paid off all creditors, and with a few pounds left, vanished from Aberalva. She had written at once to Tom at Whitbury, telling him that his belt and money were safe, but had received no answer; and now she went to Whitbury herself, only to arrive a week after Tom had gone. Mark Armsworth and Mary kept her for a night, and she left Tom’s money with the old banker, retaining the belt and then set out Eastward Ho! too, to nurse the wounded in the war; and, if possible, to find Tom and clear her name of all suspicion.

How Grace Harvey worked at Scutari and at Balaclava, there is no need to tell. Why mark her out from the rest, when all did more than nobly? In due time she went home to England—home, but not to Aberalva.

She presented herself one day at Mark Armsworth’s house in Whitbury, and begged him to obtain her a place as servant to old Dr. Thurnall. And by the help of Mark, and Mary, Grace Harvey took up her abode in the old man’s house; and ere a month was past she was to him a daughter.

Mary loved her—wanted to call her sister; but Grace drew back lovingly, but humbly, from all advances; for she had divined Mary’s secret with the quick eye of a woman. She saw how Mary grew daily paler, sadder. Be it so; Mary had a right to him, and she had none.

* * * * *

And where was Tom Thurnall all the while? No man could tell.

Mark inquired; Lord Minchampstead inquired; great personages inquired; but all in vain. A few knew, and told Lord Minchampstead, who told Mark, in confidence, that he had been heard of last in the Circassian Mountains about Christmas 1854; but since then all was blank.

The old man never seemed to regret him; and never mentioned his name after a while. None knew it was because he and Grace never talked of anything else. So they had lived, and so they had waited.

And now it is the blessed Christmas Eve; the light is failing fast; when down the High Street comes Mark's portly bulk. The next minute he has entered the old doctor's house, and is full of the afternoon's run, for he has been out fox-hunting.

The old doctor is confident to-day that his son will return, and Grace reassures him.

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“Yes, he is coming soon to us,” she half whispers, leaning over the old man’s chair. “Or else we are soon going to him. It may mean that, sir. Perhaps it is better that it should.”

“It matters little, child, if he be near, as near he is.”

And sure enough while Mark is telling of the good run he has had, Tom’s fresh voice is heard. Yes! There he was in bodily flesh and blood; thin, sallow, bearded to the eyes, dressed in ragged sailor’s clothes.

Grace uttered a long, soft, half laughing cry, full of the delicious agony of sudden relief; and then slipped from the room past the unheeding Tom, who had no eyes but for his father. Straight up to the old man he went, took both his hands, and spoke in the old, cheerful voice.

“Well, my dear old daddy! I’m afraid I’ve made you very anxious; but it was not my fault; and I knew you would be certain I should come at last, eh?”

“My son! my son!” murmured the old man. “You won’t go away again, dear boy? I’m getting old and forgetful; and I don’t think I could bear it again, you see.”

“Never again, as long as I live, daddy.”

Mark Armsworth burst out blubbering like a great boy.

“I said so! I always said so! The devil could not kill him and God wouldn’t.”

“Tom,” said his father presently, “you have not spoken to Grace yet. She is my daughter now, Tom, and has been these twelve months past.”

“If she is not, she will be soon,” said Tom, quietly. With that he walked straight out of the room to find Grace in the passage.

And Grace lay silent in his arms.

* * * * *

Water-Babies

Charles Kingsley wrote “The Water-Babies, a Fairy Tale for a Land-Baby,” under romantic circumstances. Reminded in 1862 of a promise he had made that “Rose, Maurice, and Mary have got their books, the baby must have his,” Kingsley produced the story about little Tom, which forms the first chapter in “The Water-Babies,” a fairy tale occupying a nook of its own in the literature of fantasy for children. After running serially through “Macmillan’s Magazine,” the “Water-Babies” was published in book form

in 1863, dedicated “To my youngest son, and to all other good little boys.” Mrs. Kingsley, in the life of her husband says “that it was perhaps the last book that he wrote with any real ease.” The story, with its irresponsible and whimsical humour, throws an altogether delightful light upon the character of Charles Kingsley—clergyman, lecturer, historian, and social reformer.

I.—“I Must be Clean!"

Once upon a time there was a little chimney-sweep, and his name was Tom. He lived in a great town in the North Country where there were plenty of chimneys to sweep and plenty of money for Tom to earn, and his drunken master to spend. He could not read nor write, and did not care to do either; and he never washed himself, for there was no water up the court where he lived. Chimney-sweeping and hunger and beatings, he took all for the way of the world, and when his master let him have a pull at the leavings of his beer Tom was the jolliest boy in the whole town.

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One day, Tom's master, Mr. Grimes, was sent for to sweep all the chimneys at Sir John Harthover's mansion, Harthover Place.

At four in the morning they passed through the silent town together and along the peaceful country roads to Sir John's, Mr. Grimes riding the donkey in front and Tom and the brushes walking behind. On the way they came up with an old Irishwoman, limping slowly along and carrying a heavy bundle. She walked along with Tom and asked him many questions about himself, and seemed very sad when he told her that he knew no prayers to say. She told him that she lived far away by the sea; and, how the sea rolled and roared on winter nights and lay still in the bright summer days, for the children to bathe and play in it; and many a story more till Tom longed to go and see the sea and bathe in it likewise.

When, at length, they came to a spring, Grimes got off his donkey, to refresh himself by dipping his head in the water. Because Tom followed his example, his master immediately thrashed him.

"Are you not ashamed of yourself, Thomas Grimes?" said the Irishwoman.

Grimes looked up, startled at her knowing his name; but he answered: "No, nor never was yet," and went on beating Tom.

"True for you. If you ever had been ashamed of yourself, you would have gone into Vendale long ago."

"What do you know about Vendale?" shouted Grimes; but he left off beating Tom.

"I know about Vendale and about you, too, and if you strike that boy again I can tell you what I know."

Grimes seemed quite cowed and got on his donkey without another word.

"Stop!" said the Irishwoman. "I have one more word for you both, for you will see me again. Those that wish to be clean, clean they will be; and those that wish to be foul, foul they will be. Remember."

She turned away into a meadow and disappeared. And Tom and Grimes went on their way. When they came to Harthover Place, the housekeeper turned them into a grand room all covered up in sheets of brown paper. Up the chimney went Tom with a kick from his master.

How many chimneys Tom swept I cannot say; but he swept so many that he got tired, and puzzled too, for they ran into one another so that he fairly lost his way in them. At last he came down. But it was the wrong chimney, and he found himself in a room the like of which he had never seen before. The room was all dressed in white: white

window-curtains, white bed-curtains, white furniture, and white walls. There was a washhand-stand, with ewers and basins, and soap and brushes and towels; and a large bath full of clean water. What a heap of things—all for washing!

And then he happened to look towards the bed, and there lay the most beautiful little girl Tom had ever seen. He wondered whether all people were as white as she when they were washed. Thinking of this, he tried to rub some of the soot from his own wrist, and thought, perhaps, he might look better himself if he were clean.

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And looking round, he suddenly saw a little ugly black figure with bleared eyes and grinning teeth. And behold, it was himself reflected in the mirror. With tears of shame and anger at the contrast he turned to sneak up the chimney and hide. But in his haste he upset the fire-irons.

Up jumped the little white lady with a scream; in rushed her nurse and made a dash at Tom. But out of the window went he and down a tree and away through the garden and the park into the wood beyond, with the gardener, the groom, the dairymaid, Grimes, the steward, the keeper, Sir John, and the Irishwoman all in hot pursuit.

Through the wood rushed Tom until he came to a wall, where his quick wits enabled him to evade his pursuers—except the Irishwoman, who followed him all the way, although he never knew.

At length he stood on a limestone rock which overhung a valley a thousand feet below, and down there he could see a little stream winding in and out, and by the stream a cottage. It was a dangerous descent, but down went Tom without a moment's hesitation; sick and giddy, on he went until at last he dropped on the grass and lay there unconscious. But after a time he roused himself and stumbled on to the cottage.

The old dame of the cottage took pity on him and laid him on a bed of sweet hay. But Tom could not rest, and think of the little white lady, he found his way to the river murmuring. "I must be clean! I must be clean!"

And still he had not seen the Irishwoman; in front of him now, for she had stepped into the river just before Tom, and had changed into the most beautiful of fairies underneath the water. For she was, indeed, the Queen of the Water-Fairies, who were all waiting to receive her the moment she came back from the land-world.

Tom was so hot and longed so to be clean for once that he tumbled as quick as he could into the cool stream. And he had not been in it half a minute before he fell into the quietest, coolest sleep that ever he had in his life. The reason of his falling into such a delightful sleep is very simple. It was merely that the fairies took him. In fact, they turned him into a water-baby.

Meanwhile, of course, the chase after Tom had come to an end, although Sir John and his keepers made a second search the next day, for he felt sorry for the little sweep, and was afraid he might have fallen over some of the crags. They found the little fellow's rags by the side of the stream, and they also discovered his body in the water, and buried it over in Vendale churchyard.

II.—A Lonely, Mischievous Water-Baby

Tom was very happy swimming about in the river, although he was now only about four inches long, with a set of external gills, just like those of an eft. There are land-babies, and why not water-babies? Some people tell us that water-babies are contrary to nature, but there are so many things in nature which we don't expect to find that there may as well be water-babies as not.

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He was still as mischievous as any land-baby, and made himself a perfect nuisance to the other creatures of the water, teasing them as they went about their work, until they were all afraid of him, and got out of his way, or crept into their shells; so that he had no one to speak to or to play with.

It was from a dragon-fly that he learned some valuable lessons in good conduct. For all his short sight the dragon-fly had noticed a great many interesting things in nature, about which Tom knew nothing, and of which he heard with wonder. One day he might have been eaten by an otter; but, behold, seven little terrier dogs rushed at the otter, and drove her off, much to Tom's relief, though he did not guess that these were really water-fairies sent to protect him.

But before the otter had been headed off she had twitted Tom with being only an eft, and told him he would be eaten by the salmon when they came up from the sea—the great wide sea. Tom himself decided he would go down the stream, and discover what the great wide sea was like.

One night Tom noticed a curious light, and heard voices of men coming from the bank of the river.

Soon after a large salmon was speared. Then other men seemed to arrive; there were shouts and scufflings; and then a tremendous splash, and one of the men fell into the river close to Tom. He lay so still that Tom thought the water must have sent him to sleep as it had done him; so he screwed up courage to go and look at him. The moonlight lit up the man's face, and Tom recognised his old master, Grimes. Suppose he should turn into a water-baby! But he lay quite still at the bottom of the pool, and never went poaching salmon any more.

Every creature in the stream seemed to be hurrying down to the sea, and Tom, being the only water-baby among all the squirming eels and the scores of different things, big and little, he had many strange adventures before he came to the sea. But great was his disappointment to find no water-babies there to play with, though he asked the sea-snails, and the hermit crabs, and the sun-fish, and the bass, and the porpoises. But though one fish told him that he had been helped the previous night by the water-babies, Tom could find no trace of them at all.

Now, one day it befell that on the rocks where Tom was sitting with a lobster there walked the little lady, Ellie, herself, and with her a very wise man, Professor Pttmllnsprts, who was a very great naturalist. He was showing her about one in ten thousand of all the beautiful and curious things that are to be seen among the rocks. Presently, as he groped with his net among the weeds he caught poor Tom.

"Dear me!" he cried, "what a large pink Holothurian. It has actually eyes. Why, it must be a Cephalopod!"

“It is a water-baby,” cried Ellie.

“Water-fiddlesticks, my dear!” said the professor sharply.

Now, Tom was in a most horrible fright, and between fright and rage he turned to bay and bit the professor’s finger.

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“Oh! Eh!” cried he, and dropped Tom on to the seaweed, whence he was gone in a moment.

“But it was a water-baby!” cried Ellie. “Ah, it is gone!” And she jumped down off the rock. But she slipped and fell with her head on a sharp rock, and lay quite still.

The professor picked her up and took her home, and she was put to bed. But she would not waken at all, and after a week, one moonlight night the fairies came flying in at the window, and brought her a pair of wings. And she flew away, and nobody heard or saw anything of her for a long while.

III.—In St. Brandon’s Fairy Isle

After Tom slipped away into the water again, he could not help thinking of Ellie, and longed to have her to play with, for he had not succeeded in finding any other water-babies. But soon he had something else to think of. One day he helped a lobster caught in a lobster-pot to get free; and then, five minutes after, he came upon a real live water-baby, sitting on the white sand.

And it ran to Tom, and Tom ran to it, and they hugged and kissed each other for ever so long. At last Tom said. “Well, this is wonderful! I have seen things just like you again and again, but I thought you were shells or sea-creatures.”

Now, was not this very odd? So odd, indeed, that you will, no doubt, want to know how it happened, and why Tom could never find a water-baby till after he had got the lobster out of the pot. But if you will read this story nine times over, you will find out why. It is not good for little boys and girls to be told everything and never to be forced to make use of their own wits.

“Now,” said the baby, “come and help me plant this rock which got all its flowers knocked off in the last storm, or I shall not have finished before my brothers and sisters come, and it is now time to go home.”

So they worked away at the rock, and planted it, and smoothed the sand down round it, and capital fun they had till the tide began to turn. And then Tom heard all the other babies coming, laughing and singing and romping; and the noise they made was just like the noise of a ripple.

And in they came, dozens and dozens of them, and when they found that he was a new baby, they hugged and kissed him. And there was no one ever so happy as poor little Tom, and he gaily swam away with them to their home in the caves beneath St. Brandan’s fairy isle. But I wish Tom had given up all his naughty tricks. He would meddle with the creatures, frighten the crabs, and put stones in the anemones’ mouths to make them fancy dinner was coming.

The other children warned him, and said, “Take care what you are at, as Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid is coming on Friday.”

Early one Friday morning this tremendous lady came, indeed. Very ugly Tom thought her, with her green spectacles on a great hooked nose and a big birch rod under her arm. She looked at all the children, and seemed pleased with them, for she gave sea-cakes or sea-lollipops to them all.

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At last Tom's turn came, and she put something in his mouth, and lo! and behold, it was a cold, hard pebble.

"Who put pebbles in the sea-anemones' mouths to make them fancy they had caught a good dinner? As you did to them, so I must do to you."

Tom thought her very hard, but she showed him she had to do it because it was her work. She told him, too, that she was the ugliest fairy in the world, and would be until people learned to behave as they should, when she would grow as handsome as her sister, Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby, the loveliest fairy in the world.

Tom tried hard to be good on Saturday; he did not frighten one crab, nor put one pebble into a sea-anemone's mouth.

Sunday came, and so did Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby. All the children danced round her, for she had the sweetest, merriest face Tom had ever seen.

"He's the new water-baby," they informed the fairy. "He never had any mother."

"Then I will be his mother," she said, and took him in her arms. And Tom looked up in her face, and loved her, and fell asleep for very love. When he awoke she was telling the children a story.

"Now," she said to Tom, as she prepared to go, "will you be good, and torment no sea-beasts until I come again?"

Tom promised, and tormented no sea-beasts after that as long as he lived; and he is quite alive, I assure you, still.

IV.—At the Other-End-of-Nowhere

Being happy and comfortable does not always mean being good; and so it was with Tom. He had everything he could wish for in St. Brandan's fairy isle. But now he had grown so fond of lollipops that he could think of nothing else, and longed to go to the cabinet where they were kept. At last he went to take just one; then he had one more, and another, and another, until they were all gone. And all the while Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid stood close behind him, though he neither heard nor saw her.

Tom was very surprised when she came again to see that she had just as many lollipops as before. He thought therefore that she could not know.

But he was very unhappy all that week, and long after it, too. And because his conscience had been pricking him inside, his outside grew horny and prickly as well, until he could bear it no longer, and told Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid all about it, and asked

her to take away the prickles. But she told him only he could do that, that he must go to school, and she would fetch him a schoolmistress.

Soon she returned with the most beautiful little girl that was ever seen. Tom begged her to show him how to be good, and get rid of his prickles. So she began, and taught him every day except on Sunday, when she went away. In a short time all Tom's prickles had disappeared. Then the little girl knew him, she said, for the little chimney-sweep who had come into the bedroom.

"And I know you," said Tom; "you are the little white lady I saw in bed." And then they began telling each other all their story. And then they set to work at their lessons again, and both liked them so well that they went on till seven full years were past and gone.

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Tom began to be very curious to know where Ellie went on Sundays, and why he could not go, too.

“Those who go there,” said Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid, “must first learn to go where they do not want to go, and to help someone they do not like.”

And Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby said the same. Tom was very unhappy now. He knew the fairy wanted him to go and help Grimes; he did not want to go, and was ashamed of himself for not going. But just when he was feeling most discontented Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid encouraged him until he was quite anxious to seek for Grimes.

“Mr. Grimes is now at the Other-end-of-Nowhere,” said the fairy. “To get there you must go to Shiny Wall, and through the White Gate which has never yet been opened. You will then be at Peacepool, where you will find Mother Carey, who will direct you to the Other-end-of-Nowhere.”

Tom immediately set out to find his way to Shiny Wall, asking the way of all the birds and beasts he met. He at length received help from the petrels, who are Mother Carey’s chickens, and so reached Shiny Wall. He was dismayed to find that there was no gate, but taking the birds’ advice, he dived underneath the wall, and went along the bottom of the sea for seven days and seven nights, until he arrived in Peacepool. There sat Mother Carey, a marble lady on a marble throne—motionless, restful, gazing down into the depths of the sea.

Following Mother Carey’s directions, Tom at length arrived at the Other-end-of-Nowhere, after meeting with many strange adventures. He had not long arrived in this strange land when he was overtaken by several policemen’s truncheons, one of which conducted him to the prison where Grimes was quartered. Here, on the roof, his head and shoulders just showing above the top of chimney No. 343, was poor Mr. Grimes, with a pipe that would not draw.

He thought Tom had simply come to laugh at him until he assured him that he had only come to help. Suddenly Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid appeared. She reminded Grimes that he was only suffering now what he had inflicted on Tom. She told him, too, how his mother had gone to heaven, and would no more weep for him. Gradually Grimes’s heart softened, and when Tom described her kindness to him at Vendale, Grimes wept. Then his tears did for him what his mother’s could not do, for as they fell they washed the soot off his face and his clothes, and loosened the mortar from the bricks of the chimney.

“Will you obey me if I give you a chance?” said Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid.

“As you please, ma’am. For I’m beat, and that’s the truth,” said he.

“Be it so, then—you may come out. But remember, disobey me again, and into a worse place still you will go.”

“I beg your pardon, ma’am, but I never disobeyed you that I know of. I never set eyes upon you until I came to these ugly quarters.”

“Never saw me? Who said ’Those that will be foul, foul they will be’?”

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Grimes looked up, and Tom looked up, too; for the voice was that of the Irishwoman who met them the day they went out together to Harthover. She ordered Grimes to march off in the custody of the truncheon, who was to see that he devoted himself to the considerable task of sweeping out the crater of Etna.

Tom went back to St. Brandan's Isle, and there found Ellie—grown into a beautiful woman. And he looked at her, and she looked at him; and they liked the employment so much that they stood and looked for seven years more, and neither spoke nor stirred.

At last they heard the fairy say, "Attention, children! Are you never going to look at me again?"

They looked, and both of them cried out at once: "You are our dear Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby! No, you are good Mrs. Bedonebyasyoudid; but you are grown quite beautiful now."

"To you," she said. "But look again."

"You are Mother Carey," said Tom, in a very low, solemn voice. For he had found out something which made him very happy, and yet frightened him more than all that he had ever seen.

And when they looked again she was neither of them, and yet all of them at once.

"My name is written in my eyes, if you have eyes to see it there."

And her eyes flashed, for one moment, clear, white, blazing light; but the children could not read her name, for they were dazzled, and hid their faces in their hands.

"Not yet, young things, not yet," said she, smiling. And then she turned to Ellie.

"You may take him home with you on Sundays, Ellie. He has won his spurs in the great battle, and become fit to be a man; because he has done the thing he did not like."

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Westward Ho!

"Westward Ho!" was published in 1855, and, on the whole, may be accepted as the most popular of all Charles Kingsley's novels. It is a story full of the life and stir of Elizabethan England, and its heroes and heroines are the stout-hearted Devonshire people whom Kingsley knew and loved so well. Like most historical romances, "Westward Ho!" must not be accepted as history, in spite of the fact that its author was Regius Professor of History at Cambridge. Kingsley's whole-hearted and entirely creditable patriotism and his intense devotion to the established Church of England

prevented his doing justice to Spain or looking with sympathy on Roman Catholicism. (See Newman, Vol. XIII.) Kingsley never could refrain from preaching his own convictions, and while this often interfered with the art of the novelist, it gave a note of sincerity to all his work, and warmth and colour to his style.

I.—How Amyas Came Home the First Time

One bright summer's afternoon in the year 1575 a tall and fair boy came lingering along Bideford Quay, in his scholar's gown, with satchel and slate in hand, watching wistfully the shipping and the sailors, till, just after he had passed the bottom of the High Street, he came to a group of sailors listening earnestly to someone who stood in the midst. The boy, all alive for any sea news, must needs go up to them, and so came in for the following speech, delivered in a loud, bold voice, with a strong Devonshire accent.

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“I tell you, as I, John Oxenham, am a gentleman, I saw it with these eyes, and so did Salvation Yeo there; and we measured the heap, seventy foot long, ten foot broad, and twelve foot high, of silver bars, and each bar between a thirty and forty pound weight. Come along! Who lists? Who lists? Who’ll make his fortune?”

“Who’ll list?” cried a tall, gaunt man, whom the other had called Salvation Yeo. “Now’s your time! We’ve got forty men to Plymouth now, ready to sail the minute we get back; and we want a dozen out of you Bideford men, and just a boy or two, and then we’m off and away, and make our fortunes or go to heaven.”

Then the gaunt man pulled from under his arm a great white buffalo horn, covered with rough etchings of land and sea.

The horn was passed from hand to hand, and the schoolboy got a nearer sight of the marvel. To his astonished gaze displayed themselves cities and harbours, plate ships of Spain, and islands with apes and palm-trees, and here and there over-written: “Here is gold,” and again, “Much gold and silver.” The boy turned it round and round, anxious to possess this wonderful horn. And Oxenham asked him why he was so keen after it.

“Because,” said he, looking up boldly, “I want to go to sea. I want to see the Indies. I want to fight the Spaniards.” And the lad, having hurried out his say, dropped his head.

“And you shall,” cried Oxenham. “Whose son are you, my gallant fellow?”

“Mr. Leigh’s, of Burrough Court.”

“Bless his soul! I know him as well as I do the Eddystone. Tell your father John Oxenham will come and keep him company.”

The boy, Amyas Leigh, took his way homewards, and that night John Oxenham dined at Burrough Court; but failed to get Mr. Leigh’s leave to take young Amyas with him, nor did Sir Richard Grenville, the boy’s godfather, who was also at dinner, help him with his suit.

But somewhat more than a twelvemonth later, Mr. Leigh, going down on business to Exeter Assizes, caught—as was too common in those days—the gaol-fever from the prisoners, sickened in the very court, and died within a week.

“You must be my father now, sir,” said young Amyas firmly to Sir Richard Grenville, on the day after the funeral.

And shortly afterwards, Amyas having broken his slate on the head of Vindex Brimblecombe, Sir Richard thought it well to go up to Burrough. And, after much talk and many tears, matters were so concluded that Amyas Leigh found himself riding

joyfully towards Plymouth, and being handed over to Captain Drake, vanished for three years from the good town of Bideford.

And now he is returned in triumph, and the observed of all observers.

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The bells of Bideford church cannot help breaking forth into a jocund peal. Bideford streets are a very flower-garden of all the colours, swarming with seamen and burghers and burghers' wives and daughters, all in their holiday attire. Garlands are hung across the streets and tapestries from every window. Every stable is crammed with horses, and Sir Richard Grenville's house is like a very tavern. Along the little churchyard streams all the gentle blood of North Devon, and on into the church, where all are placed according to their degrees, not without shovings and whisperings from one high-born matron and another. At last there is a silence, and a looking toward the door, and then distant music which comes braying and screaming up to the very church doors. Why are all eyes fixed on those four weather-beaten mariners, decked out with knots and ribbons by loving hands? And yet more on that gigantic figure who walks before them, a beardless boy, and yet with the frame and stature of a Hercules, towering, like Saul of old, a head and shoulders above all the congregation? And why, as the five fall on their knees before the altar rails, are all eyes turned to the pew where Mrs. Leigh, of Burrough, has hid her face between her hands, and her hood rustles and shakes to her joyful sobs? Because there was fellow-feeling of old in country and in town. And these are Devon men, and men of Bideford; and they, the first of all English mariners, have sailed round the world with Francis Drake, and are come to give God thanks.

II.—The Brotherhood of the Rose

It was during the three years of Amyas's absence that Rose Salterne, the motherless daughter of that honest merchant, the Mayor of Bideford, had grown into so beautiful a girl of eighteen that half North Devon was mad about the "Rose of Torridge," as she was called. There was not a young gallant for ten miles round who would not have gone to Jerusalem to win her, and not a week passed but some nosegay or languishing sonnet was conveyed into the Rose's chamber, all of which she stowed away with the simplicity of a country girl.

Frank Leigh, Amyas's elder brother, who had won himself honour at home and abroad, and was the friend of Sir Philip Sidney and in favour at the court of Queen Elizabeth, fell as deeply in love with the Rose when he came home to rejoice over the return of Amyas as any young squire of the county.

When the time came for him to set off again for London and for Amyas to join the queen's forces in Ireland, where war was now raging, Frank and Amyas concocted a scheme which was put into effect the next day—first by the innkeeper of the Ship Tavern, who began, under Amyas's orders, a bustle of roasting and boiling; and next by Amyas himself, who invited as many of his old schoolfellows as Frank had pointed out to him to a merry supper; by which crafty scheme in came each of Rose Salteme's gentle admirers and found himself seated at the table with six rivals.

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When the cloth was drawn, and sack and sugar became the order of the day, and the queen's health had been duly drunk with all the honours, Frank rose.

"And now, gentlemen, let me give you a health which none of you, I dare say, will refuse to drink with heart and soul as well as with lips—the health of one whom beauty and virtue have so ennobled that in their light the shadow of lowly birth is unseen—the health of 'The Rose of Torridge,' and a double health to that worthy gentleman, whosoever he may be, whom she is fated to honour with her love."

Whereupon young Will Cary, of Clovelly Court, calls out, "Join hands all round, and swear eternal friendship, as brothers of the sacred order of the—of what, Frank Leigh?"

"The Rose!" said Frank, quietly.

And somehow or other, whether it was Frank's chivalrous speech, or Cary's fun, or Amyas's good wine, or the nobleness which lies in every young lad's heart, the whole party shook hands all round, and vowed on the hilt of Amyas's sword to stand by each other and by their lady-love, and neither grudge nor grumble, let her dance with, flirt with, or marry with whom she would; and, in order that the honour of their peerless dame and the brotherhood which was named after her might be spread through all lands, they would go home, and ask their fathers' leave to go abroad wheresoever there were "good wars."

Then Amyas, hearing a sneeze, made a dash at the arras behind him, and, finding a doorway there, speedily returned, dragging out Mr. John Brimblecombe, the stout, dark-skinned son of the schoolmaster.

Jack Brimblecombe, now one-and-twenty and a bachelor of Oxford, was in person exceedingly like a pig; but he was a pig of self-helpful and serene spirit, always, while watching for the best, contented with the worst, and therefore fattening fast while other pigs' ribs stare through their skins.

He had lingered in the passage, hovering around the fragrant smell; and, once there he could not help hearing what passed inside, till Rose Salterne's name fell on his ear. And now behold him brought in red-handed to judgment, not without a kick or two from the wrathful foot of Amyas Leigh.

"What business have I here?" said Jack, making answer fiercely, amid much puffing and blowing. "As much as any of you. If you had asked me in I would have come. You laugh at me because I'm a poor parson's son, and you fine gentlemen. God made us both, I reckon. I tell you I've loved her these three years as well as e'er a one of you, I have. Make me one of your brotherhood, and see if I do not dare to suffer as much as any of you! Let me but be your chaplain, and pray for your luck when you're at the

wars. If I do stay at home in a country curacy, ’tis not much that you need be jealous of me with her, I reckon.”

So, presently, after a certain mock ceremonial of initiation, Jack Brimblecombe was declared, on the word of Frank Leigh, admitted to the brotherhood, and was sent home with a pint of good red Alicant wine in him, while the rest had a right merry evening. After which they all departed—Amyas and Cary to Ireland, Frank to the court again. And so the Brotherhood of the Rose was scattered, and Mistress Salterne was left alone with her looking-glass.

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III.—The Good Ship Rose

When Amyas was in Ireland he made captive a certain Spanish grandee, Don Guzman, and sent him to Sir Richard Grenville to be held at ransom. And then, the Irish being for the time subdued, Amyas sailed with Sir Humphrey Gilbert on that ill-fated voyage to Newfoundland, and returned in rags, landing at Plymouth, where he learnt news of Bideford.

Mrs. Hawkins, wife of John Hawkins the port admiral, gave him supper, and then told him that the Spanish prisoner had “gone off, the villain.”

“Without paying his ransom?”

“I can’t say that, but there’s a poor, innocent young maid gone off with him, one Salterne’s daughter.”

“Rose Salterne, the mayor’s daughter, the Rose of Torridge?”

“That’s her. Bless your dear soul, what ails you?”

Amyas had dropped back in his seat as if he had been shot; but he recovered himself, and next morning started for Bideford.

The story was true. Don Guzman had been made governor of La Guayra, in the West Indies, and his ransom had been paid. But he had fallen in love with the Rose, and the girl, driven, some said, by the over-harshness of her father, who loved his daughter and knew not how to manage her, had willingly escaped with him.

Amyas called on Salterne, and the old burgher besought him to go in pursuit of the Spaniard, and promised he would spend any money that was needed to fit out a ship to avenge his child. And Amyas heard that honest John Brimblecombe, now a parson, mindful of his oath to the brotherhood, was longing to seek the Rose, though it might be in the jaws of death. Will Cary, too, was for a voyage to the Indies to cut the throat of Don Guzman.

Then Mrs. Leigh and Frank, her first-born, getting permission to leave the court, both consented to the voyage, and Frank would go too. Old Salterne grumbled at any man save himself spending a penny on the voyage, and forced on the adventurers a good ship of two hundred tons burden, and five hundred pounds towards fitting her out; Mrs. Leigh worked day and night at clothes and comforts of every kind; Amyas gave his time and his brains. Cary went about beating up recruits; while John Brimblecombe preached a fierce crusade against the Spaniards, and Frank grew more and more proud of his brother.

Old Salvation Yeo, who was now in Bideford, again brought twenty good men from Plymouth who had sailed with Drake.

And now November 15, 1583, has come, and the tall ship Rose, with a hundred men on board, and food in abundance, has dropped down from Bideford Quay to Appledore Pool. She is well-fitted with cannon and muskets and swords, and all agreed so well-appointed a ship had never sailed “out over Bar.”

Mrs. Leigh went to the rocky knoll outside the churchyard wall and watched the ship glide out between the yellow dunes, and lessen slowly hour by hour into the boundless west, till her hull sank below the dim horizon, and her white sails faded away into the grey Atlantic mist.

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And the good ship Rose went westward ho! and came in due time to La Guayra in the Indies, the highest cliff on earth, some seven thousand feet of rock parted from the sea by a narrow strip of bright green lowland. Amyas and his company are at last in full sight of the spot in quest of which they have sailed four thousand miles of sea. Beyond the town, two or three hundred feet up the steep mountain side, is a large white house, with a royal flag of Spain flaunting before it. That must be the governor's house; that must be the abode of the Rose of Torridge. There are ships of war in the landing-place.

Amyas's plan was to wait till midnight, attack the town on the west, plunder the government storehouses, and then fight their way back to their boats. To reach the governor's house seemed impossible with the small force at their disposal.

But Frank would not have their going away without doing the very thing for which they came.

"I will go up to that house, Amyas, and speak with her!" he said.

Then Amyas, Cary, and Brimblecombe drew lots as to which of them should accompany him, and the lot fell upon Amyas Leigh.

At midnight Amyas went on deck, and asked for six volunteers. Whosoever would come should have double prize money.

"Why six only, captain?" said an old seaman. "Give the word, and any and all of us will go up with you, sack the house, and bring off the treasure and the lady before two hours are out!"

"No, no, my brave lads! As for treasure, it is sure to have been put all safe into the forts; and, as for the lady, God forbid that we should force her a step without her own will."

The boat with Frank, Amyas, and the six seamen reached the pebble beach. There seemed no difficulty about finding the path to the house, so bright was the moon. Leaving the men with the boat, they started up the beach, with their swords only.

"She may expect us," whispered Frank. "She may have seen our ship, and some secret sympathy will draw her down towards the sea to-night."

They found the path, which wound in zig-zags up the steep, rocky slope, easily. It ended at a wicket-gate, and they found the gate was open when they tried it.

"What is your plan?" said Amyas.

"I have none. I go where I am called—love's willing victim."

Amyas was at his wits' end. A light was burning in a window on the upper story; twenty black figures lay sleeping on the terrace.

Frank saw the shadow of the Rose against the window. She came down, and he made a wild appeal to her.

"Your conscience! Your religion—"

"No, never! I can face the chance of death, but not the loss of my husband. Go! For God's sake leave me!"

Frank turned, and Amyas dragged him down the hill. Both were too proud to run, but the whole gang of negroes were in pursuit, and stones were flying.

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They were not twenty-five yards from the boat, when the storm burst and a volley of great quartz pebbles whistled round their heads. Frank is struck, and Amyas takes him over his shoulders and plunges wildly on towards the beach.

“Men, to the rescue!” Amyas shouts. “Fire, men! Give it the black villains!”

The arquebuses crackled from the boat in front, but, balls are answering from behind. The governor’s guard have turned out, followed them to the beach, and are firing over the negroes’ heads.

Amyas is up to his knees in water, battered with stones, blinded with blood; but Frank is still in his arms. Another heavy blow—confused mass of negroes and English, foam and pebbles—a confused roar of shouts, shots, curses, and he recollects no more.

He is lying in the stern-sheets of the boat, stiff and weak. Two men only are left of the six, and Frank is not in the boat. With weary work they made the ship, and as, the alarm being now given, it was hardly safe to remain where they were, it was agreed to weigh anchor. Amyas had no hope that Frank might still be alive. So ended that fatal venture of mistaken chivalry.

IV.—Amyas Comes Home for the Third Time

More than three years have passed since the Rose sailed out from Bideford, and never a word has reached England of what has befallen the ship and her company.

Many have been the adventures of Amyas and the men who have followed him. Treasure they have got in South America, and old Salvation Yeo has found a young girl whom he had lost twelve years before, grown up wild among the Indians. Ayacanora she is called, and she is white, for her father was an Englishman and her mother Spanish, for all her savage ways; and will not be separated from her discoverers, but insists on going with them to England. And Amyas has learnt that his brother Frank was burnt by order of the Inquisition, and with him Rose, and that Don Guzman had resigned the governorship of La Guayra.

Amyas swore a dreadful oath before all his men when he was told of the death of Frank and Rose, that as long as he had eyes to see a Spaniard and hands to hew him down he would give no quarter to that accursed nation, and that he would avenge all the innocent blood shed by them.

And now it is February, 1587, and Mrs. Leigh, grown grey and feeble in step, is pacing up and down the terrace walk at Burrough. A flash is seen in the fast darkening twilight, and then comes the thunder of a gun at sea. Twenty minutes later, and a ship has turned up the Bideford river, and a cheer goes up from her crew.

Yes, Amyas has come, and with him Will Cary and the honest parson, Jack Brimblecombe, and the good seamen of Devon; and Ayacanora, who knelt down obedient before Mrs. Leigh because she had seen Amyas kneel, and whom Mrs. Leigh took by the hand and led to Bur-rough Court.

William Salterne would take none of his share of the treasure which was brought home, and which he had a just claim to.

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“The treasure is yours, sir,” he said to Amyas. “I have enough, and more than enough. And if I have a claim in law for aught, which I know not, neither shall ever ask—why, if you are not too proud, accept that claim as a plain burgher’s thank-offering to you, sir, for a great and a noble love which you and your brother have shown to one who, though I say it to my shame, was not worthy thereof.”

That night old Salterne was found dead, kneeling by his daughter’s bed. His will lay by him. Any money due to him as owner of the Rose, and a new barque of 300 tons burden, he had bequeathed to Captain Amyas Leigh, on condition that he should re-christen that barque the Vengeance, and with her sail once more against the Spaniard.

In the summer of 1588 comes the great Armada, and Captain Leigh has the Vengeance fitted out for war, and is in the English Channel. He has found out that Don Guzman is on board the Santa Catherina, and is set on taking his revenge.

For twelve months past this hatred of Don Guzman has been eating out his heart, and now the hour has struck. But the Armada melts away in the storms of the North Sea, and Captain Leigh has pursued the Santa Catherina round the Orkneys and down to Lundy Island. And there, on the rock called the Shutter, the Santa Catherina strikes, and then vanishes for ever and ever.

“Shame!” cried Amyas, hurling his sword far into the sea, “to lose my right, when it was in my very grasp!”

A crack which rent the sky, a bright world of flame, and then a blank of utter darkness. The great proud sea captain has been struck blind by the flash of lightning.

* * * * *

Once more Amyas Leigh has come home. His work is over, his hatred dead. And Ayacanora will comfort him.

“Amyas, my son,” said Mrs. Leigh, “fear not to take her to your heart, for it is your mother who has laid her there!”

“It is true, after all,” said Amyas to himself. “What God has joined together, man cannot put asunder.”

* * * * *

HENRY KINGSLEY

Geoffry Hamlyn

Henry Kingsley, younger brother of Charles Kingsley, was born at Barnack, Northamptonshire, England, Jan. 2, 1830. Leaving Worcester College, Oxford, in 1853, he, with a number of fellow-students, emigrated to the Australian goldfields. After some five years of unremunerative toil he returned to England, poor in pocket, but possessing sufficient knowledge of life to justify his adoption of a literary career. His first attempt, and perhaps his most successful, was “The Recollections of Geoffry Hamlyn,” published in 1859, which was based largely on his own experiences in Australia. From that time until his death on May 24, 1876, some nineteen stories flowed in quick succession from his pen, none of them, however, reaching the high standard of his first two—“Geoffry Hamlyn” and “Ravenshoe.” In 1869 Kingsley became editor of the Edinburgh “Daily Review,” and on the outbreak of the Franco-German War represented that paper at the front. He was present at the battle of Sedan, and was the first Englishman to enter the town afterwards.

I.—In a Devonshire Village

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The twilight of a winter's evening was fast falling into night, and old John Thornton sat dozing by the fire. His face looked worn and aged, and anyone might see the old man was unhappy.

What could there be to vex him? Not poverty, at all events, for not a year ago a relation had left him L5,000, and a like sum to his daughter, Mary. And his sister—a quiet, good old maid—had come to live with him, so that now he was comfortably off, and had with him the only two relations he cared about to make his old age happy. His daughter Mary—a beautiful girl, merry, impetuous, and thoughtless—was standing at the window.

The white gate swings on its hinges, and a tall man comes, with rapid, eager steps, up the walk. The maid, bringing in candles, announces: "Mr. George Hawker!"

As the light fell on him, any man or woman might have exclaimed instantly, and with justice, "What a handsome fellow!" Handsome he was, without doubt, and yet the more you looked at him the less you liked him. The thin lips, the everlasting smile, the quick, suspicious glance were fearfully repulsive. He was the only son of a small farmer in one of the outlying hamlets of Drumston. His mother had died when he was very young, and he had had little education, and strange stories were in circulation about that lonely farmhouse, not much to the credit of father or son; which stories John Thornton must, in his position of clergyman, have heard somewhat of; so that one need hardly wonder at his uneasiness when he saw him enter.

For Mary Thornton adored him. The rest of the village disliked and mistrusted him; but she, with a strange perversity, loved him with her whole heart and soul. After a few words, the lovers were whispering in the window.

Presently the gate goes again, and another footfall is heard approaching.

That is James Stockbridge. I should know that step in a thousand. As he entered the parlour, John's face grew bright, and he held out his hand to him; but he got rather a cool reception from the pair at the window.

Old John and he were as father and son, and sat there before the cheerful blaze smoking their pipes.

"How are your Southdowns looking, Jim?" says the vicar. "How is Scapegrace Hamlyn?"

"He is very well, sir. He and I are thinking of selling up and going to New South Wales."

The vicar was "knocked all of a heap" at Jim's announcement; but, recovering a little, said, "You hear him? He is going to sell his estate—250 acres of the best land in Devon—and go and live among the convicts. And who is going with him? Hamlyn, the wise! Oh, dear me! And what is he going for?"

That was a question apparently hard to answer. Yet I think the real cause was standing there, with a look of unbounded astonishment upon her pretty face.

“Going to leave us, James!” she cried. “Why, whatever shall I do without you?”

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“Yes, Miss Mary,” said James huskily. “I think I may say we’ve settled to go. Hamlyn has got a letter from a cousin of his, who is making a fortune; and besides, I’ve got tired of the old place somehow lately.”

Time went on, and May was well advanced. That had at last reached the vicar’s ears which had driven him to risk a quarrel with his daughter and forbid George Hawker the house.

George went home one evening and found Madge, the gipsy woman who had brought him up, sitting before the kitchen fire.

“Well, old woman, where’s the old man?”

“Away at Colyton fair,” she answered.

“I hope he’ll have the sense to stay there to-night He’ll fall off his horse, coming home drunk one night, and be found dead in a ditch.”

“Good thing for you if he was.”

“Maybe,” said George; “but I’d be sorry for him, too.”

“He’s been a good father to you, George, and I like you for speaking up for him. He’s an awful old rascal, my boy, but you’ll be a worse if you live.”

“Now stop that, Madge! I want your help, old girl.”

“Ay, and you’ll get it, my pretty boy. Bend over the fire, and whisper in my ear, lad.”

“Madge, old girl,” he whispered, “I’ve wrote the old man’s name where I oughtn’t to have done.”

“What, again!” she answered. “Three times! For God’s sake, George, mind what you’re at! Why, you must be mad! What’s this last?”

“Why, the five hundred. I only did it twice.”

“You mustn’t do it again, George. He likes you best of anything next his money, and sometimes I think he wouldn’t spare you if he knew he’d been robbed. You might make yourself safe for any storm if you liked.”

“How?”

“Marry that little doll Thornton, and get her money.”

“Well,” said George, “I am pushing that on. The old man won’t come round, and I want her to go off with me; but she can’t get up her courage yet.”

But in a few days Mary had consented. They had left the village at midnight, and were married in London. Within a year George Hawker had spent all his wife’s money, and had told her to her face he was tired of her. He fell from bad to worse, and finally becoming the ally of a coiner, was arrested and transported for life.

Mary Hawker, with a baby, tramped her way home to the village she had left.

II.—A General Exodus

The vicar had only slowly recovered from the fit in which he had fallen on the morning of Mary’s departure, to find himself hopelessly paralytic. When Mary’s letter, written just after her marriage, came, it was a great relief. They had kept from him all knowledge of George Hawker’s forgery, which had been communicated to them by Major Buckley, old John Thornton’s very good friend and near neighbour.

But George’ Hawker burnt the loving letters they wrote in reply, and Mary remained under the impression that they had cast her off. So when, one bright Sunday morning, old Miss Thornton found a poor woman sitting on the doorstep, Mary rose, prepared to ask forgiveness. Her aunt rushed forward wildly, and hugged her to her honest heart.

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When they were quieted, Miss Thornton went up to tell the vicar. The poor old man was far gone beyond feeling joy or grief to any great extent. Mary, looking in, saw he was so altered she hardly knew him.

The good news soon got up to Major Buckley's, and he was seen striding up the path, leading the pony carrying his wife and child. While they were still busy welcoming Mary came a ring at the door. Who but her cousin, Tom Troubridge? Who else was there to raise her four good feet from the floor and call her his darling little sister?

This was her welcome home—to the home she had dreaded to come to, where she had meant to come only as a penitent, to leave her child and go forth to die.

After dinner, Mrs. Buckley told Mary all the news, how her husband had heard from Stockbridge, how he and Hamlyn were so flourishing, and had written such an account of the country that Major Buckley, half persuaded before, had now made up his mind to go there himself, and Tom Troubridge was much inclined to go too. Mary was sad to think of losing them all so soon, but Mrs. Buckley pointed out her father's state gently to her, and asked her to think what she would do when he was gone. Miss Thornton said she had made up her mind to go wherever Mary went, if it were to the other end of the earth.

Scarcely more than a week had passed when another messenger came to old John Thornton, and one so peremptory that he rose and followed it in the dead of night.

It was two months yet before the major intended to sail, and long before they had passed Mary and Miss Thornton had determined to cast in their lot with the others, and cross the sea towards a more hopeful land.

III.—The New World

A new heaven, and a new earth. All creation is new and strange. The trees, the graceful shrubs, the bright-coloured flowers, ay, the very grass itself, are of species unknown in Europe, while flaming lories and brilliant paroquets fly whistling through the gloomy forest, and overhead countless cockatoos wheel and scream in noisy joy, as we may see the gulls do in England.

We are in Australia, three hundred and fifty miles south of Sydney, on the great watershed which divides the Belloury from the Maryburnong.

As the sun was going down, James Stockbridge and I, Geoffry Hamlyn, reined up our horses and gazed down the long gully at our feet. For five days we had been passing from run to run, making inquiries about some cattle we had lost, and were now fifty long miles from home.

At this time Stockbridge and I had been settled in our new home about two years, and were beginning to get comfortable and settled. We had had but little trouble with the blacks, and having taken possession of a fine piece of country, were flourishing and well-to-do. I dismounted to set right some strap or other, and stood looking at the prospect, glad to ease my legs for a time, cramped with many hours' riding.

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Stockbridge sat immovable and silent as a statue, and I saw that his heart travelled farther than his eye could reach.

“Jim,” said I, “I wonder what is going on at Drumston now?”

“I wonder,” he said softly.

“Jim,” I began again, “do you ever think of poor little Mary now?”

“Yes, old boy, I do,” he replied. “I was thinking of her then—I am always thinking of her. I wonder if she married that fellow Hawker?”

“I fear there’s but little doubt of it,” I said. “Try to forget her, James; you’ll make all your life unhappy if you don’t.”

He laughed.

“That’s all very well, Jeff, but it’s easier said than done. Do you hear that? There are cattle down the gully!”

There was some noise in the air beside the evening rustle of the south wind among the tree-tops. Now it sounded like a far-off hubbub of waters, now swelled up harmonious, like the booming of cathedral bells across some rich old English valley on a still summer’s afternoon.

“I’ll tell you what I think it is, old Jeff; it’s some new chums going to cross the watershed, and look for new country to the south. Let us go down to meet them; they will come down by the river yonder.”

All doubt about what the newcomers were was solved before we reached the river; so we sat and watched the scene so venerable and ancient—the patriarchs moving into the desert, to find new pasture-ground.

First came the cattle lowing loudly, then horsemen, six or seven in number, and last, four drays came crawling up the pass.

Suddenly James dashed forward with a shout, and when I came up with him, wondering, I found myself shaking hands, talking and laughing, with Major Buckley and Tom Troubridge.

They told us all the news as we rode with them to the drays, where sat Mrs. Buckley,—a noble, happy matron, laughing at her son, as he toddled about busy gathering sticks for the fire. Beside her sat Mary, looking sad and worn, with her child on her lap, and poor old Miss Thornton, glancing uneasily round.

Mary sprang up, burst into hysterical weeping. I saw how his big heart yearned to comfort his old sweetheart in her distress, as he took the child of his rival to his bosom.

“Is nobody going to notice me or my boy, I wonder?” said Mrs. Buckley. “Come here immediately, Mr. Stockbridge, before we quarrel.”

Soon we were all restored to our equanimity, and laying plans for future meetings.

Next morning, with many hearty farewells, and having promised to spend Christmastide with them, I turned my horse homewards, and went my solitary way. Jim was going on with them to see them settled.

IV.—Father and Son

There is a long period of dull prosperity coming to our friends. Go on two years. See Baroona, the Buckley’s place, now. That hut where we spent the pleasant Christmas-day is degraded into the kitchen, for a new house is built—a long, low house, with deep, cool verandas all round, already festooned with passion flowers, and young grape-vines.

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Mary and Miss Thornton had stayed with the Buckleys till good Cousin Tom had got a house ready for them—a charming house covered with creepers, and backed by huts, sheep-yards, and all the usual concomitants of a flourishing Australian sheep-station. This is Toonarbin, where Mary Hawker is living with her son Charles as happy and uninteresting an existence as ever fell to the lot of a handsome woman yet. The old dark days seem like a bad dream. She had heard of her husband's re-conviction and life sentence—finally death, and George Hawker is as one who has never lived.

So sixteen years rolled peacefully away, until Tom Troubridge returned from a journey up country with news of a great gang of bushrangers being "out." He had actually sat hob-nob with the captain in a public house, without knowing it. But his servant, William Lee, an ex-convict, knew him, and told them that the great Captain Tonan, with whose crimes the whole country was ringing, was George Hawker himself. Mary's terrible fear that father and son might meet made her ill and delirious for weeks; Tom and his trusty servant kept watch, then heard from a passing cattle-dealer that the gang had been "utterly obliterated" by Captain Desborough, the chief of police—but the captain had escaped.

Things went on quietly for two months, and no one thought about bushrangers—but Mary, at her watch up at the lonely forest station— till one morning Lee's body was found dead in his hut, with a pistol lying near with "G. Hawker" scratched upon it. A messenger was sent post haste to fetch Desborough and his troopers, who came, declared the country in a state of siege, and kept us all staying at Major Buckley's.

We were sitting merrily over our wine one day, when hasty steps came through the house. The bushrangers had attacked a station not far off, killed the owner, and were now riding towards Captain Brentford's, the major's nearest neighbour and old friend. Captain Desborough rose with deadly wrath in his face. The laughing Irishman was gone, and a stern, gloomy man stood in his place. But the villains had done their work of destruction before we reached Garoopm, and gone off to the mountains.

"We shall have them in the morning," said Desborough. "More particularly as they have in their drunken madness hampered themselves in the mountains."

We started before daybreak; each man of us armed with swords and pistols, and every man knew the use of his weapons well.

As we entered the mouth of the glen to which we were bound, one of the most beautiful gullies I have ever seen, I turned to the man beside me. Conceive my horror at finding it was Charles Hawker! I said fiercely, "Get back, Charles! Go home! You don't know what you're doing, lad."

He defied me. I was speaking to him again when there came a puff of smoke from the rocks overhead, and down I went, head over heels. A bullet grazed my thigh, and killed

my horse; so that during the fight that followed, I was sitting on a rock very sick and very stupid.

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“They’ve set a watch,” said Captain Desborough. “They’ll fight us now; they can’t help it, thank God!”

Then, under the beetling crags, the bushrangers turned like hunted wolves, and stood at bay. Now the fight became general and confused. All about among the ferns and flowers men fought, and fired, and cursed. Shots were cracking on all sides, and two riderless horses were galloping about neighing.

Desborough fought neither against small nor great, but only against one man—George Hawker. Him he had sworn he would bring home, alive or dead. He caught sight of his quarry, and instantly made towards him. As soon as Hawker saw he was recognised, he made to the left, trying to reach the only practicable way back to the mountains. They fired at one another without effect. As the ground got more open, Desborough was aware of one who came charging recklessly up alongside of him, and recognised Charley Hawker. He had had no hint of the relationship.

“Good lad,” he said; “come on. I must have that fellow before us. He’s the arch-devil of the lot. We must have him!”

“We’ll have him safe enough!” said Charles. “Push to the left, captain, and we shall get him among these fallen rocks.”

They pushed forwards, and soon succeeded in bringing him to bay. Alas, too well!

He reined up when he saw escape was impossible, and awaited their coming. Desborough’s horse received a bullet in the chest, and down went horse and man together. But Charles pushed on till within ten yards of the bushranger, and levelled his pistol to fire.

For an instant father and son glared on one another as the father made his aim more deadly. The bullet sped, and the poor boy tumbled from his saddle, clutching wildly at the grass and flowers—shot through the chest. Then, ere Desborough had disentangled himself from his fallen horse, George Hawker rode off laughing—out through the upper rock walls into the presence of the broad snow-line that rolled above his head in endless lofty tiers, and made for the broader valley which stretched beyond.

There was no pursuit, he thought. How could there be? Who knew of this route but he and his mates? No creature was stirring, but he must onwards—onwards, across the snow. Twilight, and then night, and still the snow but half passed. Strange ghosts and fancies crowd in upon him thick and fast.

Morning, and the pale ghosts have departed. He reached the gully where his refuge lay, utterly dispirited, just as the sun was setting. He turned a sharp angle round an abrupt cliff. He saw a horseman within ten yards of him—Captain Desborough, holding

a pistol to his head! Hungry, cold, desperate, unarmed—his pistols had gone with his horse over a precipice—he threw up his arms, and was instantly chained fast to Desborough's saddle, only to be loosed, he knew, by the gallows.

Without a word on either side they began their terrible journey. They had gone two or three miles before Hawker said: "That young fellow I shot when you were after me, is he dead?"

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“By this time,” said Desborough. “He was dying as I came away.”

“Would you mind stopping for a moment, captain? Now tell me who was he?”

“Mr. Charles Hawker, son of Mrs. Hawker, of Toonarbin.”

Desborough told me his wild, despairing cry rang in his ears for years afterwards.

* * * * *

One wild, dreary day in spring, Major Buckley and I were admitted to the condemned cell in the gaol in Sydney. Before us was a kind of bed place. On it lay a man with his face buried in the pillow. I advanced towards him, but the governor held me back.

“My God, sir,” he said, “take care! Don’t, as you value your life, go within length of his chain.”

The handsome head was raised, and my eyes met George Hawker’s. I could not see the fierce, desperate villain who had kept our country-side in terror so long; I could only see the handsome, curly-headed boy who used to play with James Stockbridge and myself in Drumston churchyard! And, seeing him, and him only, I sat down beside him, and put my arm round his neck.

I don’t want to be instructed in my duty. My duty as a magistrate was to stand at the farther end of the cell, and give this hardened criminal a moral lecture. But I only hung there, with my arm round his neck, and said, “Oh, George, George!” like a fool.

He put his hands on my shoulders, and looked me in the face, and said, after a time, “What! Hamlyn? Old Jeff Hamlyn! Jeff, old boy, I’m to be hung to-morrow.”

“I know it,” I said. “And I came to ask if I could do anything for you.”

“Anything you like, old Jeff,” he said, with a laugh, “so long as you don’t get me reprieved. I’ve murdered my own son, Jeff. Do you know that?”

I answered, “Yes, I know that, George; but you did not know who he was.”

“He came at me to take my life,” said Hawker. “And I tell you, if I had guessed who he was, I’d have blown my brains out to save him from the crime of killing me.”

The major came forward, and held out his hand to George Hawker, and asked him to forgive him; he had been his enemy since they first met.

“Let me tell you, major, I feel more kind and hearty towards you and Hamlyn for coming to me like this than I’ve felt towards any man this twenty years. Time’s up, I see. I ain’t so much of a coward, am I, Jeff? Good-bye, old lad, good-bye!”

That was the last we saw of him; the next morning he was executed with four of his comrades.

* * * * *

After all this, we old folks taking up our residence at Baroona had agreed to make common house of it. We were very dull at first, but I remember many pleasant evenings, when we played whist; and Mary Hawker, in her widow’s weeds, sat sewing by the fireside contentedly enough.

But one evening next spring in stalked Tom Troubridge; and, in short, he took her off with him, and they were married. And I think I never saw a couple more sincerely attached than she and her husband.

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Ravenshoe

“Ravenshoe” was Henry Kingsley’s second novel, and it was published in 1862, when its author was thirty-two years old. It will always rank with “Geoffry Hamlyn” as Henry Kingsley’s best work. These two books were their author’s favourites among his own novels, and Charles Ravenshoe was one of his two favourite characters. It has been said that “Ravenshoe” is “alive—the expression of a man who worked both with heart and brain,” and few would care to dispute that opinion. For study of character, wide charity of outlook, brilliant descriptive writing—as, for instance, in the charge at Balaclava, and real, not mawkish, pathos—as in the hopeless misery of Charles, invalided, with only eighteen shillings, out of the army—“Ravenshoe” will always deserve to be read. It is the work of a writer who was not ashamed to avow himself an “optimist.”

I.—Charles Loses His Brother and His Home

In 1820 Densil lost both his father and mother, and found himself, at the age of thirty-seven, master of Ravenshoe—an estate worth L10,000 a year—and master of himself.

Densil was an only son. His father, Peter Ravenshoe, had married Alicia, daughter of Charles, Earl of Ascot.

The Ravenshoes, an old West of England family, were Catholics; but Densil’s second wife (his first wife died childless in 1816) was a Protestant, and made her husband promise that all her children, after her first born, should be brought up Protestant.

Mrs. Ravenshoe bore Densil two sons: Cuthbert, born 1826; Charles, born 1831.

On the night Charles was born his mother lay dying, and Densil swore to her he would keep the promise he had made. And to this vow he was faithful, in spite of the indignation of Father Mackworth, the resident Catholic priest at Ravenshoe.

The doctor insisted that a nurse was an immediate necessity, and James Horton, Densil’s devoted servant and head keeper, suggested his wife, Norah; a proposal that had the doctor’s immediate approval.

In due time Charles went to Eton and to Oxford, where he was rusticated for a term with his friend Lord Welter, Lord Ascot’s eldest son, and fell in love with Adelaide, a penniless young lady, who acted as companion to old Lady Ascot.

At Ravenshoe, Charles and Mackworth seldom met without a “sparring match,” for to the priest it was intolerable that this house should, in the event of Cuthbert dying childless, pass into Protestant hands.

On the other hand, it was natural that a considerable amount of familiarity, and a most sincere and hearty affection, should exist between Charles and his servant and foster-brother, William Horton. Till Charles went to Shrewsbury he had never had another playfellow, for his brother Cuthbert was reserved and bookish; and the friendship between the two had grown with age.

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One other inmate of Ravenshoe must be mentioned—this was little Mary Corby, who was saved miraculously from the wreck of the Warren Hastings when Charles was about ten. She was the daughter of Captain Corby, and when the ship went down in fifteen fathoms of water, the mate, assisted by fishermen, and encouraged by Densil, managed to get the little girl to shore, and to Ravenshoe—for the house was not far from the cliffs.

In spite of Densil's letters and inquiries, no friends came forward to claim little Mary, then a child of nine, and in three months she was considered as a permanent member of the household. And the night before Charles went to school he told her of his grand passion for Adelaide.

On the day of the Oxford and Cambridge boat-race, when Charles rowed three in the winning boat, Densil Ravenshoe died, after two days' illness. Old James Horton's death occurred at the same time. Charles hurried home in time for the funeral, and when all was over a servant came up to him, and asked him would he see Mr. Ravenshoe in the library? Charles entered the library with William, who had also been sent for.

Charles went up silently and kissed his brother on the forehead. For a few minutes Cuthbert neither moved nor spoke, while Charles greeted Mackworth civilly. William stood at a little distance, looking uneasily from one to another.

Cuthbert broke the silence, and as he spoke Charles, by some instinct, laid his hand on William's shoulder.

"I sent for you," he said, "on business which must be gone through with, though I expect it will kill me. I should like to prepare you for what is to come, but the blow would be equally severe whether you expect it or not. You two who stand there were nursed at the same breast. That groom on whose shoulder you have your hand now is my real brother; you are no relation to me—you are the son of the faithful old servant whom we buried to-day with my father!"

Charles at once asked for proofs and witnesses, and Mackworth took up the tale.

"Your mother was Norah, James Horton's wife. James Horton was Densil Ravenshoe's half-brother, and the illegitimate son of Peter. She confessed to me the wicked fraud she practised, and has committed that confession to paper. I hold it. You have not a point of ground to stand on. You have been living in luxury and receiving an expensive education when you should have been cleaning out the stable."

Charles's heart died away within him.

"Cuthbert," he said, "you are a gentleman. Is this true?"

"God knows how terribly true it is!" said Cuthbert quietly.

Father Mackworth handed the paper, signed by his mother, to him, and Charles read it. It was completely conclusive. William also read it, and turned pale.

Cuthbert spoke again in his quiet, passionless voice.

“My intention,” he said, “is to make a provision of L300 a year for this gentleman, whom till the last few days I believed to be my brother. Less than twenty-four hours ago, Charles, I offered Father Mackworth L10,000 for this paper, with a view to destroying it. You see what a poor weak rogue I am, and what a criminal I might become with a little temptation. Father Mackworth did his duty and refused me!”

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“You acted like yourself, Cuthbert. Like one who would risk body and soul for one you loved. But it is time that this scene should end. I utterly refuse the assistance so nobly offered. I go forth alone into the world to make my own way, or to be forgotten. It only remains to say good-bye. I leave this house without a hard thought towards any one in it. I am at peace with all the world. Father Mackworth, I beg your forgiveness. I have often been rude and brutal to you. Good-bye!”

He shook hands with Mackworth, then with William, and lastly he went up to Cuthbert and kissed him on the cheek; and then walked out of the door into the hall.

“I am going to follow him, wherever he goes,” said William. “If he goes to the world’s end, I will be with him!”

II.—Charles Loses Himself

Charles fled from Ravenshoe for London in the middle of the night, determined that William should not follow him. But he could not bear to go out and seek fortune without seeing Adelaide. So he called at Ranford, Lord Ascot’s seat, only to learn that Adelaide had eloped with Lord Welter. The two were married when he afterwards saw them in London.

Charles had to tell his story to old Lady Ascot, and when he had gone she said to herself, “I will never keep another secret after this. It was for Alicia’s sake and for Peter’s that I did it, and now see what has become of me!”

In London, Charles Ravenshoe committed suicide deliberately. He did not hang himself or drown himself; he hired himself out as groom—being perfectly accomplished in everything relating to horses—to Lieutenant Hornby, of the 140th Hussars; and when the Crimean War broke out, enlisted, under the name of Simpson, as a trooper in Hornby’s regiment.

On October 25 Charles was at Balaclava. They went down hill, straight towards the guns, and almost at once the shot from them began to tell. Charles was in the second line, and the men in the front line began to fall terribly fast as they rode into the narrowing valley. It was impossible to keep line. Presently the batteries right and left opened on them, and those who were there engaged can give us very little idea of what followed in the next quarter of an hour. They were soon among the guns—the very guns that had annoyed them from the first—and Charles, and two or three others known to him, were hunting some Russian artillerymen round these guns for a minute or so.

He saw also at this time a friend of his—a cornet—on foot, and rode to his assistance. He caught a riderless horse, and the cornet mounted. Then the word was given to get back again, and as they turned their faces to get out of this terrible hell, poor Charles gave a short, sharp scream, and bent down in his saddle over his horse’s neck.

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It was nothing. It was only as if one were to have twenty teeth pulled out at once. The pain was over in an instant. His left arm seemed nearly dead, but he could hold his reins in a way. He saw Hornby before him, and his own friends were beside him again, and there was a rally and a charge. At guns? No. At men this time—Russian hussars—right valiant fellows, too. He could do but little himself. He rode at a Russian, and unhorsed him; he remembers seeing the man go down. They beat them back, and then turned and rode—for it was time.

As the noise of the battle grew fainter behind them, he looked around to see who was riding beside him and holding him by the right arm. It was the little cornet. Charles wondered why he did so.

“You’re hard hit, Simpson,” said the cornet. “Never mind. Keep your saddle a little longer. We shall be all right directly.”

Charles looked down, and noticed that his left arm was hanging numbed by his side, and that a trooper was guiding his horse.

Soon they were among English faces, and English cheers rang out in welcome to their return, but it was nothing to him; he kept his eye, which was growing dim, on Hornby, and when he saw him fall off his saddle into the arms of a trooper, he dismounted, too, and staggered towards him.

The world seemed to go round and round, and he felt about him like a blind man. But he found Hornby somehow. Presently a doctor was bending over him.

Later, they found Hornby dead and cold, with his head on Charles’s lap. Charles had been struck by a ball in the bone of his arm, and the splinters were driven into the flesh, though the arm was not broken. It was a nasty business, said the doctors. All sorts of things might happen to him. Only one thing was certain, and that was that Charles Ravenshoe’s career in the army was over for ever.

At home they all believed him dead, for William had traced him to Varna, and there had been informed that his foster-brother had died of cholera. The change of name was partly responsible for this, for among the dead or living there was no signs of Charles Ravenshoe.

But he recovered, after a long spell in the hospital at Scutari, and after a time was sent home to Fort Pitt. But that mighty left arm, which had done such noble work when it belonged to No. 3 in the Oxford University Eight, was useless; and Charles Simpson, trooper of the 140th, was discharged from the army, and found himself on Christmas Eve in the street with eighteen shillings and ninepence in his pocket, wondering blindly what the end would be, but no more dreaming of begging from those who had known him formerly than of leaping off Waterloo Bridge.

III.—The Last Eighteen Shillings

Charles's luck seemed certainly to have deserted him at last. He had got to spend his Christmas with eighteen shillings and a crippled left arm, and had nothing left to trust to but his little friend, the cornet, who had come home invalided, and was living with his mother in Hyde Park Gardens.

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The cornet welcomed him with both hands, and, hearing from Charles of his plight, said, “Now, I know you are a gentleman, and I may offend you, but, if you are utterly hard up, take service with me. There!”

“I will do so with the deepest gratitude,” said Charles. “But I cannot ride, I fear. My left arm is gone.”

“Pish! Ride with your right. It’s a bargain.”

Then Charles went upstairs, and was introduced to the cornet’s mother.

He accepted his new position with dull carelessness. Life was getting very worthless. And all this time, had he but known it, money and a home, and sweet little Mary Corby, who had loved him ever since he was a boy, were waiting for him.

There was also a remarkable advertisement which appeared in the “Times” for a considerable period, and was never seen by Charles. The advertisement was inserted by old Lady Ascot, and offered one hundred guineas to any person who could discover the register of marriage between Peter Ravenshoe, Esq., of Ravenshoe, in the county of Devon, and Maria Dawson, supposed to have been solemnised about 1778.

How was Charles to know that Cuthbert Ravenshoe was dead; that William, now master of Ravenshoe, still hoped for his foster-brother’s life, and that old Lady Ascot was doing all she could to atone for a mistake? Charles, in fact, was still very weak and ill, and served his friend the cornet in a poor way. He had not recovered the shock of his fever and delirium in the Crimea, and both nerve and health were gone.

Nobody could be more kind and affectionate than the cornet and his deaf mother. They guessed that he was “somebody,” and that things were wrong with him; and the cornet once or twice invited his confidence; but he was too young, and Charles had not the energy to tell him anything.

And life was getting very, very weary business for Charles. By day, riding had become a terror, and at night he got no rest. And his mind began to dwell too much on the bridges over the Thames, and on the water lapping and swirling about the piers.

Then, as it happened, a little shoeblack with whom Charles had struck up a friendship, falling sick in a foul court in South London, Charles must needs go and sit with him. The child died in his arms, and a dull terror came on Charles when he thought of his homeward journey. A scripture reader who had been in the room came towards him and laid his hand upon his shoulder. Charles turned from the dead child, and looked up into the face of John Marston, the best of his old Oxford friends.

They passed out of the house together, Charles clinging tight to John Marston's arms. When they got to Marston's lodgings, Charles sat down by the fire, and said quietly, "John, you have saved me! I should never have got home this night."

But John Marston, by finding Charles, had dashed his dearest hopes to the ground. He had always loved Mary Corby from his first visit to Ravenshoe, and Mary loved Charles, who had loved Adelaide, who had married Lord Welter. Marston thought there was just a chance for him, and now that chance was gone. How did he behave, knowing that?

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He put his hand on Charles's shoulder and said, "Charles—Charles, my dear old boy, look up! Think of Mary. She has been wooed by more than one, but I think her heart is yours yet."

"John," said Charles, "that is what has made me hide from you all like this. I know that she loved me above all men; and partly that she should forget a penniless and disgraced man like myself, and partly from a silly pride, I have spent all my cunning on losing myself, hoping that you would believe me dead."

"We have hunted you hard, Charles. You do not know, I suppose, that you are a rich man, and undoubtedly heir of Ravenshoe, though one link is still wanting."

"What do you mean?"

"There is no reasonable doubt, although we cannot prove it, that your grandfather Peter was married previously to his marriage with Lady Alicia Staunton, that your father James was the real Ravenshoe, while poor Cuthbert and William—"

"Cuthbert! I will hide again. I will never displace Cuthbert, mind you."

"Cuthbert is dead. He was drowned bathing last August."

Charles broke down, and cried like a child. When he was quiet, he asked after William.

"He is very well, as he deserves to be. He gave up everything to hunt you through the world and bring you back. Now, my dear old boy, do satisfy my curiosity. What regiment did you enlist in?"

"In the 140th."

He paused, hid his face in his hands, and then his speech became rapid and incoherent.

"At Devna we got wood-pigeons, and I rode the Roucan-nosed bay, and he carried me through it capitally. I ask your pardon, sir, but I am only a poor discharged trooper. I would not beg, sir, if I could help it, but pain and hunger are hard things to bear, sir!"

"Charles—Charles! Don't you know me?"

"That is my name, sir. That is what they used to call me. I am no common beggar, sir. I was a gentleman once, sir, and rode a-horseback. I was in the light cavalry charge at Balaclava. An angry business. They shouldn't get good fellows to fight together like that—"

The next morning, old Lady Ascot, William, Mary, and John Marston were round his bed listening to his half-uttered, delirious babble. The anxious question was put to the greatest of the doctors present. “My dear Dr. B——, will he die?”

“Well, yes,” said the doctor. “I would sooner say ‘Yes’ than ’No’—the chances are so heavy against him. You must really prepare for the worst.”

IV.—A Life-Long Shadow

Of course, he did not die—I need not tell you that. The doctors pulled him through. And when he was better the doctors removed the splinters of bone from his arm. He did not talk much in this happy quiet time. William and Lady Ascot were with him all day. William, dear fellow, used to sit on a footstool and read the “Times” to him.

Lord Welter (now Lord Ascot, on the death of his father) came to see Charles one day, and something he said made Charles ask if Adelaide was dead.

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“Tell me something,” said Lord Ascot. “Have you any love left for her yet?”

“Not one spark,” said Charles. “If I ever am a man again, I shall ask Mary Corby to marry me. I ought to have done so sooner, perhaps. But I love your wife, Welter, in a way; and I should grieve at her death, for I loved her once.”

“The truth is very horrible. We went out hunting together, and I was getting the gate open for her, when her devil of a horse rushed it, and down they came on it together. And she broke her back, and the doctor says she may live till seventy, but that she will never move from where she lies—and just as I was getting to love her so dearly—”

That same afternoon Charles asked William to get Mary to come and see him, and William straightway departed, and found Mary. And later in the day Miss Mary Corby announced that she and Charles were engaged to be married.

William was still master of Ravenshoe, but he was convinced that the first marriage of his grandfather would be proved, and Charles reinstated.

“Remember, Charles, I am not spending the revenues of Ravenshoe,” he said. “They are yours. I know it. I am spending about L400 a year. When our grandfather’s marriage is proved, you will provide for me and my wife, I know that. Be quiet.”

William had long been engaged, from the time he had been Charles’s servant, to a fisherman’s daughter, Jane Evans, and the change in his fortunes made no difference in the matter. She was only a fisherman’s daughter, but she was wonderfully beautiful, and gentle, and good.

The weddings took place at St. Peter’s, Eaton Square. Mary and Charles were not a handsome couple. The enthusiasm of the population was reserved for William and Jane Evans, who certainly were.

Father Mackworth, dying after a stroke of paralysis, told us the date and place of Peter Ravenshoe’s first marriage—Finchampstead, Berks, 1778. He had known the truth, but had been anxious to keep Ravenshoe in Catholic hands.

“You used to irritate and insult me, sir,” he said, turning to Charles, “and I was not so near death then as now. If you can forgive me, in God’s name, say so!”

Charles went over to him, and put his arm round him.

“Forgive you!” he said. “Dear Mackworth, can you forgive me?”

The register was found, and the lawyers were soon busy. One document may be noted, a rent charge on Ravenshoe of two thousand a year in favour of William Ravenshoe.

* * * * *

Well, Charles and William are both happily married now, and I saw Charles last summer playing with his eldest boy. But there was a cloud on his face, for the memory of those few terrible months has cast its shadow upon him, and the shadow will lie, I fancy, upon that forehead until the forehead is smoothed in the sleep of death.