

The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer — Volume 6 eBook

The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer — Volume 6 by Charles Lever

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CHAPTER XLII.

THE JOURNEY.

Trevanion came at last. He had obtained my passport, and engaged a carriage to convey me about eight miles, where I should overtake the diligence—such a mode of travelling being judged more likely to favour my escape, by attracting less attention than posting. It was past ten when I left the Rue St. Honore, having shaken hands with Trevanion for the last time, and charged him with ten thousand soft messages for the “friends” I left behind me.

When I arrived at the village of St. Jacques, the diligence had not come up. To pass away the time, I ordered a little supper and a bottle of St. Julien. Scarcely had I seated myself to my “cotelette,” when the rapid whirl of wheels was heard without, and a cab drew up suddenly at the door. So naturally does the fugitive suspect pursuit, that my immediate impression was, that I was followed. In this notion I was strengthened by the tones of a cracked, discordant voice, asking in very peculiar French if the “diligence had passed?” Being answered in the negative he walked into the room where I was, and speedily by his appearance, removed any apprehensions I had felt as to my safety. Nothing could less resemble the tall port and sturdy bearing of a gendarme, than the diminutive and dwarfish individual before me. His height could scarcely have reached five feet, of which the head formed fully a fourth part; and even this was rendered in appearance still greater by a mass of loosely floating black hair that fell upon his neck and shoulders, and gave him much the air of a “black lion” on a sign board. His black frock, fur-collared and braided—his ill-made boots, his meerschaum projecting from his breast-pocket, above all, his unwashed hands, and a heavy gold ring upon his thumb—all made up an ensemble of evidences that showed he could be nothing but a German. His manner was bustling, impatient, and had it not been ludicrous, would certainly be considered as insolent to every one about him, for he stared each person abruptly in the face, and mumbled some broken expressions of his opinion of them half-aloud in German. His comments ran on:—“Bon soir, Monsieur,” to the host: “Ein boesewicht, ganz sicher”—“a scoundrel without doubt;” and then added, still lower, “Rob you here as soon as look at you.” “Ah, postillion! comment va?”—“much more like a brigand after all—I know which I’d take you for.” “Ver fluchte fraw”—“how ugly the woman is.” This compliment was intended for the hostess, who curtsied down to the ground in her ignorance. At last approaching me, he stopped, and having steadily surveyed me, muttered, “Ein echter Engländer”—“a thorough Englishman, always eating.” I could not resist the temptation to assure him that I was perfectly aware of his flattering impression in my behalf, though I had speedily to regret my precipitancy, for, less mindful of the rebuke than pleased at finding some one who understood German, he drew his chair beside me and entered into conversation.

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Every one has surely felt, some time or other in life, the insufferable annoyance of having his thoughts and reflections interfered with, and broken in upon by the vulgar impertinence and egotism of some “bore,” who, mistaking your abstraction for attention and your despair for delight, inflicts upon you his whole life and adventures, when your own immediate destinies are perhaps vacillating in the scale.

Such a doom was now mine! Occupied as I was by the hope of the future, and my fears lest any impediment to my escape should blast my prospects for ever, I preferred appearing to pay attention to this confounded fellow’s “personal narrative” lest his questions, turning on my own affairs, might excite suspicions as to the reasons of my journey.

I longed most ardently for the arrival of the diligence, trusting that with true German thrift, my friend might prefer the cheapness of the “interieure” to the magnificence of the “coupe,” and that thus I should see no more of him. But in this pleasing hope I was destined to be disappointed, for I was scarcely seated in my place when I found him beside me. The third occupant of this “privileged den,” as well as my lamp-light survey of him permitted, afforded nothing to build on as a compensation for the German. He was a tall, lanky, lantern-jawed man, with a hook nose and projecting chin; his hair, which had only been permitted to grow very lately, formed that curve upon his forehead we see in certain old fashioned horse-shoe wigs; his compressed lip and hard features gave the expression of one who had seen a good deal of the world, and didn’t think the better of it in consequence. I observed that he listened to the few words we spoke while getting in with some attention, and then, like a person who did not comprehend the language, turned his shoulder towards us, and soon fell asleep. I was now left to the “tender mercies” of my talkative companion, who certainly spared me not.

Notwithstanding my vigorous resolves to turn a deaf ear to his narratives, I could not avoid learning that he was the director of music to some German prince—that he had been to Paris to bring out an opera which having, as he said, a “success pyramidal,” he was about to repeat in Strasbourg. He further informed me that a depute from Alsace had obtained for him a government permission to travel with the courier; but that he being “social” withal, and no ways proud, preferred the democracy of the diligence to the solitary grandeur of the caleche, (for which heaven confound him,) and thus became my present companion.

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Music, in all its shapes and forms made up the staple of the little man's talk. There was scarcely an opera or an overture, from Mozart to Donizetti, that he did not insist upon singing a scene from; and wound up all by a very pathetic lamentation over English insensibility to music, which he in great part attributed to our having only one opera, which he kindly informed me was "Bob et Joan." However indisposed to check the current of his loquacity by any effort of mine, I could not avoid the temptation to translate for him a story which Sir Walter Scott once related to me, and was so far apropos, as conveying my own sense of the merits of our national music, such as we have it, by its association with scenes, and persons, and places we are all familiar with, however unintelligible to the ear of a stranger.

A young French viscomte was fortunate enough to obtain in marriage the hand of a singularly pretty Scotch heiress of an old family and good fortune, who, amongst her other endowments, possessed a large old-fashioned house in a remote district of the highlands, where her ancestors had resided for centuries. Thither the young couple repaired to pass their honeymoon; the enamoured bridegroom gladly availing himself of the opportunity to ingratiate himself with his new connexion, by adopting the seclusion he saw practised by the English on such occasions. However consonant to our notions of happiness, and however conducive to our enjoyment this custom be—and I have strong doubts upon the subject—it certainly prospered ill with the volatile Frenchman, who pined for Paris, its cafes, its boulevards, its maisons de jeu, and its soirees. His days were passed in looking from the deep and narrow windows of some oak-framed room upon the bare and heath-clad moors, or watching the cloud's shadows as they passed across the dark pine trees that closed the distance.

Ennuyee to death, and convinced that he had sacrificed enough and more than enough to the barbarism which demanded such a "sejour," he was sitting one evening listlessly upon the terrace in front of the house, plotting a speedy escape from his gloomy abode, and meditating upon the life of pleasure that awaited him, when the discordant twang of some savage music broke upon his ear, and roused him from his reverie. The wild scream and fitful burst of a highland pibroch is certainly not the most likely thing in nature to allay the irritable and ruffled feelings of an irascible person—unless, perhaps, the hearer eschew breeches. So thought the viscomte. He started hurriedly up, and straight before him, upon the gravel-walk, beheld the stalwart figure and bony frame of an old highlander, blowing, with all his lungs, the "Gathering of the clans." With all the speed he could muster, he rushed into the house, and, calling his servants, ordered them to expel the intruder, and drive him at once outside the demesne. When the mandate was made known to the old piper, it was with the greatest difficulty

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he could be brought to comprehend it—for, time out of mind, his approach had been hailed with every demonstration of rejoicing; and now—but no; the thing was impossible—there must be a mistake somewhere. He was accordingly about to recommence, when a second and stronger hint suggested to him that it were safer to depart. “Maybe the ‘carl’ did na like the pipes,” said the highlander musingly, as he packed them up for his march. “Maybe he did na like me;” “perhaps, too, he was na in the humour of music.” He paused for an instant as if reflecting—not satisfied, probably, that he had hit upon the true solution—when suddenly his eye brightened, his lips curled, and fixing a look upon the angry Frenchman, he said—“Maybe ye are right enow—ye heard them ower muckle in Waterloo to like the skirl o’ them ever since;” with which satisfactory explanation, made in no spirit of bitterness or raillery, but in the simple belief that he had at last hit the mark of the viscomte’s antipathy, the old man gathered up his plaid and departed.

However disposed I might have felt towards sleep, the little German resolved I should not obtain any, for when for half an hour together I would preserve a rigid silence, he, nowise daunted, had recourse to some German “lied,” which he gave forth with an energy of voice and manner that must have aroused every sleeper in the diligence: so that, fain to avoid this, I did my best to keep him on the subject of his adventures, which, as a man of successful gallantry, were manifold indeed. Wearying at last, even of this subordinate part, I fell into a kind of half doze. The words of a student song he continued to sing without ceasing for above an hour—being the last waking thought on my memory.

Less as a souvenir of the singer than a specimen of its class I give here a rough translation of the well-known Burschen melody called

ThePope

I.
The Pope, he leads a happy life,
He fears not married care, nor strife,
He drinks the best of Rhenish wine,
I would the Pope’s gay lot were mine.

Chorus.
He drinks the best of Rhenish wine.
I would the Pope’s gay lot were mine.

II.
But then all happy’s not his life,
He has not maid, nor blooming wife;



Nor child has he to raise his hope—
I would not wish to be the Pope.

III.
The Sultan better pleases me,
His is a life of jollity;
His wives are many as he will—
I would the Sultan's throne then fill.

IV.
But even he's a wretched man,
He must obey his Alcoran;
And dares not drink one drop of wine—
I would not change his lot for mine.

V.
So then I'll hold my lowly stand,
And live in German Vaterland;
I'll kiss my maiden fair and fine,
And drink the best of Rhenish wine.

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VI.
Whene'er my maiden kisses me,
I'll think that I the Sultan be;
And when my cheery glass I tope,
I'll fancy then I am the Pope.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE JOURNEY.

It was with a feeling of pleasure I cannot explain, that I awoke in the morning, and found myself upon the road. The turmoil, the bustle, the never-ending difficulties of my late life in Paris had so over-excited and worried me, that I could neither think nor reflect. Now all these cares and troubles were behind me, and I felt like a liberated prisoner as I looked upon the grey dawn of the coming day, as it gradually melted from its dull and leaden tint to the pink and yellow hue of the rising sun. The broad and richly-coloured plains of "la belle France" were before me—and it is "la belle France," however inferior to parts of England in rural beauty—the large tracts of waving yellow corn, undulating like a sea in the morning breeze—the interminable reaches of forest, upon which the shadows played and flitted, deepening the effect and mellowing the mass, as we see them in Ruysdael's pictures—while now and then some tall-gabled, antiquated chateau, with its mutilated terrace and dowager-like air of bye-gone grandeur, would peep forth at the end of some long avenue of lime trees, all having their own features of beauty—and a beauty with which every object around harmonizes well. The sluggish peasant, in his blouse and striped night-cap—the heavily caparisoned horse, shaking his head amidst a Babel-tower of gaudy worsted tassels and brass bells—the deeply laden waggon, creeping slowly along—are all in keeping with a scene, where the very mist that rises from the valley seems indolent and lazy, and unwilling to impart the rich perfume of verdure with which it is loaded. Every land has its own peculiar character of beauty. The glaciated mountain, the Alpine peak, the dashing cataract of Switzerland and the Tyrol, are not finer in their way than the long flat moorlands of a Flemish landscape, with its clump of stunted willows cloistering over some limpid brook, in which the oxen are standing for shelter from the noon-day heat—while, lower down, some rude water-wheel is mingling its sounds with the summer bees and the merry voices of the miller and his companions. So strayed my thoughts as the German shook me by the arm, and asked if "I were not ready for my breakfast?" Luckily to this question there is rarely but the one answer. Who is not ready for his breakfast when on the road? How delightful, if on the continent, to escape from the narrow limits of the dungeon-like diligence, where you sit with your knees next your collar-bone, fainting with heat and suffocated by dust, and find yourself suddenly beside the tempting "plats" of a little French dejeune, with its cutlets, its fried fish, its poulet, its salad, and its little entre of

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fruit, tempered with a not despicable bottle of Beaune. If in England, the exchange is nearly as grateful—for though our travelling be better, and our equipage less “genante,” still it is no small alternative from the stage-coach to the inn parlour, redolent of aromatic black tea, eggs, and hot toast, with a hospitable side-board of red, raw surloins, and York hams, that would made a Jew’s mouth water. While, in America, the change is greatest of all, as any one can vouch for who has been suddenly emancipated from the stove-heat of a “nine-inside” leathern “conveniency,” bumping ten miles an hour over a corduroy road, the company smoking, if not worse; to the ample display of luxurious viands displayed upon the breakfast-table, where, what with buffalo steaks, pumpkin pie, gin cock-tail, and other aristocratically called temptations, he must be indeed fastidious who cannot employ his half-hour. Pity it is, when there is so much good to eat, that people will not partake of it like civilized beings, and with that air of cheerful thankfulness that all other nations more or less express when enjoying the earth’s bounties. But true it is, that there is a spirit of discontent in the Yankee, that seems to accept of benefits with a tone of dissatisfaction, if not distrust. I once made this remark to an excellent friend of mine now no more, who, however, would not permit of my attributing this feature to the Americans exclusively, adding, “Where have you more of this than in Ireland? and surely you would not call the Irish ungrateful?” He illustrated his first remark by the following short anecdote:—

The rector of the parish my friend lived in was a man who added to the income he derived from his living a very handsome private fortune, which he devoted entirely to the benefit of the poor around him. Among the objects of his bounty one old woman—a childless widow, was remarkably distinguished. Whether commiserating her utter helplessness or her complete isolation, he went farther to relieve her than to many, if not all, the other poor. She frequently was in the habit of pleading her poverty as a reason for not appearing in church among her neighbours; and he gladly seized an opportunity of so improving her condition, that on this score at least no impediment existed. When all his little plans for her comfort had been carried into execution, he took the opportunity one day of dropping in, as if accidentally, to speak to her. By degrees he led the subject to her changed condition in life—the alteration from a cold, damp, smoky hovel, to a warm, clean, slated house—the cheerful garden before the door that replaced the mud-heap and the duck-pool—and all the other happy changes which a few weeks had effected. And he then asked, did she not feel grateful to a bountiful Providence that had showered down so many blessings upon her head?

“Ah, troth, its throe for yer honour, I am grateful,” she replied, in a whining discordant tone, which astonished the worthy parson.

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“Of course you are, my good woman, of course you are—but I mean to say, don’t you feel that every moment you live is too short to express your thankfulness to this kind Providence for what he has done?”

“Ah, darlin’, it’s all thrue, he’s very good, he’s mighty kind, so he is.”

“Why then, not acknowledge it in a different manner?” said the parson, with some heat —“has he not housed you, and fed you, and clothed you?”

“Yes, alanah, he done it all.”

“Well, where is your gratitude for all these mercies?”

“Ah, sure if he did,” said the old crone, roused at length by the importunity of the questioner—“sure if he did, doesn’t he take it out o’ me in the corns?”

CHAPTER XLIV.

A reminiscence of the East.

The breakfast-table assembled around it the three generations of men who issued from the three subdivisions of the diligence, and presented that motley and mixed assemblage of ranks, ages, and countries, which forms so very amusing a part of a traveller’s experience.

First came the “haute aristocratie” of the coupe, then the middle class of the interieure, and lastly, the tiers etat of the rotonde, with its melange of Jew money-lenders, under-officers and their wives, a Norman nurse with a high cap and a red jupe; while, to close the procession, a German student descended from the roof, with a beard, a blouse, and a meerscham. Of such materials was our party made up; and yet, differing in all our objects and interests, we speedily amalgamated into a very social state of intimacy, and chatted away over our breakfast with much good humour and gaiety. Each person of the number seeming pleased at the momentary opportunity of finding a new listener, save my tall companion of the coupe. He preserved a dogged silence, unbroken by even a chance expression to the waiter, who observed his wants and supplied them by a species of quick instinct, evidently acquired by practice. As I could not help feeling somewhat interested about the hermit-like attachment he evinced for solitude, I watched him narrowly for some time, and at length as the “roti” made its appearance before him, after he had helped himself and tasted it, he caught my eye fixed upon him, and looking at me intently for a few seconds, he seemed to be satisfied in some passing doubt he laboured under, as he said with a most peculiar shake of the head—“No mangez, no mangez cela.”

“Ah,” said I, detecting in my friend’s French his English origin, “you are an Englishman I find.”

“The devil a doubt of it, darlin’,” said he half testily.

“An Irishman, too—still better,” said I.

“Why then isn’t it strange that my French always shows me to be English, and my English proves me Irish? It’s lucky for me there’s no going farther any how.”

Delighted to have thus fallen upon a “character,” as the Irishman evidently appeared, I moved my chair towards his; and finding, however, he was not half pleased at the manner in which my acquaintance had been made with him, and knowing his country’s susceptibility of being taken by a story, I resolved to make my advances by narrating a circumstance which had once befallen me in my early life.

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Our countrymen, English and Irish, travel so much now a days, that one ought never to feel surprised at finding them anywhere. The instance I am about to relate will verify to a certain extent the fact, by showing that no situation is too odd or too unlikely to be within the verge of calculation.

When the 10th foot, to which I then belonged, were at Corfu, I obtained with three other officers a short leave of absence, to make a hurried tour of the Morea, and taking a passing glance at Constantinople—in those days much less frequently visited by travellers than at present.

After rambling pleasantly about for some weeks, we were about to return, when we determined that before sailing we should accept an invitation some officers of the “Dwarf” frigate, then stationed there, had given us, to pass a day at Pera, and pic-nic in the mountain.

One fine bright morning was therefore selected—a most appetizing little dinner being carefully packed up—we set out, a party of fourteen, upon our excursion.

The weather was glorious, and the scene far finer than any of us had anticipated—the view from the mountain extending over the entire city, gorgeous in the rich colouring of its domes and minarets; while, at one side, the golden horn was visible, crowded with ships of every nation, and, at the other, a glimpse might be had of the sea of Marmora, blue and tranquil as it lay beneath. The broad bosom of the Bosphorus was sheeted out like a map before us—peaceful yet bustling with life and animation. Here lay the union-jack of old England, floating beside the lilies of France—we speak of times when lilies were and barricades were not—the tall and taper spars of a Yankee frigate towering above the low timbers and heavy hull of a Dutch schooner—the gilded poop and curved galleries of a Turkish three-decker, anchored beside the raking mast and curved deck of a suspicious looking craft, whose red-capped and dark-visaged crew needed not the naked creese at their sides to bespeak them Malays. The whole was redolent of life, and teeming with food for one’s fancy to conjure from.

While we were debating upon the choice of a spot for our luncheon, which should command the chief points of view within our reach, one of the party came to inform us that he had just discovered the very thing we were in search of. It was a small kiosk, built upon a projecting rock that looked down upon the Bosphorus and the city, and had evidently, from the extended views it presented, been selected as the spot to build upon. The building itself was a small octagon, open on every side, and presenting a series of prospects, land and seaward, of the most varied and magnificent kind.

Seeing no one near, nor any trace of habitation, we resolved to avail ourselves of the good taste of the founder; and spreading out the contents of our hampers, proceeded to discuss a most excellent cold dinner. When the good things had disappeared, and the wine began to circulate, one of the party observed that we should not think of enjoying

ourselves before we had filled a bumper to the brim, to the health of our good king, whose birth-day it chanced to be. Our homeward thoughts and loyalty uniting, we filled our glasses, and gave so hearty a “hip, hip, hurra,” to our toast, that I doubt if the echoes of those old rocks ever heard the equal of it.

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Scarcely was the last cheer dying away in the distance, when the door of the kiosk opened, and a negro dressed in white muslin appeared, his arms and ancles bearing those huge rings of massive gold, which only persons of rank distinguish their servants by.

After a most profound obeisance to the party, he explained in very tolerable French, that his master the Effendi, Ben Mustapha Al Halak, at whose charge (in house rent) we were then resting, sent us greetings, and begged that if not considered as contrary to our usages, &c. we should permit him and his suite to approach the kiosk and observe us at our meal.

Independent of his politeness in the mode of conveying the request, as he would prove fully as entertaining a sight to us as we could possibly be to him, we immediately expressed our great willingness to receive his visit, coupled with a half hint that perhaps he might honour us by joining the party.

After a half hour's delay, the door was once more thrown open, and a venerable old Turk entered: he salaamed three times most reverently, and motioned to us to be seated, declining, at the same time, by a gentle gesture of his hand, our invitation. He was followed by a train of six persons, all splendidly attired, and attesting, by their costume and manner, the rank and importance of their chief. Conceiving that his visit had but one object—to observe our convivial customs—we immediately reseated ourselves, and filled our glasses.

As one after another the officers of the effendi's household passed round the apartments, we offered them a goblet of champagne, which they severally declined, with a polite but solemn smile—all except one, a large, savage-looking Turk, with a most ferocious scowl, and the largest black beard I ever beheld. He did not content himself with a mute refusal of our offer, but stopping suddenly, he raised up his hands above his head, and muttered some words in Turkish, which one of the party informed us was a very satisfactory recommendation of the whole company to Satan for their heretic abomination.

The procession moved slowly round the room, and when it reached the door again retired, each member of it salaaming three times as they had done on entering. Scarcely had they gone, when we burst into a loud fit of laughter at the savage-looking fellow who thought proper to excommunicate us, and were about to discuss his more than common appearance of disgust at our proceedings, when again the door opened, and a turbaned head peeped in, but so altered were the features, that although seen but the moment before, we could hardly believe them the same. The dark complexion—the long and bushy beard were there—but instead of the sleepy and solemn character of the oriental, with heavy eye and closed lip, there was a droll, half-devilry in the look, and partly open mouth, that made a most laughable contrast with the head-dress. He looked stealthily around him for an instant, as if to see that all was right, and then, with

an accent and expression I shall never forget, said, "I'll taste your wine, gentleman, an it be pleasing to ye."

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CHAPTER XLV.

A day in the Phoenix.

When we were once more in the coupe of the diligence, I directed my entire attention towards my Irish acquaintance, as well because of his apparent singularity, as to avoid the little German in the opposite corner.

"You have not been long in France, then, sir," said I, as we resumed our conversation.

"Three weeks, and it seems like three years to me—nothing to eat—nothing to drink—and nobody to speak to. But I'll go back soon—I only came abroad for a month."

"You'll scarcely see much of the Continent in so short a time."

"Devil a much that will grieve me—I didn't come to see it."

"Indeed!"

"Nothing of the kind; I only came—to be away from home."

"Oh! I perceive."

"You're quite out there," said my companion, misinterpreting my meaning. "It wasn't any thing of that kind. I don't owe sixpence. I was laughed out of Ireland—that's all, though that same is bad enough."

"Laughed out of it!"

"Just so—and little you know of Ireland if that surprises you."

After acknowledging that such an event was perfectly possible, from what I myself had seen of that country, I obtained the following very brief account of my companion's reasons for foreign travel:

"Well, sir," began he, "it is about four months since I brought up to Dublin from Galway a little chesnut mare, with cropped ears and a short tail, square-jointed, and rather low—just what you'd call a smart hack for going to cover with—a lively thing on the road with a light weight. Nobody ever suspected that she was a clean bred thing—own sister to Jenny, that won the Corinthians, and ran second to Giles for the Riddlesworth—but so she was, and a better bred mare never leaped the pound in Ballinasloe. Well, I brought her to Dublin, and used to ride her out two or three times a week, making little matches sometimes to trot—and, for a thorough bred, she was a clipper at trotting—to trot a mile or so on the grass—another day to gallop the length of the nine acres opposite the

Lodge—and then sometimes, back her for a ten pound note, to jump the biggest furze bush that could be found—all or which she could do with ease, nobody thinking, all the while, that the cock-tailed pony was out of Scroggins, by a “Lamplighter mare.” As every fellow that was beat to-day was sure to come back to-morrow, with something better, either of his own or a friend’s, I had matches booked for every day in the week—for I always made my little boy that rode, win by half a neck, or a nostril, and so we kept on day after day pocketing from ten to thirty pounds or thereabouts.

“It was mighty pleasant while it lasted, for besides winning the money, I had my own fun laughing at the spoonies that never could book my bets fast enough. Young infantry officers and the junior bar—they were for the most part mighty nice to look at, but very raw about racing. How long I might have gone on in this way I cannot say; but one morning I fell in with a fat, elderly gentleman, in shorts and gaiters, mounted on a dun cob pony, that was very fidgety and hot tempered, and appeared to give the rider a great deal of uneasiness.

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“He’s a spicy hack you’re on, sir,’ said I, ‘and has a go in him, I’ll be bound.’

“I rayther think he has,’ said the old gentleman, half testily.

“And can trot a bit, too.’

“Twelve Irish miles in fifty minutes, with my weight.’ Here he looked down at a paunch like a sugar hosghead.

“Maybe he’s not bad across a country,’ said I, rather to humour the old fellow, who, I saw, was proud of his poney.

“I’d like to see his match, that’s all.’ Here he gave a rather contemptuous glance at my hack.

“Well, one word led to another, and it ended at last in our booking a match, with which one party was no less pleased than the other. It was this: each was to ride his own horse, starting from the school in the Park, round the Fifteen Acres, outside the Monument, and back to the start—just one heat, about a mile and a half—the ground good, and only soft enough. In consideration, however, of his greater weight, I was to give odds in the start; and as we could not well agree on how much, it was at length decided that he was to get away first, and I to follow as fast as I could, after drinking a pewter quart full of Guinness’s double stout—droll odds, you’ll say, but it was the old fellow’s own thought, and as the match was a soft one, I let him have his way.

“The next morning the Phoenix was crowded as if for a review. There were all the Dublin notorieties, swarming in barouches, and tilburies, and outside jaunting-cars—smart clerks in the post-office, mounted upon kicking devils from Dycer’s and Lalouette’s stables—attorney’s wives and daughters from York-street, and a stray doctor or so on a hack that looked as if it had been lectured on for the six winter months at the College of Surgeons. My antagonist was half an hour late, which time I occupied in booking bets on every side of me—offering odds of ten, fifteen, and at last, to tempt the people, twenty-five to one against the dun. At last, the fat gentleman came up on a jaunting-car, followed by a groom leading the cob. I wish you heard the cheer that greeted him on his arrival, for it appeared he was a well-known character in town, and much in favour with the mob. When he got off the car, he bundled into a tent, followed by a few of his friends, where they remained for about five minutes, at the end of which he came out in full racing costume—blue and yellow striped jacket, blue cap and leathers—looking as funny a figure as ever you set eyes upon. I now thought it time to throw off my white surtout, and show out in pink and orange, the colours I had been winning in for two months past. While some of the party were sent on to station themselves at different places round the Fifteen Acres, to mark out the course, my fat friend was assisted into his saddle, and gave a short preliminary gallop of a hundred

yards or so, that set us all a-laughing. The odds were now fifty to one in my favour, and I gave

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them wherever I could find takers. 'With you, sir, if you please, in pounds, and the gentleman in the red whiskers, too, if he likes—very well, in half sovereigns, if you prefer it.' So I went on, betting on every side, till the bell rung to mount. As I knew I had plenty of time to spare, I took little notice, and merely giving a look to my girths, I continued leisurely booking my bets. At last the time came, and at the word 'Away!' off went the fat gentleman on the dun, at a spluttering gallop, that flung the mud on every side of us, and once more threw us all a-laughing. I waited patiently till he got near the upper end of the park, taking bets every minute; and now that he was away, every one offered to wager. At last, when I had let him get nearly half round, and found no more money could be had, I called out to his friends for the porter, and, throwing myself into the saddle, gathered up the reins in my hand. The crowd fell back on each side, while from the tent I have already mentioned came a thin fellow with one eye, with a pewter quart in his hand: he lifted it up towards me, and I took it; but what was my fright to find that the porter was boiling, and the vessel so hot I could barely hold it. I endeavoured to drink, however: the first mouthful took all the skin off my lips and tongue—the second half choked, and the third nearly threw me into an apoplectic fit—the mob cheering all the time like devils. Meantime, the old fellow had reached the furze, and was going along like fun. Again I tried the porter, and a fit of coughing came on that lasted five minutes. The pewter was now so hot that the edge of the quart took away a piece of my mouth at every effort. I ventured once more, and with the desperation of a madman I threw down the hot liquid to its last drop. My head reeled—my eyes glared—and my brain was on fire. I thought I beheld fifty fat gentlemen galloping on every side of me, and all the sky raining jackets in blue and yellow. Half mechanically I took the reins, and put spurs to my horse; but before I got well away, a loud cheer from the crowd assailed me. I turned, and saw the dun coming in at a floundering gallop, covered with foam, and so dead blown that neither himself nor the rider could have got twenty yards farther. The race was, however, won. My odds were lost to every man on the field, and, worse than all, I was so laughed at, that I could not venture out in the streets, without hearing allusions to my misfortune; for a certain friend of mine, one Tom O'Flaherty—"

"Tom of the 11th light dragoons?"

"The same—you know Tom, then? Maybe you have heard him mention me —Maurice Malone?"

"Not Mr. Malone, of Fort Peak?"

"Bad luck to him. I am as well known in connexion with Fort Peak, as the Duke is with Waterloo. There is not a part of the globe where he has not told that confounded story."

As my readers may not possibly be all numbered in Mr. O'Flaherty's acquaintance, I shall venture to give the anecdote which Mr. Malone accounted to be so widely circulated.

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CHAPTER XLVI.

An Adventure in Canada.

Towards the close of the last war with America, a small detachment of military occupied the little block house of Fort Peak, which, about eight miles from the Falls of Niagara, formed the last outpost on the frontier. The Fort, in itself inconsiderable, was only of importance as commanding a part of the river where it was practicable to ford, and where the easy ascent of the bank offered a safe situation for the enemy to cross over, whenever they felt disposed to carry the war into our territory.

There having been, however, no threat of invasion in this quarter, and the natural strength of the position being considerable, a mere handful of men, with two subaltern officers, were allotted for this duty—such being conceived ample to maintain it till the arrival of succour from head-quarters, then at Little York, on the opposite side of the lake. The officers of this party were our old acquaintance Tom O'Flaherty, and our newly-made one Maurice Malone.

Whatever may be the merits of commanding officers, one virtue they certainly can lay small claim to—viz. any insight into character, or at least any regard for the knowledge. Seldom are two men sent off on detachment duty to some remote quarter, to associate daily and hourly for months together, that they are not, by some happy chance, the very people who never, as the phrase is, “took to each other” in their lives. The grey-headed, weather-beaten, disappointed “Peninsular” is coupled with the essenced and dandified Adonis of the corps; the man of literary tastes and cultivated pursuits, with the empty headed, ill informed youth, fresh from Harrow or Westminster. This case offered no exception to the rule; for though there were few men possessed of more assimilating powers than O'Flaherty, yet certainly his companion did put the faculty to the test, for any thing more unlike him, there never existed. Tom all good humour and high spirits—making the best of every thing—never non-plussed—never taken aback—perfectly at home, whether flirting with a Lady Charlotte in her drawing-room, or crossing a grouse mountain in the highlands—sufficiently well read to talk on any ordinary topic—and always ready-witted enough to seem more so. A thorough sportsman, whether showing forth in the “park” at Melton, whipping a trout-stream in Wales, or filling a country-house with black cock and moor-fowl; an unexceptionable judge of all the good things in life, from a pretty angle to a well hung tilbury—from the odds at hazard to the “Comet vintage.” Such, in brief, was Tom. Now his confrere was none of these; he had been drafted from the Galway militia to the line, for some election services rendered by his family to the government candidate; was of a saturnine and discontented habit; always miserable about some trifle or other, and never at rest till he had drowned his sorrows in Jamaica rum—which, since the regiment was abroad, he had copiously used as a substitute for whiskey. To such an extent had this passion gained upon him, that a

corporal's guard was always in attendance whenever he dined out, to convey him home to the barracks.

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The wearisome monotony of a close garrison, with so ungenial a companion, would have damped any man's spirits but O'Flaherty's. He, however, upon this, as other occasions in life, rallied himself to make the best of it; and by short excursions within certain prescribed limits along the river side, contrived to shoot and fish enough to get through the day, and improve the meagre fare of his mess-table. Malone never appeared before dinner—his late sittings at night requiring all the following day to recruit him for a new attack upon the rum bottle.

Now, although his seeing so little of his brother officer was any thing but unpleasant to O'Flaherty, yet the ennui of such a life was gradually wearing him, and all his wits were put in requisition to furnish occupation for his time. Never a day passed without his praying ardently for an attack from the enemy; any alternative, any reverse, had been a blessing compared with his present life. No such spirit, however, seemed to animate the Yankee troops; not a soldier was to be seen for miles around, and every straggler that passed the Fort concurred in saying that the Americans were not within four day's march of the frontier.

Weeks passed over, and the same state of things remaining unchanged, O'Flaherty gradually relaxed some of his strictness as to duty; small foraging parties of three and four being daily permitted to leave the Fort for a few hours, to which they usually returned laden with wild turkeys and fish—both being found in great abundance near them.

Such was the life of the little garrison for two or three long summer months—each day so resembling its fellow, that no difference could be found.

As to how the war was faring, or what the aspect of affairs might be, they absolutely knew nothing. Newspapers never reached them; and whether from having so much occupation at head-quarters, or that the difficulty of sending letters prevented, their friends never wrote a line; and thus they jogged on, a very vegetable existence, till thought at last was stagnating in their brains, and O'Flaherty half envied his companion's resource in the spirit flask.

Such was the state of affairs at the Fort, when one evening O'Flaherty appeared to pace the little rampart that looked towards Lake Ontario, with an appearance of anxiety and impatience strangely at variance with his daily phlegmatic look. It seemed that the corporal's party he had despatched that morning to forage, near the "Falls," had not returned, and already were four hours later than their time away.

Every imaginable mode of accounting for their absence suggested itself to his mind. Sometimes he feared that they had been attacked by the Indian hunters, who were far from favourably disposed towards their poaching neighbours. Then, again, it might be merely that they had missed their track in the forest; or could it be that they had ventured to reach Goat Island in a canoe, and had been carried down the rapids.

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Such were the torturing doubts that passed as some shrill squirrel, or hoarse night owl pierced the air with a cry, and then all was silent again. While thus the hours went slowly by, his attention was attracted by a bright light in the sky. It appeared as if part of the heavens were reflecting some strong glare from beneath, for as he looked, the light, at first pale and colourless, gradually deepened into a rich mellow hue, and at length, through the murky blackness of the night, a strong clear current of flame rose steadily upwards from the earth, and pointed towards the sky. From the direction, it must have been either at the Falls, or immediately near them; and now the horrible conviction flashed upon his mind that the party had been waylaid by the Indians, who were, as is their custom, making a war feast over their victims.

Not an instant was to be lost. The little garrison beat to arms; and, as the men fell in, O'Flaherty cast his eyes around, while he selected a few brave fellows to accompany him. Scarcely had the men fallen out from the ranks, when the sentinel at the gate was challenged by a well-known voice, and in a moment more the corporal of the foraging party was among them. Fatigue and exhaustion had so overcome him, that for some minutes he was speechless. At length he recovered sufficiently to give the following brief account:—

The little party having obtained their supply of venison above Queenston, were returning to the Fort, when they suddenly came upon a track of feet, and little experience in forest life soon proved that some new arrivals had reached the hunting grounds, for on examining them closely, they proved neither to be Indian tracks, nor yet those made by the shoes of the Fort party. Proceeding with caution to trace them backwards for three or four miles, they reached the bank of the Niagara river, above the whirlpools, where the crossing is most easily effected from the American side. The mystery was at once explained: it was a surprise party of the Yankees, sent to attack Fort Peak; and now the only thing to be done was to hasten back immediately to their friends, and prepare for their reception.

With this intent they took the river path as the shortest, but had not proceeded far when their fears were confirmed; for in a little embayment of the bank they perceived a party of twenty blue coats, who, with their arms piled, were lying around as if waiting for the hour of attack. The sight of this party added greatly to their alarm, for they now perceived that the Americans had divided their force—the foot-tracks first seen being evidently those of another division. As the corporal and his few men continued, from the low and thick brushwood, to make their reconnaissance of the enemy, they observed with delight that they were not regulars, but a militia force. With this one animating thought, they again, with noiseless step, regained the forest, and proceeded upon their

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way. Scarcely, however, had they marched a mile, when the sound of voices and loud laughter apprised them that another party was near, which, as well as they could observe in the increasing gloom, was still larger than the former. They were now obliged to make a considerable circuit, and advance still deeper into the forest—their anxiety hourly increasing, lest the enemy should reach the Fort before themselves. In this dilemma it was resolved that the party should separate—the corporal determining to proceed alone by the river bank, while the others, by a detour of some miles, should endeavour to learn the force of the Yankees, and, as far as they could, their mode of attack. From that instant the corporal knew no more; for, after two hours' weary exertion, he reached the Fort, which, had it been but another mile distant, his strength had not held out for him to attain.

However gladly poor O'Flaherty might have hailed such information under other circumstances, now it came like a thunderbolt upon him. Six of his small force were away, perhaps ere this made prisoners by the enemy; the Yankees, as well as he could judge, were a numerous party; and he himself totally without a single adviser—for Malone had dined, and was, therefore, by this time in that pleasing state of indifference, in which he could only recognise an enemy, in the man that did not send round the decanter.

In the half indulged hope that his state might permit some faint exercise of the reasoning faculty, O'Flaherty walked towards the small den they had designated as the mess-room, in search of his brother officer.

As he entered the apartment, little disposed as he felt to mirth at such a moment, the tableau before him was too ridiculous not to laugh at. At one side of the fire-place sat Malone, his face florid with drinking, and his eyeballs projecting. Upon his head was a small Indian skull cap, with two peacock feathers, and a piece of scarlet cloth which hung down behind. In one hand he held a smoking goblet of rum punch, and in the other a long, Indian Chibook pipe. Opposite to him, but squatted upon the floor, reposed a red Indian, that lived in the Fort as a guide, equally drunk, but preserving, even in his liquor, an impassive, grave aspect, strangely contrasting with the high excitement of Malone's face. The red man wore Malone's uniform coat, which he had put on back foremost—his head-dress having, in all probability been exchanged for it, as an amicable courtesy between the parties. There they sat, looking fixedly at each other; neither spoke, nor even smiled—the rum bottle, which at brief intervals passed from one to the other, maintained a friendly intercourse that each was content with.

To the hearty fit of laughing of O'Flaherty, Malone replied by a look of drunken defiance, and then nodded to his red friend, who returned the courtesy. As poor Tom left the room, he saw that nothing was to be hoped for in this quarter, and determined to beat the garrison to arms without any further delay. Scarcely had he closed the door behind

him, when a sudden thought flashed through his brain. He hesitated, walked forward a few paces, stopped again, and calling out to the corporal, said—

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"You are certain they were militia?"

"Yes, sir; quite sure."

"Then, by Jove, I have it," cried O'Flaherty. "If they should turn out to be the Buffalo fencibles, we may get through this scrape better than I hoped for."

"I believe you are right, sir; for I heard one of the men as I passed observe, 'what will they say in Buffalo when it's over?'. "

"Send Mathers here, corporal; and do you order four rank and file, with side-arms to be in readiness immediately."

"Mathers, you have heard the news," said O'Flaherty, as the sergeant entered. "Can the Fort hold out against such a force as Jackson reports? You doubt; well, so do I; so let's see what's to be done. Can you remember, was it not the Buffalo militia that were so tremendously thrashed by the Delawares last autumn?"

"Yes, sir, they chased them for two days and nights, and had they not reached the town of Buffalo, the Delawares would not have left a scalp in the regiment."

"Can you recollect the chief's name—it was Carran—something, eh?"

"Caudan-dacwagae."

"Exactly. Where is he supposed to be now?"

"Up in Detroit, sir, they say, but no one knows. Those fellows are here to-day, and there to-morrow."

"Well then, sergeant, here's my plan." Saying these words, O'Flaherty proceeded to walk towards his quarters, accompanied by the sergeant, with whom he conversed for some time eagerly—occasionally replying, as it appeared, to objections, and offering explanations as the other seemed to require them. The colloquy lasted half an hour—and although the veteran sergeant seemed difficult of conviction, it ended by his saying, as he left the room,

"Well, sir, as you say, it can only come to hard knocks at worst. Here goes—I'll send off the scout party to make the fires and choose the men for the out picquets, for no time is to be lost."

In about an hour's time from the scene I have mentioned, a number of militia officers, of different grades, were seated round a bivouac fire, upon the bank of the Niagara river. The conversation seemed of an angry nature, for the voices of the speakers were loud and irascible, and their gestures evidenced a state of high excitement.

"I see," said one, who seemed the superior of the party—"I see well where this will end. We shall have another Queenston affair, as we had last fall with the Delawares."

"I only say," replied another, "that if you wish our men to stand fire to-morrow morning, the less you remind them of the Delawares the better. What is that noise? Is not that a drum beating?"

The party at these words sprung to their legs, and stood in an attitude of listening for some seconds.

"Who goes there?" sung out a sentinel from his post; and then, after a moment's delay, added—"Pass flag of truce to Major Brown's quarters."

Scarcely were the words spoken, when three officers in scarlet, preceded by a drummer with a white flag, stood before the American party.

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"To whom may I address myself?" said one of the British—who, I may inform my reader, en passant, was no other than O'Flaherty—"To whom may I address myself as the officer in command?"

"I am Major Brown," said a short, plethoric little man, in a blue uniform and round hat—"And who are you?"

"Major O'Flaherty, of his majesty's fifth foot," said Tom, with a very sonorous emphasis on each word—"the bearer of a flag of truce and an amicable proposition from Major-General Allen, commanding the garrison of Fort Peak."

The Americans, who were evidently taken by surprise at their intentions of attack being known, were silent, while he continued—

"Gentlemen, it may appear somewhat strange that a garrison, possessing the natural strength of a powerful position—supplied with abundant ammunition and every muniment of war—should despatch a flag of truce on the eve of an attack, in preference to waiting for the moment, when a sharp and well-prepared reception might best attest its vigilance and discipline. But the reasons for this step are soon explained. In the first place, you intend a surprise. We have been long aware of your projected attack. Our spies have tracked you from your crossing the river above the whirlpool to your present position. Every man of your party is numbered by us; and, what is still more, numbered by our allies—yes, gentlemen, I must repeat it, "allies"—though, as a Briton, I blush at the word. Shame and disgrace for ever be that man's portion, who first associated the honourable usages of war with the atrocious and bloody cruelties of the savage. Yet so it is: the Delawares of the hills"—here the Yankees exchanged very peculiar looks—"have this morning arrived at Fort Peak, with orders to ravage the whole of your frontier, from Fort George to Lake Erie. They brought us the information of your approach, and their chief is, while I speak, making an infamous proposition, by which a price is to be paid for every scalp he produces in the morning. Now, as the general cannot refuse to co-operate with the savages, without compromising himself with the commander-in-chief, neither can he accept of such assistance without some pangs of conscience. He has taken the only course open to him: he has despatched myself and my brother officers here"—O'Flaherty glanced at two privates dressed up in his regimentals—"to offer you terms"—

O'Flaherty paused when he arrived thus far, expecting that the opposite party would make some reply; but they continued silent: when suddenly, from the dense forest, there rung forth a wild and savage yell, that rose and fell several times, like the pibroch of the highlander, and ended at last in a loud whoop, that was echoed and re-echoed again and again for several seconds after.

"Hark!" said O'Flaherty, with an accent of horror—"Hark! the war-cry of the Delawares! The savages are eager for their prey. May it yet be time enough to rescue you from

such a fate! Time presses—our terms are these—as they do not admit of discussion, and must be at once accepted or rejected, to your own ear alone can I impart them.”

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Saying which, he took Major Brown aside, and, walking apart from the others, led him, by slow steps, into the forest. While O'Flaherty continued to dilate upon the atrocities of Indian war, and the revengeful character of the savages, he contrived to be always advancing towards the river side, till at length the glare of a fire was perceptible through the gloom. Major Brown stopped suddenly, and pointed in the direction of the flame.

"It is the Indian picquet," said O'Flaherty, calmly; "and as the facts I have been detailing may be more palpable to your mind, you shall see them with your own eyes. Yes, I repeat it, you shall, through the cover of this brushwood, see Caudan-dacwagae himself—for he is with them in person."

As O'Flaherty said this, he led Major Brown, now speechless with terror, behind a massive cork tree, from which spot they could look down upon the river side, where in a small creek sat five or six persons in blankets, and scarlet head-dresses; their faces streaked with patches of yellow and red paint, to which the glare of the fire lent fresh horror. In the midst sat one, whose violent gestures and savage cries gave him the very appearance of a demon, as he resisted with all his might the efforts of the others to restrain him, shouting like a maniac all the while, and struggling to rise.

"It is the chief," said O'Flaherty; "he will wait no longer. We have bribed the others to keep him quiet, if possible, a little time; but I see they cannot succeed."

A loud yell of triumph from below interrupted Tom's speech. The infuriated savage—who was no other than Mr. Malone—having obtained the rum bottle, for which he was fighting with all his might—his temper not being improved in the struggle by occasional admonitions from the red end of a cigar, applied to his naked skin by the other Indians—who were his own soldiers acting under O'Flaherty's orders.

"Now," said Tom, "that you have convinced yourself, and can satisfy your brother officers, will you take your chance? or will you accept the honoured terms of the General—pile your arms, and retreat beyond the river before day-break? Your muskets and ammunition will offer a bribe to the cupidity of the savage, and delay his pursuit till you can reach some place of safety."

Major Brown heard the proposal in silence, and at last determined upon consulting his brother officers.

"I have outstaid my time," said O'Flaherty, "but stop; the lives of so many are at stake, I consent." Saying which, they walked on without speaking, till they arrived where the others were standing around the watch-fire.

As Brown retired to consult with the officers, Tom heard with pleasure how much his two companions had worked upon the Yankees' fears, during his absence, by details of the vindictive feelings of the Delawares, and their vows to annihilate the Buffalo militia.

Before five minutes they had decided. Upon a solemn pledge from O'Flaherty that the terms of the compact were to be observed as he stated them, they agreed to march with their arms to the ford, where, having piled them, they were to cross over, and make the best of their way home.

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By sunrise the next morning, all that remained of the threatened attack on Fort Peak, were the smouldering ashes of some wood fires—eighty muskets piled in the fort—and the yellow ochre, and red stripes that still adorned the countenance of the late Indian chief,—but now snoring Lieutenant Maurice Malone.

CHAPTER XLVII.

The courier's passport.

A second night succeeded the long dreary day of the diligence, and the only one agreeable reflection arose in the feeling that every mile travelled, was diminishing the chance of pursuit, and removing me still further from that scene of trouble and annoyance that was soon to furnish gossip for Paris—under the title of “The Affaire O’Leary.”

How he was ever to extricate himself from the numerous and embarrassing difficulties of his position, gave me, I confess, less uneasiness than the uncertainty of my own fortunes. Luck seemed ever to befriend him—me it had always accompanied far enough through life to make its subsequent desertion more painful. How far I should blame myself for this, I stopped not to consider; but brooded over the fact in a melancholy and discontented mood. The one thought uppermost in my mind was, how will Lady Jane receive me—am I forgotten—or am I only remembered as the subject of that unlucky mistake, when, under the guise of an elder son, I was feted and made much of. What pretensions I had, without fortune, rank, influence, or even expectations of any kind, to seek the hand of the most beautiful girl of the day, with the largest fortune as her dowry, I dare not ask myself—the reply would have dashed all my hopes, and my pursuit would have at once been abandoned. “Tell the people you are an excellent preacher,” was the advice of an old and learned divine to a younger and less experienced one—“tell them so every morning, and every noon, and every evening, and at last they will begin to believe it.” So thought I. I shall impress upon the Callonbys that I am a most unexceptionable “parti.” Upon every occasion they shall hear it—as they open their newspapers at breakfast—as they sip their soup at luncheon—as they adjust their napkin at dinner—as they chat over their wine at night. My influence in the house shall be unbounded—my pleasures consulted—my dislikes remembered. The people in favour with me shall dine there three times a-week—those less fortunate shall be put into schedule A. My opinions on all subjects shall be a law—whether I pronounce upon politics, or discuss a dinner: and all this I shall accomplish by a successful flattery of my lady—a little bullying of my lord—a devoted attention to the youngest sister—a special cultivation of Kilkee—and a very “prononce” neglect of Lady Jane. These were my half-waking thoughts, as the heavy diligence rumbled over the pave into Nancy; and I was aroused by the door being suddenly jerked open, and a bronzed face, with a black beard and moustache, being thrust in amongst us.

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"Your passports, Messieurs," as a lantern was held up in succession across our faces, and we handed forth our crumpled and worn papers to the official.

The night was stormy and dark—gusts of wind sweeping along, bearing with them the tail of some thunder cloud—mingling their sounds with a falling tile from the roofs, or a broken chimney-pot. The officer in vain endeavoured to hold open the passports while he inscribed his name; and just as the last scrawl was completed, the lantern went out. Muttering a heavy curse upon the weather, he thrust them in upon us en masse, and, banging the door to, called out to the conducteur, "en route."

Again we rumbled on, and, ere we cleared the last lamps of the town, the whole party were once more sunk in sleep, save myself. Hour after hour rolled by, the rain pattering upon the roof, and the heavy splash of the horses' feet contributing their mournful sounds to the melancholy that was stealing over me. At length we drew up at the door of a little auberge; and, by the noise and bustle without, I perceived there was a change of horses. Anxious to stretch my legs, and relieve, if even for a moment, the wearisome monotony of the night, I got out and strode into the little parlour of the inn. There was a cheerful fire in an open stove, beside which stood a portly figure in a sheepskin bunta and a cloth travelling cap, with a gold band; his legs were cased in high Russia leather boots, all evident signs of the profession of the wearer, had even his haste at supper not bespoke the fact that he was a government courier.

"You had better make haste with the horses, Antoine, if you don't wish the postmaster to hear of it," said he, as I entered, his mouth filled with pie crust and vin de Beaune, as he spoke.

A lumbering peasant, with a blouse, sabots, and a striped nightcap, replied in some unknown patois; when the courier again said—

"Well, then, take the diligence horses; I must get on at all events; they are not so presse, I'll be bound; besides it will save the gens-d'armes some miles of a ride if they overtake them here."

"Have we another vise of our passports here, then?" said I, addressing the courier, "for we have already been examined at Nancy?"

"Not exactly a vise," said the courier, eyeing me most suspiciously as he spoke, and then continuing to eat with his former voracity.

"Then, what, may I ask, have we to do with the gens-d'armes?"

"It is a search," said the courier, gruffly, and with the air of one who desired no further questioning.

I immediately ordered a bottle of Burgundy, and filling the large goblet before him, said, with much respect,

“A votre bonne voyage, Monsier le Courier.”

To this he at once replied, by taking off his cap and bowing politely as he drank off the wine.

“Have we any runaway felon or a stray galerien among us?” said I, laughingly, “that they are going to search us?”

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"No, monsieur," said the courier; "but there has been a government order to arrest a person on this road connected with the dreadful Polish plot, that has just eclated at Paris. I passed a vidette of cavalry at Nancy, and they will be up here in half an hour."

"A Polish plot! Why, I left Paris only two days ago, and never heard of it."

"C'est bien possible, Monsieur? Perhaps, after all, it may only be an affair of the police; but they have certainly arrested one prisoner at Meurice, charged with this, as well as the attempt to rob Frascati, and murder the croupier."

"Alas," said I, with a half-suppressed groan, "it is too true; that infernal fellow O'Leary has ruined me, and I shall be brought back to Paris, and only taken from prison to meet the open shame and ignominy of a public trial."

What was to be done?—every moment was precious. I walked to the door to conceal my agitation. All was dark and gloomy. The thought of escape was my only one; but how to accomplish it! Every stir without suggested to my anxious mind the approaching tread of horses—every rattle of the harness seemed like the clink of accoutrements.

While I yet hesitated, I felt that my fate was in the balance. Concealment where I was, was impossible; there were no means of obtaining horses to proceed. My last only hope then rested in the courier; he perhaps might be bribed to assist me at this juncture. Still his impression as to the enormity of the crime imputed, might deter him; and there was no time for explanation, if even he would listen to it. I returned to the room; he had finished his meal, and was now engaged in all the preparations for encountering a wet and dreary night. I hesitated; my fears that if he should refuse my offers, all chance of my escape was gone, deterred me for a moment. At length as he wound a large woollen shawl around his throat, and seemed to have completed his costume, I summoned nerve for the effort, and with as much boldness in my manner as I could muster, said—

"Monsieur le Courier, one word with you." I here closed the door, and continued. "My fortunes—my whole prospects in life depend upon my reaching Strasbourg by to-morrow night. You alone can be the means of my doing so. Is there any price you can mention, for which you will render me this service?—if so, name it."

"So then, Monsieur," said the Courier, slowly—"so, then, you are the—"

"You have guessed it," said I, interrupting. "Do you accept my proposal?"

"It is impossible," said he, "utterly impossible; for even should I be disposed to run the risk on my own account, it would avail you nothing; the first town we entered your passport would be demanded, and not being vised by the minister to travel en courier, you would at once be detained and arrested."

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“Then am I lost,” said I, throwing myself upon a chair; at the same instant my passport, which I carried in my breast pocket, fell out at the feet of the courier. He lifted it and opened it leisurely. So engrossed was I by my misfortunes, that for some minutes I did not perceive, that as he continued to read the passport, he smiled from time to time, till at length a hearty fit of laughing awoke me from my abstraction. My first impulse was to seize him by the throat; controlling my temper, however, with an effort, I said—

“And pray, Monsieur, may I ask in what manner the position I stand in at this moment affords you so much amusement? Is there any thing so particularly droll—any thing so excessively ludicrous in my situation—or what particular gift do you possess that shall prevent me throwing you out of the window?”

“Mais, Monsieur,” said he, half stifled with laughter, “do you know the blunder I fell into? it is really too good. Could you only guess who I took you for, you would laugh too.”

Here he became so overcome with merriment, that he was obliged to sit down, which he did opposite to me, and actually shook with laughter.

“When this comedy is over,” thought I, “we may begin to understand each other.” Seeing no prospect of this, I became at length impatient, and jumping on my legs, said —

“Enough, sir, quite enough of this foolery. Believe me, you have every reason to be thankful that my present embarrassment should so far engross me, that I cannot afford time to give you a thrashing.”

“Pardon, mille pardons,” said he humbly; “but you will, I am sure, forgive me when I tell you that I was stupid enough to mistake you for the fugitive Englishman, whom the gens-d’armes are in pursuit of. How good, eh?”

“Oh! devilish good—but what do you mean?”

“Why, the fellow that caused the attack at Frascati, and all that, and—”

“Yes—well, eh? Did you think I was him?”

“To be sure I did, till I saw your passport.”

“Till you saw my passport!” Why, what on earth can he mean? thought I. “No, but,” said I, half jestingly, “how could you make such a blunder?”

“Why, your confused manner—your impatience to get on—your hurried questions, all convinced me. In fact, I’d have wagered any thing you were the Englishman.”



“And what, in heaven’s name, does he think me now?” thought I, as I endeavoured to join the laugh so ludicrous a mistake occasioned.

“But we are delaying sadly,” said the courier. “Are you ready?”

“Ready?—ready for what?”

“To go on with me, of course. Don’t you wish to get early to Strasbourg?”

“To be sure I do.”

“Well, then, come along. But, pray, don’t mind your luggage, for my caleche is loaded. Your instruments can come in the diligence.”

“My instruments in the diligence! He’s mad—that’s flat.”

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“How they will laugh at Strasbourg at my mistake.”

“That they will,” thought I. “The only doubt is, will you join in the merriment?”

So saying, I followed the courier to the door, jumped into his caleche, and in another moment was hurrying over the pave at a pace that defied pursuit, and promised soon to make up for all our late delay. Scarcely was the fur-lined apron of the caleche buttoned around me, and the German blinds let down, when I set to work to think over the circumstance that had just befallen me. As I had never examined my passport from the moment Trevanion handed it to me in Paris, I knew nothing of its contents; therefore, as to what impression it might convey of me, I was totally ignorant. To ask the courier for it now might excite suspicion; so that I was totally at sea how to account for his sudden change in my favour, or in what precise capacity I was travelling beside him. Once, and once only, the thought of treachery occurred to me. Is he about to hand me over to the gens-d’armes? and are we now only retracing our steps towards Nancy? If so, Monsieur le Courier, whatever be my fate, your’s is certainly an unenviable one. My reflections on this head were soon broken in upon, for my companion again returned to the subject of his “singular error,” and assured me that he was as near as possible leaving me behind, under the mistaken impression of my being “myself;” and informed me that all Strasbourg would be delighted to see me, which latter piece of news was only the more flattering, that I knew no one there, nor had ever been in that city in my life; and after about an hour’s mystification as to my tastes, habits, and pursuits, he fell fast asleep, leaving me to solve the difficult problem as to whether I was not somebody else, or the only alternative—whether travelling en courier might not be prescribed by physicians as a mode of treating insane patients.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

A night in Strasbourg.

With the dawn of day my miseries recommenced; for after letting down the sash, and venting some very fervent imprecations upon the postillion for not going faster than his horses were able, the courier once more recurred to his last night’s blunder, and proceeded very leisurely to catechise me as to my probable stay at Strasbourg, when I should go from there, &c. As I was still in doubt what or whom he took me for, I answered with the greatest circumspection—watching, the while, for any clue that might lead me to a discovery of myself. Thus, occasionally evading all pushing and home queries, and sometimes, when hard pressed, feigning drowsiness, I passed the long and anxious day—the fear of being overtaken ever mingling with the thoughts that some unlucky admission of mine might discover my real character to the courier, who, at any post station, might hand me over to the authorities. Could I only guess at the part I am performing, thought

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I, and I might manage to keep up the illusion; but my attention was so entirely engrossed by fencing off all his threats, that I could find out nothing. At last, as night drew near, the thought that we were approaching Strasbourg rallied my spirits, suggesting an escape from all pursuit, as well as the welcome prospect of getting rid of my present torturer, who, whenever I awoke from a doze, reverted to our singular meeting with a pertinacity that absolutely seemed like malice.

“As I am aware that this is your first visit to Strasbourg,” said the courier, “perhaps I can be of service to you in recommending a hotel. Put up, I advise you, at the ‘Bear’—a capital hotel, and not ten minutes’ distance from the theatre.”

I thanked him for the counsel; and, rejoicing in the fact that my prototype, whoever he might be, was unknown in the city, began to feel some little hope of getting through this scrape, as I had done so many others.

“They have been keeping the ‘Huguenots’ for your arrival, and all Strasbourg is impatient for your coming.”

“Indeed!” said I, mumbling something meant to be modest. “Who the devil am I, then, to cause all this fracas? Heaven grant, not the new ‘prefect,’ or the commander of the forces.”

“I am told the ‘Zauberflotte’ is your favourite opera?”

“I can’t say that I ever heard it—that is, I mean that I could say—well got up.”

Here I floundered on having so far forgot myself as to endanger every thing.

“How very unfortunate! Well, I hope you will not long have as much to say. Meanwhile, here we are—this is the ‘Bear.’”

We rattled into the ample porte cochere of a vast hotel—the postillion cracking his enormous whip, and bells ringing on every side, as if the crown prince of Russia had been the arrival, and not a poor sub. in the __th.

The courier jumped out, and running up to the landlord, whispered a few words in his ear, to which the other answered by a deep “ah, vraiment!” and then saluted me with an obsequiousness that made my flesh quake.

“I shall make ‘mes hommages’ in the morning,” said the courier, as he drove off at full speed to deliver his despatches, and left me to my own devices to perform a character, without even being able to guess what it might be. My passport, too, the only thing that

could throw any light upon the affair, he had taken along with him, promising to have it vised, and save me any trouble.

Of all my difficulties and puzzling situations in life, this was certainly the worst; for however often my lot had been to personate another, yet hitherto I had had the good fortune to be aware of what and whom I was performing. Now I might be any body from Marshal Soult to Monsieur Scribe; one thing only was certain, I must be a “celebrity.” The confounded pains and trouble they were taking to receive me, attested that fact, and left me to the pleasing reflection that my detection, should it take

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place, would be sure of attracting a very general publicity. Having ordered my supper from the landlord, with a certain air of reserve, sufficient to prevent even an Alsace host from obtruding any questions upon me, I took my opportunity to stroll from the inn down to the river side. There lay the broad, rapid Rhine, separating me, by how narrow a gulph, from that land, where, if I once arrived, my safety was certain. Never did that great boundary of nations strike me so forcibly, as now when my own petty interests and fortunes were at stake. Night was fast settling upon the low flat banks of the stream, and nothing stirred, save the ceaseless ripple of the river. One fishing barque alone was on the water. I hailed the solitary tenant of it, and after some little parley, induced him to ferry me over. This, however, could only be done when the night was farther advanced—it being against the law to cross the river except at certain hours, and between two established points, where officers of the revenue were stationed. The fisherman was easily bribed, however, to evade the regulation, and only bargained that I should meet him on the bank before daybreak. Having settled this point to my satisfaction, I returned to my hotel in better spirits; and with a Strasbourg pate, and a flask of Nierensteiner, drank to my speedy deliverance.

How to consume the long, dreary hours between this time and that of my departure, I knew not; for though greatly fatigued, I felt that sleep was impossible; the usual resource of a gossip with the host was equally out of the question; and all that remained was the theatre, which I happily remembered was not far from the hotel.

It was an opera night, and the house was crowded to excess; but with some little management, I obtained a place in a box near the stage. The piece was “Les Franc Macons,” which was certainly admirably supported, and drew down from the audience—no mean one as judges of music—the loudest thunders of applause. As for me, the house was a great a curiosity as the opera. The novel spectacle of some hundred (thousand?) people relishing and appreciating the highest order of musical genius, was something totally new and surprising to me. The curtain at length fell upon the fifth act.

And now the deafening roar of acclamation was tremendous; and amid a perfect shout of enthusiasm, the manager announced the opera for the ensuing evening. Scarcely had this subsided, when a buzz ran through the house; at first subdued, but gradually getting louder—extending from the boxes to the balcony—from the balcony to the parterre—and finally even to the galleries. Groups of people stood upon the benches, and looked fixedly in one part of the house; then changed and regarded as eagerly the other.

What can this mean? thought I. Is the theatre on fire? Something surely has gone wrong!

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In this conviction, with the contagious spirit of curiosity, I mounted upon a seat, and looked about me on every side; but unable still to catch the object which seemed to attract the rest, as I was about to resume my place, my eyes fell upon a well-known face, which in an instant I remembered was that of my late fellow-traveller the courier. Anxious to avoid his recognition, I attempted to get down at once; but before I could accomplish it, the wretch had perceived and recognised me; and I saw him, even with a gesture of delight, point me out to some friends beside him.

“Confound the fellow,” muttered I; “I must leave this at once, or I shall be involved in some trouble.”

Scarcely was my my resolve taken, when a new burst of voices arose from the pit—the words “l’Auteur,” “l’Auteur,” mingling with loud cries for “Meerberger,” “Meerberger,” to appear. So, thought I, it seems the great composer is here. Oh, by Jove! I must have a peep at him before I go. So, leaning over the front rail of the box, I looked anxiously about to catch one hasty glimpse of one of the great men of his day and country. What was my surprise, however, to perceive that about two thousand eyes were firmly rivetted upon the box I was seated in; while about half the number of tongues called out unceasingly, “Mr. Meerberger—vive Meerberger—vive l’Auteur des Franc Macons—vive Franc Macons,” &c. Before I could turn to look for the hero of the scene, my legs were taken from under me, and I felt myself lifted by several strong men and held out in front of the box, while the whole audience, rising en masse, saluted me—yes, me, Harry Lorrequer—with a cheer that shook the building. Fearful of precipitating myself into the pit beneath, if I made the least effort, and half wild with terror and amazement, I stared about like a maniac, while a beautiful young woman tripped along the edge of the box, supported by her companion’s hand, and placed lightly upon my brow a chaplet of roses and laurel. Here the applause was like an earthquake.

“May the devil fly away with half of ye,” was my grateful response, to as full a cheer of applause as ever the walls of the house re-echoed to.

“On the stage—on the stage!” shouted that portion of the audience who, occupying the same side of the house as myself, preferred having a better view of me; and to the stage I was accordingly hurried, down a narrow stair, through a side scene, and over half the corps de ballet who were waiting for their entree. Kicking, plunging, buffetting like a madman, they carried me to the “flats,” when the manager led me forward to the foot lights, my wreath of flowers contrasting rather ruefully with my bruised cheeks and torn habiliments. Human beings, God be praised, are only capable of certain efforts—so that one-half the audience were coughing their sides out, while the other were hoarse as bull-frogs from their enthusiasm in less than five minutes.

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“You’ll have what my friend Rooney calls a chronic bronchitis for this, these three weeks,” said I, “that’s one comfort,” as I bowed my way back to the “practicable” door, through which I made my exit, with the thousand faces of the parterre shouting my name, or, as fancy dictated, that of one of “my” operas. I retreated behind the scenes, to encounter very nearly as much, and at closer quarters, too, as that lately sustained before the audience. After an embrace of two minutes duration from the manager, I ran the gauntlet from the prima donna to the last triangle of the orchestra, who cut away a back button of my coat as a “souvenir.” During all this, I must confess, very little acting was needed on my part. They were so perfectly contented with their self-deception, that if I had made an affidavit before the mayor—if there be such a functionary in such an insane town—they would not have believed me. Wearied and exhausted at length, by all I had gone through, I sat down upon a bench, and, affecting to be overcome by my feelings, concealed my face in my handkerchief. This was the first moment of relief I experienced since my arrival; but it was not to last long, for the manager, putting down his head close to my ear, whispered—

“Monsieur Meerberger, I have a surprise for you—such as you have not had for some time, I venture to say”—

“I defy you on this head,” thought I. “If they make me out king Solomon now, it will not amaze me”—

“And when I tell you my secret,” continued he, “you will acknowledge I cannot be of a very jealous disposition. Madame Baptiste has just told me she knew you formerly, and that—she—that is, you—were—in fact, you understand—there had been—so to say—a little ‘amourette’ between you.”

I groaned in spirit as I thought, now am I lost without a chance of escape—the devil take her reminiscences.

“I see,” continued le bon mari, “you cannot guess of whom I speak; but when I tell you of Amelie Grandet, your memory will, perhaps, be better.”

“Amelie Grandet!” said I, with a stage start. I need not say that I had never heard the name before. “Amelie Grandet here!”

“Yes, that she is,” said the manager, rubbing his hands; “and my wife, too”—

“Married!—Amelie Grandet married! No, no; it is impossible—I cannot believe it. But were it true—true, mark me—for worlds would I not meet her.”

“Comment il est drole,” said the manager, soliloquising aloud; “for my wife takes it much easier, seeing they never met each other since they were fifteen.”

“Ho, ho!” thought I, “the affair is not so bad either—time makes great changes in that space.” “And does she still remember me?” said I, in a very Romeo-in-the-garden voice.

“Why, so far as remembering the little boy that used to play with her in the orchard at her mother’s cottage near Pirna, and with whom she used to go boating upon the Elbe, I believe the recollection is perfect. But come along—she insists upon seeing you, and is this very moment waiting supper in our room for you.”

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"A thorough German she must be," thought I, "with her sympathies and her supper—her reminiscences and her Rhine wine hunting in couples through her brain."

Summoning courage from the fact of our long absence from each other, I followed the manager through a wilderness of pavilions, forests, clouds and cataracts, and at length arrived at a little door, at which he knocked gently.

"Come in," said a soft voice inside. We opened, and beheld a very beautiful young woman, in Tyrolese costume. She was to perform in the afterpiece—her low boddice and short scarlet petticoat displaying the most perfect symmetry of form and roundness of proportion. She was dressing her hair before a low glass as we came in, and scarcely turned at our approach; but in an instant, as if some sudden thought had struck her, she sprung fully round, and looking at me fixedly for above a minute—a very trying one for me—she glanced at her husband, whose countenance plainly indicated that she was right, and calling out, "C'est lui—c'est bien lui," threw herself into my arms, and sobbed convulsively.

"If this were to be the only fruits of my impersonation," thought I, "it is not so bad—but I am greatly afraid these good people will find out a wife and seven babies for me before morning."

Whether the manager thought that enough had been done for stage effect, I know not; but he gently disengaged the lovely Amelie, and deposited her upon a sofa, to a place upon which she speedily motioned me by a look from a pair of very seducing blue eyes.

"Francois, mon cher, you must put off La Chaumiere. I can't play to-night."

"Put it off! But only think of the audience, ma mie—they will pull down the house."

"C'est possible," said she, carelessly. "If that give them any pleasure, I suppose they must be indulged; but I, too, must have a little of my own way. I shall not play."

The tone this was said in—the look—the easy gesture of command—no less than the afflicted helplessness of the luckless husband, showed me that Amelie, however docile as a sweetheart, had certainly her own way as wife.

While Le cher Francois then retired, to make his proposition to the audience, of substituting something for the Chaumiere—the "sudden illness of Madame Baptiste having prevented her appearance,"—we began to renew our old acquaintance, by a thousand inquiries from that long-past time, when we were sweethearts and lovers.

"You remember me then so well?" said I.



“As of yesterday. You are much taller, and your eyes darker; but still—there is something. You know, however, I have been expecting to see you these two days; and tell me frankly how do you find me looking?”

“More beautiful, a thousand times more beautiful than ever—all save in one thing, Amelie.”

“And that is—”

“You are married.”

“How you jest. But let us look back. Do you ever think on any of our old compacts?” Here she pulled a leaf from a rose bud in her bouquet, and kissed it. “I wager you have forgotten that.”

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How I should have replied to this masonic sign, God knows; but the manager fortunately entered, to assure us that the audience had kindly consented not to pull down the house, but to listen to a five act tragedy instead, in which he had to perform the principal character. "So, then, don't wait supper, Amelie; but take care of Monsieur Meerberger till my return."

Thus, once more were we left to our souvenirs, in which, whenever hard pushed myself, I regularly carried the war into the enemy's camp, by allusions to incidents, which I need not observe had never occurred. After a thousand stories of our early loves, mingled with an occasional sigh over their fleeting character—now indulging a soft retrospect of the once happy past—now moralising on the future—Amelie and I chatted away the hours till the conclusion of the tragedy.

By this time, the hour was approaching for my departure; so, after a very tender leave-taking with my new friend and my old love, I left the theatre, and walked slowly along to the river.

"So much for early associations," thought I; "and how much better pleased are we ever to paint the past according to our own fancy, than to remember it as it really was. Hence all the insufferable cant about happy infancy, and 'the glorious schoolboy days,' which have generally no more foundation in fact than have the 'Chateaux en Espagne' we build up for the future. I wager that the real Amant d'enfance, when he arrives, is not half so great a friend with the fair Amelie as his unworthy shadow. At the same time, I had just as soon that Lady Jane should have no 'premiers amours' to look back upon, except such as I have performed a character in."

The splash of oars near me broke up my reflections, and the next moment found me skimming the rapid Rhine, as I thought for the last time. What will they say in Strasbourg to-morrow? How will they account for the mysterious disappearance of Monsieur Meerberger? Poor Amelie Grandet! For so completely had the late incidents engrossed my attention, that I had for the moment lost sight of the most singular event of all—how I came to be mistaken for the illustrious composer.

CHAPTER XLIX.

A surprise.

It was late upon the following day ere I awoke from the long deep sleep that closed my labours in Strasbourg. In the confusion of my waking thoughts, I imagined myself still before a crowded and enthusiastic audience—the glare of the foot-lights—the crash of the orchestra—the shouts of "l'Auteur," "l'Auteur," were all before me, and so completely possessed me, that, as the waiter entered with hot water, I could not resist the impulse to pull off my night-cap with one hand, and press the other to my heart in the usual

theatrical style of acknowledgments for a most flattering reception. The startled look of the poor fellow as he neared the door to escape, roused me from my hallucination, and awakened me to the conviction that the suspicion of lunacy might be a still heavier infliction than the personation of Monsieur Meerberger.

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With thoughts of this nature, I assumed my steadiest demeanour—ordered my breakfast in the most orthodox fashion—eat it like a man in his senses; and when I threw myself back in the wicker conveniency they call a caleche, and bid adieu to Kehl, the whole fraternity of the inn would have given me a certificate of sanity before any court in Europe.

“Now for Munich,” said I, as we rattled along down the steep street of the little town. “Now for Munich, with all the speed that first of postmasters and slowest of men, the Prince of Tour and Taxis, will afford us.”

The future engrossed all my thoughts; and puzzling as my late adventures had been to account for, I never for a moment reverted to the past. “Is she to be mine?” was the ever-rising question in my mind. The thousand difficulties that had crossed my path might long since have terminated a pursuit where there was so little of promise, did I not cherish the idea in my heart, that I was fated to succeed. Sheridan answered the ribald sneers of his first auditory, by saying, “Laugh on; but I have it in me, and by ____ it shall come out.” So I whispered to myself:--Go on Harry. Luck has been hitherto against you, it is true; but you have yet one throw of the dice, and something seems to say, a fortunate one in store; and, if so——, but I cannot trust myself with such anticipations. I am well aware how little the world sympathises with the man whose fortunes are the sport of his temperament—that April-day frame of mind is ever the jest and scoff of those hardier and sterner natures, who, if never overjoyed by success, are never much depressed by failure. That I have been cast in the former mould, these Confessions have, alas! plainly proved; but that I regret it, I fear also, for my character for sound judgment, I must answer “No.”

Better far to be
In utter darkness lying,
Than be blest with light, and see
That light for ever flying

is, doubtless, very pretty poetry, but very poor philosophy. For myself—and some glimpses of sunshine this fair world has afforded me, fleeting and passing enough, in all conscience—and yet I am not so ungrateful as to repine at my happiness, because it was not permanent, as I am thankful for those bright hours of “Love’s young dream,” which, if nothing more, are at least delightful souvenirs. They form the golden thread in the tangled web of our existence, ever appearing amid the darker surface around, and throwing a fair halo of brilliancy on what, without it, were cold, bleak, and barren. No, no

The light that lies
In woman’s eyes,

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were it twice as fleeting—as it is ten times more brilliant—than the forked lightning, irradiates the dark gloom within us for many a long day after it has ceased to shine upon us. As in boyhood it is the humanizing influence that tempers the fierce and unruly passions of our nature, so in manhood it forms the goal to which all our better and higher aspirations tend, telling us there is something more worthy than gold, and a more lofty pinnacle of ambition than the praise and envy of our fellow-men; and we may rest assured, that when this feeling dies within us, that all the ideal of life dies with it, and nothing remains save the dull reality of our daily cares and occupations. “I have lived and have loved,” saith Schiller; and if it were not that there seems some tautology in the phrase, I should say, such is my own motto. If Lady Jane but prove true—if I have really succeeded—if, in a word—but why speculate upon such chances?—what pretensions have I?—what reasons to look for such a prize? Alas! and alas! were I to catechise myself too closely, I fear that my horses’ heads would face towards Calais, and that I should turn my back upon the only prospect of happiness I can picture to myself in this world. In reflections such as these, the hours rolled over, and it was already late at night when we reached the little village of Merchem. While fresh horses were being got ready, I seized the occasion to partake of the table d’hôte supper of the inn, at the door of which the diligence was drawn up. Around the long, and not over-scrupulously clean table, sat the usual assemblage of a German “Eilwagen”—smoking, dressing salad, knitting, and occasionally picking their teeth with their forks, until the soup should make its appearance. Taking my place amid this motley assemblage of mustachioed shopkeepers and voluminously-petticoated frows, I sat calculating how long human patience could endure such companionship, when my attention was aroused by hearing a person near me narrate to his friend the circumstances of my debut at Strasbourg, with certain marginal notes of his own that not a little surprised me.

“And so it turned out not to be Meerberger, after all,” said the listener.

“Of course not,” replied the other. “Meerberger’s passport was stolen from him in the diligence by this English escroc, and the consequence was, that our poor countryman was arrested, the other passport being found upon him; while the Englishman, proceeding to Strasbourg, took his benefit at the opera, and walked away with above twelve thousand florins.

“Sappermint” said the other, tossing off his beer. “He must have been a clever fellow, though, to lead the orchestra in the Franc Macons.”

“That is the most astonishing part of all; for they say in Strasbourg that his performance upon the violin was far finer than Paganini’s; but there seems some secret in it, after all: for Madame Baptiste swears that he is Meerberger; and in fact the matter is far from being cleared up —nor can it be till he is apprehended.”

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"Which shall not be for some time to come," said I to myself, as, slipping noiselessly from the room, I regained my "caleche," and in ten minutes more was proceeding on my journey. So much for correct information, thought I. One thing, however, is certain—to the chance interchange of passports I owe my safety, with the additional satisfaction that my little German acquaintance is reaping a pleasant retribution for all his worry and annoyance of me in the coupe.

Only he who has toiled over the weary miles of a long journey —exclusively occupied with one thought—one overpowering feeling—can adequately commiserate my impatient anxiety as the days rolled slowly over on the long tiresome road that leads from the Rhine to the south of Germany.

The morning was breaking on the fourth day of my journey as the tall spires of Munich rose to my view, amid the dull and arid desert of sand that city is placed in. At last! was my exclamation as the postilion tapped at the window with his whip, and then pointed towards the city. At last! Oh! what would be the extacy of my feelings now could I exchange the torturing anxieties of suspense for the glorious certainty my heart throbs for; now my journey is nearing its end to see me claim as my own what I now barely aspire to in the sanguine hope of a heart that will not despair. But cheer up, Harry. It is a noble stake you play for; and it is ever the bold gambler that wins. Scarcely was this reflection made half aloud, when a sudden shock threw me from my seat. I fell towards the door, which, bursting open, launched me out upon the road, at the same moment that the broken axletree of the caleche had upset it on the opposite side, carrying one horse along with it, and leaving the other with the postillion on his back, kicking and plunging with all his might. After assisting the frightened fellow to dismount, and having cut the traces of the restive animal, I then perceived that in the melee I had not escaped scatheless. I could barely stand; and, on passing my hand upon my instep, perceived I had sprained my ankle in the fall. The day was only breaking, no one was in sight, so that after a few minutes' consideration, the best thing to do, appeared to get the other horse upon his legs, and despatching the postillion to Munich, then about three leagues distant, for a carriage, wait patiently on the road-side for his return. No sooner was the resolve made than carried into execution; and in less than a quarter of an hour from the moment of the accident, I was seated upon the bank, watching the retiring figure of the postillion, as he disappeared down a hill, on his way to Munich. When the momentary burst of impatience was over, I could not help congratulating myself, that I was so far fortunate in reaching the end of my journey ere the mischance befell me. Had it occurred at Stuttgart I really think that it would have half driven me distracted.

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I was not long in my present situation till a number of peasants, with broad-brimmed hats, and many-buttoned coats, passed on their way to work; they all saluted me respectfully; but although they saw the broken carriage, and might well guess at the nature of my accident, yet not one ever thought of proffering his services, or even indulging curiosity, by way of inquiry. "How thoroughly German," thought I; "these people are the Turks of Europe, stupified with tobacco and 'starkes bier.' They have no thought for any thing but themselves, and their own immediate occupations." Perceiving at length one whose better dress and more intelligent look bespoke a rank above the common, I made the effort with such "platt deutsch," as I could muster, to ask if there were any house near, where I could remain till the postillion's return? and learned greatly to my gratification, that by taking the path which led through a grove of pine trees near me, I should find a chateau; but who was the proprietor he knew not; indeed the people were only newly come, and he believed were foreigners. English he thought. Oh, how my heart jumped as I said, "can they be the Callonbys; are they many in family; are there ladies—young ladies, among them?"—he knew not. Having hastily arranged with my new friend to watch the carriage till my return, I took the path he showed me, and smarting with pain at every step, hurried along as best I could towards the chateau. I had not walked many minutes, when a break in the wood gave me a view of the old mansion, and at once dispelled the illusion that was momentarily gaining upon me. "They could not be the Callonbys." The house was old; and though it had once been a fine and handsome structure, exhibited now abundant traces of decay; the rich cornices which supported the roof had fallen in many places, and lay in fragments upon the terrace beneath; the portico of the door was half tumbling; and the architraves of the windows were broken and dismantled; the tall and once richly ornamented chimnies, were bereft of all their tracery, and stood bolt upright in all their nakedness above the high pitched roof. A straggling "jet d'eau" was vigorously fighting its way amid a mass of creeping shrubs and luxuriant lichens that had grown around and above a richly carved fountain, and fell in a shower of sparkling dew upon the rank grass and tall weeds around. The gentle murmur was the only sound that broke the stillness of the morning.

A few deities in lead and stone, mutilated and broken, stood like the Genii loci, guarding the desolation about them, where an old, superannuated peacock, with dropping, ragged tail was the only living thing to be seen. All bespoke the wreck of what once was great and noble, and all plainly told me that such could not be the abode of the Callonbys.

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Half doubting that the house were inhabited, and half scrupling if so to disturb its inmates from their rest, I sat down upon the terrace steps and fell into a fit of musing on the objects about. That strange propensity of my countrymen to settle down in remote and unfrequented spots upon the continent, had never struck me so forcibly; for although unquestionably there were evident traces of the former grandeur of the place, yet it was a long past greatness; and in the dilapidated walls, broken statues, weed grown walls, and dark and tangled pine grove, there were more hints for sadness than I should willingly surround myself by in a residence. The harsh grating of a heavy door behind roused me; I turned and beheld an old man in a species of tarnished and worm-eaten livery, who, holding the door, again gazed at me with a mingled expression of fear and curiosity. Having briefly explained the circumstances which had befallen me, and appealed to the broken caleche upon the road to corroborate a testimony that I perceived needed such aid, the old man invited me to enter, saying that his master and mistress were not risen, but that he would himself give me some breakfast, of which by this time I stood much in want. The room into which I was ushered, corresponded well with the exterior of the house. It was large, bleak, and ill furnished; the ample, uncurtained windows; the cold, white pannelled walls; the uncarpeted floor; all giving it an air of uninhabitable misery. A few chairs of the Louis-quatorze taste, with blue velvet linings, faded and worn, a cracked marble table upon legs that once had been gilt; two scarcely detectable portraits of a mail-clad hero and a scarcely less formidable fair, with a dove upon her wrist, formed the principal articles of furniture in the dismal abode, where so “triste” and depressing did every thing appear, that I half regretted the curiosity that had tempted me from the balmy air, and cheerful morning without, to the gloom and solitude around me.

The old man soon re-appeared with a not despicable cup of “Cafe noir,” and a piece of bread as large as a teaspoon, and used by the Germans pretty much in the same way. As the adage of the “gift horse” is of tolerably general acceptance, I eat and was thankful, mingling my acknowledgments from time to time with some questions about the owners of the mansion, concerning whom I could not help feeling curious. The ancient servitor, however, knew little or nothing of those he served; his master was the honourable baron; but of his name he was ignorant; his mistress was young; they had not been many months there; they knew no one—had no visitors—he had heard they were English, but did not know it himself; they were “Gute leute,” “good people,” and that was enough for him. How strange did all this seem, that two people, young, too, should separate themselves from all the attractions and pleasures of the world, and settle down in the dark and dreary

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solitude, where every association was of melancholy, every object a text for sad reflections. Lost in these thoughts I sat down beside the window, and heeded not the old man as he noiselessly left the room. My thoughts ran on over the strange phases in which life presents itself, and how little after all external influences have to do with that peace of mind whose origin is within. The Indian, whose wigwam is beside the cataract, heeds not its thunders, nor feels its sprays as they fall in everlasting dew upon him; the Arab of the desert sees no bleakness in those never ending plains, upon whose horizon his eye has rested from childhood to age. Who knows but he who inhabits this lonely dwelling may have once shone in the gay world, mixing in its follies, tasting of its fascination; and to think that now—the low murmurs of the pine tops, the gentle rustle of the water through the rank grass, and my own thoughts combining, overcame me at length, and I slept—how long I know not; but when I awoke, certain changes about showed me that some length of time had elapsed; a gay wood fire was burning on the hearth; an ample breakfast covered the table; and the broadsheet of the “Times” newspaper was negligently reposing in the deep hollow of an arm chair. Before I had well thought how to apologize for the cool insouciance of my intrusion, the door opened, and a tall, well built man entered; his shooting jacket and gaiters were evidence of his English origin, while a bushy moustache and most ample “Henri quatre” nearly concealed features, that still were not quite unknown to me; he stopped, looked steadily at me, placed a hand on either shoulder, and calling out, “Harry—Harry Lorrequer, by all that’s glorious!” rushed from the room in a transport of laughter.

If my escape from the gallows depended upon my guessing my friend, I should have submitted to the last penalty of the law; never was I so completely nonplussed. Confound him what does he mean by running away in that fashion. It would serve him right were I to decamp by one of the windows before he comes back; but hark! some one is approaching.

“I tell you I cannot be mistaken,” said the man’s voice from without.

“Oh, impossible!” said a lady-like accent that seemed not heard by me for the first time.

“Judge for yourself; though certainly the last time you saw him may confuse your memory a little.”

“What the devil does he mean by that?” said I, as the door opened, and a very beautiful young woman came forward, who, after a moment’s hesitation, called out—

“True, indeed, it is Mr. Lorrequer, but he seems to have forgotten me.”



The eyes, the lips, the tone of the voice, were all familiar. What! can it be possible? Her companion who had now entered, stood behind her, holding his sides with ill-suppressed mirth; and at length called out—

“Harry, my boy, you scarcely were more discomposed the last morning we parted, when the yellow plush—”

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"By Jove it is," said I, as I sprang forward, and seizing my fair friend in my arms, saluted upon both cheeks my quondam flame, Miss Kamworth, now the wife of my old friend Jack Waller, of whom I have made due mention in an early chapter of these Confessions.

Were I given a muster roll of my acquaintance to say which of them might inhabit this deserted mansion, Jack Waller would certainly have been the last I should have selected—the gay, lively, dashing, high-spirited Jack, fond of society, dress, equipage, living greatly in the world, known to and liked by every body, of universal reputation. Did you want a cavalier to see your wife through a crush at the opera, a friend in a duel, a rider for your kicking horse in a stiff steeple chase, a bow oar for your boat at a rowing match, Jack was your man. Such then was my surprise at finding him here, that although there were many things I longed to inquire about, my first question was—

"And how came you here?"

"Life has its vicissitudes," replied Jack, laughing; "many stranger things have come to pass than my reformation. But first of all let us think of breakfast; you shall have ample satisfaction for all your curiosity afterwards."

"Not now, I fear; I am hurrying on to Munich."

"Oh, I perceive; but you are aware that—your friends are not there."

"The Callonbys not at Munich!" said I, with a start.

"No; they have been at Saltzburgh, in the Tyrol, for some weeks; but don't fret yourself, they are expected to-morrow in time for the court masquerade; so that until then at least you are my guest."

Overjoyed at this information, I turned my attention towards madame, whom I found much improved; the embonpoint of womanhood had still farther increased the charms of one who had always been handsome; and I could not help acknowledging that my friend Jack was warrantable in any scheme for securing such a prize.

CHAPTER L.

Jack Waller's story.

The day passed quickly over with my newly-found friends, whose curiosity to learn my adventures since we parted, anticipated me in my wish to learn theirs. After an early dinner, however, with a fresh log upon the hearth, a crusty flask of red hermitage before us, Jack and I found ourselves alone and at liberty to speak freely together.

"I scarcely could have expected such would be our meeting, Jack," said I, "from the way we last parted."

"Yes, by Jove, Harry; I believe I behaved but shabbily to you in that affair; but 'Love and War,' you know; and besides we had a distinct agreement drawn up between us."

"All true; and after all you are perhaps less to blame than my own miserable fortune that lies in wait to entrap and disappoint me at every turn in life. Tell me what do you know of the Callonbys?"

"Nothing personally; we have met them at dinner, a visit passed subsequently between us, 'et voila tout;' they have been scenery hunting, picture hunting, and all that sort of thing since their arrival; and rarely much in Munich; but how do you stand there? to be or not to be—eh?"

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"That is the very question of all others I would fain solve; and yet am in most complete ignorance of all about it; but the time approaches which must decide all. I have neither temper nor patience for further contemplation of it; so here goes; success to the Enterprize."

"Or," said Jack, tossing off his glass at the moment, "or, as they would say in Ireland, 'your health and inclinations, if they be virtuous.'"

"And now, Jack, tell me something of your own fortunes since the day you passed me in the post-chaise and four."

"The story is soon told. You remember that when I carried off Mary, I had no intention of leaving England whatever: my object was, after making her my wife, to open negotiations with the old colonel, and after the approved routine of penitential letters, imploring forgiveness, and setting forth happiness only wanting his sanction to make it heaven itself, to have thrown ourselves at his feet 'selon les regles,' sobbed, blubbered, blew our noses, and dressed for dinner, very comfortable inmates of that particularly snug residence, 'Hydrabad Cottage.' Now Mary, who behaved with great courage for a couple of days, after that got low-spirited and depressed; the desertion of her father, as she called it, weighed upon her mind, and all my endeavours to rally and comfort her, were fruitless and unavailing. Each day, however, I expected to hear something of, or from, the colonel, that would put an end to this feeling of suspense; but no—three weeks rolled on, and although I took care that he knew of our address, we never received any communication. You are aware that when I married, I knew Mary had, or was to have, a large fortune; and that I myself had not more than enough in the world to pay the common expenses of our wedding tour. My calculation was this—the reconciliation will possibly, what with delays of post—distance—and deliberation, take a month—say five weeks—now, at forty pounds per week, that makes exactly two hundred pounds—such being the precise limit of my exchequer, when blessed with a wife, a man, and a maid, three imperials, a cap-case, and a poodle, I arrived at the Royal Hotel, in Edinburgh. Had I been Lord Francis Egerton, with his hundred thousand a year, looking for a new 'distraction,' at any price; or still more—were I a London shopkeeper, spending a Sunday in Boulogne sur Mer, and trying to find out something expensive, as he had only one day to stay, I could not have more industriously sought out opportunities for extravagance, and each day contrived to find out some two or three acquaintances to bring home to dinner. And as I affected to have been married for a long time, Mary felt less genee among strangers, and we got on famously; still the silence of the colonel weighed upon her mind, and although she partook of none of my anxieties from that source, being perfectly ignorant of the state of my finances, she dwelt so constantly upon this subject, that I at length yielded to her repeated solicitations,

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and permitted her to write to her father. Her letter was a most proper one; combining a dutiful regret for leaving her home, with the hope that her choice had been such as to excuse her rashness, or, at least, palliate her fault. It went to say, that her father's acknowledgment of her, was all she needed or cared for, to complete her happiness, and asking for his permission to seek it in person. This was the substance of the letter, which upon the whole, satisfied me, and I waited anxiously for the reply. At the end of five days the answer arrived. It was thus:—

“Dear Mary,

“You have chosen your own path in life, and having done so, I have neither the right nor inclination to interfere with your decision; I shall neither receive you, nor the person you have made your husband; and to prevent any further disappointment, inform you that, as I leave this to-morrow, any future letters you might think proper to address, will not reach me.

“Yours very faithful,
C. Kamworth, Hyderabad Cottage.’

“This was a tremendous coup, and not in the least anticipated by either of us; upon me the effect was stunning, knowing, as I did, that our fast-diminishing finances were nearly expended. Mary on the other hand, who neither knew nor thought of the exchequer, rallied at once from her depression, and after a hearty fit of crying, dried her eyes, and putting her arm round my neck, said:

“Well, Jack, I must only love you the more, since papa will not share any of my affection.’

“I wish he would his purse though,’ muttered I, as I pressed her in my arms, and strove to seem perfectly happy.

“I shall not prolong my story by dwelling upon the agitation this letter cost me; however, I had yet a hundred pounds left, and an aunt in Harley-street, with whom I had always been a favourite. This thought, the only rallying one I possessed, saved me for the time; and as fretting was never my forte, I never let Mary perceive that any thing had gone wrong, and managed so well in this respect, that my good spirits raised her's, and we set out for London one fine sunshiny morning, as happy a looking couple as ever travelled the north road.

“When we arrived at the ‘Clarendon,’ my first care was to get into a cab, and drive to Harley-street. I rung the bell; and not waiting to ask if my aunt was at home, I dashed up stairs to the drawing-room; in I bolted, and instead of the precise old Lady Lilford,



sitting at her embroidery, with her fat poodle beside her, beheld a strapping looking fellow, with a black moustache, making fierce love to a young lady on a sofa beside him.

“‘Why, how is this—I really—there must be some mistake here.’ In my heart I knew that such doings in my good aunt’s dwelling were impossible.

“‘I should suspect there is, sir,’ drawled out he of the moustache, as he took a very cool survey of me, through his glass.

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“‘Is Lady Lilford at home, may I ask,’ said I, in a very apologetic tone of voice.

“‘I haven’t the honor of her ladyship’s acquaintance,’ replied he in a lisp, evidently enjoying my perplexity, which was every moment becoming more evident.

“‘But this is her house,’ said I, ‘at least—’

“‘Lady Lilford is at Paris, sir,’ said the young lady, who now spoke for the first time. ‘Papa has taken the house for the season, and that may perhaps account for your mistake.’

“What I muttered by way of apology for my intrusion, I know not; but I stammered—the young lady blushed—the beau chuckled, and turned to the window, and when I found myself in the street, I scarcely knew whether to laugh at my blunder, or curse my disappointment.

“The next morning I called upon my aunt’s lawyer, and having obtained her address in Paris, sauntered to the ‘Junior Club,’ to write her a letter before post hour. As I scanned over the morning papers, I could not help smiling at the flaming paragraph which announced my marriage, to the only daughter and heiress of the Millionaire, Colonel Kamworth. Not well knowing how to open the correspondence with my worthy relative, I folded the paper containing the news, and addressed it to ‘Lady Lilford, Hotel de Bristol, Paris.’

“When I arrived at the ‘Clarendon,’ I found my wife and her maid surrounded by cases and band-boxes; laces, satins and velvets were displayed on all sides, while an emissary from ‘Storr and Mortimer’ was arranging a grand review of jewellery on a side table, one half of which would have ruined the Rajah of Mysore, to purchase. My advice was immediately called into requisition; and pressed into service, I had nothing left for it, but to canvass, criticise, and praise, between times, which I did, with a good grace, considering that I anticipated the ‘Fleet,’ for every flounce of Valenciennes lace; and could not help associating a rich diamond aigrette, with hard labour for life, and the climate of New South Wales. The utter abstraction I was in, led to some awkward contre temps; and as my wife’s enthusiasm for her purchases increased, so did my reverie gain ground.

“‘Is it not beautiful, Jack?—how delicately worked—it must have taken a long time to do it.’

“‘Seven years,’ I muttered, as my thoughts ran upon a very different topic.

“‘Oh, no—not so much,’ said she laughing; ‘and it must be such a hard thing to do.’

“‘Not half so hard as carding wool, or pounding oyster shells.’

“How absurd you are. Well, I’ll take this, it will look so well in—’

“Botany Bay,’ said I, with a sigh that set all the party laughing, which at last roused me, and enabled me to join in the joke.

“As, at length, one half of the room became filled with millinery, and the other glittered with jewels and bijouterie, my wife grew weary with her exertions, and we found ourselves alone.

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“When I told her that my aunt had taken up her residence in Paris, it immediately occurred to her, how pleasant it would be to go there too; and, although I concurred in the opinion for very different reasons, it was at length decided we should do so; and the only difficulty now existed as to the means, for although the daily papers teem with ‘four ways to go from London to Paris;’ they all resolved themselves into one, and that one, unfortunately to me, the most difficult and impracticable —by money.

“There was, however, one last resource open—the sale of my commission. I will not dwell upon what it cost me to resolve upon this—the determination was a painful one, but it was soon come to, and before five-o’clock that day, Cox and Greenwood had got their instructions to sell out for me, and had advanced a thousand pounds of the purchase. Our bill settled—the waiters bowing to the ground (it is your ruined man that is always most liberal)—the post-horses harnessed, and impatient for the road, I took my place beside my wife, while my valet held a parasol over the soubrette in the rumble, all in the approved fashion of those who have an unlimited credit with Coutts and Drummond; the whips cracked, the leaders capered, and with a patronizing bow to the proprietor of the ‘Clarendon,’ away we rattled to Dover.

“After the usual routine of sea sickness, fatigue, and poisonous cookery, we reached Paris on the fifth day, and put up at the ‘Hotel de Londres,’ Place Vendome.

“To have an adequate idea of the state of my feelings as I trod the splendid apartments of this princely Hotel, surrounded by every luxury that wealth can procure, or taste suggest, you must imagine the condition of a man, who is regaled with a sumptuous banquet on the eve of his execution. The inevitable termination to all my present splendour, was never for a moment absent from my thoughts, and the secrecy with which I was obliged to conceal my feelings, formed one of the greatest sources of my misery. The coup, when it does come, will be sad enough, and poor Mary may as well have the comfort of the deception, as long as it lasts, without suffering as I do. Such was the reasoning by which I met every resolve to break to her the real state of our finances, and such the frame of mind in which I spent my days at Paris, the only really unhappy ones I can ever charge my memory with.

“We had scarcely got settled in the hotel, when my aunt, who inhabited the opposite side of the ‘Place,’ came over to see us and wish us joy. She had seen the paragraph in the Post, and like all other people with plenty of money, fully approved a match like mine.

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“She was delighted with Mary, and despite the natural reserve of the old maiden lady, became actually cordial, and invited us to dine with her that day, and every succeeding one we might feel disposed to do so. So far so well, thought I, as I offered her my arm to see her home; but if she knew of what value even this small attention is to us, am I quite so sure she would offer it?—however, no time is to be lost; I cannot live in this state of hourly agitation; I must make some one the confidant of my sorrows, and none so fit as she who can relieve as well as advise upon them. Although such was my determination, yet somehow I could not pluck up courage for the effort. My aunt’s congratulations upon my good luck, made me shrink from the avowal; and while she ran on upon the beauty and grace of my wife, topics I fully concurred in, I also chimed in with her satisfaction at the prudential and proper motives which led to the match. Twenty times I was on the eve of interrupting her, and saying, ‘But, madam, I am a beggar—my wife has not a shilling—I have absolutely nothing—her father disowns us—my commission is sold, and in three weeks, the ‘Hotel de Londres’ and the ‘Palais Royale,’ will be some hundred pounds the richer, and I without the fare of a cab, to drive me to the Seine to drown myself.’

“Such were my thoughts; but whenever I endeavoured to speak them, some confounded fulness in my throat nearly choked me; my temples throbbed, my hands trembled, and whether it was shame, or the sickness of despair, I cannot say; but the words would not come, and all that I could get out was some flattery of my wife’s beauty, or some vapid eulogy upon my own cleverness in securing such a prize. To give you in one brief sentence an idea of my state, Harry—know, then, that though loving Mary with all my heart and soul, as I felt she deserved to be loved, fifty times a day I would have given my life itself that you had been the successful man, on the morning I carried her off, and that Jack Waller was once more a bachelor, to see the only woman he ever loved, the wife of another.

“But, this is growing tedious, Harry, I must get over the ground faster; two months passed over at Paris, during which we continued to live at the ‘Londres,’ giving dinners, soirees, dejeuners, with the prettiest equipage in the ‘Champs Elysees,’ we were quite the mode; my wife, which is rare enough for an Englishwoman, knew how to dress herself. Our evening parties were the most recherche things going, and if I were capable of partaking of any pleasure in the eclat, I had my share, having won all the pigeon matches in the Bois de Boulegard, and beat Lord Henry Seymour himself in a steeple chase. The continual round of occupation in which pleasure involves a man, is certainly its greatest attraction—reflection is impossible—the present is too full to admit any of the past, and very little of the future; and even I, with all my terrors awaiting me, began

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to feel a half indifference to the result in the manifold cares of my then existence. To this state of fatalism, for such it was becoming, had I arrived, when the vision was dispelled in a moment, by a visit from my aunt, who came to say, that some business requiring her immediate presence in London, she was to set out that evening, but hoped to find us in Paris on her return. I was thunderstruck at the news, for, although as yet I had obtained no manner of assistance from the old lady, yet, I felt that her very presence was a kind of security to us, and that in every sudden emergency, she was there to apply to. My money was nearly expended, the second and last instalment of my commission was all that remained, and much of even that I owed to trades-people. I now resolved to speak out—the worst must be known, thought I, in a few days—and now or never be it. So saying, I drew my aunt's arm within my own, and telling her that I wished a few minutes conversation alone, led her to one of the less frequented walks in the Tuilleries gardens. When we had got sufficiently far to be removed from all listeners, I began then—'my dearest aunt, what I have suffered in concealing from you so long, the subject of my present confession, will plead as my excuse in not making you sooner my confidante.' When I had got thus far, the agitation of my aunt was such, that I could not venture to say more for a minute or two. At length, she said, in a kind of hurried whisper, 'go on;' and although then I would have given all I possessed in the world to have continued, I could not speak a word.

"Dear John, what is it, any thing about Mary—for heavens sake speak.'

"Yes,' dearest aunt, 'it is about Mary, and entirely about Mary.'

"Ah, dear me, I feared it long since; but then, John, consider she is very handsome—very much admired—and—'

"That makes it all the heavier, my dear aunt—the prouder her present position, the more severely will she feel the reverse.'

"Oh, but surely, John, your fears must exaggerate the danger.'

"Nothing of the kind—I have not words to tell you—'

"Oh dear, oh dear, don't say so,' said the old lady blushing, 'for though I have often remarked a kind of gay flirting manner she has with men—I am sure she means nothing by it—she is so young—and so—'

"I stopped, stepped forward, and looking straight in my aunt's face, broke out into a fit of laughter, that she, mistaking for hysterical from its violence, nearly fainted upon the spot.

“As soon as I could sufficiently recover gravity to explain to my aunt her mistake, I endeavoured to do so, but so ludicrous was the contre temps, and so ashamed the old lady for her gratuitous suspicions, that she would not listen to a word, and begged me to return to her hotel. Such an unexpected turn to my communication routed all my plans, and after a very awkward silence of some minutes on both sides, I mumbled something about our expensive habits of life, costly equipage, number of horses, &c., and hinted at the propriety of retrenchment.

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“‘Mary rides beautifully,’ said my aunt, drily.’

“‘Yes, but my dear aunt, it was not exactly of that I was going to speak, for in fact—’

“‘Oh John,’ said she, interrupting—‘I know your delicacy too well to suspect; but, in fact, I have myself perceived what you allude to, and wished very much to have some conversation with you on the subject.’

“‘Thank God,’ said I to myself, ‘at length, we understand each other—and the ice is broken at last.’

“‘Indeed, I think I have anticipated your wish in the matter; but as time presses, and I must look after all my packing, I shall say good by for a few weeks, and in the evening, Jepson, who stays here, will bring you, “what I mean,” over to your hotel; once more, then, good by.’

“‘Good by, my dearest, kindest friend,’ said I, taking a most tender adieu of the old lady. ‘What an excellent creature she is,’ said I, half aloud, as I turned towards home—‘how considerate, how truly kind—to spare me too all the pain of explanation.’ Now I begin to breathe once more. ‘If there be a flask of Johannisberg in the “Londres,” I’ll drink your health this day, and so shall Mary;’ so saying, I entered the hotel with a lighter heart, and a firmer step than ever it had been my fortune to do hitherto.

“‘We shall miss the old lady, I’m sure, Mary, she is so kind.’

“‘Oh! indeed she is; but then, John, she is such a prude.’

“‘Now I could not help recurring in my mind to some of the conversation in the Tuilleries garden, and did not feel exactly at ease.

“‘Such a prude, and so very old-fashioned in her notions.’

“‘Yes, Mary,’ said I, with more gravity than she was prepared for, ‘she is a prude; but I am not certain that in foreign society, where less liberties are tolerated than in our country, if such a bearing be not wiser.’ What I was going to plunge into, heaven knows, for the waiter entered at the moment, and presenting me with a large and carefully sealed package, said, ‘de la part de mi ladi Lilfore,’—‘but stay, here comes, if I am not mistaken, a better eulogy upon my dear aunt, than any I can pronounce.’

“‘How heavy it is, said I to myself, balancing the parcel in my hand. ‘There is no answer,’ said I, aloud to the waiter, who stood as if expecting one.

“‘The servant wishes to have some acknowledgment in writing, sir, that it has been delivered into your own hands.’

“Jepson entered,—‘well, George, your parcel is all right, and here is a Napoleon to drink my health.’

“Scarcely had the servants left the room, when Mary, whose curiosity was fully roused, rushed over, and tried to get the packet from me; after a short struggle, I yielded, and she flew to the end of the room, and tearing open the seals, several papers fell to the ground; before I could have time to snatch them up, she had read some lines written on the envelope, and turning towards me, threw her arms around my neck, and said, ‘yes Jack, she is, indeed, all you have said; look here,’ I turned and read—with what feeling I leave to you to guess—the following:—

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“Dear Nephew and Niece,

“The enclosed will convey to you, with my warmest wishes for your happiness, a ticket on the Francfort Lottery, of which I inclose the scheme. I also take the opportunity of saying that I have purchased the Hungarian pony for Mary—which we spoke of this morning. It is at Johnston’s stable, and will be delivered on sending for it.’

“Think of that, Jack, the Borghese poney, with the silky tail; mine—Oh! what a dear good old soul; it was the very thing of all others I longed for, for they told me the princess had refused every offer for it.’

“While Mary ran on in this strain, I sat mute and stupified; the sudden reverse my hopes had sustained, deprived me, for a moment, of all thought, and it was several minutes before I could rightly take in the full extent of my misfortunes.

“How that crazy old maid, for such, alas, I called her to myself now, could have so blundered all my meaning—how she could so palpably have mistaken, I could not conceive; what a remedy for a man overwhelmed with debt—a ticket in a German lottery, and a cream-coloured pony, as if my whole life had not been one continued lottery, with every day a blank; and as to horses, I had eleven in my stables already. Perhaps she thought twelve would read better in my schedule, when I, next week, surrendered as insolvent.

“Unable to bear the delight, the childish delight of Mary, on her new acquisition, I rushed out of the house, and wandered for several hours in the Boulevards. At last I summoned up courage to tell my wife. I once more turned towards home, and entered her dressing-room, where she was having her hair dressed for a ball at the Embassy. My resolution failed me—not now thought I—to-morrow will do as well—one night more of happiness for her and then—I looked on with pleasure and pride, as ornament after ornament, brilliant with diamonds and emeralds, shone in her hair, and upon her arms, still heightened her beauty, and lit up with a dazzling brilliancy her lovely figure.—But it must come—and whenever the hour arrives—the reverse will be fully as bitter; besides I am able now—and when I may again be so, who can tell—now then be it, said I, as I told the waiting-maid to retire; and taking a chair beside my wife, put my arm round her.

“There, John dearest, take care; don’t you see you’ll crush all that great affair of Malines lace, that Rosette has been breaking her heart to manage this half hour.’

“‘Et puis,’ said I.

“‘Et puis. I could not go to the ball, naughty boy. I am bent on great conquest to-night; so pray don’t mar such good intentions.’

“‘And you should be greatly disappointed were you not to go?’



“Of course I should; but what do you mean; is there any reason why I should not? You are silent, John—speak—oh speak—has any thing occurred to my—’

“No, no, dearest—nothing that I know has occurred to the Colonel.’

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“Well then, who is it? Oh tell me at once.”

“Oh, my dear, there is no one in the case but ourselves;” so saying, despite the injunction about the lace, I drew her towards me, and in as few words, but as clearly as I was able, explained all our circumstances —my endeavour to better them—my hopes —my fears—and now my bitter disappointment, if not despair.

“The first shock over, Mary showed not only more courage, but more sound sense than I could have believed. All the frivolity of her former character vanished at the first touch of adversity; just as of old, Harry, we left the tinsel of our gay jackets behind, when active service called upon us for something more sterling. She advised, counselled, and encouraged me by turns; and in half an hour the most poignant regret I had was in not having sooner made her my confidante, and checked the progress of our enormous expenditure somewhat earlier.

“I shall not now detain you much longer. In three weeks we sold our carriages and horses, our pictures, (we had begun this among our other extravagances,) and our china followed; and under the plea of health set out for Baden; not one among our Paris acquaintances ever suspecting the real reason of our departure, and never attributing any monied difficulties to us—for we paid our debts.

“The same day we left Paris, I despatched a letter to my aunt, explaining fully all about us, and suggesting that as I had now left the army for ever, perhaps she would interest some of her friends—and she has powerful ones—to do something for me.

“After some little loitering on the Rhine, we fixed upon Hesse Cassel for our residence. It was very quiet—very cheap. The country around picturesque, and last but not least, there was not an Englishman in the neighbourhood. The second week after our arrival brought us letters from my aunt. She had settled four hundred a year upon us for the present, and sent the first year in advance; promised us a visit as soon as we were ready to receive her; and pledged herself not to forget when an opportunity of serving me should offer.

“From that moment to this,” said Jack, “all has gone well with us. We have, it is true, not many luxuries, but we have no wants, and better still, no debts. The dear old aunt is always making us some little present or other; and somehow I have a kind of feeling that better luck is still in store; but faith, Harry, as long as I have a happy home, and a warm fireside, for a friend when he drops in upon me, I scarcely can say that better luck need be wished for.”

“There is only one point, Jack, you have not enlightened me upon, how came you here? You are some hundred miles from Hesse, in your present chateau.”



“Oh! by Jove, that was a great omission in my narrative; but come, this will explain it; see here”—so saying, he drew from a little drawer a large lithographic print of a magnificent castellated building, with towers and bastions, keep, moat, and even draw-bridge, and the walls bristled with cannon, and an eagled banner floated proudly above them.

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“What in the name of the Sphynxes is this?”

“There,” said Jack, “is the Schloss von Eberhausen; or, if you like it in English, Eberhausen Castle, as it was the year of the deluge; for the present mansion that we are now sipping our wine in bears no very close resemblance to it. But to make the mystery clear, this was the great prize in the Francfort lottery, the ticket of which my aunt’s first note contained, and which we were fortunate enough to win. We have only been here a few weeks, and though the affair looks somewhat meagre, we have hopes that in a little time, and with some pains, much may be done to make it habitable. There is a capital chasses of some hundred acres; plenty of wood and innumerable rights, seignorial, memorial, &c., which, fortunately for my neighbours, I neither understand nor care for; and we are therefore the best friends in the world. Among others I am styled the graf or count—.”

“Well, then, Monsieur Le Comte, do you intend favouring me with your company at coffee this evening; for already it is ten o’clock; and considering my former claim upon Mr. Lorrequer, you have let me enjoy very little of his society.”

We now adjourned to the drawing-room, where we gossipped away till past midnight; and I retired to my room, meditating over Jack’s adventures, and praying in my heart, that despite all his mischances, my own might end as happily.

CHAPTER LI.

Munich.

The rest and quietness of the preceding day had so far recovered me from the effects of my accident, that I resolved, as soon as breakfast was over, to take leave of my kind friends, and set out for Munich.

“We shall meet to-night, Harry,” said Waller, as we parted—“we shall meet at the Casino—and don’t forget that the Croix Blanche is your hotel; and Schnetz, the tailor, in the Grande Place, will provide you with every thing you need in the way of dress.”

This latter piece of information was satisfactory, inasmuch as the greater part of my luggage, containing my uniform, &c., had been left in the French diligence; and as the ball was patronised by the court, I was greatly puzzled how to make my appearance.

Bad roads and worse horses made me feel the few leagues I had to go the most tiresome part of my journey. But, of course, in this feeling impatience had its share. A few hours more, and my fate should be decided; and yet I thought the time would never come. If the Callonbys should not arrive—if, again, my evil star be in the ascendant, and any new impediment to our meeting arise—but I cannot, will not, think this — Fortune must surely be tired of persecuting me by this time, and, even to sustain her old

character for fickleness, must befriend me now. Ah! here we are in Munich—and this is the Croix Blanche—what a dingy old mansion! Beneath a massive porch, supported by heavy stone pillars, stood the stout figure of Andreas

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Behr, the host. A white napkin, fastened in one button-hole, and hanging gracefully down beside him—a soup-ladle held sceptre-wise in his right hand, and the grinding motion of his nether jaw, all showed that he had risen from his table d'hôte to welcome the new arrival; and certainly, if noise and uproar might explain the phenomenon, the clatter of my equipage over the pavement might have risen the dead.

While my postillion was endeavouring, by mighty efforts, with a heavy stone, to turn the handle of the door, and thus liberate me from my cage, I perceived that the host came forward and said something to him—on replying, to which, he ceased his endeavours to open the door, and looked vacantly about him. Upon this I threw down the sash, and called out—

“I say, is not this the Croix Blanche?”

“Ya,” said the man-mountain with the napkin.

“Well, then, open the door, pray—I’m going to stop here.”

“Nein.”

“No! What do you mean by that? Has not Lord Callonby engaged rooms here?”

“Ya.”

“Well, then, I am a particular friend of his, and will stay here also.”

“Nein.”

“What the devil are you at, with your ya and nein?” said I. “Has your confounded tongue nothing better than a monosyllable to reply with.”

Whether disliking the tone the controversy was assuming, or remembering that his dinner waited, I know not, but at these words my fat friend turned leisurely round, and waddled back into the house; where, in a moment after, I had the pleasure of beholding him at the head of a long table, distributing viands with a very different degree of activity from what he displayed in dialogue.

With one vigorous jerk, I dashed open the door, upsetting, at the same time, the poor postillion, who had recommenced his operations on the lock, and, foaming with passion, strode into the “salle a manger.” Nothing is such an immediate damper to any sudden explosion of temper, as the placid and unconcerned faces of a number of people, who, ignorant of yourself and your peculiar miseries at the moment, seem only to regard you

as a madman. This I felt strongly, as, flushed in face and tingling in my fingers, I entered the room.

“Take my luggage,” said I to a gaping waiter, “and place a chair there, do you hear?”

There seemed, I suppose, something in my looks that did not admit of much parley, for the man made room for me at once at the table, and left the room, as if to discharge the other part of my injunction, without saying a word. As I arranged my napkin before me, I was collecting my energies and my German, as well as I was able, for the attack of the host, which, I anticipated from his recent conduct, must now ensue; but, greatly to my surprise, he sent me my soup without a word, and the dinner went on without any interruption. When the desert had made its appearance, I beckoned the waiter towards me, and asked what the landlord meant by his singular reception of me. The man shrugged his shoulders, and raised his eyebrows, without speaking, as if to imply, “it’s his way.”

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"Well, then, no matter," said I. "Have you sent my luggage up stairs?"

"No, sir, there is no room—the house is full."

"The house full! Confound it—this is too provoking. I have most urgent reasons for wishing to stay here. Cannot you make some arrangement—see about it, waiter." I here slipped a Napoleon into the fellow's hand, and hinted that as much more awaited the finale of the negotiation.

In about a minute after, I perceived him behind the host's chair, pleading my cause with considerable energy; but to my complete chagrin, I heard the other answer all his eloquence by a loud "Nein," that he grunted out in such a manner as closed the conference.

"I cannot succeed, sir," said the man, as he passed behind me, "but don't leave the house till I speak with you again."

What confounded mystery is there in all this, thought I. Is there any thing so suspicious in my look or appearance, that the old bear in the fur cap will not even admit me. What can it all mean. One thing I'm resolved upon—nothing less than force shall remove me.

So saying I lit my cigar, and in order to give the waiter an opportunity of conferring with me unobserved by his master, walked out into the porch and sat down.

In a few minutes he joined me, and after a stealthy look on each side, said—

"The Herr Andreas is a hard man to deal with, and when he says a thing, never goes back of it. Now he has been expecting the new English Charge d'Affaires here these last ten days, and has kept the hotel half empty in consequence; and as mi Lor Callonby has engaged the other half, why we have nothing to do; so that when he asked the postillion if you were mi Lor, and found that you were not, he determined not to admit you."

"But why not have the civility to explain that?"

"He seldom speaks, and when he does only a word or two at a time. He is quite tired with what he has gone through to-day, and will retire very early to bed; and for this reason I have requested you to remain, for as he never ventures up stairs, I will then manage to give you one of the ambassador's rooms, which, even if he come, he'll never miss. So that if you keep quiet, and do not attract any particular attention towards you, all will go well."

This advice seemed so reasonable, that I determined to follow it—any inconvenience being preferable, provided I could be under the same roof with my beloved Jane; and from the waiter's account, there seemed no doubt whatever of their arrival that evening.

In order, therefore, to follow his injunctions to the letter, I strolled out toward the Place in search of the tailor, and also to deliver a letter from Waller to the chamberlain, to provide me with a card for the ball. Monsieur Schnetz, who was the very pinnacle of politeness, was nevertheless, in fact, nearly as untractable as my host of the "Cross." All his "sujets" were engaged in preparing

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a suit for the English Charge d’Affaires, whose trunks had been sent in a wrong direction, and who had despatched a courier from Frankfort, to order a uniform. This second thwarting, and from the same source, so nettled me, that I greatly fear, all my respect for the foreign office and those who live thereby, would not have saved them from something most unlike a blessing, had not Monsieur Schnetz saved diplomacy from such desecration by saying, that if I could content myself with a plain suit, such as civilians wore, he would do his endeavour to accommodate me.

“Any thing, Monsieur Schnetz—dress me like the Pope’s Nuncio, or the Mayor of London, if you like, but only enable me to go.”

Although my reply did not seem to convey a very exalted idea of my taste in costume to the worthy artiste, it at least evinced my anxiety for the ball; and running his measure over me, he assured me that the dress he would provide was both well looking and becoming; adding, “At nine o’clock, sir, you’ll have it—exactly the same size as his Excellency the Charge d’Affaires.”

“Confound the Charge d’Affaires!” I added, and left the house.

CHAPTER LII.

Inn at Munich.

As I had never been in Munich before, I strolled about the town till dusk. At that time the taste of the present king had not enriched the capital with the innumerable objects of art which render it now second to none in Europe. There were, indeed, then but few attractions—narrow streets, tall, unarchitectural-looking houses, and gloomy, unimpressive churches. Tired of this, I turned towards my inn, wondering in my mind if Antoine had succeeded in procuring me the room, or whether yet I should be obliged to seek my lodging elsewhere. Scarcely had I entered the porch, when I found him waiting my arrival, candle in hand. He conducted me at once up the wide oaken stair, then along the gallery, into a large wainscotted room, with a most capacious bed. A cheerful wood fire burned and crackled away in the grate—the cloth was already spread for supper—(remember it was in Germany)—the newspapers of the day were placed before me—and, in a word, every attention showed that I had found the true avenue to Antoine’s good graces, who now stood bowing before me, in apparent ecstasy at his own cleverness.

“All very well done, Antoine, and now for supper—order it yourself for me—I never can find my way in a German ‘carte de diner;’ and be sure to have a fiacre here at nine—nine precisely.”

Antoine withdrew, leaving me to my own reflections, which now, if not gloomy, were still of the most anxious kind.

Scarcely was the supper placed upon the table, when a tremendous tramping of horses along the street, and loud cracking of whips, announced a new arrival.

“Here they are,” said I, as, springing up, I upset the soup, and nearly threw the roti into Antoine’s face, as he was putting it before me.

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Down stairs I rushed, through the hall, pushing aside waiters and overturning chambermaids in my course. The carriage was already at the door. Now for a surprise, thought I, as I worked through the crowd in the porch, and reached the door just as the steps were clattered down, and a gentleman began to descend, whom twenty expectant voices, now informed of his identity, welcomed as the new Charge d’Affaires.

“May all the—”

What I wished for his excellency it would not be polite to repeat, nor most discreet even to remember; but, certes, I mounted the stairs with as little good will towards the envoy extraordinary as was consistent with due loyalty.

When once more in my room, I congratulated myself that now at least no more “false starts” could occur—“the eternal Charge d’Affaires, of whom I have been hearing since my arrival, cannot come twice—he is here now, and I hope I’m done with him.”

The supper—some greasiness apart—was good—the wine excellent. My spirits were gradually rising, and I paced my room in that mingled state of hope and fear, that amid all its anxieties, has such moments of ecstasy. A new noise without—some rabble in the street; hark, it comes nearer—I hear the sound of wheels; yes, there go the horses—nearer and nearer. Ah, it is dying away again—stay—yes, yes—here it is—here they are. The noise and tumult without now increased every instant—the heavy trot of six or eight horses shook the very street, and I heard the round, dull, rumbling sound of a heavy carriage, as it drew up at last at the door of the inn. Why it was I know not, but this time I could not stir—my heart beat almost loud enough for me to hear—my temples throbbed, and then a cold and clammy perspiration came over me, and I sank into a chair. Fearing that I was about to faint, sick as I was, I felt angry with myself, and tried to rally, but could not, and only at length was roused by hearing that the steps were let down, and shortly after the tread of feet coming along the gallery towards my room.

They are coming—she is coming, thought I. Now then for my doom!

There was some noise of voices outside. I listened, for I still felt unable to rise. The talking grew louder—doors were opened and shut—then came a lull—then more slamming of doors, and more talking—then all was still again—and at last I heard the steps of people as if retiring, and in a few minutes after the carriage door was jammed to, and again the heavy tramp of the horses rattled over the pave. At this instant Antoine entered.

“Well, Antoine,” said I, in a voice trembling with weakness and agitation, “not them yet?”

“It was his Grace the Grand Mareschal,” said Antoine, scarcely heeding my question, in the importance of the illustrious visitor who had arrived.

“Ah, the Grand Mareschal,” said I, carelessly; “does he live here?”

“Sappermint nein, Mein Herr; but he has just been to pay his respects to his Excellency the new Charge d’Affaires.”

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In the name of all patience, I ask, who could endure this? From the hour of my arrival I am haunted by this one image—the Charge d’Affaires. For him I have been almost condemned to go houseless, and naked; and now the very most sacred feelings of my heart are subject to his influence. I walked up and down in an agony. Another such disappointment, and my brain will turn, thought I, and they may write my epitaph—“Died of love and a Charge d’Affaires.”

“It is time to dress,” said the waiter.

“I could strangle him with my own hands,” muttered I, worked up into a real heat by the excitement of my passion.

“The Charge—”

“Say that name again, villain, and I’ll blow your brains out,” cried I, seizing Antoine by the throat, and pinning him against the wall; “only dare to mutter it, and you’ll ever breathe another syllable.”

The poor fellow grew green with terror, and fell upon his knees before me.

“Get my dressing things ready,” said I, in a more subdued tone. “I did not mean to terrify you—but beware of what I told you.”

While Antoine occupied himself with the preparations for my toilette, I sat broodingly over the wood embers, thinking of my fate.

A knock came to the door. It was the tailor’s servant with my clothes. He laid down the parcel and retired, while Antoine proceeded to open it, and exhibit before me a blue uniform with embroidered collar and cuffs—the whole, without being gaudy, being sufficiently handsome, and quite as showy as I could wish.

The poor waiter expressed his unqualified approval of the costume, and talked away about the approaching ball as something pre-eminently magnificent.

“You had better look after the fiacre, Antoine,” said I; “it is past nine.”

He walked towards the door, opened it, and then, turning round, said, in a kind of low, confidential whisper, pointing, with the thumb of his left hand, towards the wall of the room as he spoke—

“He won’t go—very strange that.”

“Who do you mean?” said I, quite unconscious of the allusion.

“The Charge d’Aff—”



I made one spring at him, but he slammed the door to, and before I could reach the lobby, I heard him rolling from top to bottom of the oak staircase, making noise enough in his fall to account for the fracture of every bone in his body.

CHAPTER LIII.

The ball.

As I was informed that the King would himself be present at the ball, I knew that German etiquette required that the company should arrive before his Majesty; and although now every minute I expected the arrival of the Callonbys, I dared not defer my departure any longer.

"They are certain to be at the ball," said Waller, and that sentence never left my mind.

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So saying, I jumped into the fiacre, and in a few minutes found myself in the long line of carriages that led to the “Hof saal.” Any one who has been in Munich will testify for me, that the ball room is one of the most beautiful in Europe, and to me who for some time had not been living much in the world, its splendour was positively dazzling. The glare of the chandeliers—the clang of the music—the magnificence of the dresses—the beauty of the Bavarian women too, all surprized and amazed me. There were several hundred people present, but the king not having yet arrived, dancing had not commenced. Feeling as I then did, it was rather a relief to me than otherwise, that I knew no one. There was quite amusement enough in walking through the saloons, observing the strange costumes, and remarking the various groups as they congregated around the trays of ices and the champagne glacee. The buzz of talking and the sounds of laughter and merriment prevailed over even the orchestra; and, as the gay crowds paraded the rooms, all seemed pleasure and excitement. Suddenly a tremendous noise was heard without—then came a loud roll of the drums, which lasted for several seconds, and the clank of musketry—then a cheer;—it is the king.

The king! resounded on all sides; and in another moment the large folding-doors at the end of the saal were thrown open, and the music struck up the national anthem of Bavaria.

His majesty entered, accompanied by the queen, his brother, two or three archduchesses, and a long suite of officers.

I could not help remarking upon the singular good taste with which the assembly—all anxious and eager to catch a glimpse of his majesty —behaved on this occasion. There was no pressing forward to the “estrade” where he stood,—no vulgar curiosity evinced by any one, but the group continued, as before, to gather and scatter. The only difference being, that the velvet chair and cushion, which had attracted some observers before, were, now that they were tenanted by royalty, passed with a deep and respectful salutation. How proper this, thought I, and what an inducement for a monarch to come among his people, who remember to receive him with such true politeness. While these thoughts were passing through my mind, as I was leaning against a pillar that supported the gallery of the orchestra, a gentleman whose dress, covered with gold and embroidery, bespoke him as belonging to the court, eyed me aside with his lorgnette and then passed rapidly on. A quadrille was now forming near me, and I was watching, with some interest, the proceeding, when the same figure that I remarked before, approached me, bowing deeply at every step, and shaking a very halo of powder from his hair at each reverence.

“May I take the liberty of introducing myself to you?” said he.—“Le Comte Benningsen.” Here he bowed again, and I returned the obeisance still deeper. “Regretted much that I was not fortunate enough to make your acquaintance this evening, when I called upon you.”

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"Never heard of that," said I to myself.

"Your excellency arrived this evening?"

"Yes," said I, "only a few hours since."

"How fond these Germans are of titles," thought I. Remembering that in Vienna every one is "his grace," I thought it might be Bavarian politeness to call every one his excellency.

"You have not been presented, I believe?"

"No," said I; "but I hope to take an early opportunity of paying 'mes homages' to his majesty."

"I have just received his orders to present you now," replied he, with another bow.

"The devil, you have," thought I. "How very civil that." And, although I had heard innumerable anecdotes of the free-and-easy habits of the Bavarian court, this certainly surprized me, so that I actually, to prevent a blunder, said, "Am I to understand you, Monsieur le Comte, that his majesty was graciously pleased"—

"If you will follow me," replied the courtier, motioning with his chapeau; and in another moment I was elbowing my way through the mob of marquisses and duchesses, on my way to the raised platform where the king was standing.

"Heaven grant I have not misunderstood all he has been saying," was my last thought as the crowd of courtiers fell back on either side, and I found myself bowing before his majesty. How the grand mareschal entitled me I heard not; but when the king addressed me immediately in English, saying,

"I hope your excellency has had a good journey?"

I felt, "Come, there is no mistake here, Harry; and it is only another freak of fortune, who is now in good humour with you."

The king, who was a fine, tall, well-built man, with a large, bushy moustache, possessed, though not handsome, a most pleasing expression; his utterance was very rapid, and his English none of the best, so that it was with the greatest difficulty I contrived to follow his questions, which came thick as hail upon me. After some commonplaces about the roads, the weather, and the season, his majesty said,

"My Lord Callonby has been residing some time here. You know him?" And then, not waiting for a reply, added, "Pleasant person—well informed—like him much, and his

daughters, too, how handsome they are.” Here I blushed, and felt most awkwardly, while the king continued.

“Hope they will remain some time—quite an ornament to our court. Monsieur le Comte, his excellency will dance?” I here muttered an apology about my sprained ankle, and the king turned to converse with some of the ladies of the court. His majesty’s notice brought several persons now around me, who introduced themselves; and, in a quarter of an hour, I felt myself surrounded by acquaintances, each vieing with the other in showing me attention.

Worse places than Munich, Master Harry, thought I, as I chaperoned a fat duchess, with fourteen quarterings, towards the refreshment-room, and had just accepted invitations enough to occupy me three weeks in advance.

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"I have been looking every where for your excellency," said the grand mareschal, bustling his way to me, breathless and panting. "His majesty desires you will make one of his party at whist, so pray come at once."

"Figaro qua, Figaro la," muttered I. "Never was man in such request. God grant the whole royal family of Bavaria be not mad, for this looks very like it. Lady Jane had better look sharp, for I have only to throw my eyes on an archduchess, to be king of the Tyrol some fine morning."

"You play whist, of course; every Englishman does," said the king. "You shall be my partner."

Our adversaries were the Prince Maximilian, brother to his Majesty and the Prussian Ambassador. As I sat down at the table, I could not help saying in my heart, "now is your time, Harry, if my Lord Callonby should see you, your fortune is made." Waller passed at this moment, and as he saluted the king, I saw him actually start with amazement as he beheld me—"better fun this than figuring in the yellow plush, Master Jack," I muttered as he passed on actually thunder-struck with amazement. But the game was begun, and I was obliged to be attentive. We won the first game, and the king was in immense good humour as he took some franc pieces from the Prussian minister, who, small as the stake was, seemed not to relish losing. His majesty now complimented me upon my play, and was about to add something when he perceived some one in the crowd, and sent an Aide de camp for him.

"Ah, my Lord, we expected you earlier," and then said some words in too low a tone for me to hear, motioning towards me as he spoke. If Waller was surprised at seeing me where I was, it was nothing to the effect produced upon the present party, whom I now recognized as Lord Callonby. Respect for the presence we were in, restrained any expression on either side, and a more ludicrous tableau than we presented can scarcely be conceived. What I would have given that the whist party was over, I need not say, and certainly his majesty's eulogy upon my play came too soon, for I was now so "destrait and unhinged," my eyes wandering from the table to see if Lady Jane was near, that I lost every trick, and finished by revoking. The king rose half pettishly, observing that "Son Excellence a apparemment perdu la tete," and I rushed forward to shake hands with Lord Callonby, totally forgetting the royal censure in my delight at discovering my friend.

"Lorrequer, I am indeed rejoiced to see you, and when did you arrive."

"This evening."

"This evening! and how the deuce have you contrived already, eh? why you seem quite chez vous here?"



“You shall hear all,” said I hastily, “but is Lady Callonby here?”

“No. Kilkee only is with me, there he is figuranting away in a gallope. The ladies were too tired to come, particularly as they dine at court to-morrow, the fatigue would be rather much.”

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"I have his majesty's order to invite your Excellency to dinner to-morrow," said the grand Mareschal coming up at this instant.

I bowed my acknowledgments, and turned again to Lord Callonby, whose surprise now seemed to have reached the climax.

"Why Lorrequer, I never heard of this? when did you adopt this new career?"

Not understanding the gist of the question, and conceiving that it applied to my success at court, I answered at random, something about "falling upon my legs, good luck, &c.," and once more returned to the charge, enquiring most anxiously for Lady Callonby's health.

"Ah! she is tolerably well. Jane is the only invalid, but then we hope Italy will restore her." Just at this instant, Kilkee caught my eye, and rushing over from his place beside his partner, shook me by both hands, saying,

"Delighted to see you here Lorrequer, but as I can't stay now, promise to sup with me to-night at the 'Cross'."

I accepted of course, and the next instant, he was whirling along in his waltze, with one of the most lovely German girls I ever saw. Lord Callonby saw my admiration of her, and as it were replying to my gaze, remarked,

"Yes, very handsome indeed, but really Kilkee is going too far with it. I rely upon you very much to reason him out of his folly, and we have all agreed that you have most influence over him, and are most likely to be listened to patiently."

Here was a new character assigned me, the confidential friend and adviser of the family, trusted with a most delicate and important secret, likely to bring me into most intimate terms of intercourse with them all, for the "we" of Lord Callonby bespoke a family consultation, in which I was deputed as the negociator. I at once promised my assistance, saying, at the same time, that if Kilkee really was strongly attached, and had also reason to suppose that the Lady liked him, it was not exactly fair; that in short, if the matter had gone beyond flirtation, any interference of mine would be imprudent, if not impertinent. Lord Callonby smiled slightly as he replied,

"Quite right, Lorrequer, I am just as much against constraint as yourself, if only no great barriers exist; but here with a difference of religion, country, language, habits, in fact, everything that can create disparity, the thing is not to be thought of."

I suspected that his Lordship read in my partial defence of Kilkee, a slight attempt to prop up my own case, and felt confused and embarrassed beyond measure at the detection.

“Well, we shall have time enough for all this. Now let us hear something of my old friend Sir Guy. How is he looking?”

“I am unfortunately unable to give you any account of him. I left Paris the very day before he was expected to arrive there.”

“Oh then, I have all the news myself in that case, for in his letter which I received yesterday, he mentions that we are not to expect him before Tuesday.”

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"Expect him. Is he coming here then?"

"Yes. Why, I thought you were aware of that, he has been long promising to pay us a visit, and at last, by great persuasion, we have succeeded in getting him across the sea, and, indeed, were it not that he was coming, we should have been in Florence before this."

A gleam of hope shot through my heart as I said to myself, what can this visit mean? and the moment after I felt sick, almost to fainting, as I asked if "my cousin Guy were also expected."

"Oh yes. We shall want him I should think" said Lord Callonby with a very peculiar smile.

I thought I should have fallen at these few words. Come, Harry, thought I, it is better to learn your fate at once. Now or never; death itself were preferable to this continued suspense. If the blow is to fall, it can scarcely sink me lower than I now feel: so reasoning, I laid my hand upon Lord Callonby's arm, and with a face pale as death, and a voice all but inarticulate, said,

"My Lord, you will pardon, I am sure—"

"My dear Lorrequer," said his lordship interrupting me, "for heaven's sake sit down. How ill you are looking, we must nurse you, my poor fellow."

I sank upon a bench—the light danced before my eyes—the clang of the music sounded like the roar of a waterfall, and I felt a cold perspiration burst over my face and forehead; at the same instant, I recognized Kilkee's voice, and without well knowing why, or how, discovered myself in the open air.

"Come, you are better now," said Kilkee, "and will be quite well when you get some supper, and a little of the tokay, his majesty has been good enough to send us."

"His majesty desires to know if his excellency is better," said an aide de camp.

I muttered my most grateful acknowledgments.

"One of the court carriages is in waiting for your excellency," said a venerable old gentleman in a tie wig, whom I recognized as the minister for foreign affairs—as he added in a lower tone to Lord Callonby, "I fear he has been greatly overworked lately—his exertions on the subject of the Greek loan are well known to his majesty."

"Indeed," said Lord Callonby, with a start of surprise, "I never heard of that before."

If it had not been for that start of amazement, I should have died of terror. It was the only thing that showed me I was not out of my senses, which I now concluded the old gentleman must be, for I never had heard of the Greek loan in my life before.

“Farewell, mon cher colleague,” said the venerable minister as I got into the carriage, wondering as well I might what singular band of brotherhood united one of his majesty’s ___th with the minister for foreign affairs of the Court of Bavaria.

When I arrived at the White-cross, I found my nerves, usually proof to any thing, so shaken and shattered, that fearing with the difficult game before me any mistake, however trivial, might mar all my fortunes for ever, I said a good night to my friends, and went to bed.

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CHAPTER LIV.

A discovery.

"A note for Monsieur," said the waiter, awaking me at the same time from the soundest sleep and most delightful dream. The billet was thus:—

"If your excellency does not intend to slumber during the next twenty-four hours, it might be as well to remember that we are waiting breakfast. Ever yours,

"Kilkee."

"It is true, then," said I—following up the delusion of my dream. "It is true, I am really domesticated once more with the Callonbys. My suit is prospering, and at length the long-sought, long-hoped for moment is come—"

"Well, Harry," said Kilkee, as he dashed open the door. "Well, Harry, how are you, better than last night, I hope?"

"Oh yes, considerably. In fact, I can't think what could have been the matter with me; but I felt confoundedly uncomfortable."

"You did! Why, man, what can you mean; was it not a joke?"

"A joke," said I, with a start.

"Yes, to be sure. I thought it was only the sequel of the other humbug."

"The sequel of the other humbug!" Gracious mercy! thought I, getting pale with horror, is it thus he ventures to designate my attachment to his sister?

"Come, come, it's all over now. What the devil could have persuaded you to push the thing so far?"

"Really, I am so completely in the dark as to your meaning that I only get deeper in mystery by my chance replies. What do you mean?"

"What do I mean! Why, the affair of last night of course. All Munich is full of it, and most fortunately for you, the king has taken it all in the most good-humoured way, and laughs more than any one else about it."

Oh, then, thought I, I must have done or said something last night during my illness, that I can't remember now. "Come, Kilkee, out with it. What happened last night, that has served to amuse the good people of Munich? for as I am a true man, I forget all you are alluding to."

“And don’t remember the Greek Loan—eh?”

“The Greek Loan!”

“And your Excellency’s marked reception by his Majesty? By Jove though, it was the rarest piece of impudence I ever heard of; hoaxing a crowned head, quizzing one of the Lord’s anointed is un peu trop fort.”

“If you really do not wish to render me insane at once, for the love of mercy say, in plain terms, what all this means.”

“Come, come, I see you are incorrigible; but as breakfast is waiting all this time, we shall have your explanations below stairs.”

Before I had time for another question Kilkee passed his arm within mine, and led me along the corridor, pouring out, the entire time a whole rhapsody about the practical joke of my late illness, which he was pleased to say would ring from one end of Europe to the other.

Lord Callonby was alone in the breakfast-room when we entered, and the moment he perceived me called out,

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"Eh, Lorrequer, you here still? Why, man, I thought you'd have been over the frontier early this morning?"

"Indeed, my lord, I am not exactly aware of any urgent reason for so rapid a flight."

"You are not! The devil, you are not. Why, you must surely have known his majesty to be the best tempered man in his dominions then, or you would never have played off such a ruse, though I must say, there never was anything better done. Old Heldersteen, the minister for foreign affairs, is nearly deranged this morning about it—it seems that he was the first that fell into the trap; but seriously speaking, I think it would be better if you got away from this; the king, it is true, has behaved with the best possible good feeling; but—"

"My lord, I have a favour to ask, perhaps, indeed in all likelihood the last I shall ever ask of your lordship, it is this—what are you alluding to all this while, and for what especial reason do you suggest my immediate departure from Munich?"

"Bless my heart and soul—you surely cannot mean to carry the thing on any further—you never can intend to assume your ministerial functions by daylight?"

"My what!—my ministerial functions."

"Oh no, that were too much—even though his majesty did say—that you were the most agreeable diplomate he had met for a long time."

"I, a diplomate."

"You, certainly. Surely you cannot be acting now; why, gracious mercy, Lorrequer! can it be possible that you were not doing it by design, do you really not know in what character you appeared last night?"

"If in any other than that of Harry Lorrequer, my lord, I pledge my honour, I am ignorant."

"Nor the uniform you wore, don't you know what it meant?"

"The tailor sent it to my room."

"Why, man, by Jove, this will kill me," said Lord Callonby, bursting into a fit of laughter, in which Kilkee, a hitherto silent spectator of our colloquy, joined to such an extent, that I thought he should burst a bloodvessel. "Why man, you went as the Charge d'Affaires."

"I, the Charge d'Affaires!"

"That you did, and a most successful debut you made of it."

While shame and confusion covered me from head to foot at the absurd and ludicrous blunder I had been guilty of, the sense of the ridiculous was so strong in me, that I fell upon a sofa and laughed on with the others for full ten minutes.

“Your Excellency is, I am rejoiced to find, in good spirits,” said Lady Callonby, entering and presenting her hand.

“He is so glad to have finished the Greek Loan,” said Lady Catherine, smiling with a half malicious twinkle of the eye. Just at this instant another door opened, and Lady Jane appeared. Luckily for me, the increased mirth of the party, as Lord Callonby informed them of my blunder, prevented their paying any attention to me, for as I half sprung forward toward her, my agitation would have revealed to any observer, the whole state of my feelings. I took her hand which she extended to me, without speaking, and bowing deeply over it, raised my head and looked into her eyes, as if to read at one glance, my fate, and when I let fall her hand, I would not have exchanged my fortune for a kingdom.

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"You have heard, Jane, how our friend opened his campaign in Munich last night."

"Oh, I hope, Mr. Lorrequer, they are only quizzing. You surely could not—"

"Could not. What he could not—what he would not do, is beyond my calculation to make out," said Kilkee, laughing, "anything in life, from breaking an axletree to hoaxing a king;" I turned, as may be imagined, a deaf ear to this allusion, which really frightened me, not knowing how far Kilkee's information might lead, nor how he might feel disposed to use it. Lady Jane turned a half reproachful glance at me, as if rebuking my folly; but in the interest she thus took in me, I should not have bartered it for the smile of the proudest queen in Christendom.

Breakfast over, Lord Callonby undertook to explain to the Court the blunder, by which I had unwittingly been betrayed into personating the newly arrived minister, and as the mistake was more of their causing than my own, my excuses were accepted, and when his lordship returned to the hotel, he brought with him an invitation for me to dine at Court in my own unaccredited character. By this time I had been carrying on the siege as briskly as circumstances permitted; Lady Callonby being deeply interested in her newly arrived purchases, and Lady Catherine being good-natured enough to pretend to be so also, left me, at intervals, many opportunities of speaking to Lady Jane.

As I feared that such occasions would not often present themselves, I determined on making the best use of my time, and at once led the conversation towards the goal I aimed at, by asking, "if Lady Jane had completely forgotten the wild cliffs and rocky coast of Clare, amid the tall mountains and glaciated peaks of the Tyrol?"

"Far from it," she replied. "I have a most clear remembrance of bold Mogher and the rolling swell of the blue Atlantic, and long to feel its spray once more upon my cheek; but then, I knew it in childhood—your acquaintance with it was of a later date, and connected with fewer happy associations."

"Fewer happy associations—how can you say so? Was it not there the brightest hours of my whole life were passed, was it not there I first met—"

"Kilkee tells me," said Lady Jane, interrupting me shortly, "that Miss Bingham is extremely pretty."

This was turning my flank with a vengeance; so I muttered something about differences of tastes, &c. and continued, "I understand my worthy cousin Guy, had the good fortune to make your acquaintance in Paris."

It was now her turn to blush, which she did deeply, and said nothing.

"He is expected, I believe, in a few days at Munich," said I, fixing my eyes upon her, and endeavouring to read her thoughts; she blushed more deeply, and the blood at my own

heart ran cold, as I thought over all I had heard, and I muttered to myself “she loves him.”

“Mr. Lorrequer, the carriage is waiting, and as we are going to the Gallery this morning, and have much to see, pray let us have your escort.”

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“Oh, I am sure,” said Catherine, “his assistance will be considerable —particularly if his knowledge of art only equals his tact in botany. Don’t you think so, Jane?”—But Jane was gone.

They left the room to dress, and I was alone—alone with my anxious, now half despairing thoughts, crowding and rushing upon my beating brain. She loves him, and I have only come to witness her becoming the wife of another. I see it all, too plainly;—my Uncle’s arrival—Lord Callonby’s familiar manner—Jane’s own confession. All—all convince me, that my fate is decided. Now, then, for one last brief explanation, and I leave Munich, never to see her more. Just as I had so spoken, she entered. Her gloves had been forgotten in the room, and she came in not knowing that I was there. What would I not have given at that moment, for the ready witted assurance, the easy self-possession, with which I should have made my advances had my heart not been as deeply engaged as I now felt it. Alas! My courage was gone; there was too much at stake, and I preferred, now, that the time was come, any suspense, any vacillation, to the dreadful certainty of refusal.

These were my first thoughts, as she entered; how they were followed, I cannot say. The same evident confusion of my brain, which I once felt when mounting the breach in a storm-party, now completely beset me; and as then, when death and destruction raged on every side, I held on my way regardless of every obstacle, and forgetting all save the goal before me; so did I now, in the intensity of my excitement, disregard every thing, save the story of my love, which I poured forth with that fervour which truth only can give. But she spoke not,—her averted head,—her cold and tremulous hand, and half-drawn sigh were all that replied to me, as I waited for that one word upon which hung all my fortune. At length her hand, which I scarcely held within my own, was gently withdrawn. She lifted it to her eyes, but still was silent.

“Enough,” said I, “I seek not to pain you more. The daring ambition that prompted me to love you, has met its heaviest retribution. Farewell, —You, Lady Jane, have nothing to reproach yourself with—You never encouraged, you never deceived me. I, and I alone have been to blame, and mine must be the suffering. Adieu, then once more, and now for ever.”

She turned slowly round, and as the handkerchief fell from her hand,—her features were pale as marble,—I saw that she was endeavouring to speak, but could not; and at length, as the colour came slowly back to her cheek, her lips moved, and just as I leaned forward, with a beating heart to hear, her sister came running forward, and suddenly checked herself in her career, as she said, laughingly,—

“Mille pardons, Jane, but his Excellency must take another occasion to explain the quadruple alliance, for mamma has been waiting in the carriage these ten minutes.”

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I followed them to the door, placed them in the carriage, and was turning again towards the house, when Lady Callonby said—

“Oh, Mr. Lorrequer, we count upon you—you must not desert us.”

I muttered something about not feeling well.

“And then, perhaps, the Greek loan is engaging your attention,” said Catherine; “or, mayhap, some reciprocity treaty is not prospering.”

The malice of this last sally told, for Jane blushed deeply, and I felt overwhelmed with confusion.

“But pray come—the drive will do you good.”

“Your ladyship will, I am certain, excuse”—

Just as I had got so far, I caught Lady Jane’s eye, for the first time since we had left the drawing-room. What I read there, I could not, for the life of me, say; but, instead of finishing my sentence, I got into the carriage, and drove off, very much to the surprise of Lady Callonby, who, never having studied magnetism, knew very little the cause of my sudden recovery.

The thrill of hope that shot through my heart succeeding so rapidly the dark gloom of my despairing thoughts, buoyed me up, and while I whispered to myself, “all may not yet be lost,” I summoned my best energies to my aid. Luckily for me, I was better qualified to act as cicerone in a gallery than as a guide in a green-house; and with the confidence that knowledge of a subject ever inspires, I rattled away about art and artists, greatly to the edification of Lady Callonby—much to the surprise of Lady Catherine—and, better than all, evidently to the satisfaction of her, to win whose praise I would gladly have risked my life.

“There,” said I, as I placed my fair friend before a delicious little madonna of Carl Dolci —“there is, perhaps, the triumph of colouring—for the downy softness of that cheek—the luscious depth of that blue eye —the waving richness of those sunny locks, all is perfect—fortunately so beautiful a head is not a monopoly, for he painted many copies of this picture.”

“Quite true,” said a voice behind, “and mine at Elton is, I think, if anything, better than this.”

I turned, and beheld my good old uncle, Sir Guy, who was standing beside Lady Callonby. While I welcomed my worthy relative, I could not help casting a glance around to see if Guy were also there, and not perceiving him, my heart beat freely again.



My uncle, it appeared, had just arrived, and lost no time in joining us at the gallery. His manner to me was cordial to a degree; and I perceived that, immediately upon being introduced to Lady Jane, he took considerable pains to observe her, and paid her the most marked attention.

The first moment I could steal unnoticed, I took the opportunity of asking if Guy were come. That one fact were to me all, and upon the answer to my question, I hung with deep anxiety.

“Guy here!—no, not yet. The fact is, Harry, my boy, Guy has not got on here as well as I could have wished. Everything had been arranged among us—Callonby behaved most handsomely—and, as far as regarded myself, I threw no impediment in the way. But still, I don’t know how it was, but Guy did not advance, and the matter now”—

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"Pray, how does it stand? Have you any hopes to put all to rights again?"

"Yes, Harry, I think, with your assistance, much may be done."

"Oh, count upon me by all means," said I, with a sneering bitterness, that my uncle could not have escaped remarking, had his attention not been drawn off by Lady Callonby.

What have I done—what sin did I meditate before I was born, that I should come into the world branded with failure in all I attempt? Is it not enough that my cousin, my elder by some months, should be rich while I am poor—honoured and titled, while I am unknown and unnoticed?—but is he also to be preferred to me in every station in life? Is there no feeling of the heart so sacred that it must not succumb to primogeniture?

"What a dear old man Sir Guy is," said Catherine, interrupting my sad reflections, "and how gallant; he is absolutely flirting with Lady Jane."

And quite true it was. The old gentleman was paying his devoirs with a studied anxiety to please, that went to my very heart as I witnessed it. The remainder of that day to me was a painful and suffering one. My intention of suddenly leaving Munich had been abandoned, why, I knew not. I felt that I was hoping against hope, and that my stay was only to confirm, by the most "damning proof," how surely I was fated to disappointment. My reasonings all ended in one point. If she really love Guy, then my present attentions can only be a source of unhappiness to her; if she do not, is there any prospect that from the bare fact of my attachment, so proud a family as the Callonbys will suffer their daughter to make a mere "marriage d'inclination?"

There was but one answer to this question, and I had at last the courage to make it: and yet the Callonbys had marked me out for their attentions, and had gone unusually out of their way to inflict injury upon me, if all were meant to end in nothing. If I only could bring myself to think that this was a systematic game adopted by them, to lead to the subsequent arrangement with my cousin!—if I could but satisfy my doubts on this head—What threats of vengeance I muttered, I cannot remember, for I was summoned at that critical moment to attend the party to the palace.

The state of excitement I was in, was an ill preparative for the rigid etiquette of a court dinner. All passed off, however, happily, and the king, by a most good-natured allusion to the blunder of the night before, set me perfectly at ease on that head.

I was placed next to Lady Jane at dinner; and half from wounded pride, half from the momentarily increasing conviction that all was lost, chatted away gaily, without any evidence of a stronger feeling than the mere vicinity of a pretty person is sure to inspire. What success this game was attended with I know not; but the suffering it cost

me, I shall never cease to remember. One satisfaction I certainly did experience —she was manifestly piqued,

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and several times turned towards the person on the other side of her, to avoid the tone of indifference in which I discussed matters that were actually wringing my own heart at the moment. Yet such was the bitterness of my spirit, that I set down this conduct on her part as coquetry; and quite convinced myself that any slight encouragement she might ever have given my attentions, was only meant to indulge a spirit of vanity, by adding another to the list of her conquests.

As the feeling grew upon me, I suppose my manner to her became more palpably cutting, for it ended at last in our discontinuing to speak, and when we retired from the palace, I accompanied her to the carriage in silence, and wished her a cold and distant good night, without any advance to touch her hand at parting—and yet that parting, I had destined for our last.

The greater part of that night I spent in writing letters. One was to Jane herself owning my affection, confessing that even the “rudesse” of my late conduct was the fruit of it, and finally assuring her that failing to win from her any return of my passion, I had resolved never to meet her more—I also wrote a short note to my uncle, thanking him for all he had formerly done in my behalf, but coldly declining for the future, any assistance upon his part, resolving that upon my own efforts alone should I now rest my fortunes. To Lord Callonby I wrote at greater length, recapitulating the history of our early intimacy, and accusing him of encouraging me in expectations, which, as he never intended to confirm them, were fated to prove my ruin. More—much more I said, which to avow, I should gladly shrink from, were it not that I have pledged myself to honesty in these “Confessions,” and as they depict the bitterness and misery of my spirit, I must plead guilty to them here. In a word, I felt myself injured. I saw no outlet for redress, and the only consolation open to my wounded pride and crushed affection, was to show, that if I felt myself a victim, at least I was not a dupe. I set about packing up for the journey, whither, I knew not. My leave was nearly expired, yet I could not bear the thought of rejoining the regiment. My only desire was to leave Munich, and that speedily. When all my arrangements were completed I went down noiselessly to the inn yard to order post-horses by day-break, there to my surprise I found all activity and bustle. Though so late at night, a courier had arrived from England for Lord Callonby, with some important dispatches from the Government; this would, at any other time, have interested me deeply; now I heard the news without a particle of feeling, and I made all the necessary dispositions for my journey, without paying the slightest attention to what was going on about me. I had just finished, when Lord Callonby’s valet came to say, that his lordship wished to see me immediately in his dressing room. Though I would gladly have declined any further interview, I saw no means of escape, and followed the servant to his lordship’s room.

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There I found Lord Callonby in his dressing gown and night cap, surrounded by papers, letters, despatch boxes, and red tape-tied parcels, that all bespoke business.

“Lorrequer, sit down, my boy, I have much to say to you, and as we have no time to lose, you must forego a little sleep. Is the door closed? I have just received most important news from England, and to begin,” here his lordship opened a letter and read as follow:—

“My Lord—They are out at last—the majority on Friday increased to forty yesterday evening, when they resigned; the Duke has, meanwhile, assumed the reins till further arrangements can be perfected, and despatches are now preparing to bring all our friends about us. The only rumours as yet are, L____, for the Colonies, H____, to the Foreign Office, W____ President of the Council, and we anxiously hope yourself Viceroy to Ireland. In any case lose no time in coming back to England. The struggle will be a sharp one, as the outs are distracted, and we shall want you much. Ever yours, my dear lord,

“Henry ____.”

“This is much sooner than I looked for, Lorrequer, perhaps almost than I wished; but as it has taken place, we must not decline the battle; now what I wanted with you is this—if I go to Ireland I should like your acceptance of the Private Secretary's Office. Come, come, no objections; you know that you need not leave the army, you can become unattached, I'll arrange all that; apropos, this concerns you, it is from the Horse Guards, you need not read it now though, it is merely your gazette to the company; your promotion, however, shall not stop there; however, the important thing I want with you is this, I wish you to start for England to-morrow; circumstances prevent my going from this for a few days. You can see L____ and W____, &c., and explain all I have to say; I shall write a few letters, and some hints for your own guidance; and as Kilkee never would have head for these matters, I look to your friendship to do it for me.”

Looking only to the post, as the proposal suited my already made resolve to quit Munich, I acceded at once, and assured Lord Callonby that I should be ready in an hour.

“Quite right, Lorrequer, but still I shall not need this, you cannot leave before eleven or twelve o'clock, in fact I have another service to exact at your hands before we part with you; meanwhile, try and get some sleep, you are not likely to know anything of a bed before you reach the Clarendon.” So saying, he hurried me from the room, and as he closed the door, I heard him muttering his satisfaction, that already so far all had been well arranged.



CHAPTER LV.

Conclusion.

Sleep came on me, without my feeling it, and amid all the distracting cares and pressing thoughts that embarrassed me, I only awoke when the roll of the caleche sounded beneath my window, and warned me that I must be stirring and ready for the road.

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Since it is to be thus, thought I, it is much better that this opportunity should occur of my getting away at once, and thus obviate all the unpleasantness of my future meeting with Lady Jane; and the thousand conjectures that my departure, so sudden and unannounced might give rise to. So be it, and I have now only one hope more—that the terms we last parted on, may prevent her appearing at the breakfast table; with these words I entered the room, where the Callonbys were assembled, all save Lady Jane.

“This is too provoking; really, Mr. Lorrequer,” said Lady Callonby, with her sweetest smile, and most civil manner, “quite too bad to lose you now, that you have just joined us.”

“Come, no tampering with our party,” said Lord Callonby, “my friend here must not be seduced by honied words and soft speeches, from the high road that leads to honours and distinctions—now for your instructions.” Here his lordship entered into a very deep discussion as to the conditions upon which his support might be expected, and relied upon, which Kilkee from time to time interrupted by certain quizzing allusions to the low price he put upon his services, and suggested that a mission for myself should certainly enter into the compact.

At length breakfast was over, and Lord Callonby said, “now make your adieux, and let me see you for a moment in Sir Guy’s room, we have a little discussion there, in which your assistance is wanting.” I accordingly took my farewell of Lady Callonby, and approached to do so to Lady Jane, but much to my surprise, she made me a very distant salute, and said in her coldest tone, “I hope you may have a pleasant journey.” Before I had recovered my surprise at this movement, Kilkee came forward and offered to accompany me a few miles of the road. I accepted readily the kind offer, and once more bowing to the ladies, withdrew. And thus it is, thought I, that I leave all my long dreamed of happiness, and such is the end of many a long day’s ardent expectation. When I entered my uncle’s room, my temper was certainly not in the mood most fit for further trials, though it was doomed to meet them.

“Harry, my boy, we are in great want of you here, and as time presses, we must state our case very briefly. You are aware, Sir Guy tells me, that your cousin Guy has been received among us as the suitor of my eldest daughter. It has been an old compact between us to unite our families by ties still stronger than our very ancient friendship, and this match has been accordingly looked to, by us both with much anxiety. Now, although on our parts I think no obstacle intervenes, yet I am sorry to say, there appear difficulties in other quarters. In fact, certain stories have reached Lady Jane’s ears concerning your cousin, which have greatly prejudiced her against him, and we have reason to think most unfairly; for we have succeeded in tracing some of the offences in question, not to Guy, but to a Mr. Morewood, who

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it seems has personated your cousin upon more than one occasion, and not a little to his disadvantage. Now we wish you to sift these matters to the bottom, by your going to Paris as soon as you can venture to leave London—find out this man, and if possible, make all straight; if money is wanting, he must of course have it; but bear one thing in mind, that any possible step which may remove this unhappy impression from my daughter's mind, will be of infinite service, and never forgotten by us. Kilkee too has taken some dislike to Guy. You have only, however, to talk to him on the matter, and he is sure to pay attention to you."

"And, Harry," said my uncle, "tell Guy, I am much displeased that he is not here, I expected him to leave Paris with me, but some absurd wager at the Jockey Club detained him."

"Another thing, Harry, you may as well mention to your cousin, that Sir Guy has complied with every suggestion that he formerly threw out—he will understand the allusion."

"Oh yes," said my uncle, "tell him roundly, he shall have Elton Hall; I have fitted up Marsden for myself; so no difficulty lies in that quarter."

"You may add, if you like, that my present position with the government enables me to offer him a speedy prospect of a Regiment, and that I think he had better not leave the army."

"And say that by next post Hamercloth's bond for the six thousand shall be paid off, and let him send me a note of any other large sum he owes."

"And above all things, no more delays. I must leave this for England inevitably, and as the ladies will probably prefer wintering in Italy—"

"Oh certainly," said my uncle, "the wedding must take place."

"I scarcely can ask you to come to us on the occasion, though I need not say how greatly we should all feel gratified if you could do so," said my Lord.

While this cross fire went on from both sides, I looked from one to the other of the speakers. My first impression being, that having perceived and disliked my attention to Lady Jane, they adopted this "*mauvaise plaisanterie*" as a kind of smart lesson for my future guidance. My next impression was that they were really in earnest, but about the very stupidest pair of old gentlemen that ever wore hair powder.

"And this is all," said I, drawing a long breath, and inwardly uttering a short prayer for patience.

“Why, I believe, I have mentioned everything,” said Lord Callonby, “except that if anything occurs to yourself that offers a prospect of forwarding this affair, we leave you a carte blanche to adopt it.”

“Of course, then,” said I, “I am to understand that as no other difficulties lie in the way than those your Lordship has mentioned, the feelings of the parties, their affections are mutual.”

“Oh, of course, your cousin, I suppose, has made himself agreeable; he is a good looking fellow, and in fact, I am not aware, why they should not like each other, eh Sir Guy?”

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"To be sure, and the Elton estates run half the shire with your Gloucester property; never was there a more suitable match."

"Then only one point remains, and that being complied with, you may reckon upon my services; nay, more, I promise you success. Lady Jane's own consent must be previously assured to me, without this, I most positively decline moving a step in the matter; that once obtained, freely and without constraint, I pledge myself to do all you require."

"Quite fair, Harry, I perfectly approve of your scruples," so saying, his Lordship rose and left the room.

"Well, Harry, and yourself, what is to be done for you, has Callonby offered you anything yet?"

"Yes sir, his Lordship has most kindly offered me the under secretaryship in Ireland, but I have resolved on declining it, though I shall not at present say so, lest he should feel any delicacy in employing me upon the present occasion."

"Why, is the boy deranged—decline it—what have you got in the world, that you should refuse such an appointment."

The colour mounted to my cheeks, my temples burned, and what I should have replied to this taunt, I know not, for passion had completely mastered me. When Lord Callonby again entered the room, his usually calm and pale face was agitated and flushed; and his manner tremulous and hurried; for an instant he was silent, then turning towards my uncle, he took his hand affectionately, and said,

"My good old friend, I am deeply, deeply grieved; but we must abandon this scheme. I have just seen my daughter, and from the few words which we have had together, I find that her dislike to the match is invincible, and in fact, she has obtained my promise never again to allude to it. If I were willing to constrain the feelings of my child, you yourself would not permit it. So here let us forget that we ever hoped for, ever calculated on a plan in which both our hearts were so deeply interested."

These words, few as they were, were spoken with deep feeling, and for the first time, I looked upon the speaker with sincere regard. They were both silent for some minutes; Sir Guy, who was himself much agitated, spoke first.

"So be it then, Callonby, and thus do I relinquish one—perhaps the only cheering prospect my advanced age held out to me. I have long wished to have your daughter for my niece, and since I have known her, the wish has increased tenfold."

"It was the chosen dream of all my anticipations," said Lord Callonby, "and now Jane's affections only—but let it pass."

“And is there then really no remedy, can nothing be struck out?”

“Nothing.”

“I am not quite so sure, my Lord,” said I tremulously.

“No, no, Lorrequer, you are a ready witted fellow I know, but this passes even your ingenuity, besides I have given her my word.”

“Even so.”

“Why, what do you mean, speak out man,” said Sir Guy, “I’ll give you ten thousand pounds on the spot if you suggest a means of overcoming this difficulty.”

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"Perhaps you might not accede afterwards."

"I pledge myself to it."

"And I too," said Lord Callonby, "if no unfair stratagem be resorted to towards my daughter. If she only give her free and willing consent, I agree."

"Then you must bid higher, uncle, ten thousand won't do, for the bargain is well worth the money."

"Name your price, boy, and keep your word."

"Agreed then," holding my uncle to his promise, "I pledge myself that his nephew shall be husband of Lady Jane Callonby, and now, my Lord, read Harry vice Guy in the contract, and I am certain my uncle is too faithful to his plighted word, and too true to his promise not to say it shall be."

The suddenness of this rash declaration absolutely stunned them both, and then recovering at the same moment, their eyes met.

"Fairly caught, Guy" said Lord Callonby, "a bold stroke if it only succeeds."

"And it shall, by G—," said my uncle, "Elton is yours, Harry, and with seven thousand a year, and my nephew to boot, Callonby won't refuse you."

There are moments in life in which conviction will follow a bold "coup de main," that never would have ensued from the slow process of reasoning. Luckily for me, this was one of those happy intervals. Lord Callonby catching my uncle's enthusiasm, seized me by the hand and said,

"With her consent, Lorrequer, you may count upon mine, and faith if truth must be told, I always preferred you to the other."

What my uncle added, I waited not to listen to; but with one bound sprung from the room—dashed up stairs to Lady Callonby's drawing-room—looked rapidly around to see if *she* were there, and then without paying the slightest attention to the questions of Lady Callonby and her younger daughter, was turning to leave the room, when my eye caught the flutter of a Cachmere shawl in the garden beneath. In an instant the window was torn open—I stood upon the sill, and though the fall was some twenty feet, with one spring I took it, and before the ladies had recovered from their first surprise at my unaccountable conduct, put the finishing stroke to their amazement, by throwing my arms around Lady Jane, and clasping her to my heart.

I cannot remember by what process I explained the change that had taken place in my fortunes. I had some very vague recollection of vows of eternal love being mingled with



praises of my worthy uncle, and the state of my affections and finances were jumbled up together, but still sufficiently intelligible to satisfy my beloved Jane—that this time at least, I made love with something more than my own consent to support me. Before we had walked half round the garden, she had promised to be mine; and Harry Lorrequer, who rose that morning with nothing but despair and darkness before him, was now the happiest of men.

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Dear reader, I have little more to confess. Lord Callonby's politics were fortunately deemed of more moment than maidenly scruples, and the treasury benches more respected than the trousseau. Our wedding was therefore settled for the following week. Meanwhile, every day seemed to teem with its own meed of good fortune. My good uncle, under whose patronage, forty odd years before, Colonel Kamworth had obtained his commission, undertook to effect the reconciliation between him and the Wallers, who now only waited for our wedding, before they set out for Hyderabad cottage, that snug receptacle of Curry and Madeira, Jack confessing that he had rather listen to the siege of Java, by that fire-side, than hear an account of Waterloo from the lips of the great Duke himself.

I wrote to Trevanion to invite him to Munich for the ceremony, and the same post which informed me that he was en route to join us, brought also a letter from my eccentric friend O'Leary, whose name having so often occurred in these confessions, I am tempted to read aloud, the more so as its contents are no secret, Kilkee having insisted upon reading it to a committee of the whole family assembled after dinner.

"Dear Lorrequer,

"The trial is over, and I am acquitted, but still in St. Pelagie; for as the government were determined to cut my head off if guilty, so the mob resolved to murder me if innocent. A pleasant place this: before the trial, I was the most popular man in Paris; my face was in every print shop; plaster busts of me, with a great organ behind the ear, in all the thoroughfares; my autograph selling at six and twenty sous, and a lock of my hair at five francs. Now that it is proved I did not murder the "minister at war," (who is in excellent health and spirits) the popular feeling against me is very violent; and I am looked upon as an imposter, who obtained his notoriety under false pretences; and Vernet, who had begun my picture for a Judas, has left off in disgust. Your friend Trevanion is a trump; he procured a Tipperary gentleman to run away with Mrs. Ram, and they were married at Frankfort, on Tuesday last. By the by, what an escape you had of Emily: she was only quizzing you all the time. She is engaged to be married to Tom O'Flaherty, who is here now. Emily's imitation of you, with the hat a little on one side, and a handkerchief flourishing away in one hand, is capital; but when she kneels down and says, 'dearest Emily, &c.' you'd swear it was yourself."—[Here the laughter of the auditory prevented Kilkee proceeding, who, to my utter confusion, resumed after a little.]—"Don't be losing your time making up to Lord Callonby's daughter"—[here came another burst of laughter]—"they say here you have not a chance, and moreover she's a downright flirt."—"It is your turn now, Jane," said Kilkee, scarcely able to proceed.]—"Besides that, her father's a pompous old Tory, that won't give a sixpence with her; and the old curmudgeon,

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your uncle, has as much idea of providing for you, as he has of dying.”—[This last sally absolutely convulsed all parties.]—“To be sure Kilkee’s a fool, but he is no use to you.”—[“Begad I thought I was going to escape,” said the individual alluded to, “but your friend O’Leary cuts on every side of him.”] The letter, after some very grave reflections upon the hopelessness of my pursuit, concluded with a kind pledge to meet me soon, and become my travelling companion. Meanwhile, added he, “I must cross over to London, and look after my new work, which is to come out soon, under the title of ‘the Loiterings of Arthur O’Leary.’”

This elegant epistle formed the subject of much laughter and conversation amongst us long after it was concluded; and little triumph could be claimed by any party, when nearly all were so roughly handled. So passed the last evening I spent in Munich—the next morning I was married.

The end.

EBOOK EDITOR’S BOOKMARKS:

Accept of benefits with a tone of dissatisfaction
Mistaking your abstraction for attention
My English proves me Irish
My French always shows me to be English
Nine-inside leathern “conveniency,” bumping ten miles an hour
Pleased are we ever to paint the past according to our own fancy
Sure if he did, doesn’t he take it out o’ me in the corns?
They were so perfectly contented with their self-deception
Unwashed hands, and a heavy gold ring upon his thumb