The Works of
Benjamin Disraeli
Earl of Beaconsfield

Embracing
Novels, Romances, Plays, Poems,
Biography, Short Stories
And Great Speeches

With
A Critical Introduction by
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House of Lords,
And
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And placing his left arm around Sybil, he defended her with his sword. (See page 185, Sybil.)
SYBIL
OR
THE TWO NATIONS

BY
BENJAMIN DISRAELI
EARL OF BEACONSFIELD

VOLUME II.

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AND PLACING HIS LEFT ARM AROUND SYBIL, HE DEFENDED HER WITH HIS SWORD. (See page 185, Sybil) . Frontispiece

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OR
THE TWO NATIONS
(CONTINUED)

CHAPTER XLIX.

A MEETING IN THE GARDEN.

GREMONT had recognised Sybil as she entered the garden. He was himself crossing the park to attend a committee of the House of Commons which had sat for the first time that morning. The meeting had been formal and brief, the committee soon adjourned, and Egremont repaired to the spot where he was in the hope of still finding Sybil.

He approached her not without some restraint, with reserve, and yet with tenderness. 'This is a great, an unexpected pleasure indeed,' he said in a faltering tone. She had looked up; the expression of an agitation, not distressful, on her beautiful countenance could not be concealed. She smiled through a gushing vision; and, with a flushed cheek, impelled
perhaps by her native frankness, perhaps by some softer and irresistible feeling of gratitude, respect, regard, she said in a low voice, 'I was reading your beautiful speech.'

'Indeed,' said Egremont much moved, 'that is an honour, a pleasure, a reward, I never could have even hoped to attain.'

'By all,' continued Sybil with more self-possession, 'it must be read with pleasure, with advantage, but by me, oh! with what deep interest.'

'If anything that I said finds an echo in your breast,' and here he hesitated: 'it will give me confidence for the future,' he hurriedly added.

'Ah! why do not others feel like you?' said Sybil, 'all would not then be hopeless.'

'But you are not hopeless?' said Egremont, and he seated himself on the bench, but at some distance from her.

Sybil shook her head.

'But when we spoke last,' said Egremont, 'you were full of confidence; in your cause, and in your means.'

'It is not very long ago,' said Sybil, 'since we thus spoke, and yet time in the interval has taught me some bitter truths.'

'Truth is precious,' said Egremont, 'to us all; and yet I fear I could not sufficiently appreciate the cause that deprived you of your sanguine faith.'

'Alas!' said Sybil mournfully, 'I was but a dreamer of dreams: I wake from my hallucination, as others have done, I suppose, before me. Like them, too, I feel the glory of life has gone; but my content at least,' and she bent her head meekly, 'has never rested, I hope, too much on this world.'

'You are depressed, dear Sybil?'

'I am unhappy. I am anxious about my father. I fear that he is surrounded by men unworthy of his confidence. These scenes of violence alarm me. Under any circumstances I should shrink from them, but I am impressed with the conviction that they can bring us nothing but disaster and disgrace.'

'I honour your father,' said Egremont; 'I know no man whose character I esteem so truly noble; such a just compound of intelligence and courage, and gentle and generous impulse. I should deeply grieve were he to compromise himself. But you have influence over him, the greatest, as you have over all. Counsel him to return to Mowbray.'

'Can I give counsel?' said Sybil, 'I who have been wrong in all my judgments? I came up to this city with him, to be his guide, his guardian. What arrogance! What short-sighted pride! I thought the people all felt as I feel; that I had nothing to do but to sustain and animate him; to encourage him when he flagged, to uphold him when he wavered. I thought that moral power must govern the world, and that moral power was embodied in an assembly whose annals will be a series of petty intrigues, or, what is worse, of violent machinations.'

'Exert every energy,' said Egremont, 'that your father should leave London immediately; to-morrow, to-night if possible. After this business at Birmingham, the government must act. I hear that they will immediately increase the army and the police; and that there is a circular from the Secretary of State to the Lord Lieutenants of counties. But the government will strike at the Convention. The members who remain will be the victims. If your father re-
turn to Mowbray, and be quiet, he has a chance of not being disturbed.'

'An ignoble end of many lofty hopes,' said Sybil.

'Let us retain our hopes,' said Egremont, 'and cherish them.'

'I have none,' she replied.

'And I am sanguine,' said Egremont.

'Ah! because you have made a beautiful speech. But they will listen to you, they will cheer you, but they will never follow you. The dove and the eagle will not mate; the lion and the lamb will not lie down together; and the conquerors will never rescue the conquered.'

Egremont shook his head. 'You still will cherish these phantoms, dear Sybil! and why? They are not visions of delight. Believe me, they are as vain as they are distressing. The mind of England is the mind ever of the rising race. Trust me, it is with the people. And not the less so, because this feeling is one of which even in a great degree it is unconscious. Those opinions which you have been educated to dread and mistrust, are opinions that are dying away. Predominant opinions are generally the opinions of the generation that is vanishing. Let an accident, which speculation could not foresee, the balanced state at this moment of parliamentary parties, cease, and in a few years, more or less, cease it must, and you will witness a development of the new mind of England, which will make up by its rapid progress for its retarded action. I live among these men; I know their inmost souls; I watch their instincts and their impulses; I know the principles which they have imbibed, and I know, however hindered by circumstances for the moment, those principles must bear their fruit.

It will be a produce hostile to the oligarchical system. The future principle of English politics will not be a levelling principle; not a principle adverse to privileges, but favourable to their extension. It will seek to ensure equality, not by levelling the few, but by elevating the many.'

Indulging for some little time in the mutual reflections which the tone of the conversation suggested, Sybil at length rose, and, saying that she hoped by this time her father might have returned, bade farewell to Egremont, but he, also rising, would for a time accompany her. At the gate of the gardens, however, she paused, and said with a soft sad smile, 'Here we must part,' and extended to him her hand.

'Heaven will guard over you!' said Egremont, 'for you are a celestial charge.'
CHAPTER L.

DANGER.

SYBIL approached her home, she recognised her father in the court before their house, accompanied by several men, with whom he seemed on the point of going forth. She was so anxious to speak to Gerard, that she did not hesitate at once to advance. There was a stir as she entered the gate; the men ceased talking, some stood aloof, all welcomed her with silent respect. With one or two Sybil was not entirely unacquainted; at least by name or person. To them, as she passed, she bent her head; and then, going up to her father, who was about to welcome her, she said, in a tone of calmness, and with a semblance of composure, ‘If you are going out, dear father, I should like to see you for one moment first.’

‘A moment, friends,’ said Gerard, ‘with your leave;’ and he accompanied his daughter into the house. He would have stopped in the hall, but she walked on to their room, and Gerard, though pressed for time, was compelled to follow her. When they had entered their chamber, Sybil closed the door with care, and then, Gerard sitting, or rather leaning care-

lessly, on the edge of the table, she said, ‘We are once more together, dear father; we will never again be separated.’

Gerard sprang quickly on his legs, his eye kindled, his cheek flushed. ‘Something has happened to you, Sybil!’

‘No,’ she said, shaking her head mournfully, ‘not that; but something may happen to you.’

‘How so, my child?’ said her father, relapsing into his customary good-tempered placidity, and speaking in an easy, measured, almost drawling tone that was habitual to him.

‘You are in danger,’ said Sybil, ‘great and immediate. No matter at this moment how I am persuaded of this: I wish no mysteries, but there is no time for details. The government will strike at the Convention; they are resolved. This outbreak at Birmingham has brought affairs to a crisis. They have already arrested the leaders there; they will seize those who remain here in avowed correspondence with them.’

‘If they arrest all who are in correspondence with the Convention,’ said Gerard, ‘they will have enough to do.’

‘Yes: but you take a leading part,’ said Sybil; ‘you are the individual they would select.’

‘Would you have me hide myself,’ said Gerard, ‘just because something is going on besides talk?’

‘Besides talk!’ exclaimed Sybil. ‘O! my father, what thoughts are these? It may be that words are vain to save us; but feeble deeds are vainer far than words.’

‘I do not see that the deeds, though I have nothing to do with them, are so feeble,’ said Gerard;
their boasted police are beaten, and by the isolated movement of an unorganised mass. What if the outbreak had not been a solitary one? What if the people had been disciplined?"

"What if everything were changed, if everything were contrary to what it is?" said Sybil. "The people are not disciplined; their action will not be, cannot be, coherent and uniform; these are riots in which you are involved, not revolutions; and you will be a victim, and not a sacrifice."

Gerard looked thoughtful, but not anxious: after a momentary pause, he said, 'We must not be scared at a few arrests, Sybil. These are hap-hazard pranks of a government that wants to terrify, but is itself frightened. I have not counselled, none of us have counselled, this stir at Birmingham. It is a casualty. We were none of us prepared for it. But great things spring from casualties. I say the police were beaten, and the troops alarmed; and I say this was done without organisation, and in a single spot. I am as much against feeble deeds as you can be, Sybil; and to prove this to you, our conversation at the moment you arrived was to take care for the future that there shall be none. Neither vain words, nor feeble deeds, for the future,' added Gerard, and he moved to depart.

Sybil approached him with gentleness; she took his hand as if to bid him farewell; she retained it for a moment, and looked him steadfastly in the face, with a glance at the same time serious and soft. Then, throwing her arms round his neck, and leaning her cheek upon his breast, she murmured, 'O! my father, your child is most unhappy.'

'Sybil,' exclaimed Gerard, in a tone of tender re-

proach, 'this is womanish weakness; I love but must not share it.'

'It may be womanish,' said Sybil, 'but it is wise: for what should make us unhappy if not the sense of impending, yet unknown, danger?'

'And why danger?' said Gerard.

'Why mystery?' said Sybil. 'Why are you ever preoccupied and involved in dark thoughts, my father? It is not the pressure of business, as you will perhaps tell me, that occasions this change in a disposition so frank and even careless. The pressure of affairs is not nearly so great, cannot be nearly so great, as in the early period of your assembling; when the eyes of the whole country were on you, and you were in communication with all parts of it. How often have you told me that there was no degree of business which you found irksome? Now you are all dispersed and scattered: no discussions, no committees, little correspondence; and you yourself are ever brooding, and ever in conclave too, with persons who, I know, for Stephen has told me so, are the preachers of violence; violence perhaps that some of them may preach, yet will not practise: both bad; traitors it may be, or, at the best, hare-brained men.'

'Stephen is prejudiced,' said Gerard. 'He is a visionary, indulging in impossible dreams, and if possible, little desirable. He knows nothing of the feeling of the country or the character of his countrymen. Englishmen want none of his joint-stock felicity; they want their rights, rights consistent with the rights of other classes, but without which the rights of other classes cannot and ought not to be secure.'

'Stephen is at least your friend, my father; and once you honoured him.'
'And do so now, and love him very dearly. I honour him for his great abilities and knowledge. Stephen is a scholar; I have no pretensions that way; but I can feel the pulse of a people, and can comprehend the signs of the times, Sybil. Stephen was all very well talking in our cottage and garden at Mowbray, when we had nothing to do; but now we must act, or others will act for us. Stephen is not a practical man; he is crotchety, Sybil, and that's just it.'

'But violence and action,' said Sybil, 'are they identical, my father?'

'I did not speak of violence.'

'No; but you looked it. I know the language of your countenance, even to the quiver of your lip. Action, as you and Stephen once taught me, and I think wisely, was to prove to our rulers by an agitation, orderly and intellectual, that we were sensible of our degradation; and that it was neither Christian-like nor prudent, neither good nor wise, to let us remain so. That you did, and you did it well; the respect of the world, even of those who differed from you in interest or opinion, was not withheld from you, and can be withheld from none who exercise the moral power that springs from great talents and a good cause. You have let this great moral power, this pearl of price,—said Sybil, with emotion; 'we cannot conceal it from ourselves, my father—you have let it escape from your hands.'

Gerard looked at her as she spoke, with an earnestness unusual with him. As she ceased, he cast his eyes down, and seemed for a moment deep in thought; then, looking up, he said, 'The season for words is past. I must begone, dear Sybil.' And he moved towards the door.

'Sybil looked up to heaven with streaming eyes, and clasped her hands in unutterable woe. Gerard moved again towards the door, but before he reached it his step faltered, and he turned again and looked at his daughter with tenderness and anxiety. She remained in the same position, save that her arms that had fallen were crossed before her, and her downward glance seemed fixed in deep abstraction. Her father approached her unnoticed; he took her hand; she started, and looking round with a cold and distressed expression, said, in a smothered tone, 'I thought you had gone.'

'Not in anger, my sweet child,' and Gerard pressed her to his heart.
But you go,' murmured Sybil. 'These men await me,' said Gerard. 'Our council is of importance. We must take some immediate steps for the aid of our brethren in distress at Birmingham, and to discountenance similar scenes of outbreak to this affair: but, the moment this is over, I will come back to you; and, for the rest, it shall be as you desire; to-morrow we will return to Mowbray.'

Sybil returned her father's embrace with a warmth which expressed her sense of his kindness and her own soothed feelings, but she said nothing; and bidding her now to be of good cheer, Gerard quitted the apartment.

CHAPTER LI.

THE CLOCK OF ST. JOHN'S.

HE clock of St. John's church struck three, and the clock of St. John's church struck four; and the fifth hour sounded from St. John's church; and the clock of St. John's was sounding six. And Gerard had not yet returned.

The time for a while after his departure had been comparatively pleasant, and even agreeable. Easier in her mind and for a time busied with the preparations for their journey, Sybil sat by the open window more serene and cheerful than for a long period had been her wont. Sometimes she turned for a moment from her volume and fell into a reverie of the morrow and of Mowbray. Viewed through the magic haze of time and distance, the scene of her youth assumed a character of tenderness and even of peaceful bliss. She sighed for the days of their cottage and their garden, when the discontent of her father was only theoretical, and their political conclaves were limited to a discussion between him and Morley on the rights of the people or the principals of society. The bright waters of the Mowe and its wooded hills; her matin
walks to the convent to visit Ursula Trafford, a pilgrimage of piety and charity and love; the faithful Harold, so devoted and so intelligent; even the crowded haunts of labour and suffering among which she glided like an angel, blessing and blessed; they rose before her, those touching images of the past, and her eyes were suffused with tears, of tenderness, not of gloom.

And blended with them the thought of one who had been for a season the kind and gentle companion of her girlhood, that Mr. Franklin whom she had never quite forgotten, and who, alas! was not Mr. Franklin after all. Ah! that was a wonderful history; a somewhat thrilling chapter in the memory of one so innocent and so young! His voice even now lingered in her ear. She recalled without an effort those tones of the morning, tones of tenderness, and yet of wisdom and considerate thought, that had sounded only for her welfare. Never had Egremont appeared to her in a light so subduing. He was what man should be to woman ever: gentle, and yet a guide. A thousand images dazzling and wild rose in her mind; a thousand thoughts, beautiful and quivering as the twilight, clustered round her heart; for a moment she indulged in impossible dreams, and seemed to have entered a newly discovered world. The horizon of her experience expanded like the glittering heaven of a fairy tale. Her eye was fixed in lustrous contemplation, the flush on her cheek was a messenger from her heart, the movement of her mouth would have in an instant become a smile, when the clock of St. John's struck four, and Sybil started from her reverie.

The clock of St. John's struck four, and Sybil became anxious; the clock of St. John's struck five, and

Sybil became disquieted; restless and perturbed, she was walking up and down the chamber, her books long since thrown aside, when the clock of St. John's struck six.

She clasped her hands and looked up to heaven. There was a knock at the street door; she herself sprang out to open it. It was not Gerard. It was Morley.

‘Ah! Stephen,’ said Sybil, with a countenance of undisguised disappointment, ‘I thought it was my father.’

‘I should have been glad to have found him here,’ said Morley. ‘However, with your permission I will enter.’

‘And he will soon arrive,’ said Sybil; ‘I am sure he will soon arrive. I have been expecting him every minute—’

‘For hours,’ added Morley, finishing her sentence, as they entered the room. ‘The business that he is on,’ he continued, throwing himself into a chair with a recklessness very unlike his usual composure and even precision, ‘the business that he is on is engrossing.’

‘Thank Heaven,’ said Sybil, ‘we leave this place to-morrow.’

‘Hah!’ said Morley, starting, ‘who told you so?’

‘My father has so settled it; has indeed promised me that we shall depart.’

‘And you were anxious to do so.’

‘Most anxious; my mind is prophetic only of mischief to him if we remain.’

‘Mine too. Otherwise I should not have come up to-day.’

‘You have seen him, I hope?’ said Sybil.
'I have; I have been hours with him.'

'I am glad. At this conference which he talked of?'

'Yes; at this headstrong council; and I have seen him since; alone. Whatever hap to him, my conscience is assailed.'

'You terrify me, Stephen,' said Sybil, rising from her seat. 'What can happen to him? What would he do, what would you resist? Tell me, tell me, dear friend.'

'Oh! yes,' said Morley, pale, and with a slight bitter smile. 'Oh! yes; dear friend!' 'I said dear friend, for so I deemed you,' said Sybil; 'and so we have ever found you. Why do you stare at me so strangely, Stephen?'

'So you deem me, and so you have ever found me,' said Morley, in a slow and measured tone, repeating her words. 'Well, what more would you have? What more should any of us want? he asked abruptly.

'I want no more,' said Sybil, innocently.

'I warrant me, you do not. Well, well; nothing matters. And so,' he added in his ordinary tone, 'you are waiting for your father?'

'Whom you have not long since seen,' said Sybil, 'and whom you expected to find here?'

'No!' said Morley, shaking his head with the same bitter smile; 'no, no, I didn't. I came to find you.'

'You have something to tell me,' said Sybil, earnestly. 'Something has happened to my father. Do not break it to me; tell me at once,' and she advanced and laid her hand upon his arm.

Morley trembled; and then in a hurried and agitated voice, said, 'No, no, no! nothing has happened. Much may happen, but nothing has happened. And we may prevent it.'

'Tell me what may happen; tell me what to do.' 'Your father,' said Morley, slowly rising from his seat and pacing the room, and speaking in a low calm voice, 'your father, and my friend, is in this position, Sybil; he is conspiring against the State.'

'Yes, yes,' said Sybil, very pale, speaking almost in a whisper, and with her gaze fixed intently on her companion. 'Tell me all.'

'I will. He is conspiring, I say, against the State. To-night they meet in secret, to give the last finish to their plans; and to-night they will be arrested.'

'O God!' said Sybil, clasping her hands. 'He told me truth.'

'Who told you truth?' said Morley, springing to her side, in a hoarse voice, and with an eye of fire.

'A friend,' said Sybil, dropping her arms and bending her head in woe; 'a kind, good friend. I met him but this morn, and he warned me of all this.'

'Hah, hah!' said Morley, with a sort of stifled laugh; 'Hah, hah! he told you, did he? the kind, good friend whom you met this morning? Did I not warn you, Sybil, of the traitor? Did I not tell you to beware of taking this false aristocrat to your hearth; to worm out all the secrets of that home that he once polluted by his espionage, and now would desolate by his treason?'

'Of whom and what do you speak?' said Sybil, throwing herself into a chair.

'I speak of that base spy, Egremont.'

'You slander an honourable man,' said Sybil, with dignity. 'Mr. Egremont has never entered this house.
since you met him here for the first time; save once.'

'He needed no entrance to this house to worm out its secrets,' said Morley, maliciously. 'That could be more adroitly done by one who had assignations at command with the most charming of its inmates.'

'Unmannerly churl!' exclaimed Sybil, starting in her chair, her eye flashing lightning, her distended nostril quivering with scorn.

'Oh! yes, I am a churl,' said Morley; 'I know I am a churl. Were I a noble, the daughter of the people would perhaps condescend to treat me with less contempt.'

'The daughter of the people loves truth and manly bearing, Stephen Morley; and will treat with contempt all those who slander women, whether they be nobles or serfs.'

'And where is the slanderer?'

'Ask him who told you I held assignations with Mr. Egremont, or with any one.'

'Mine eyes, mine own eyes, were my informant,' said Morley. 'This morn, the very morn I arrived in London, I learnt how your matins were now spent. Yes!' he added, in a tone of mournful anguish, 'I passed the gate of the gardens; I witnessed your adieux.'

'We met by hazard,' said Sybil in a calm tone, and with an expression that denoted she was thinking of other things, 'and in all probability we shall never meet again. Talk not of these trifles, Stephen; my father, how can we save him?'

'Are they trifles?' said Morley, slowly and earnestly, walking to her side, and looking her intently in the face. 'Are they indeed trifles, Sybil? Oh! make me credit that, and then — ' he paused.

Sybil returned his gaze: the deep lustre of her dark orb rested on his peering vision; his eye fled from the unequal contest; his heart throbbed, his limbs trembled; he fell upon his knee.

'Pardon me, pardon me,' he said, and he took her hand. 'Pardon the most miserable and the most devoted of men!'

'What need of pardon, dear Stephen?' said Sybil in a soothing tone. 'In the agitated hour wild words escape. If I have used them, I regret; if you, I have forgotten.'

The clock of St. John's told that the sixth hour was more than half-past.

'Ah!' said Sybil, withdrawing her hand, 'you told me how precious was time. What can we do?'

Morley rose from his kneeling position, and again paced the chamber, lost for some moments in deep meditation. Suddenly he seized her arm, and said, 'I can endure no longer the anguish of my life: I love you, and if you will not be mine, I care for no one's fate.'

'I am not born for love,' said Sybil, frightened, yet endeavouring to conceal her alarm.

'We are all born for love,' said Morley. 'It is the principle of existence and its only end. And love of you, Sybil,' he continued, in a tone of impassioned pathos, 'has been to me for years the hoarded treasure of my life. For this I have haunted your hearth and hovered round your home; for this I have served your father like a slave, and embarked in a cause with which I have little sympathy, and which can meet with no success. It is your image that has stimulated my ambition, developed my powers, sustained me in the hour of humiliation, and secured me that
material prosperity which I can now command. Oh! deign to share it; share it with the impassioned heart and the devoted life that now bow before you; and do not shrink from them because they are the feelings and the fortunes of the people.'

'You astound, you overwhelm me,' said Sybil, agitated. 'You came for another purpose, we were speaking of other feelings; it is the hour of exigency you choose for these strange, these startling words.'

'I also have my hour of exigency,' said Morley, 'and its minutes are now numbering. Upon it all depends.'

'Another time,' said Sybil, in a low and deprecatory voice; 'speak of these things another time!'

'The caverns of my mind are open,' said Morley, 'and they will not close."

'Stephen,' said Sybil, 'dear Stephen, I am grateful for your kind feelings; but indeed this is not the time for such passages: cease, my friend!'

'I came to know my fate,' said Morley, doggedly.

'It is a sacrilege of sentiment,' said Sybil, unable any longer to restrain her emotion, 'to obtrude its expression on a daughter at such a moment."

'You would not deem it so if you loved, or if you could love, me, Sybil,' said Morley, mournfully. 'Why, it is a moment of deep feeling, and suited for the expression of deep feeling. You would not have answered thus if he who had been kneeling here had been named Egremont.'

'He would not have adopted a course,' said Sybil, unable any longer to restrain her displeasure, 'so selfish, so indecent."

'Ah! she loves him!' exclaimed Morley, springing on his legs, and with a demoniac laugh.

There was a pause. Under ordinary circumstances Sybil would have left the room and terminated a distressing interview, but in the present instance that was impossible; for on the continuance of that interview any hope of assisting her father depended. Morley had thrown himself into a chair opposite her, leaning back in silence with his face covered; Sybil was disinclined to revive the conversation about her father, because she had already perceived that Morley was only too much aware of the command which the subject gave him over her feelings and even conduct. Yet time, time now full of terror, time was stealing on. It was evident that Morley would not break the silence. At length, unable any longer to repress her tortured heart, Sybil said, 'Stephen, be generous; speak to me of your friend."

'I have no friend,' said Morley, without taking his hands from his face. 'The saints in heaven have mercy on me,' said Sybil, 'for I am very wretched.'

'No, no, no!' said Morley, rising rapidly from his seat, and again kneeling at her side, 'not wretched; not that tone of anguish! What can I do? what say? Sybil, dearest Sybil. I love you so much, so fervently, so devotedly; none can love you as I do; say not you are wretched!'

'Alas! alas!' said Sybil.

'What shall I do? what say?' said Morley. 'You know what I would have you say,' said Sybil. 'Speak of one who is my father, if no longer your friend: you know what I would have you do: save him; save him from death and me from despair.'

'I am ready,' said Morley, 'I came for that.
Listen. There is a meeting to-night at half-past eight o'clock; they meet to arrange a general rising in the country: their intention is known to the government; they will be arrested. Now it is in my power, which it was not when I saw your father this morning, to convince him of the truth of this, and were I to see him before eight o'clock, which I could easily do, I could prevent his attendance, certainly prevent his attendance, and he would be saved; for the government depend much upon the papers, some proclamations, and things of that kind, which will be signed this evening, for their proofs. Well, I am ready to save Gerard, my friend, for so I'll call him, as you wish it; one I have served before and long; one whom I came up from Mowbray this day to serve and save; I am ready to do that which you require; you yourself admit it is no light deed; and coming from one you have known so long, and, as you confess, so much regarded, should be doubly cherished; I am ready to do this great service; to save the father from death and the daughter from despair, if she would but only say to me, "I have but one reward, and it is yours.""

'I have read of something of this sort,' said Sybil, speaking in a murmuring tone, and looking round her with a wild expression, 'this bargaining of blood, and shall I call it love? But that was ever between the oppressors and the oppressed. This is the first time that a child of the people has been so assailed by one of her own class, and who exercises his power from the confidence which the sympathy of their sorrows alone caused. It is bitter; bitter for me and mine; but for you, pollution.'

'Am I answered?' said Morley.

'Yes,' said Sybil, 'in the name of the holy Virgin.'

'Good night, then,' said Morley, and he approached the door. His hand was on it. The voice of Sybil made him turn his head.

'Where do they meet to-night?' she enquired in a smothered tone.

'I am bound to secrecy,' said Morley.

'There is no softness in your spirit,' said Sybil.

'I am met with none.'

'We have ever been your friends.'

'A blossom that has brought no fruit.'

'This hour will be remembered at the judgment-seat,' said Sybil.

'The holy Virgin will perhaps interpose for me,' said Morley with a sneer.

'We have merited this,' said Sybil, 'who have taken an infidel to our hearts.'

'If he had only been a heretic, like Egremont!' said Morley.

Sybil burst into tears. Morley sprang to her.

'Swear by the holy Virgin, swear by all the saints, swear by your hope of heaven and by your own sweet name; without equivocation, without reserve, with fulness and with truth, that you will never give your heart or hand to Egremont, and I will save your father.'

As in a low voice, but with a terrible earnestness, Morley dictated this oath, Sybil, already pale, became white as the marble saint of some sacred niche. Her large dark eyes seemed fixed; a fleet expression of agony flitted over her beautiful brow like a cloud; and she said, 'I swear that I will never give my hand to——'
And your heart, your heart,' said Morley eagerly.

'Omit not that. Swear by the holy oaths again you do not love him. She falters! Ah! she blushes!' For a burning brightness now suffused the cheek of Sybil. 'She loves him,' exclaimed Morley, wildly, and he rushed frantically from the room.
the steps before the door of that dreary house, within
the railings of that gloomy court, and buried her face
in her hands; a wild vision of the past and the
future, without thought or feeling, coherence or con-
sequence; sunset gleams of vanished bliss, and stormy
gusts of impending doom.

The clock of St. John's struck seven.

It was the only thing that spoke in that still and
dreary square; it was the only voice that ever seemed
to sound there; but it was a voice from heaven, it
was the voice of St. John.

Sybil looked up; she looked up at the holy build-
ing. Sybil listened; she listened to the holy sounds.
St. John told her that the danger of her father was so
much more advanced. Oh! why are there saints in
heaven if they cannot aid the saintly? The oath that
Morley would have enforced came whispering in the
ear of Sybil, 'Swear by the holy Virgin, and by all
the saints.'

And shall she not pray to the holy Virgin, and all
the saints? Sybil prayed; she prayed to the holy
Virgin, and all the saints; and especially to the be-
loved St. John, most favoured among Hebrew men,
who reposed on the breast of the Divine Friend.

Brightness and courage returned to the spirit of
Sybil; a sense of animating and exalting faith that
could move mountains, and combat without fear a
thousand perils. The conviction of celestial aid in-
spired her. She rose from her sad resting-place, and
re-entered the house; only, however, to provide her-
sel with her walking attire, and then, alone and
without a guide, the shades of evening already de-
sceding, this child of innocence and divine thoughts,
born in a cottage and bred in a cloister, went forth,
on a great enterprise of duty and devotion, into the
busiest and the wildest haunts of the greatest of
modern cities.

Sybil knew well her way to Palace Yard. This
point was soon reached; she desired the cabman to
drive her to a street in the Strand, in which was a
coffee-house, where, during the last weeks of their
stay in London, the scanty remnants of the National
Convention had held their sittings. It was by a mere
accident that Sybil had learnt this circumstance, for,
when she had attended the meetings of the Conven-
tion in order to hear her father's speeches, it was in
the prime of their gathering, and when their numbers
were great, and when they met in audacious rivalry
opposite to that St. Stephen's which they wished to
supersede. This accidental recollection, however, was
her only clue in the urgent adventure on which she
had embarked.

She cast an anxious glance at the clock of St.
Martin's, as she passed that church; the hand was
approaching the half hour of seven. She urged on the
driver; they were in the Strand: there was an agita-
ting stoppage; she was about to descend when the
obstacle was removed; and in a few minutes they
turned down the street which she sought.

'What number, ma'am?' asked the cabman.

'Tis a coffee-house; I know not the number, nor
the name of him who keeps it. 'Tis a coffee-house.
Can you see one? Look, look, I pray you! I am
much pressed.'

'Here's a coffee-house, ma'am,' said the man in a
hoarse voice.

'How good you are! Yes; I will get out. You
will wait for me, I am sure.'
‘All right,’ said the cabman, as Sybil entered the illumined door. ‘Poor young thing! she’s very anxious about summut.’

Sybil at once stepped into a rather capacious room, fitted up in the old-fashioned style of coffee-rooms, with mahogany boxes, in several of which were men drinking coffee, and reading newspapers by a painful glare of gas. There was a waiter in the middle of the room, who was throwing some fresh sand upon the floor, but who stared immensely when, looking up, he beheld Sybil.

‘Now, ma’am, if you please,’ said the waiter enquiringly.

‘Is Mr. Gerard here?’ said Sybil.

‘No, ma’am; Mr. Gerard has not been here to-day, nor yesterday neither;’ and he went on throwing the sand.

‘I should like to see the master of the house,’ said Sybil very humbly.

‘Should you, ma’am?’ said the waiter, but he gave no indication of assisting her in the fulfillment of her wish.

Sybil repeated that wish, and this time the waiter said nothing.

This vulgar and insolent neglect, to which she was so little accustomed, depressed her spirit. She could have encountered tyranny and oppression, and she would have tried to struggle with them; but this insolence of the insignificant made her feel her insignificance; and the absorption all this time of the guests in their newspapers aggravated her nervous sense of her utter helplessness. All her feminine reserve and modesty came over her; alone in this room among men, she felt overpowered, and she was about to make a precipitate retreat when the clock of the coffee-room sounded the half hour. In a paroxysm of nervous excitement, she exclaimed, ‘Is there not one among you who will assist me?’

All the newspaper readers put down their journals, and stared.

‘Hoity, toity!’ said the waiter, and he left off throwing the sand.

‘Well, what’s the matter now?’ said one of the guests.

‘I wish to see the master of the house on business of urgency,’ said Sybil, ‘to himself, and to one of his friends, and his servant here will not even reply to my enquiries.’

‘I say, Saul, why don’t you answer the young lady?’ said another guest.

‘So I did,’ said Saul. ‘Did you call for coffee, ma’am?’

‘Here’s Mr. Tanner, if you want him, my dear,’ said the first guest, as a lean black-looking individual, with grizzled hair and a red nose, entered the coffee-room from the interior. ‘Tanner, here’s a lady wants you.’

‘And a very pretty girl too,’ whispered one to another.

‘What’s your pleasure?’ said Mr. Tanner abruptly.

‘I wish to speak to you alone,’ said Sybil; and advancing towards him, she said in a low voice, ‘Tis about Walter Gerard I would speak to you.’

‘Well, you can step in here if you like,’ said Tanner, discourteously; ‘there’s only my wife;’ and he led the way to the inner room, a small close parlour, adorned with portraits of Tom Paine, Cobbett, Thistlewood, and General Jackson; with a fire, though it
was a hot July, and a very fat woman affording still more heat, and who was drinking shrub and water, and reading the police reports. She stared rudely at Sybil as she entered, following Tanner, who himself, when the door was closed, said, ‘Well, now what have you got to say?’

‘I wish to see Walter Gerard.’

‘Do you indeed!’

‘And,’ continued Sybil, notwithstanding his sneering remark, ‘I come here that you may tell me where I may find him.’

‘I believe he lives somewhere in Westminster,’ said Tanner, ‘that’s all I know about him; and if this be all you had to say, it might have been said in the coffee-room.’

‘It is not all that I have to say,’ said Sybil; ‘and I beseech you, sir, listen to me. I know where Gerard lives; I am his daughter, and the same roof covers our heads. But I wish to know where they meet to-night; you understand me;’ and she looked at his wife, who had resumed her police reports; ‘tis urgent.’

‘I don’t know nothing about Gerard,’ said Tanner, ‘except that he comes here and goes away again.’

‘The matter on which I would see him,’ said Sybil, ‘is as urgent as the imagination can conceive, and it concerns you as well as himself; but, if you know not where I can find him,’ and she moved, as if about to retire, ‘tis of no use.’

‘Stop,’ said Tanner, ‘you can tell it to me.’

‘Why so? You know not where he is; you cannot tell it to him.’

‘I don’t know that,’ said Tanner. ‘Come, let’s have it out; and if it will do him any good, I’ll see if we can’t manage to find him.’

‘I can impart my news to him, and no one else,’ said Sybil. ‘I am solemnly bound.’

‘You can’t have a better counsellor than Tanner,’ urged his wife, getting curious; ‘you had better tell us.’

‘I want no counsel; I want that which you can give me if you choose—information. My father instructed me that if, certain circumstances occurring, it was a matter of the last urgency that I should see him this evening, and, before nine o’clock, I was to call here, and obtain from you the direction where to find him; the direction, she added in a lowered tone, and looking Tanner full in the face, ‘where they hold their secret council to-night.’

‘Hem,’ said Tanner; ‘I see you’re on the freelist. And pray how am I to know you are Gerard’s daughter?’

‘You do not doubt I am his daughter!’ said Sybil, proudly.

‘Hem!’ said Tanner; ‘I do not know that I do very much,’ and he whispered to his wife. Sybil removed from them as far as she was able.

‘And this news is very urgent,’ resumed Tanner; ‘and concerns me, you say?’

‘Concerns you all,’ said Sybil; ‘and every minute is of the last importance.’

‘I should like to have gone with you myself, and then there could have been no mistake,’ said Tanner: ‘but that can’t be; we have a meeting here at half-past eight in our great room. I don’t much like breaking rules, especially in such a business; and yet, concerning all of us, as you say, and so very urgent, I don’t see how it could do harm; and I might—I wish I was quite sure you were the party.’
‘How can I satisfy you?’ said Sybil, distressed.
‘Perhaps the young person have got her mark on her handkerchief,’ suggested the wife. ‘Have you got a handkerchief, ma’am?’ and she took Sybil’s handkerchief, and looked at it, and examined it at every corner. It had no mark. And this unforeseen circumstance of great suspicion might have destroyed everything, had not the production of the handkerchief by Sybil also brought forth a letter addressed to her from Hatton.

‘It seems to be the party,’ said the wife.
‘Well,’ said Tanner, ‘you know St. Martin’s Lane, I suppose? Well, you go up St. Martin’s Lane to a certain point, and then you will get into Seven Dials; and then you’ll go on. However, it is impossible to direct you; you must find your way. Hunt Street, going out of Silver Street, No. 22. ‘Tis what you call a blind street, with no thoroughfare, and then you go down an alley. Can you recollect that?’

‘Fear not.’

‘No. 22, Hunt Street, going out of Silver Street. Remember the alley. It’s an ugly neighbourhood; but you go of your own accord.’

‘Yes, yes. Good night.’

CHAPTER LIII.

A HUMBLE FRIEND.

RGED by Sybil’s entreaties the cab-driver hurried on. With all the skilled experience of a thoroughbred cockney charioteer, he tried to conquer time and space by his rare knowledge of short cuts and fine acquaintance with unknown thoroughfares. He seemed to avoid every street which was the customary passage of mankind. The houses, the population, the costume, the manners, the language, through which they whirled their way, were of a different state and nation from those with which the dwellers of the dainty quarters of this city are acquainted. Now dark streets of frippery and old stores, now market-places of entrails and carrion, with gutters running gore; sometimes the way was enveloped in the yeasty fumes of a colossal brewery, and sometimes they plunged into a labyrinth of lanes teeming with life, and where the dog-stealer and the pick-pocket, the burglar and the assassin, found a sympathetic multitude of all ages; comrades for every enterprise, and a market for every booty.

The long summer twilight was just expiring; the pale shadows of the moon were just stealing on; the gas was beginning to glare in shops of tripe and ba-
con, and the paper lanterns to adorn the stall and the stand. They crossed a broad street which seemed the metropolis of the district; it flamed with gin palaces; a multitude were sauntering in the mild though tainted air; bargaining, blaspheming, drinking, wrangling; and varying their business and their potations, their fierce strife and their impious irreverence, with flashes of rich humour, gleams of native wit, and racy phrases of idiomatic slang.

Absorbed in her great mission, Sybil was almost insensible to the scenes through which she passed, and her innocence was thus spared many a sight and sound that might have startled her vision or alarmed her ear. They could not now be very distant from the spot; they were crossing this broad way, and then were about to enter another series of small obscure dingy streets, when the cab-driver giving a flank to his steed to stimulate it to a last effort, the horse sprang forward, and the wheel of the cab came off.

Sybil extricated herself from the vehicle unhurt; a group immediately formed round the cab, a knot of young thieves, almost young enough for infants schools, a dustman, a woman nearly naked and very drunk, and two unshorn ruffians with brutality stamped on every feature, with pipes in their mouths, and their hands in their pockets.

'I can take you no further,' said the cabman: 'my fare is three shillings.'

'What am I to do?' said Sybil, taking out her purse.

'The best thing the young lady can do,' said the dustman in a hoarse voice, 'is to stand something to us all.'

'That's your time o' day,' squeaked a young thief.

'I'll drink to your health with very great pleasure, my dear,' hiccuped the woman.

'How much have you got there?' said the young thief making a dash at her purse, but he was not quite tall enough, and failed.

'No violence,' said one of the ruffians, taking his pipe out of his mouth and sending a volume of smoke into Sybil's face, 'we'll take the young lady to Mother Poppy's, and then we'll make a night of it.'

But at this moment appeared a policeman, one of the permanent garrison of the quarter, who seeing one of her Majesty's carriages in trouble thought he must interfere. 'Hilloa,' he said, 'what's all this?' And the cabman, who was a good fellow, though in too much trouble to aid Sybil, explained in the terse and picturesque language of Cockaigne, doing full justice to his late fare, the whole circumstances.

'Oh! that's it,' said the policeman, 'the lady's respectable, is she? Then I'd advise you and Hell Fire Dick to stir your chalks, Splinterlegs. Keep moving's the time of day, madam; you get on. Come;' and taking the woman by her shoulder he gave her a spin that sent her many a good yard. 'And what do you want?' he asked gruffly of the lads.

'We wants a ticket for the Mendicity Society,' said the captain of the infant band, putting his thumb to his nose and running away, followed by his troop.

'And so you want to go to Silver Street?' said her official preserver to Sybil, for she had not thought it wise to confess her ultimate purpose, and indicate under the apprehended circumstances the place of rendezvous to a member of the police.
'Well; that's not very difficult now. Go ahead; take the second turning to your right, and the third to your left, and you're landed.'

Aided by these instructions, Sybil hastened on, avoiding notice as much as was in her power, and assisted in some degree by the advancing gloom of night. She reached Silver Street; a long, narrow, hilly street; and now she was at fault. There were not many persons about, and there were few shops here; yet one was at last at hand, and she entered to enquire her way. The person at the counter was engaged, and many customers awaited him: time was very precious: Sybil had made the enquirey and received only a supercilious stare from the shopman, who was weighing with precision some articles that he was serving. A young man, shabby, but of a superior appearance to the people of this quarter, good-looking, though with a dissolute air, and who seemed waiting for a customer in attendance, addressed Sybil. 'I am going to Hunt Street,' he said, 'shall I show you the way?'

She accepted this offer thankfully. 'It is close at hand, I believe?'

'Here it is,' he said; and he turned down a street.

'What is your house?'

'No. 22: a printing-office,' said Sybil; for the street she had entered was so dark she despaired of finding her way, and ventured to trust so far a guide who was not a policeman.

'The very house I am going to,' said the stranger: 'I am a printer.' And they walked on some way, until they at length stopped before a glass illuminated door, covered with a red curtain. Before it was a group of several men and women brawling, but who did not notice Sybil and her companion.

'Here we are,' said the man; and he pushed the door open, inviting Sybil to enter. She hesitated; it did not agree with the description that had been given her by the coffee-house keeper, but she had seen so much since, and felt so much, and gone through so much, that she had not at the moment that clear command of her memory for which she was otherwise remarkable; but while she faltered, an inner door was violently thrown open, and Sybil moving aside, two girls, still beautiful in spite of gin and paint, stepped into the street.

'This cannot be the house,' exclaimed Sybil, starting back, overwhelmed with shame and terror. 'Holy Virgin, aid me!'

'And that's a blessed word to hear in this heathen land,' exclaimed an Irishman, who was one of the group on the outside.

'If you be of our holy Church,' said Sybil, appealing to the man who had thus spoken and whom she gently drew aside, 'I beseech you by everything we hold sacred, to aid me.'

'And will I not?' said the man; 'and I should like to see the arm that would hurt you;' and he looked round, but the young man had disappeared.

'You are not a countrywoman, I am thinking,' he added.

'No, but a sister in Christ,' said Sybil; 'listen to me, good friend. I hasten to my father, he is in great danger, in Hunt Street; | know not my way, every moment is precious; guide me, I beseech you, honestly and truly guide me!'

'Will I not? Don't you be afraid, my dear. And
her poor father is ill! I wish I had such a daughter! We have not far to go. You should have taken the next turning. We must walk up this again, for 'tis a small street with no thoroughfare. Come on without fear.'

Nor did Sybil fear; for the description of the street which the honest man had incidentally given, tallied with her instructions. Encouraging her with many kind words, and full of rough courtesies, the good Irishman led her to the spot she had so long sought. There was the court she was told to enter. It was well lit, and, descending the steps, she stopped at the first door on her left, and knocked.

CHAPTER LIV.

RICH AND POOR.

In the same night that Sybil was encountering so many dangers, the saloons of Deloraine House blazed with a thousand lights to welcome the world of power and fashion to a festival of almost unprecedented magnificence. Fronting a royal park, its long lines of illumined windows and the bursts of gay and fantastic music that floated from its walls attracted the admiration and curiosity of another party that was assembled in the same fashionable quarter, beneath a canopy not less bright and reclining on a couch scarcely less luxurious, for they were lit by the stars and reposed upon the grass.

'I say, Jim,' said a young genius of fourteen, stretching himself upon the turf, 'I pity them ere jarvies a-sitting on their boxes all the night and waiting for the nobs what is dancing. They 'as no repose.'

'But they 'as porter,' replied his friend, a sedater spirit, with the advantage of an additional year or two of experience; 'they takes their pot of half-and-half by turns, and if their name is called, the link
what they subscribe for to pay sings out, “Here;” and that’s the way their guvners is done.’

‘I think I should like to be a link, Jim,’ said the young one.

‘I wish you may get it,’ was the response: ‘it’s the next best thing to a crossing: it’s what everyone looks to when he enters public life, but he soon finds tain’t to be done without a deal of interest. They keeps it to themselves, and never lets anyone in unless he makes himself very troublesome and gets up a party agin’ em.’

‘I wonder what the nobs has for supper,’ said the young one pensively. ‘Lots of kidneys, I dare say.’

‘Oh! no; sweets is the time of day in these here blowouts; syllabubs like blazes, and snapdragon as makes the flunkies quite pale.’

‘I would thank you, sir, not to tread upon this child,’ said a widow. She had three others with her slumbering around, and this was the youngest wrapped in her only shawl.

‘Madam,’ replied the person whom she addressed, in tolerable English, but with a marked accent, ‘I have bivouacked in many lands, but never with so young a comrade: I beg you a thousand pardons.’

‘Sir, you are very polite. These warm nights are a great blessing, but I am sure I know not what we shall do in the fall of the leaf.’

‘Take no thought of the morrow,’ said the foreigner, who was a Pole, had served as a boy beneath the suns of the Peninsula under Soults, and fought against Diebitsch on the banks of the icy Vistula. ‘It brings many changes.’ And, arranging the cloak which he had taken that day out of pawn around

him, he delivered himself up to sleep with that facility which is not uncommon among soldiers.

Here broke out a brawl; two girls began fighting and blaspheming; a man immediately came up, chastised, and separated them. ‘I am the Lord Mayor of the night,’ he said, ‘and I will have no row here. ’Tis the like of you that makes the beaks threaten to expel us from our lodgings.’ His authority seemed generally recognised, the girls were quiet; but they had disturbed a sleeping man, who roused himself, looked around him and said with a scared look, ‘Where am I? What’s all this?’

‘Oh! it’s nothin’,” said the elder of the two lads we first noticed, ‘only a couple of unfortunate gals who’ve prigged a watch from a cove what was lushy, and fell asleep under the trees, between this and Kinsington.’

‘I wish they had not waked me,’ said the man.

‘I walked as far as from Stokenchurch, and that’s a matter of forty mile, this morning, to see if I could get some work, and went to bed here without any supper. I’m blessed if I won’t dreaming of a roast leg of pork.’

‘It has not been a lucky day for me,’ rejoined the lad; ‘I could not find a single gentleman’s horse to hold, so help me, except one what was at the House of Commons, and he kept me there two mortal hours, and said, when he came out, that he would remember me next time. I ain’t tasted no wittals to-day, except some cat’s-meat and a cold potato, what was given me by a cabman; but I have got a quid here, and if you are very low, I’ll give you half.’

In the meantime Lord Valentine, and the Princess Stephanie of Eurasberg, with some companions worthy
of such a pair, were dancing a new mazurka before
the admiring assembly at Deloraine House. The ball
was in the statue gallery, illumined on this night in
the Russian fashion, which, while it diffused a bril-
liant light throughout the beautiful chamber, was
peculiarly adapted to develop the contour of the
marble forms of grace and loveliness that were ranged
around.

'Where is Arabella?' inquired Lord Marney of his
mother; 'I want to present young Huntingford to
her. He can be of great use to me, but he bores me
so, I cannot talk to him. I want to present him to
Arabella.'

'Arabella is in the blue drawing-room. I saw her
just now with Mr. Jermyn and Charles. Count Sou-
driaffsky is teaching them some Russian tricks.'

'What are Russian tricks to me? she must talk to
young Huntingford; everything depends on his work-
ing with me against the Cut-and-Come-again branch-
line; they have refused me my compensation, and I
am not going to have my estate cut up into ribbons
without compensation.'

'My dear Lady Deloraine,' said Lady de Mowbray,
'how beautiful your gallery looks to-night! Certainly
there is nothing in London that lights up so well.'

'Its greatest ornaments are its guests. I am
charmed to see Lady Joan looking so well.'

'You think so?'

'Indeed.'

'I wish——' and here Lady de Mowbray gave a
smiling sigh. 'What do you think of Mr. Mount-
chesney?'

'He is universally admired.'

'So everyone says, and yet——'
'I do not despair,' said Lady Firebrace. 'The unequivocal adhesion of the Duke of Fitz-Aquitaine is a great thing. It gives us the northern division at a dissolution.'

'That is to say, in five years, my dear Lady Firebrace. The country will be ruined before that.'

'We shall see. Is it a settled thing between Lady Joan and Mr. Mountchesney?'

'Not the slightest foundation. Lady Joan is a most sensible girl, as well as a most charming person, and my dear friend. She is not in a hurry to marry, and quite right. If indeed Frederick were a little more steady—but nothing shall ever induce me to consent to his marrying her unless I thought he was worthy of her.'

'You are such a good mother,' exclaimed Lady Firebrace, 'and such a good friend! I am glad to hear it is not true about Mr. Mountchesney.'

'If you could only help me, my dear Lady Firebrace, to put an end to that affair between Frederick and Lady Wallington. It is so silly, and getting talked about; and in his heart too he really loves Lady Joan; only he is scarcely aware of it himself.'

'We must manage it,' said Lady Firebrace, with a look of encouraging mystery.

'Do, my dear creature; speak to him; he is very much guided by your opinion. Tell him everybody is laughing at him, and any other little thing that occurs to you.'

'I will come directly,' said Lady Marney to her husband, 'only let me see this.'

'Well, I will bring Huntingford here. Mind you speak to him a great deal; take his arm, and go down to supper with him, if you can. He is a very nice, sensible young fellow, and you will like him very much. I am sure; a little shy at first, but he only wants bringing out.'

A dexterous description of one of the most unlicked and unlickable cubs that ever entered society with forty thousand a year; courted by all, and with just that degree of cunning that made him suspicious of every attention.

'This dreadful Lord Huntingford!' said Lady Marney.

'Jermyn and I will interfere,' said Egremont, 'and help you.'

'No, no,' said Lady Marney, shaking her head, 'I must do it.'

At this moment a groom of the chambers advanced, and drew Egremont aside, saying in a low tone, 'Your servant, Mr. Egremont, is here, and wishes to see you instantly.'

'My servant! Instantly! What the deuce can the matter? I hope the Albany is not on fire,' and he quitted the room.

In the outer hall, amid a crowd of footmen, Egremont recognised his valet, who immediately came forward.

'A porter has brought this letter, sir, and I thought it best to come on with it at once.'

The letter, directed to Egremont, bore also on its superscription these words: 'This letter must be instantly carried by the bearer to Mr. Egremont, wherever he may be.'

Egremont, with some change of countenance, drew aside, and opening the letter, read it by a lamp at hand. It must have been very brief; but the face of him to whom it was addressed, became, as he pe-
rused its lines, greatly agitated. When he had finished reading it, he seemed for a moment lost in profound thought; then looking up, he dismissed his servant without instructions, and hastening back to the assembly, he enquired of the groom of the chambers whether Lord John Russell, whom he had observed in the course of the evening, was still present; and he was answered in the affirmative.

About a quarter of an hour after this incident, Lady Firebrace said to Lady St. Julians in a tone of mysterious alarm, ‘Do you see that?’

‘No! what?’

‘Do not look as if you observed them: Lord John and Mr. Egremont, in the furthest window; they have been there these ten minutes, in the most earnest conversation. I am afraid we have lost him.’

‘I have always been expecting it,’ said Lady St. Julians. ‘He breakfasts with that Mr. Trenchard, and does all that sort of things. Men who breakfast out are generally Liberals. Have not you observed that? I wonder why?’

‘It shows a restless revolutionary mind,’ said Lady Firebrace, ‘that can settle to nothing; but must be running after gossip the moment they are awake.’

‘Yes,’ said Lady St. Julians. ‘I think those men who breakfast out, or who give breakfasts, are generally dangerous characters; at least, I would not trust them. The Whigs are very fond of that sort of thing. If Mr. Egremont joins them, I really do not see what shadow of a claim Lady Deloraine can urge to have anything.’

‘She only wants one thing,’ said Lady Firebrace, ‘and we know she cannot have that.’

‘Why?’
CHAPTER LV.

THE CONSPIRATORS.

BEHIND the printing-office in the alley, at the door of which we left Sybil, was a yard that led to some premises that had once been used as a workshop, but were now generally unoccupied. In a rather spacious chamber, over which was a loft, five men, one of whom was Gerard, were busily engaged. There was no furniture in the room except a few chairs and a deal table, on which were a solitary light and a variety of papers.

‘Depend upon it,’ said Gerard, ‘we must stick to the national holiday: we can do nothing effectively, unless the movement is simultaneous. They have not troops to cope with a simultaneous movement, and the holiday is the only machinery to secure unity of action. No work for six weeks, and the rights of labour will be acknowledged!’

‘We shall never be able to make the people unanimous in a cessation of labour,’ said a pale young man, very thin, but with a countenance of remarkable energy. ‘The selfish instincts will come into play and will balk our political object, while a great increase of physical suffering must be inevitable.’

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'The accounts to-day from the north are very encouraging though,' said the young man. 'Stevens is producing a great effect, and this plan of our people going in procession and taking possession of the churches very much affects the imagination of the multitude.'

'Ahi!' said Gerard, 'if we could only have the Church on our side, as in the good old days, we would soon put an end to the demon tyranny of Capital.'

'And now,' said the pale young man, taking up a manuscript paper, 'to our immediate business. Here is the draft of the projected proclamation of the Convention on the Birmingham outbreak. It enjoins peace and order, and counsels the people to arm themselves in order to secure both. You understand: that they may resist if the troops and the police endeavour to produce disturbance.'

'Ay, ay,' said Gerard. 'Let it be stout. We will settle this at once, and so get it out to-morrow. Then for action.'

'But we must circulate this pamphlet of the Polish Count on the manner of encountering cavalry with pikes,' said Maclast.

'Tis printed,' said the stout thickest man; 'we have set it up on a broadside. We have sent ten thousand to the north and five thousand to John Frost. We shall have another delivery to-morrow. It takes very generally.'

The pale young man then read the draft of the proclamation; it was canvassed and criticised, sentence by sentence; altered, approved; finally put to the vote, and unanimously carried. On the morrow it was to be posted in every thoroughfare of the metropolis.

and circulated in every great city of the provinces and every populous district of labour.

'And now,' said Gerard, 'I shall go to-morrow to the north, where I am wanted. But before I go, I propose, as suggested yesterday, that we five, together with Langley, whom I counted on seeing here to-night, now form ourselves into a committee for arming the people. Three of us are permanent in London; Wilkins and myself will aid you in the provinces. Nothing can be decided on this head till we see Langley, who will make a communication from Birmingham that cannot be trusted to writing. The seven o'clock train must have long since arrived. He is now a good hour behind his time.'

'I hear footsteps,' said Maclast.

'He comes,' said Gerard.

The door of the chamber opened and a woman entered. Pale, agitated, exhausted, she advanced to them in the glimmering light.

'What is this?' said several of the council.

'Sybil!' exclaimed the astonished Gerard, and he rose from his seat.

She caught the arm of her father, and leant on him for a moment in silence. Then looking up, with an expression which seemed to indicate that she was rallying her last energies, she said, in a voice low, yet so distinct that it reached the ear of all present, 'There is not an instant to lose; fly!'"
"'Tis very strange," said Maclast.
'I feel queer,' said the thickset man.
'Methinks she looks like a heavenly messenger,' said Wilkins.
'I had no idea that earth had anything so fair,' said the youthful scribe of proclamations.
'Hush, friends,' said Gerard; and then he bent over Sybil, and said in a low soothing voice, 'Tell me, my child, what is it?'
She looked up to her father, a glance as it were of devotion and despair; her lips moved, but they refused their office, and expressed no words. There was a deep silence in the room.
'She is gone,' said her father.
'Water,' said the young man, and he hurried away to obtain some.
'I feel queer,' said his thickset colleague to Maclast.
'I will answer for Langley as for myself,' said Maclast; 'and there is not another human being aware of our purpose.'
'Except Morley.'
'Yes; except Morley. But I should as soon doubt Gerard as Stephen Morley.'
'Certainly.'
'I cannot conceive how she traced me,' said Gerard. 'I have never even breathed to her of our meeting. Would we had some water! Ah! here it comes.'
'I arrest you in the Queen's name,' said the sergeant of police. 'Resistance is vain.' Maclast blew out the light, and then ran up into the loft, followed by the thickset man, who fell down the stairs. Wilkins got up the chimney. The sergeant took a lantern from his pocket, and threw a powerful light on the chamber, while his followers entered, seized and secured all the papers, and commenced their search.
The light fell upon a group that did not move; the father holding the hand of his insensible child, while he extended his other arm as if to preserve her from the profanation of the touch of the invaders.
'You are Walter Gerard, I presume?' said the sergeant; 'six foot two, without shoes.'
'Whoever I may be,' he replied, 'I presume you will produce your warrant, friend, before you touch me.'
'Tis here. We want five of you, named herein, and all others that may happen to be found in your company.'
'I shall obey the warrant,' said Gerard, after he had examined it; 'but this maiden, my daughter, knows nothing of this meeting or its purpose. She has but just arrived, and how she traced me I know not. You will let me recover her, and then permit her to depart.'
'Can't let no one out of my sight found in this room.'
'But she is innocent, even if we were guilty; she could be nothing else but innocent, for she knows nothing of this meeting and its business, both of which I am prepared at the right time and place to vindicate. She entered this room a moment only before yourself, entered and swooned.'
'Can't help that; must take her; she can tell the magistrate anything she likes, and he must decide.'
'Why, you are not afraid of a young girl?'
'I am afraid of nothing, but I must do my duty.'
Come, we have no time for talk. I must take you both.'

'By G—d! you shall not take her;' and letting go her hand, Gerard advanced before her and assumed a position of defence. 'You know, I find, my height; my strength does not shame my stature! Look to yourself. Advance and touch this maiden, and I will fell you and your minions like oxen at their pasture.'

The inspector took a pistol from his pocket, and pointed it at Gerard. 'You see,' he said, 'resistance is quite vain.'

'For slaves and cravens, but not for us, I say, you shall not touch her till I am dead at her feet. Now, do your worst.'

At this moment, two policemen who had been searching the loft, descended with Maclast, who had vainly attempted to effect his escape over a neighbouring roof; the thickset man was already secured; and Wilkins had been pulled down the chimney, and made his appearance in as grimy a state as such a shelter would naturally have occasioned. The young man too, their first prisoner, who had been captured before they had entered the room, was also brought in; there was now abundance of light; the four prisoners were ranged and well guarded at the end of the apartment; Gerard, standing before Sybil, still maintained his position of defence, and the serjeant was, a few yards away, in his front with his pistol in his hand.

'Well, you are a queer chap,' said the serjeant; 'but I must do my duty. I shall give orders to my men to seize you, and if you resist them, I shall shoot you through the head.'

'Stop!' called out one of the prisoners, the young man who drew proclamations, 'she moves. Do with us as you think fit, but you cannot be so harsh as to seize one that is senseless, and a woman!'

'I must do my duty,' said the serjeant, rather perplexed at the situation. 'Well, if you like, take steps to restore her, and when she has come to herself, she shall be moved in a hackney coach alone with her father.'

The means at hand to recover Sybil were rude, but they assisted a reviving nature. She breathed, she sighed, slowly opened her beautiful dark eyes, and looked around. Her father held her death-cold hand; she returned his pressure; her lips moved, and still she murmured 'Fly!'

Gerard looked at the serjeant. 'I am ready,' he said, 'and I will carry her.' The officer nodded assent. Guarded by two policemen, the tall delegate of Mowbray bore his precious burthen out of the chamber through the yard, the printing-offices, up the alley, till a hackney-coach received them in Hunt Street, around which a mob had already collected, though kept at a discreet distance by the police. One officer entered the coach with them; another mounted the box. Two other coaches carried the rest of the prisoners and their guards, and within half an hour from the arrival of Sybil at the scene of the secret meeting, she was on her way to Bow Street to be examined as a prisoner of state.

Sybil rallied quickly during their progress to the police-office. Satisfied to find herself with her father, she would have enquired as to all that had happened, but Gerard at first discouraged her; at length he thought it wisest gradually to convey to her that they were prisoners, but he treated the matter lightly, did
not doubt that she would immediately be discharged, and added that though he might be detained for a day or so, his offence was at all events bailable, and he had friends on whom he could rely. When Sybil clearly comprehended that she was a prisoner, and that her public examination was impending, she became silent, and, leaning back in the coach, covered her face with her hands.

The prisoners arrived at Bow Street; they were hurried into a back office, where they remained some time unnoticed, several policemen remaining in the room. At length, about twenty minutes having elapsed, a man dressed in black and of a severe aspect, entered the room, accompanied by an inspector of police. He first enquired whether these were the prisoners, what were their names and descriptions, which each had to give and which were written down, where they were arrested, why they were arrested; then scrutinising them sharply, he said the magistrate was at the Home Office, and he doubted whether they could be examined until the morrow. Upon this Gerard commenced stating the circumstances under which Sybil had unfortunately been arrested, but the gentleman in black, with a severe aspect, immediately told him to hold his tongue, and, when Gerard persisted, declared that, if he did not immediately cease, he should be separated from the other prisoners, and be ordered into solitary confinement.

Another half-hour of painful suspense. The prisoners were not permitted to hold any conversation. Sybil sat half reclining on a form with her back against the wall, and her face covered, silent and motionless. At the end of half an hour, the inspector of police, who had visited them with the gentleman in black, entered, and announced that the prisoners could not be brought up for examination that evening, and they must make themselves as comfortable as they could for the night. Gerard made a last appeal to the inspector that Sybil might be allowed a separate chamber, and in this he was unexpectedly successful.

The inspector was a kind-hearted man: he lived at the office and his wife was the housekeeper. He had already given her an account, an interesting account, of his female prisoner. The good woman's imagination was touched as well as her heart; she had herself suggested that they ought to soften the rigour of the fair prisoner's lot; and her husband therefore almost anticipated the request of Gerard. He begged Sybil to accompany him to his better half, and at once promised all the comforts and convenience which they could command. As, attended by him, she took her way to the apartments of his family, they passed through a room in which there were writing materials; and Sybil, speaking for the first time, and in a faint voice, enquired of the inspector whether it were permitted to apprise a friend of her situation. She was answered in the affirmative, on condition that the note was previously perused by him.

'I will write it at once,' she said, and taking up a pen inscribed these words:

'I followed your counsel; I entreated him to quit London this night. He pledged himself to do so on the morrow,

'I learnt he was attending a secret meeting; that there was urgent peril. I tracked him through scenes
of terror. Alas! I arrived only in time to be myself seized as a conspirator, and I have been arrested and carried a prisoner to Bow Street, where I write this.

'I ask you not to interfere for him; that would be vain; but if I were free, I might at least secure him justice. But I am not free: I am to be brought up for public examination to-morrow, if I survive this night.

'You are powerful; you know all; you know what I say is truth. None else will credit it. Save me!'

'And now,' said Sybil to the inspector in a tone of mournful desolation and of mild sweetness, 'all depends on your faith to me,' and she extended him the letter, which he read.

'Whoever he may be, and wherever he may be,' said the man with emotion, for the spirit of Sybil had already controlled his nature, 'provided the person to whom this letter is addressed is within possible distance, fear not it shall reach him.'

'I will seal and address it then,' said Sybil, and she addressed the letter to

'THE HON. CHARLES EGREMONT, M.P.,'

adding that superscription the sight of which had so agitated Egremont at Deloraine House.
framed, that had been executed by the wife of the inspector, when she was at school, and opposite to it, on the other side, were portraits of Dick Curtis and Dutch Sam, who had been the tutors of her husband, and now lived as heroes in his memory.

Slowly came over Sybil the consciousness of the dreadful eve that was past. She remained for some time on her knees in silent prayer: then, stepping lightly, she approached the window. It was barred. The room which she inhabited was a high story of the house; it looked down upon one of those half-tawdry, half-squalid streets that one finds in the vicinity of our theatres; some wretched courts, haunts of misery and crime, blended with gin palaces and slang taverns, burnedished and brazen; not a being was stirring. It was just that single hour of the twenty-four when crime ceases, debauchery is exhausted, and even desolation finds a shelter.

It was dawn, but still grey. For the first time since she had been a prisoner, Sybil was alone. A prisoner, and in a few hours to be examined before a public tribunal! Her heart sank. How far her father had committed himself was entirely a mystery to her; but the language of Morley, and all that she had witnessed, impressed her with the conviction that he was deeply implicated. He had indeed spoken in their progress to the police-office with confidence as to the future, but then he had every motive to encourage her in her despair, and to support her under the overwhelming circumstances in which she was so suddenly involved.

What a catastrophe to his aspirations! It tore her heart to think of him! As for herself, she would still hope that ultimately she might obtain justice, but she could scarcely flatter herself that at the first any distinction would be made between her case and that of the other prisoners. She would probably be committed for trial; and though her innocence on that occasion might be proved, she would have been a prisoner in the interval, instead of devoting all her energies in freedom to the support and assistance of her father. She shrank, too, with all the delicacy of a woman, from the impending examination in open court before the magistrate. Supported by her convictions, vindicating a sacred principle, there was no trial, perhaps, to which Sybil could not have been superior, and no test of her energy and faith which she would not have triumphantly encountered; but to be hurried like a criminal to the bar of a police-office, suspected of the lowest arts of sedition, ignorant even of what she was accused, without a conviction to support her, or the ennobling consciousness of having failed at least in a great cause: all these were circumstances which infinitely disheartened and depressed her. She felt sometimes that she should be unable to meet the occasion; had it not been for Gerard, she could almost have wished that death might release her from its base perplexities.

Was there any hope? In the agony of her soul she had confided last night in one; with scarcely a bewildering hope that he could save her. He might not have the power, the opportunity, the wish. He might shrink from mixing himself up with such characters and such transactions; he might not have received her hurried appeal in time to act upon it, even if the desire of her soul were practicable. A thousand difficulties, a thousand obstacles now occurred to her; and she felt her hopelessness.
Yet, notwithstanding her extreme anxiety, and the absence of all surrounding objects to soothe and to console her, the expanding dawn revived and even encouraged Sybil. In spite of the confined situation, she could still partially behold a sky dappled with rosy hues; a sense of freshness touched her; she could not resist endeavouring to open the window and feel the air, notwithstanding all the bars. The wife of the inspector stirred, and half slumbering, murmured, ‘Are you up? It cannot be more than five o’clock. If you open the window we shall catch cold; but I will rise and help you to dress.’

This woman, like her husband, was naturally kind, and at once influenced by Sybil. They both treated her as a superior being; and if, instead of the daughter of a lowly prisoner and herself a prisoner, she had been the noble child of a captive minister of state, they could not have extended to her a more humble and even delicate solicitude.

It had not yet struck seven, and the wife of the inspector suddenly stopping and listening, said, ‘They are stirring early;’ and then, after a moment’s pause, she opened the door, at which she stood for some time, endeavouring to catch the meaning of the mysterious sounds. She looked back at Sybil, and saying, ‘Hush, I shall be back directly,’ she withdrew, shutting the door.

In little more than two hours, as Sybil had been informed, she would be summoned to her examination. It was a sickening thought. Hope vanished as the catastrophe advanced. She almost accused herself for having without authority sought out her father; it had been, as regarded him, a fruitless mission, and, by its results on her, had aggravated his present sorrows and perplexities. Her mind again recurred to him whose counsel had indirectly prompted her rash step, and to whose aid in her infinite hopelessness she had appealed. The woman who had all this time been only standing on the landing-place without the door, now re-entered with a puzzled and curious air, saying, ‘I cannot make it out; some one has arrived.’

‘Some one has arrived.’ Simple yet agitating words. ‘Is it unusual,’ enquired Sybil in a trembling tone, ‘for persons to arrive at this hour?’

‘Yes,’ said the wife of the inspector. ‘They never bring them from the stations until the office opens. I cannot make it out. Hush!’ and at this moment some one tapped at the door.

The woman returned to the door and reopened it, and some words were spoken which did not reach Sybil, whose heart beat violently as a wild thought rushed over her mind. The suspense was so intolerable, her agitation so great, that she was on the point of advancing and asking if—when the door was shut and she was again left alone. She threw herself on the bed. It seemed to her that she had lost all control over her intelligence. All thought and feeling merged in that deep suspense, when the order of our being seems to stop and quiver, as it were, upon its axis.

The woman returned; her countenance was glad. Perceiving the agitation of Sybil, she said, ‘You may dry your eyes, my dear. There is nothing like a friend at court; there’s a warrant from the Secretary of State for your release.’

‘No, no,’ said Sybil springing from her chair. ‘Is he here?’
'What, the Secretary of State?' said the woman.

'No, no; I mean is anyone here?'

'There is a coach waiting for you at the door with the messenger from the office, and you are to depart forthwith. My husband is here; it was he who knocked at the door. The warrant came before the office was opened.'

'My father! I must see him.'

The inspector at this moment tapped again at the door and then entered. He caught the last request of Sybil, and replied to it in the negative. 'You must not stay,' he said; 'you must be off immediately. I will tell all to your father. And take a hint; this affair may be bailable or it may not be. I can't give an opinion, but it depends on the evidence. If you have any good man you know, I mean a householder long established and well to do in the world, I advise you to lose no time in looking him up. That will do your father much more good than saying good-bye and all that sort of thing.'

Bidding farewell to his kind wife, and leaving many weeping messages for her father, Sybil descended the stairs with the inspector. The office was not opened; a couple of policemen only were in the passage, and, as she appeared, one of them went forth to clear the way for Sybil to the coach that was waiting for her. A milkwoman or two, a stray chimney-sweep, a pieman with his smoking apparatus, and several of those nameless nothings that always congregate and make the nucleus of a mob, probably our young friends who had been passing the night in Hyde Park, had already gathered round the office door. They were dispersed and returned again and took up their position at a more respectful distance,

abusing with many racy expletions that ancient body which from a traditionary habit they still called the new police.

A man in a loose white great-coat, his countenance concealed by a shawl which was wound round his neck and by his slouched hat, assisted Sybil into the coach, and pressed her hand at the same time with great tenderness. Then he mounted the box by the driver, and ordered him to make the best of his way to Smith Square.

With a beating heart, Sybil leant back in the coach and clasped her hands. Her brain was too wild to think; the incidents of her life during the last four-and-twenty hours had been so strange and rapid that she seemed almost to resign any quality of intelligent control over her fortunes, and to deliver herself up to the shifting visions of the startling dream. His voice had sounded in her ear as his hand had touched hers. And on those tones her memory lingered, and that pressure had reached her heart. What tender devotion! What earnest fidelity! What brave and romantic faith! Had she breathed on some talisman, and called up some obedient genie to her aid, the spirit could not have been more loyal, nor the completion of her behest more ample and precise.

She passed the towers of the Church of St. John; of the saint who had seemed to guard over her in the exigency of her existence. She was approaching her threshold; the blood left her cheek, her heart palpitated. The coach stopped. Trembling and timid, she leant upon his arm and yet dared not look upon his face. They entered the house; they were in the room where two months before he had knelt to her
In vain, which yesterday had been the scene of so many heart-rending passions.

As in some delicious dream, when the enchanted fancy has traced for a time with coherent bliss the stream of bright adventures and sweet and touching phrase, there comes at last some wild gap in the flow of fascination, and by means which we cannot trace, and by an agency which we cannot pursue, we find ourselves in some enrapturing situation that is, as it were, the ecstasy of our life; so it happened now, that, while in clear and precise order there seemed to flit over the soul of Sybil all that had passed, all that he had done, all that she felt, by some mystical process which memory could not recall, Sybil found herself pressed to the throbbing heart of Egremont, nor shrinking from the embrace, which expressed the tenderness of his devoted love!

CHAPTER LVII.

RETURN OF THE DELEGATE.

OWBRAY was in a state of great excitement. It was Saturday evening; the mills were closed; the news had arrived of the arrest of the delegate.

'Here's a go!' said Dandy Mick to Devilsdust. 'What do you think of this?'

'It's the beginning of the end,' said Devilsdust.

'The deuce!' said the Dandy, who did not clearly comprehend the bent of the observation of his much pondering and philosophic friend, but was touched by its oracular terseness.

'We must see Warner,' said Devilsdust, 'and call a meeting of the people on the moor for to-morrow evening. I will draw up some resolutions. We must speak out; we must terrify the capitalists.'

'I am all for a strike,' said Mick.

'Tisn't ripe,' said Devilsdust.

'But that's what you always say, Dusty,' said Mick.

'I watch events,' said Devilsdust. 'If you want to be a leader of the people you must learn to watch events.'

'But what do you mean by watching events?'
'Do you see Mother Carey's stall?' said Dusty, pointing in the direction of the counter of the good-natured widow.

'I should think I did; and what's more, Julia owes her a tick for herrings.'

'Right,' said Devilsdust, 'and nothing but herrings are to be seen on her board. Two years ago it was meat.'

'I twig,' said Mick.

'Wait till it's vegetables; when the people can't buy even fish. Then we will talk about strikes. That's what I call watching events.'

Julia, Caroline, and Harriet came up to them.

'Mick,' said Julia, 'we want to go to the Temple.'

'I wish you may get it,' said Mick shaking his head. 'When you have learnt to watch events, Julia, you will understand that under present circumstances the Temple is no go.'

'And why so, Dandy?' said Julia.

'Do you see Mother Carey's stall?' said Mick, pointing in that direction. 'When there's a tick at Madam Carey's there's no tin for Chaffing Jack. That's what I call watching events.'

'Oh! as for the tin,' said Caroline, 'in these half-time days that's quite out of fashion. But they do say it's the last night at the Temple, for Chaffing Jack means to shut up, it does not pay any longer; and we want a lark. I'll stand treat; I'll put my earrings up the spout; they must go at last, and I would sooner at any time go to my uncle's for frolic than woe.'

'I am sure I should like very much to go to the Temple, if anyone would pay for me,' said Harriet, 'but I won't pawn nothing.'

'If we only pay and hear them sing,' said Julia in a coaxing tone.

'Very like,' said Mick; 'there's nothing that makes one so thirsty as listening to a song, particularly if it touches the feelings. Don't you remember, Dusty, when we used to encore that German fellow in "Scots wha hae"? We always had it five times. Hang me if I wasn't blind drunk at the end of it.'

'I tell you what, young ladies,' said Devilsdust, looking very solemn, 'you're dancing on a volcano.'

'Oh! my,' said Caroline, 'I am sure I wish we were; though what you mean exactly I don't quite know.'

'I mean that we shall all soon be slaves,' said Devilsdust.

'Not if we get the Ten-Hour Bill,' said Harriet.

'And no cleaning of machinery in meal-time,' said Julia; 'that is a shame.'

'You don't know what you are talking about,' said Devilsdust. 'I tell you, if the capitalists put down Gerard we're done for another ten years, and by that time we shall be all used up.'

'Glor! Dusty, you quite terrify one,' said Caroline.

'It's a true bill though. Instead of going to the Temple we must meet on the moor, and in as great numbers as possible. Go you and get all your sweet-hearts. I must see your father, Harriet; he must preside. We will have the Hymn of Labour sung by a hundred thousand voices, in chorus. It will strike terror into the hearts of the capitalists. This is what we must all be thinking of, if we wish labour to have a chance, not of going to Chaffing Jack's, and listening to silly songs. D'ye understand?'

'Don't we!' said Caroline; 'and for my part, for a
summer eve, I prefer Mowbray moor to all the Temples in the world, particularly if it's a sociable party, and we have some good singing.'

This evening it was settled among the principal champions of the cause of labour, among whom Devilsdust was now included, that on the morrow there should be a monster meeting on the moor, to take into consideration the arrest of the delegate of Mowbray. Such was the complete organisation of this district, that by communicating with the various lodges of the trades unions, fifty thousand persons, or even double that number, could within four-and-twenty hours, on a great occasion and on a favourable day, be brought into the field. The morrow being a day of rest, was favourable, and the seizure of their cherished delegate was a stimulating cause. The excitement was great, the enthusiasm earnest and deep. There was enough distress to make people discontented, without depressing them. And Devilsdust, after attending a council of the union, retired to rest, and dreamed of strong speeches and spicy resolutions, bands and banners, the cheers of assembled thousands, and the eventual triumph of the sacred rights.

The post of the next morning brought great and stirring news to Mowbray. Gerard had undergone his examination at Bow Street. It was a long and laborious one; he was committed for trial, for a seditious conspiracy, but he was held to bail. The bail demanded was heavy; but it was prepared, and instantly proffered. His sureties were Morley and a Mr. Hatton. By this post Morley wrote to his friends, apprising them that both Gerard and himself intended to leave London instantly, and that they might be expected to arrive at Mowbray by the evening train.

The monster meeting of the moor, it was instantly resolved, should be converted into a triumphant procession, or rather be preceded by one. Messengers on horseback were sent to all the neighbouring towns to announce the great event. Every artisan felt as a Moslem summoned by the sacred standard. All went forth with their wives and their children to hail the return of the patriot and the martyr. The trades of Mowbray mustered early in the morning, and in various processions took possession of all the churches. Their great pride was entirely to fill the church of Mr. St. Lys, who, not daunted by their demonstration, and seizing the offered opportunity, suppressed the sermon with which he had supplied himself, and preached to them an extemporary discourse on 'Fear God and honour the King.' In the dissenting chapels, thanksgivings were publicly offered that bail had been accepted for Walter Gerard. After the evening service, which the unions again attended, they formed in the High Street, and lined it with their ranks and banners. Every half-hour a procession arrived from some neighbouring town, with its music and streaming flags. Each was received by Warner, or some other member of the managing committee, who assigned to them their appointed position, which they took up without confusion, nor was the general order for a moment disturbed. Sometimes a large party arrived without music or banners, but singing psalms, and headed by their minister; sometimes the children walked together, the women following, then the men, each with a ribbon of the same colour in his hat; all
hurried, yet spontaneous and certain, indications how mankind, under the influence of high and earnest feelings, recur instantly to ceremony and form; how, when the imagination is excited, it appeals to the imagination, and requires for its expression something beyond the routine of daily life.

It was arranged that, the moment the train arrived and the presence of Gerard was ascertained, the trade in position nearest to the station should commence the Hymn of Labour, which was instantly to be taken up by its neighbour, and so on in succession, so that by an almost electrical agency the whole population should almost simultaneously be assured of his arrival.

At half-past six o'clock the bell announced that the train was in sight; a few minutes afterwards Dandy Mick hurried up to the leader of the nearest trade, spoke a few words, and instantly the signal was given and the hymn commenced. It was taken up as the steeple of a great city in the silence of the night take up the new hour that has just arrived; one by one, the mighty voices rose till they all blended in one vast waving sea of sound. Warner and some others welcomed Gerard and Morley, and ushered them, totally unprepared for such a reception, to an open carriage drawn by four white horses that was awaiting them. Orders were given that there was to be no cheering, no irregular clamber. The hymn alone was heard. As the carriage passed each trade, they followed and formed in procession behind it; thus all had the opportunity of beholding their chosen chief, and he the proud consolation of looking on the multitude who thus enthusiastically recognised the sovereignty of his services.

The interminable population, the mighty melody, the incredible order, the simple yet awful solemnity, this representation of the great cause to which she was devoted, under an aspect that at once satisfied the reason, captivated the imagination, and elevated the heart; her admiration of her father, thus ratified as it were by the sympathy of a nation, added to all the recent passages of her life teeming with such strange and trying interest, overcame Sybil. The tears fell down her cheek as the carriage bore away her father, while she remained under the care of one unknown to the people of Mowbray, but who had accompanied her from London; this was Hatton.

The last light of the sun was shed over the moor when Gerard reached it, and the Druids' altar, and its surrounding crags, were burnished with its beam.
CHAPTER LVIII.

Hatton's Secret.

T IT was the night following the day after the return of Gerard to Mowbray. Morley, who had lent to him and Sybil his cottage in the dale, was at the office of his newspaper, the Mowbray Phalanx, where he now resided. He was alone in his room writing, occasionally rising from his seat, and pacing the chamber, when some one knocked at his door. Receiving a permission to come in, there entered Hatton.

'I fear I am disturbing an article?' said the guest.

'By no means; the day of labour is not at hand. I am very pleased to see you.'

'My quarters are not inviting,' continued Hatton.

'It is remarkable what had accommodation you find in these great trading towns. I should have thought that the mercantile traveller had been a comfortable animal, not to say a luxurious; but I find everything mean and third-rate. The wine execrable. So I thought I would come and bestow my tediousness on you. 'Tis hardly fair.'

'You could not have pleased me better. I was, rather from distraction than from exigency, throwing

some thoughts on paper. But the voice of yesterday still lingers in my ear.'

'What a spectacle!'

'Yes; you see what a multitude presents who have recognised the predominance of moral power,' said Morley. 'The spectacle was august; but the results to which such a public mind must lead are sublime.'

'It must have been deeply gratifying to our friend,' said Hatton.

'It will support him in his career,' said Morley.

'And console him in his prison,' added Hatton.

'You think that it will come to that?' said Morley enquiringly.

'It has that aspect; but appearances change.'

'What should change them?'

'Time and accident, which change everything.'

'Time will bring the York Assizes,' said Morley musingly; 'and as for accident, I confess the future seems to me dreary. What can happen for Gerard?'

'He might win his writ of right,' said Hatton demurely, stretching out his legs, and leaning back in his chair. 'That also may be tried at the York Assizes.'

'His writ of right! I thought that was a feint, a mere affair of tactics to keep the chance of the field.'

'I believe the field may be won,' said Hatton very composedly.

'Won!'

'Ay! the castle and manor of Mowbray, and half the lordships round, to say nothing of this good town. The people are prepared to be his subjects; he must give up equality, and be content with being a popular sovereign.'
‘You jest, my friend.’
‘Then I speak truth in jest; sometimes, you know, the case.’
‘What mean you?’ said Morley, rising and approaching Hatton; ‘for, though I have often observed you like a biting phrase, you never speak idly. Tell me what you mean.’
‘I mean,’ said Hatton, looking Morley earnestly in the face, and speaking with great gravity, ‘that the documents are in existence which prove the title of Walter Gerard to the proprietorship of this great district; that I know where the documents are to be found; and that it requires nothing but a resolution equal to the occasion to secure them.’
‘Should that be wanting?’ said Morley.
‘I should think not,’ said Hatton. ‘It would belie our nature to believe so.’
‘And where are these documents?’
‘In the muniment room of Mowbray Castle.’
‘Hah!’ exclaimed Morley in a prolonged tone.
‘Kept closely by one who knows their value, for they are the title-deeds not of his right but of his confusion.’
‘And how can we obtain them?’
‘By means more honest than those they were acquired by.’
‘They are not obvious.’
‘Two hundred thousand human beings yesterday acknowledged the supremacy of Gerard,’ said Hatton.
‘Suppose they had known that within the walls of Mowbray Castle were contained the proofs that Walter Gerard was the lawful possessor of the lands on which they live; I say, suppose that had been the case. Do you think they would have contented themselves with singing psalms? What would have become of moral power then? They would have taken Mowbray Castle by storm; they would have sacked and gutted it; they would have appointed a chosen band to rifle the round tower; they would have taken care that every document in it, especially an iron chest, painted blue, and blazoned with the shield of Valence, should have been delivered to you, to me, to anyone that Gerard appointed for the office. And what could be the remedy of the Earl de Mowbray? He could scarcely bring an action against the hundred for the destruction of the castle, which we would prove was not his own. And the most he could do would be to transport some poor wretches who had got drunk in his plundered cellars, and then set fire to his golden saloons.’
‘You amaze me,’ said Morley, looking with an astonished expression on the person who had just delivered himself of these suggestive details with the same coolness and arid accuracy that he would have entered into the details of a pedigree.
‘Tis a practical view of the case,’ remarked Mr. Hatton.
Morley paced the chamber disturbed; Hatton remained silent and watched him with a scrutinising eye.
‘Are you certain of your facts?’ at length said Morley, abruptly stopping.
‘Quite so; Lord de Mowbray informed me of the circumstances himself before I left London, and I came down here in consequence.’
‘You know him?’
‘No one better.’
‘And these documents, some of them, I suppose,’
said Morley with a cynical look, 'were once in your own possession then?'

'Possibly. Would they were now! But it is a great thing to know where they may be found.'

'Then they once were the property of Gerard?'

'Hardly that. They were gained by my own pains, and often paid for with my own purse. Claimed by no one, I parted with them to a person to whom they were valuable. It is not merely to serve Gerard that I want them now, though I would willingly serve him. I have need of some of these papers with respect to an ancient title, a claim to which by a person in whom I am interested they would substantiate. Now listen, good friend Morley: moral force is a fine thing, especially in speculation, and so is a community of goods, especially when a man has no property, but when you have lived as long as I have, and have tasted of the world's delights, you'll comprehend the rapture of acquisition, and learn that it is generally secured by very coarse means. Come, I have a mind that you should prosper. The public spirit is inflamed here; you are a leader of the people. Let us have another meeting on the moor, a preconcerted outbreak; you can put your fingers in a trice on the men who will do our work. Mowbray Castle is in their possession; we secure our object. You shall have ten thousand pounds on the nail, and I will take you back to London with me besides, and teach you what is fortune.'

'I understand you,' said Morley. 'You have a clear brain and a bold spirit; you have no scruples, which indeed are generally the creatures of perplexity rather than of principle. You ought to succeed.'

'We ought to succeed, you mean,' said Hatton, 'for I have long perceived that you only wanted opportunity to mount.'

'Yesterday was a great burst of feeling occasioned by a very peculiar cause,' said Morley musingly; 'but it must not mislead us. The discontent here is not deep. The people are still employed, though not fully. Wages have fallen, but they must drop more. The people are not ripe for the movement you intimate. There are thousands who would rush to the rescue of the castle. Besides there is a priest here, one St. Lys, who exercises a most pernicious influence over the people. It will require immense efforts and great distress to root him out. No; it would fail.'

'Then we must wait awhile,' said Hatton, 'or devise some other means.'

'Tis a very impracticable case,' said Morley.

'There is a combination for every case,' said Hatton. 'Ponder and it comes. This seemed simple; but you think, you really think it would not answer?'

'At this moment, not; that is my conviction.'

'Well, suppose instead of an insurrection we have a burglary. Can you assist me to the right hands here?'

'Not I indeed!'

'What is the use, then, of this influence over the people of which you and Gerard are always talking? After yesterday, I thought you could do anything here.'

'We have not hitherto had the advantage of your worldly knowledge; in future we shall be wiser.'

'Well then,' said Hatton, 'we must now think of Gerard's defence. He shall have the best counsel. I shall retain Kelly specially. I shall return to town to-
morrow morning. You will keep me alive to the state of feeling here, and if things get more mature, drop me a line and I will come down.'

'This conversation had better not be mentioned to Gerard.'

'That is obvious; it would only disturb him. I did not preface it by a stipulation of confidence, because that is idle. Of course you will keep the secret; it is your interest; it is a great possession. I know very well you will be most jealous of sharing it. I know it is as safe with you as with myself.'

And with these words Hatton wished him a hearty farewell and withdrew.

'He is right,' thought Morley; 'he knows human nature well. The secret is safe. I will not breathe it to Gerard. I will treasure it up. It is knowledge; it is power: great knowledge, great power. And what shall I do with it? Time will teach me.'

CHAPTER LIX.

A Discussion in Downing Street.

NOTHER week,' exclaimed a gentleman in Downing Street on the 5th of August, 1842, 'we shall be prorogued. You can surely keep the country quiet for another week.'

'I cannot answer for the public peace for another four-and-twenty hours,' replied his companion.

'This business at Manchester must be stopped at once; you have a good force there?'

'Manchester is nothing; these are movements merely to distract. The serious work is not now to be apprehended in the cotton towns. The state of Staffordshire and Warwickshire is infinitely more menacing. Cheshire and Yorkshire alarm me. The accounts from Scotland are as bad as can be. And though I think the sufferings of '39 will keep Birmingham and the Welsh collieries in check, we cannot venture to move any of our force from those districts.'

'You must summon a council for four o'clock. I have some deputations to receive, which I will throw over; but to Windsor I must go. Nothing has yet
occurred to render any notice of the state of the country necessary in the speech from the throne.'

'Not yet,' said his companion; 'but what will to-morrow bring forth?'

'After all it is only a turn-out. I cannot recast her Majesty's speech and bring in rebellion and closed mills, instead of loyalty and a good harvest.'

'It would be a bore. Well, we will see to-morrow;' and the colleague left the room.

'And now for these deputations,' said the gentleman in Downing Street; 'of all things in the world I dislike a deputation. I do not care how much I labour in the closet or the House; that's real work; the machine is advanced. But receiving a deputation is like sham marching: an immense dust and no progress. To listen to their views! As if I did not know what their views were before they stated them! And to put on a countenance of respectful candour while they are developing their exploded or their impracticable systems! Were it not that, at a practised crisis, I permit them to see conviction slowly stealing over my conscience, I believe the fellows would never stop. I cannot really receive these deputations. I must leave them to Hoaxem;' and the gentleman in Downing Street rang his bell.

'Well, Mr. Hoaxem,' resumed the gentleman in Downing Street, as that faithful functionary entered, 'there are some deputations. I understand, to-day. You must receive them, as I am going to Windsor. What are they?'

'There are only two, sir, of moment. The rest I could easily manage.'

'And these two?'

'In the first place, there is our friend Colonel Bosky, the members for the county of Caflshire, and a deputation of tenant farmers.'

'Pah!'

'These must be attended to. The members have made a strong representation to me, that they really cannot any longer vote with government unless the Treasury assists them in satisfying their constituents.'

'And what do they want?'

'Statement of grievances; high taxes and low prices; mild expostulations and gentle hints that they have been thrown over by their friends; Polish corn, Holstein cattle, and British income-tax.'

'Well, you know what to say,' said the gentleman in Downing Street. 'Tell them generally that they are quite mistaken; prove to them particularly that my only object has been to render protection more protective by making it practical, and divesting it of the surplusage of odium; that no foreign corn can come in at fifty-five shillings; that there are not enough cattle in all Holstein to supply the parish of Pancras daily with beefsteaks; and that as for the income-tax, they will be amply compensated for it by their diminished cost of living through the agency of that very tariff of which they are so superficially complaining.'

'Their diminished cost of living!' said Mr. Hoaxem, a little confused. 'Would not that assurance, I humble suggest, clash a little with my previous demonstration that we had arranged that no reduction of prices should take place?'

'Not at all; your previous demonstration is of course true, but at the same time you must impress upon them the necessity of general views to form an opinion of particular instances. As for example, a
gentleman of five thousand pounds per annum pays to the income-tax,—which by-the-bye always call property-tax,—one hundred and fifty pounds a year. Well, I have materially reduced the duties on eight hundred articles. The consumption of each of those articles by an establishment of five thousand pounds per annum cannot be less than one pound per article. The reduction of price cannot be less than a moiety; therefore a saving of four hundred per annum, which, placed against the deduction of the property-tax, leaves a clear increase of income of two hundred and fifty pounds per annum; by which you see that a property-tax, in fact, increases income.

‘I see,’ said Mr. Hoaxem, with an admiring glance. ‘And what am I to say to the deputation of the manufacturers of Mowbray, complaining of the great depression of trade, and the total want of remunerating profits?’

‘You must say exactly the reverse,’ said the gentleman in Downing Street. ‘Show them how much I have done to promote the revival of trade. First of all, in making provisions cheaper; cutting off at one blow half the protection on corn, as, for example, at this moment under the old law the duty on foreign wheat would have been twenty-seven shillings a quarter; under the new law it is thirteen. To be sure, no wheat could come in at either price, but that does not alter the principle. Then, as to live cattle, show how I have entirely opened the trade with the Continent in live cattle. Enlarge upon this; the subject is speculative and admits of expansive estimates. If there be any dissenters on the deputation, who, having freed the negroes, have no subject left for their foreign sympathies, hint at the tortures of the bull-
CHAPTER LX.

STUMMOUS MEASURES.

WO days after this conversation in Downing Street, a special messenger arrived at Marney Abbey from the Lord Lieutenant of the county, the Duke of Fitz-Aquitaine. Immediately after reading the despatch of which he was the bearer, there was a great bustle in the house; Lady Marney was sent for to her husband’s library, and there enjoined immediately to write various letters, which were to prevent certain expected visitors from arriving; Captain Grouse was in and out of the same library every five minutes, receiving orders and counter-orders, and finally mounting his horse was flying about the neighbourhood with messages and commands. All this stir signified that the Marney regiment of yeomanry were to be called out directly.

Lord Marney, who had succeeded in obtaining a place in the Household, and was consequently devoted to the institutions of the country, was full of determination to uphold them; but at the same time, with characteristic prudence, was equally resolved that the property principally protected should be his own, and that the order of his own district should chiefly engage his solicitude.

‘I do not know what the Duke means by marching into the disturbed districts,’ said Lord Marney to Captain Grouse. ‘These are disturbed districts. There have been three fires in one week, and I want to know what disturbance can be worse than that? In my opinion this is a mere anti-corn-law riot to frighten the government; and suppose they do stop the mills, what then? I wish they were all stopped, and then one might live like a gentleman again.’

Egremont, between whom and his brother a sort of bad-tempered good understanding had of late years to a certain degree flourished, in spite of Lord Marney remaining childless, which made him hate Egremont with double-distilled virulence, and chiefly by the affectionate manoeuvres of their mother, but whose annual visits to Marney had generally been limited to the yeomanry week, arrived from London the same day as the letter of the Lord Lieutenant, as he had learnt that his brother’s regiment, in which he commanded a troop, as well as the other yeomanry corps in the north of England, must immediately take the field.

Five years had elapsed since the commencement of our history, and they had brought apparently much change to the character of the brother of Lord Marney. He had become, especially during the last two or three years, silent and reserved; he rarely entered society; even the company of those who were once his intimates had ceased to attract him; he was really a melancholy man. The change in his demeanour was observed by all; his mother and his sister-in-law were the only persons who endeavoured to penetrate
its cause, and sighed over the failure of their sagacity. Quit the world and the world forgets you; and Egremont would have soon been a name no longer mentioned in those brilliant saloons which he once adorned, had not occasionally a sensation, produced by an effective speech in the House of Commons, recalled his name to his old associates, who then remembered the pleasant hours passed in his society, and wondered why he never went anywhere now.

"I suppose he finds society a bore," said Lord Eugene de Vere; "I am sure I do: but then, what is a fellow to do? I am not in Parliament, like Egremont. I believe, after all, that's the thing; for I have tried everything else, and everything else is a bore."

"I think one should marry, like Alfred Mount-chesney," said Lord Milford.

"But what is the use of marrying if you do not marry a rich woman? and the heiresses of the present age will not marry. What can be more unnatural? It alone ought to produce a revolution. Why, Alfred is the only fellow who has made a coup; and then he has not got it down."

"She behaved in a most unprincipled manner to me, that Fitz-Warene," said Lord Milford, "always took my bouquets and once made me write some verses."

"By Jove!" said Lord Eugene, "I should like to see them. What a bore it must have been to write verses!"

"I only copied them out of Mina Blake's album: but I sent them in my own handwriting."

Baffled sympathy was the cause of Egremont's gloom. It is the secret spring of most melancholy. He loved and loved in vain. The conviction that his passion, though hopeless, was not looked upon with disfavour, only made him the more wretched, for the disappointment is more acute in proportion as the chance is better. He had never seen Sybil since the morning he quitted her in Smith Square, immediately before her departure for the north. The trial of Gerard had taken place at the assizes of that year: he had been found guilty, and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment in York Castle; the interference of Egremont, both in the House of Commons and with the government, saved him from the felon confinement with which he was at first threatened, and from which assuredly state prisoners should be exempt. During this effort some correspondence had taken place between Egremont and Sybil, which he would willingly have encouraged and maintained; but it ceased nevertheless with its subject. Sybil, through the influential interference of Ursula Trafford, lived at the convent at York during the imprisonment of her father, and visited him daily.

The anxiety to take the veil which had once characterised Sybil had certainly waned. Perhaps her experience of life had impressed her with the importance of fulfilling vital duties. Her father, though he had never opposed her wish, had never encouraged it; and he had now increased and interesting claims on her devotion. He had endured great trials, and had fallen on adverse fortunes. Sybil would 'look at him, and though his noble frame was still erect and his countenance still displayed that mixture of frankness and decision which had distinguished it of yore, she could not conceal from herself that there were ravages which time could not have produced. A year and a half of imprisonment had shaken to its
centre a frame born for action, and shrinking at all
times from the resources of sedentary life. The dis-
appointment of high hopes had jarred and tangled
even the sweetness of his noble disposition. He
needed solicitude and solace: and Sybil resolved that
if vigilance and sympathy could soothe an existence
that would otherwise be embittered, these guardian
angels should at least hover over the life of her father.

When the term of his imprisonment had ceased,
Gerard had returned with his daughter to Mowbray.
Had he deigned to accept the offers of his friends,
he need not have been anxious as to his future. A
public subscription for his service had been collected:
Morley, who was well to do in the world, for the
circulation of the Mowbray Phalanx daily increased
with the increasing sufferings of the people, offered
his friend to share his house and purse: Hatton was
munificent; there was no limit either to his offers or
his proffered services. But all were declined; Gerard
would live by labour. The post he had occupied
at Mr. Trafford’s was not vacant, even if that gentle-
man had thought fit again to receive him; but his
reputation as a first-rate artisan soon obtained him
good employment, though on this occasion in the
town of Mowbray, which for the sake of his daughter
he regretted. He had no pleasant home now for
Sybil, but he had the prospect of one, and until he
obtained possession of it, Sybil sought a refuge,
which had been offered to her from the first, with
her kindest and dearest friend; so that, at this period
of our history, she was again an inmate of the con-
vent at Mowbray, whither her father and Morley had
attended her the eve of the day she had first visited
the ruins of Marney Abbey.

CHAPTER LXI.

EXCITING NEWS.

HAVE seen a many things in my
time, Mrs. Trotman,’ said Chaffing
Jack, as he took the pipe from
his mouth in the silent bar-room
of the Cat and Fiddle; ‘but I
never see any like this. I think I
ought to know Mowbray if anyone does, for, man
and boy, I have breathed this air for a matter of half
a century. I sucked it in when it tasted of prim-
roses, and this tavern was a cottage covered with
honeysuckle in the middle of green fields, where the
lads came and drank milk from the cow with their
lasses; and I have inhaled what they call the noxious
atmosphere, when a hundred chimneys have been
smoking like one; and always found myself pretty
well. Nothing like business to give one an appetite.
But when shall I feel peckish again, Mrs. Trotman?
‘The longest lane has a turning, they say, Mr.
Trotman.’

‘Never knew anything like this before,’ replied her
husband, ‘and I have seen bad times: but I always
used to say, “Mark my words, friends, Mowbray
will rally.” My words carried weight, Mrs. Trotman,
in this quarter, as they naturally should, coming from
a man of my experience, especially when I gave tick. Every man I chatted up was of the same opinion as the landlord of the Cat and Fiddle, and always thought that Mowbray would rally. That's the killing feature of these times, Mrs. Trotman, there's no rallying in the place.'

'I begin to think it's the machines,' said Mrs. Trotman.

'Nonsense,' said Mr. Trotman; 'it's the corn laws. The town of Mowbray ought to clothe the world with our resources. Why, Shuffle and Screw can turn out forty mile of calico per day; but where's the returns? That's the point. As the American gentlemen said, who left his bill unpaid, 'Take my breadstuffs and I'll give you a cheque at sight on the Pennsylvanian Bank.'"

'It's very true,' said Mrs. Trotman. 'Who's there?'

'Nothing in my way,' said a woman with a basket of black cherries, with a pair of tin scales thrown upon their top.

'Ah! Mrs. Carey,' said Chaffing Jack, 'is that you?'

'My mortal self, Mr. Trotman, tho' I be sure I feel more like a ghost than flesh and blood.'

'You may well say that, Mrs. Carey; you and I have known Mowbray as long, I should think, as any in this quarter ——'

'And never see such times as these, Mr. Trotman, nor the like of such. But I always thought it would come to this, everything turned topsy-turvy, as it were, the children getting all the wages, and decent folk turned adrift to pick up a living as they could. It's something of a judgment, in my mind, Mr. Trotman.'
and thanking the capitalists for keeping the mills going, and only starving them by inches? said Devilsdust, in a tone of scorn.

'That's your time of day,' said Mick.

'Very glad to see you, gentlemen,' said Mr. Trotman, 'pray be seated. There's a little backy left yet in Mowbray, and a glass of twist at your service.'

'Nothing excisable for me,' said Devilsdust.

'Well, it ain't exactly the right ticket, Mrs. Trotman, I believe,' said Mick, bowing gallantly to the lady; 'but 'pon my soul I am so thirsty that I'll take Chaffing Jack at his word;' and so saying, Mick and Devilsdust ensconced themselves in the bar, while goodhearted Mrs. Carey sipped her glass of gin-and-water, which she frequently protested was a pool of Bethesda.

'Well, Jack,' said Devilsdust, 'I suppose you have heard the news?'

'If it be anything that has happened at Mowbray, especially in this quarter, I should think I had. Times must be very bad indeed that some one does not drop in to tell me anything that has happened, and to ask my advice.'

'It's nothing to do with Mowbray.'

'Thank you kindly, Mrs. Trotman,' said Mick, 'and here's your very good health.'

'And what will the capitalists have to spend?' said Devilsdust.

'Worse and worse,' said Mr. Trotman, 'you will never get institutions like the Temple re-opened on this system."

'Don't you be afraid, Jack,' said Mick, tossing off his tumbler; 'if we only get our rights, won't we have a blow-out!'

'We must have a struggle,' said Devilsdust, 'and teach the capitalists on whom they depend, so that in future they are not to have the lion's share, and then all will be right.'

'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work,' said Mick; 'that's your time of day.'

'It began at Staleybridge,' said Devilsdust, 'and they have stopped them all; and now they have papers, I'm all in the dark myself, for the Literary and Scientific is shut up, and no subscribers left, except the honorary ones, and not a journal to be had except the Moral World, and that's gratis.'

'As bad as the Temple,' said Chaffing Jack, 'it's all up with the institutions of the country. And what, then, is the news?'

'Labour is triumphant in Lancashire,' said Devilsdust, with bitter solemnity.

'The deuce it is,' said Chaffing Jack. 'What, have they raised wages?'

'No,' said Devilsdust, 'but they have stopped the mills.'

'That won't mend matters much,' said Jack with a puff.

'Won't it?'

'The working-classes will have less to spend than ever.'

'And what will the capitalists have to spend?' said Devilsdust.

'Worse and worse,' said Mr. Trotman, 'you will never get institutions like the Temple re-opened on this system.'

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'It began at Staleybridge,' said Devilsdust, 'and they have stopped them all; and now they have
marched into Manchester ten thousand strong. They pelted the police.—'

'And cheered the red-coats like fun,' said Mick.
'The soldiers will fraternise,' said Devildust.
'Do what?' said Mrs. Trotman.
'Stick their bayonets into the capitalists, who have hired them to cut the throats of the working-classes,' said Devildust.
'The Queen is with us,' said Mick. 'It's well known she sets her face against gals working in mills like blazes.'
'Well, this is news,' said Mrs. Carey. 'I always thought some good would come of having a woman on the throne; and repeating her thanks and pinning on her shawl, the widow retired, eager to circulate the intelligence.
'And now that we are alone,' said Devildust, 'the question is, what are we to do here; and we came to consult you, Jack, as you know Mowbray better than any living man. This thing will spread. It won't stop short. I have had a bird, too, singing something in my ear these two days past. If they do not stop it in Lancashire, and I defy them, there will be a general rising.'
'I have seen a many things in my time,' said Mr. Trotman; 'some risings and some strikes, and as stiff turn-outs as may be. But to my fancy there is nothing like a strike in prosperous times; there's more money spent under those circumstances than you can well suppose, young gentlemen. It's as good as Mowbray Staty any day.'
'But now to the point,' said Devildust. 'The people are regularly sold; they want a leader.'
'Why, there's Gerard,' said Chaffing Jack; 'never been a better man in my time. And Warner, the greatest man the handlooms ever turned out.'
'Ay, ay,' said Devildust; 'but they have each of them had a year and a half, and that cools blood.'
'Besides,' said Mick, 'they are too old; and Stephen Morley has got round them, preaching moral force, and all that sort of gammon.'
'I never heard that moral force won the battle of Waterloo,' said Devildust. 'I wish the capitalists would try moral force a little, and see whether it would keep the thing going. If the capitalists will give up their red-coats, I would be a moral force man to-morrow.'
'And the new police,' said Mick. 'A pretty go, when a fellow in a blue coat fetches you the Devil's own con on your head, and you get moral force for a plaster.'
'Why, that's all very well,' said Chaffing Jack; 'but I am against violence; at least, much. I don't object to a moderate riot, provided it is not in my quarter of the town.'
'Well, that's not the ticket now,' said Mick. 'We don't want no violence; all we want is to stop all the mills and hands in the kingdom, and have a regular national holiday for six weeks at least.'
'I have seen a many things in my time,' said Chaffing Jack solemnly, 'but I have always observed, that if the people had worked generally for half-time for a week, they would stand anything.'
'That's a true bill,' said Mick.
'Their spirit is broken,' said Chaffing Jack, 'or else they never would have let the Temple have been shut up.'
'And think of our Institute, without a single sub-

15 B. D. —
scriber!' said Mick. 'The gals is the only thing what has any spirit left. Julia told me just now she would go to the cannon's mouth for the Five Points any summer day.'

'You think the spirit can't be raised, Chaffing Jack?' said Devilsdust seriously. 'You ought to be a judge.'

'If I don't know Mowbray, who does? Trust my word, the house won't draw.'

'Then it is U-P,' said Mick.

'Hush!' said Devilsdust. 'But suppose it spreads?'

'It won't spread,' said Chaffing Jack. 'I've seen a deal of these things. I fancy from what you say it's a cotton squall. It will pass, sir. Let me see the miners out, and then I will talk to you.'

'Stranger things than that have happened,' said Devilsdust.

'Then things get serious,' said Chaffing Jack. 'Them miners is very stubborn, and when they gets excited ayn't it a bear at play, that's all?'

'Well,' said Devilsdust, 'what you say is well worth attention; but all the same I feel we are on the eve of a regular crisis.'

'No, by jingo!' said Mick, and, tossing his cap into the air, he snapped his fingers with delight at the anticipated amusement.

CHAPTER LXII.

THE BEAUTIFUL SINGER.

DON'T think I can stand this much longer,' said Mr. Mountchesney, the son-in-law of Lord de Mowbray, to his wife, as he stood before the empty fireplace with his back to the mantelpiece and his hands thrust into the pockets of his coat. 'This living in the country in August bores me to extinction. I think we will go to Baden, Joan.'

'But papa is so anxious, dearest Alfred, that we should remain here at present and see the neighbours a little.'

'I might be induced to remain here to please your father, but as for your neighbours I have seen quite enough of them. They are not a sort of people that I ever met before, or that I wish to meet again. I do not know what to say to them, nor can I annex an idea to what they say to me. Heigho! certainly the country in August is a thing of which no one who has not tried it has the most remote conception.'

'But you always used to say you doted on the country, Alfred,' said Lady Joan in a tone of tender reproach.
“So I do; I never was happier than when I was at Melton, and even enjoyed the country in August when I was on the moors.”

“But I cannot well go to Melton,” said Lady Joan.

“I don’t see why you can’t. Mrs. Sheldrake goes with her husband to Melton, and so does Lady Di with Barham; and a very pleasant life it is.”

“Well, at any rate we cannot go to Melton now,” said Lady Joan, mortified; “and it is impossible for me to go to the moors.”

“No, but I could go,” said Mr. Mountchesney, “and leave you here. I might have gone with Eugene de Vere and Milford and Fitz-Heron. They wanted me very much. What a capital party it would have been, and what capital sport we should have had! And I need not have been away for more than a month, or perhaps six weeks, and I could have written to you every day, and all that sort of thing.”

Lady Joan sighed and affected to recur to the opened volume which, during this conversation, she had held in her hand.

“I wonder where Maud is,” said Mr. Mountchesney; “I shall want her to ride with me to-day. She is a capital horsewoman, and always amuses me. As you cannot ride now, Joan, I wish you would let Maud have Sunbeam.”

“As you please.”

“Well, I am going to the stables and will tell them. Who is this?” Mr. Mountchesney exclaimed, and then walked to the window that, looking over the park, showed at a distance the advance of a showy equipage.

Lady Joan looked up.

‘Come here, Joan, and tell me who this is;’ and Lady Joan was at his side in a moment.

‘It is the livery of the Bardolfs,’ said Lady Joan.

‘I always call them Firebrace; I cannot get out of it,’ said Mr. Mountchesney. ‘Well, I am glad it is they; I thought it might be an irruption of barbarians. Lady Bardolf will bring us some news.’

Lord and Lady Bardolf were not alone; they were accompanied by a gentleman who had been staying on a visit at Firebrace, and who, being acquainted with Lord de Mowbray, had paid his respects to the castle on his way to London. This gentleman was the individual who had elevated them to the peerage, Mr. Hatton. A considerable intimacy had sprung up between him and his successful clients. Firebrace was an old place rebuilt in the times of the Tudors, but with something of its more ancient portions remaining, and with a storehouse of muniments that had escaped the civil wars. Hatton revelled in them, and in pursuing his researches had already made discoveries which might perhaps place the coronet of the earldom of Lovel on the brow of the former champion of the baronetage, who now, however, never mentioned the order. Lord de Mowbray was well content to see Mr. Hatton, a gentleman in whom he did not repose the less confidence because his advice given him three years ago, respecting the writ of right and the claim upon his estate, had proved so discreet and correct. Acting on that advice, Lord de Mowbray had instructed his lawyers to appear to the action without entering into any unnecessary explanation of the merits of his case. He counted on the accuracy of Mr. Hatton’s judgment, that the claim would not be pursued; and he was right: after some
fencing and preliminary manoeuvring, the claim had not been pursued. Lord de Mowbray therefore, always gracious, was disposed to accord a very distinguished reception to his confidential counsellor. He pressed very much his guests to remain with him some days, and, though that was not practicable, Mr. Hatton promised that he would not leave the neighbourhood without paying another visit to the castle.

'And you continue quiet here?' said Mr. Hatton to Lord de Mowbray.

'And I am told we shall keep so,' said Lord de Mowbray. 'The mills are mostly at work, and the men take the reduced wages in a good spirit. The fact is, our agitators in this neighbourhood suffered pretty smartly in '39, and the Chartists have lost their influence.'

'I am sorry for poor Lady St. Julians,' said Lady Bardolf to Lady de Mowbray. 'It must be such a disappointment, and she has had so many; but I understand there is nobody to blame but herself. If she had only left the Prince alone; but she would not be quiet.'

'And where are the Deloraines?'

'They are at Munich; with which they are delighted. And Lady Deloraine writes me that Mr. Egremont has promised to join them there. If he do, they mean to winter at Rome.'

'Somebody said he was going to be married,' said Lady de Mowbray.

'His mother wishes him to marry,' said Lady Bardolf; 'but I have heard nothing.'

Mr. Mountchesney came in and greeted the Bardolls with some warmth. 'How delightful in the country in August to meet somebody that you have seen in London in June!' he exclaimed. 'Now, dear Lady Bardolf, do tell me something, for you can conceive nothing so triste as we are here. We never get a letter. Joan only corresponds with philosophers, and Maud with clergymen, and none of my friends ever write to me.'

'Perhaps you never write to them?'

'Well, I never have been a letter-writer, because really I never wanted to write or be written to. I always knew what was going on because I was on the spot. I was doing the things that people were writing letters about; but now, not being in the world any longer, doing nothing, living in the country, and the country in August, I should like to receive letters every day, but I do not know whom to fix upon as a correspondent. Eugene de Vere will not write, Milford cannot; and as for Fitz-Heron, he is so very selfish, he always wants his letters answered.'

'That is unreasonable,' said Lady Bardolf.

'Besides, what can they tell me at this moment? They have gone to the moors and are enjoying themselves. They asked me to go with them, but I could not go, because you see I could not leave Joan; though why I could not leave her, I really cannot understand, because Egerton has got some moors this year, and he leaves Lady Augusta with her father.'

Lady Maud entered the room in her bonnet, returning from an airing. She was all animation, charmed to see everybody; she had been to Mowbray to hear some singing at the Roman Catholic chapel in that town; a service had been performed and a collection made for the suffering workpeople of the place. She had been apprised of it for some days, was told that she would hear the most beautiful voice
that she had ever listened to, but it had far exceeded her expectations. A female voice it seemed; no tones could be conceived more tender and yet more thrilling; in short, seraphic.

Mr. Mountchesney blamed her for not taking him. He liked music, singing, especially female singing; when there was so little to amuse him, he was surprised that Lady Maud had not been careful that he should have been present. His sister-in-law reminded him that she had particularly requested him to drive her over to Mowbray, and he had declined the honour as a bore.

'Yes,' said Mr. Mountchesney, 'but I thought Joan was going with you, and that you would be shopping.'

'It was a good thing our House was adjourned before these disturbances in Lancashire,' said Lord Bardolf to Lord de Mowbray.

'The best thing we can all do is to be on our estates, I believe,' said Lord de Mowbray.

'My neighbour Marney is in a state of great excitement,' said Lord Bardolf; 'all his yeomanry out.'

'But he is quiet at Marney?'

In a way; but these fires puzzle us. Marney will not believe that the condition of the labourer has anything to do with them; and he certainly is a very acute man. But still I don't know what to say to it. The Poor-Law is very unpopular in my parish. Marney will have it that the incendiaries are all strangers, hired by the Anti-Corn-Law League.'

'Aha! here is Lady Joan,' exclaimed Lady Bardolf, as the wife of Mr. Mountchesney entered the room. 'My dearest Lady Joan!'

'Why, Joan,' said Mr. Mountchesney, 'Maud has been to Mowbray, and heard the most delicious singing. Why did we not go?'

'I did mention it to you, Alfred.'

'I remember you said something about going to Mowbray, and that you wanted to go to several places. But there is nothing I hate so much as shopping. It bores me more than anything. And you are so peculiarly long when you are shopping. But singing, and beautiful singing in a Catholic chapel by a woman, perhaps a beautiful woman, that is quite a different thing; and I should have been amused, which nobody seems ever to think of here. I do not know how you find it, Lady Bardolf, but the country to me in August is a something—— and not finishing his sentence, Mr. Mountchesney gave a look of inexpressible despair.

'And you did not see this singer?' said Mr. Hatton, sidling up to Lady Maud, and speaking in a subdued tone.

'I did not, but they tell me she is most beautiful; something extraordinary; I tried to see her; but it was impossible.'

'Is she a professional singer?'

'I should imagine not; a daughter of one of the Mowbray people, I believe.'

'Let us have her over to the castle, Lady de Mowbray,' said Mr. Mountchesney.

'If you like,' replied Lady de Mowbray, with a languid smile.

'Well, at last I have got something to do,' said Mr. Mountchesney. 'I will ride over to Mowbray, find out the beautiful singer, and bring her to the castle.'
have realised the matchless promise of her charms, and, while they have added something to her stature, have robbed it of nothing of its grace, and have rather steadied the blaze of her beauty than diminished its radiance.

‘Yes, I mourn over them,’ said Sybil, ‘the deep convictions that made me look forward to the cloister as my home. Is it that the world has assailed my soul? Yet I have not tasted of worldly joys: all that I have known of it has been suffering and tears. They will return, these visions of my sacred youth: dear friend, tell me that they will return!’

‘I too have had visions in my youth, Sybil, and not of the cloister, yet am I here.’

‘And what should I infer?’ said Sybil, inquiringly.

‘That my visions were of the world, and brought me to the cloister, and that yours were of the cloister, and have brought you to the world.’

‘My heart is sad,’ said Sybil; ‘and the sad should seek the shade.’

‘It is troubled, my child, rather than sorrowful.’

Sybil shook her head.

‘Yes, my child,’ said Ursula, ‘the world has taught you that there are affections which the cloister can neither satisfy nor supply. Ah! Sybil, I too have loved.’

The blood rose to the cheek of Sybil, and then returned as quickly to the heart; her trembling hand pressed that of Ursula as she sighed, and murmured, ‘No, no, no.’

‘Yes, it is the spirit that hovers over your life, Sybil; and in vain you would forget what haunts your heart. One not less gifted than he, as good, as gentle, as gracious, once too breathed in my ear the
acents of joy. He was, like myself, the child of an old house, and Nature had invested him with every quality that can dazzle and can charm. But his heart was as pure, and his soul as lofty, as his intellect and frame were bright,—and Ursula paused.

Sybil pressed the hand of Ursula to her lips, and whispered, ‘Speak on.’

‘The dreams of by-gone days,’ continued Ursula, in a voice of emotion; ‘the wild sorrows that I can recall, and yet feel that I was wisely chastened: he was stricken in his virtuous pride, the day before he was to have led me to that altar where alone I found the consolation that never fails. And thus closed some years of human love, my Sybil,’ said Ursula, bending forward and embracing her. ‘The world for a season crossed their fair current, and a power greater than the world forbade their banns; but they are hallowed; memory is my sympathy; it is soft and free, and when he came here to inquire after you, his presence and agitated heart recalled the past.’

‘It is too wild a thought,’ said Sybil, ‘ruin to him, ruin to all. No; we are severed by a fate as uncontrollable as severed you, dear friend; ours is a living death.’

‘The morrow is unforeseen,’ said Ursula. ‘Happy, indeed, would it be for me, my Sybil, that your innocence should be enshrined in these holy walls, and that the pupil of my best years, and the friend of my serene life, should be my successor in this house. But I feel a deep persuasion that the hour has not arrived for you to take the step that never can be recalled.’

So saying, Ursula embraced and dismissed Sybil; for the conversation, the last passages of which we have given, had occurred when Sybil, according to her wont on Saturday afternoon, had come to request the permission of the Lady Superior to visit her father.

It was in a tolerably spacious and not discomfortable chamber, the first floor over the printing-office of the Mowbray Phalanx, that Gerard had found a temporary home. He had not long returned from his factory, and, pacing the chamber with a disturbed step, he awaited the expected arrival of his daughter.

She came; the faithful step, the well-known knock; the father and the daughter embraced; he pressed to his heart the child who had clung to him through so many trials, and who had softened so many sorrows, who had been the visiting angel in his cell and whose devotion had led captivity captive.

Their meetings, though regular, were now comparatively rare. The sacred day united them, and sometimes for a short period the previous afternoon, but otherwise the cheerful hearth and welcome home were no longer for Gerard. And would the future bring them to him? And what was to be the future of his child? His mind vacillated between the convent, of which she was seldom spoke, and which with him was never a cherished idea, and those dreams of restored and splendid fortunes, which his sanguine temperament still whispered him, in spite of hope so long deferred and expectations so often baulked, might yet be realised. And sometimes between these opposing visions there rose a third, and more practical, though less picturesque, result: the idea of her marriage. And with whom? It was impossible that one so rarely gifted, and educated with so much daintiness, could ever make a wife of the people. Hatton offered wealth, but Sybil had never
seemed to comprehend his hopes, and Gerard felt that their ill-assorted ages was a great barrier. There was of all the men of his own order but one, who from his years, his great qualities, his sympathy, and the nature of his toil and means, seemed not unfitted to be the husband of his daughter; and often had Gerard mused over the possibility of these intimate ties with Morley. Sybil had been, as it were, bred up under his eye; an affection had always subsisted between them, and he knew well that in former days Sybil had appreciated and admired the great talents and acquirements of their friend. At one period he almost suspected that Morley was attached to her. And yet, from causes which he had never attempted to penetrate, probably from a combination of unintentional circumstances, Sybil and Morley had for the last two or three years been thrown little together, and their intimacy had entirely died away. To Gerard it seemed that Morley had ever proved his faithful friend: Morley had originally dissuaded him with energy against that course which had led to his discomfiture and punishment; when arrested, his former colleague was his bail, was his companion and adviser during his trial; had endeavoured to alleviate his imprisonment; and on his release had offered to share his means with Gerard, and when these were refused, he at least supplied Gerard with a roof. And yet, with all this, that abandonment of heart and brain, that deep sympathy with every domestic thought which characterised old days, were somehow or other wanting. There was on the part of Morley still devotion, but there was reserve.

"You are troubled, my father," said Sybil, as Gerard continued to pace the chamber.

"Only a little restless. I am thinking what a mistake it was to have moved in '39,"

Sybil sighed.

"Ah! you were right, Sybil," continued Gerard; "affairs were not ripe. We should have waited three years."

"Three years!" exclaimed Sybil, starting; "are affairs ripen now?"

"The whole of Lancashire is in revolt," said Gerard.

"There is not a sufficient force to keep them in check. If the miners and colliers rise, and I have cause to believe that it is more than probable they will move before many days are past, the game is up."

"You terrify me," said Sybil.

"On the contrary," said Gerard, smiling, "the news is good enough; I'll not say too good to be true, for I had if from one of the old delegates who is over here to see what can be done in our north countree."

"Yes," said Sybil, inquiringly, and leading on her father.

"He came to the works; we had some talk. There are to be no leaders this time, at least no visible ones. The people will do it themselves. All the children of labour are to rise on the same day, and to till no more, till they have their rights. No violence, no bloodshed; but till halts, and then our oppressors will learn the great economical truth as well as moral lesson, that when toll plays, wealth ceases."

"When toll ceases the people suffer," said Sybil.

"That is the only truth that we have learnt, and it is a bitter one."

"Can we be free without suffering?" said Gerard.

"Is the greatest of human blessings to be obtained as
a matter of course; to be plucked like fruit, or seized like a running stream? No, no; we must suffer, but we are wiser than of yore; we will not conspire. Conspiracies are for aristocrats, not for nations.'

'Alas, alas! I see nothing but woe,' said Sybil. 'I cannot believe, after all that has passed, the people here will move; I cannot believe, after all that has passed, all that you, that we, have endured, that you, my father, will counsel them to move.'

'I counsel nothing,' said Gerard. 'It must be a great national instinct that does it; but if all England, if Wales, if Scotland, won't work, is Mowbray to have a monopoly?'

'Ah! that's a bitter jest,' said Sybil. 'England, Wales, Scotland, will be forced to work as they were forced before. How can they subsist without labour? And if they could, there is an organised power that will subdue them.'

'The Benefit Societies, the Sick and Burial Clubs, have money in the banks that would maintain the whole working-classes, with aid in kind that will come, for six weeks, and that will do the business. And as for force, why there are not five soldiers to each town in the kingdom. It's a glittering bugbear, this fear of the military; simultaneous strikes would baffle all the armies in Europe.'

'I'll go back and pray that all this is wild talk,' said Sybil, earnestly. 'After all that has passed, were it only for your child, you should not speak, much less think this, my father. What havoc to our hearts and homes has been all this madness! It has separated us; it has destroyed our happy home; it has done more than this——' and here she wept.

'Nay, nay, my child,' said Gerard coming up and soothing her; 'one cannot weigh one's words before those we love. I can't hear of the people moving with coldness; that's out of nature; but I promise you I'll not stimulate the lads here. I am told they are little inclined to stir. You found me in a moment of what I must call, I suppose, elation; but I hear they beat the red-coats and police at Staley Bridge, and that pricked my blood a bit. I have been ridden down before this when I was a lad, Sybil, by yeomanry hoofs. You must allow a little for my feelings.'

She extended her lips to the proffered embrace of her father. He blessed her and pressed her to his heart, and soothed her apprehensions with many words of softness. There was a knock at the door.

'Come in,' said Gerard. And there came in Mr. Hatton.

They had not met since Gerard's release from York Castle. There Hatton had visited him, had exercised his influence to remedy his grievances, and had more than once offered him the means of maintenance on receiving his freedom. There were moments of despondency when Gerard had almost wished that the esteem and regard with which Sybil looked upon Hatton might have matured into sentiments of a deeper nature; but on this subject the father had never breathed a word. Nor had Hatton, except to Gerard, ever intimated his wishes, for we could scarcely call them hopes. He was a silent suitor of Sybil, watching opportunities and ready to avail himself of circumstances which he worshipped. His sanguine disposition, fed by a suggestive and inventive mind, and stimulated by success and a prosperous
life sustained him always to the last. Hatton always believed that everything desirable must happen if a man had energy and watched circumstances. He had confidence too in the influence of his really insinuating manner, his fine taste, his tender tone, his ready sympathy, all which masked his daring courage and absolute recklessness of means.

There were general greetings of the greatest warmth. The eyes of Hatton were suffused with tears as he congratulated Gerard on his restored health, and pressed Sybil's hand with the affection of an old friend between both his own.

'I was down in this part of the world on business,' said Hatton, 'and thought I would come over here for a day to find you all out.' And then, after some general conversation, he said, 'And where do you think I accidentally paid a visit a day or two back? At Mowbray Castle. I see you are surprised. I saw all your friends. I did not ask his lordship how the writ of right went on. I dare say he thinks 'tis all hushed. But he is mistaken. I have learnt something which may help us over the stile yet.'

'Well-a-day!' said Gerard, 'I once thought if I could get back the lands the people would at last have a friend; but that's past. I have been a dreamer of dreams often when I was overlooking them at work. And so we all have, I suppose. I would willingly give up my claim if I could be sure the Lancashire lads will not come to harm this bout.'

'Tis a more serious business,' said Hatton, 'than anything of the kind that has yet happened. The government are much alarmed. They talk of sending the Guards down into the north, and bringing over troops from Ireland.'
been for Sybil's daily visit, I think, though I may never be allowed to live in a castle, I should certainly have died in one.'

'And how is Morley?'

'Right well; the same as you left him; I saw not a straw's change when I came out. His paper spreads. He still preaches moral force, and believes that we shall all end in living in communities. But as the only community of which I have personal experience is a gaol, I am not much more inclined to his theory than heretofore.'

CHAPTER LXIV.

March of the Hell-Cats.

HE reader may not have altogether forgotten Mr. Nixon and his co-mates, the miners and colliers of that district not very remote from Mowbray, which Morley had visited at the commencement of this history, in order to make fruitless researches after a gentleman—whom he subsequently so unexpectedly stumbled upon. Affairs were as little flourishing in that region as at Mowbray itself, and the distress fell upon a population less accustomed to suffering, and whose spirit was not daunted by the recent discomfiture and punishment of their leaders.

'It can't last,' said Master Nixon, as he took his pipe from his mouth at the Rising Sun.

He was responded to by a general groan. 'It comes to this,' he continued, 'Natur' has her laws, and this is one: a fair day's wage for a fair day's work.'

'I wish you may get it,' said Juggins, 'with a harder stint every week, and a shilling a day knocked off.'

'And what's to come to-morrow?' said Waghorn.
'The butty has given notice to quit in Parker's field this day se'nnight. Simmons won't drop wages, but works half time.'

'The boys will be at play afore long,' said a collier.

'Hush!' said Master Nixon, with a reprobation glance.

'Play is a very serious word. The boys are not to go to play as they used to do without by your leave or with your leave. We must appoint a committee to consider the question, and we must communicate with the other trades.'

'You're the man, Master Nixon, to choose for churchwarden,' replied the reproved miner, with a glance of admiration.

'What is Diggs doing?' said Master Nixon, in a solemn tone.

'A-dropping wages, and a-raising tommy like fun,' said Master Waghorn.

'There is a great stir in Hell-house yard,' said a miner who entered the tap-room at this moment, much excited. 'They say that all the workshops will be shut to-morrow; not an order for a month past. They have got a top-sawyer from London there, who addresses them every evening, and says that we have a right to four shillings a day wages, eight hours' work, and two pots of ale.'

'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work,' said Master Nixon; 'I would not stickle about hours, but the money and the drink are very just.'

'If Hell-house yard is astir,' said Waghorn, 'there will be a good deal to be seen yet.'

'It's grave,' said Master Nixon. 'What think you of a deputation there? It might come to good.'

'I should like to hear the top-sawyer from London,' said Juggins. 'We had a Chartist here the other day, but he did not understand our case at all.'

'I heard him,' said Master Nixon; 'but what's his Five Points to us? Why, he ain't got tommy among them.'

'Nor long stints,' said Waghorn.

'Nor butties,' said Juggins.

'He's a pretty fellow to come and talk to us,' said a collier. 'He had never been down a pit in all his life.'

The evening passed away in the tap-room of the Rising Sun in reflections on the present critical state of affairs, and in consultations as to the most expedient course for the future. The rate of wages, which for several years in this district had undergone a continuous depression, had just received another downward impulse, and was threatened with still further reduction, for the price of iron became every day lower in the market, and the article itself so little in demand that few but the great capitalists who could afford to accumulate their produce were able to maintain their furnaces in action. The little men who still continued their speculations could only do so partially, by diminishing the days of service and increasing their stints or toll, and by decreasing the rate of wages as well as paying them entirely in goods, of which they had a great stock, and of which they thus relieved themselves at a high profit.

Add to all this suffering and discontent among the workmen the apprehension of still greater evils, and the tyranny of the butties or middlemen, and it will with little difficulty be felt that the public mind of this district was well prepared for the excitement of the political agitator, especially if he were discreet
enough rather to descant on their physical sufferings and personal injuries than to attempt the propagation of abstract political principles, with which it was impossible for them to sympathise with the impulse and facility of the inhabitants of manufacturing towns, members of literary and scientific institutes, habitual readers of political journals, and accustomed to habits of discussion of all public questions. It generally happens, however, that where a mere physical impulse urges the people to insurrection, though it is often an influence of slow growth and movement, the effects are more violent, and sometimes more obstinate, than when they move under the blended authority of moral and physical necessity, and mix up together the rights and the wants of man.

However this may be, on the morning after the conversation at the Rising Sun which we have just noticed, the population having as usual gone to their work, having penetrated the pit, and descended the shaft, the furnaces all blazing, the chimneys all smoking, suddenly there rose a rumour even in the bowels of the earth, that the hour and the man had at length arrived: the hour that was to bring them relief, and the man that was to bear them redress.

‘My missus told it me at the pit-head, when she brought me my breakfast,’ said a pikeman to his comrade, and he struck a vigorous blow at the broad seam on which he was working.

‘It is not ten mile,’ said his companion. ‘They’ll be here by noon.’

‘There is a good deal to do in their way,’ said the first pikeman. ‘All men at work after notice to be ducked, they say, and every engine to be stopped forthwith.’

‘Will the police meet them before they reach this?’

‘There is none: my missus says that not a man John of them is to be seen. The Hell-cats, as they call themselves, halt at every town and offer fifty pounds for a live policeman.’

‘I’ll tell you what,’ said the second pikeman, ‘I’ll stop my stint and go up the shaft. My heart’s all of a flutter: I can’t work no more. We’ll have a fair day’s wage for a fair day’s work yet.’

‘Come along, I’m your man; if the doggy stop us, we’ll knock him down. The people must have their rights; we’re driven to this; but if one shilling a day is dropped, why not two?’

‘Very true; the people must have their rights, and eight hours’ work is quite enough.’

In the light of day the two miners soon learnt in more detail the news which the wife of one of them earlier in the morning had given as a rumour. There seemed now no doubt that the people of Wodgate, commonly called the Hell-cats, headed by their Bishop, had invaded in great force the surrounding district, stopped all the engines, turned all the potters out of the manufactories, met with no resistance from the authorities, and issued a decree that labour was to cease until the Charter was the law of the land.

This last edict was not the least surprising part of the whole affair; for no one could have imagined that the Bishop or any of his subjects had ever heard of the Charter, much less that they could by any circumstances comprehend its nature, or by any means be induced to believe that its operation would further their interests or redress their grievances. But all this had been brought about, as most of the great
events of history, by the unexpected and unobserved influence of individual character.

A Chartist leader had been residing for some time at Wodgate, ever since the distress had become severe, and had obtained great influence and popularity by assuring a suffering and half-starving population that they were entitled to four shillings a day and two pots of ale, and only eight hours' work. He was a man of abilities and of popular eloquence, and his representations produced an effect; their reception invested him with influence, and as he addressed a population who required excitement, being slightly employed and with few resources for their vacant hours, the Chartist, who was careful never to speak of the Charter, became an important personage at Wodgate, and was much patronised by Bishop Hatton and his lady, whose good offices he was sedulous to conciliate. At the right moment, everything being ripe and well prepared, the Bishop being very drunk and harassed by the complaints of his subjects, the Chartist revealed to him the mysteries of the Charter, and persuaded him not only that the Five Points would cure everything, but that he was the only man who could carry the Five Points. The Bishop had nothing to do; he was making a lock merely for amusement: he required action; he embraced the Charter, without having a definite idea what it meant, but he embraced it fervently, and he determined to march into the country at the head of the population of Wodgate, and establish the faith.

Since the conversion of Constantine, a more important adoption had never occurred. The whole of the north of England and a great part of the midland counties were in a state of disaffection; the entire country was suffering; hope had deserted the labouring classes; they had no confidence in any future of the existing system. Their organisation, independent of the political system of the Chartists, was complete. Every trade had its union, and every union its lodge in every town and its central committee in every district. All that was required was the first move, and the Chartist emissary had long fixed upon Wodgate as the spring of the explosion, when the news of the strike in Lancashire determined him to precipitate the event.

The march of Bishop Hatton at the head of the Hell-cats into the mining districts was perhaps the most striking popular movement since the Pilgrimage of Grace. Mounted on a white mule, wall-eyed and of hideous form, the Bishop brandished a huge hammer with which he had announced that he would destroy the enemies of the people: all butties, doggies, dealers in truck and tommy, middle masters, and main masters. Some thousand Hell-cats followed him, brandishing bludgeons, or armed with bars of iron, pickhandles, and hammers. On each side of the Bishop, on a donkey, was one of his little sons, as demure and earnest as if he were handling his file. A flowing standard of silk, inscribed with the Charter, and which had been presented to him by the delegate, was borne before him like the oriflamme. Never was such a gaunt, grim crew. As they advanced, their numbers continually increased, for they arrested all labour in their progress. Every engine was stopped, the plug was driven out of every boiler, every fire was extinguished, every man was turned out. The decree went forth that labour was to cease until the Charter was the law of the
land: the mine and the mill, the foundry and the loomshop, were, until that consummation, to be idle: nor was the mighty pause to be confined to these great enterprises. Every trade of every kind and description was to be stopped: tailor and cobbler, brushmaker and sweep, tinker and carter, mason and builder, all, all; for all an enormous Sabbath, that was to compensate for any incidental suffering which it induced by the increased means and the elevated condition that it ultimately would insure: that paradise of artisans, that Utopia of toil, embalmed in those ringing words, sounds cheerful to the Saxon race: 'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work.'

CHAPTER LXV.

URING the strike in Lancashire the people had never plundered, except a few provision shops chiefly rifled by boys, and their acts of violence had been confined to those with whom they were engaged in what, on the whole, might be described as a fair contest. They solicited sustenance often in great numbers, but even then their language was mild and respectful, and they were easily satisfied and always grateful. A body of two thousand persons, for example (the writer speaks of circumstances within his own experience), quitted one morning a manufacturing town in Lancashire, when the strike had continued for some time and began to be severely felt, and made a visit to a neighbouring squire of high degree. They entered his park in order, men, women, and children, and then, seating themselves in the immediate vicinity of the mansion, they sent a deputation to announce that they were starving and to entreat relief. In the instance in question, the lord of the domain was absent in the fulfilment of those public duties which the disturbed state of the country
devolved on him. His wife, who had a spirit equal to the occasion, notwithstanding the presence of her young children, who might well have aggravated feminine fears, received the deputation herself; told them that of course she was unprepared to feed so many, but that, if they promised to maintain order and conduct themselves with decorum, she would take measures to satisfy their need. They gave their pledge and remained tranquilly encamped while preparations were making to satisfy them. Carts were sent to a neighbouring town for provisions; the keepers killed what they could, and in a few hours the multitude were fed without the slightest disturbance, or the least breach of their self-organised discipline. When all was over, the deputation waited again on the lady to express to her their gratitude; and, the gardens of this house being of celebrity in the neighbourhood, they requested permission that the people might be allowed to walk through them, plogging themselves that no flower should be plucked and no fruit touched. The permission was granted: the multitude, in order, each file under a chief and each commander of the files obedient to a superior officer, then made a progress through the beautiful gardens of their beautiful hostess. They even passed through the forcing-houses and wineries. Not a border was trampled on, not a grape plucked; and, when they quitted the domain, they gave three cheers for the fair castellan.

The Hell-cats and their followers were of a different temper from these gentle Lancashire insurgents. They destroyed and ravaged; sacked and gutted houses; plundered cellars; proscribed bakers as enemies of the people; sequestrated the universal stores of all truck and tommy-shops; burst open doors, broke windows; destroyed the gas-works, that the towns at night might be in darkness; took union workhouses by storm, burned rate-books in the market-place, and ordered public distribution of loaves of bread and fitches of bacon to a mob; cheering and laughing amid flames and rapine. In short, they robbed and rioted; the police could make no head against them; there was no military force; the whole district was in their possession; and, hearing that a battalion of the Coldstreams were coming down by a train, the Bishop ordered all railroads to be destroyed, and, if the Hell-cats had not been too drunk to do his bidding and he too tipsy to repeat it, it is probable that a great destruction of these public ways might have taken place.

Does the reader remember Diggs's tommy-shop? And Master Joseph? Well, a terrible scene took place there. The Wodgate girl with a back like a grasshopper, of the Baptist school religion, who had married Tummas, once a pupil of the Bishop, and still his fervent follower, although he had cut open his pupil's head, was the daughter of a man who had worked many years in Diggs's field, had suffered much under his intolerable yoke, and at the present moment was deep in his awful ledger. She had heard from her first year of the oppression of Diggs, and had impressed it on her husband, who was intolerant of any tyranny except at Wodgate. Tummas and his wife, and a few chosen friends, therefore, went out one morning to settle the tommy-book of her father with Mr. Diggs. A whisper of their intention had got about among those interested in the subject. It was a fine summer morning, some three
hours from noon; the shop was shut, indeed it had not been opened since the riots, and all the lower windows of the dwelling were closed, barred, and bolted.

A crowd of women had collected. There was Mistress Page and Mistress Prance, old Dame Toddles and Mrs. Mullins, Liza Gray and the comely dame who was so fond of society that she liked even a riot. 'Master Joseph, they say, has gone to the north,' said the comely dame. 'I wonder if old Diggs is at home?' said Mrs. Mullins. 'He won't show, I'll be sworn,' said old Dame Toddles. 'Here are the Hell-cats,' said the comely dame. 'Well, I do declare, they march like reglars; two, four, six, twelve; a good score at the least.'

The Hell-cats briskly marched up to the elm-trees that shaded the canal before the house, and then formed in line opposite to it. They were armed with bludgeons, crowbars, and hammers. Tummas was at the head, and by his side his Wodgate wife. Stepping forth alone, amid the cheering of the crowd of women, the pupil of the Bishop advanced to the door of Diggs's house, gave a loud knock, and a louder ring. He waited patiently for several minutes: there was no reply from the interior, and then Tummas knocked and rang again. 'It's very awful,' said the comely dame. 'It's what I always dreamt would come to pass,' said Liza Gray, 'ever since Master Joseph cut my poor baby over the eye with his three-foot rule.'

'I think there can be nobody within,' said Mrs. Prance.

'Old Diggs would never leave the Tommy without a guard,' said Mrs. Page. 'Now, lads,' said Tummas, looking round him and making a sign; and immediately some half dozen advanced with their crowbars and were about to strike at the door, when a window in the upper story of the house opened, and the muzzle of a blunderbuss was presented at the assailants.

The women all screamed and ran away. 'Twas Master Joseph,' said the comely dame, halting to regain her breath. 'Twas Master Joseph,' sighed Mrs. Page. 'Twas Master Joseph,' moaned Mrs. Prance. 'Sure enough,' said Mrs. Mullins, 'I saw his ugly face.'

'More frightful than the great gun,' said old Dame Toddles. 'I hope the children will get out of the way,' said Liza Gray, 'for he is sure to fire on them.'

In the meantime, while Master Joseph himself was content with his position and said not a word, a benignant countenance exhibited itself at the window, and requested in a mild voice to know what his good friends wanted there.

'We have come to settle Sam Barlow's tommy-book,' said their leader. 'Our shop is not open to-day, my good friends: the account can stand over; far be it from me to press the poor.'

'Master Diggs,' said a Hell-cat, 'canst thou tell us the price of bacon to-day?'

'Well, good bacon,' said the elder Diggs, willing to humour them, 'may be eightpence a pound.'

'Thou art wrong, Master Diggs,' said the Hell-cat,
'tis fourpence and long credit. Let us see half a dozen good flitches at fourpence, Master Diggs; and be quick.'

There was evidently some controversy in the interior as to the course at this moment to be pursued. Master Joseph remonstrated against the policy of concession, called conciliation, which his father would fain follow, and was for instant coercion; but age and experience carried the day, and in a few minutes some flitches were thrown out of the window to the Hell-cats, who received the booty with a cheer.

The women returned.

'Tis the tenpence a pound flitch,' said the comely dame, examining the prize with a sparkling glance.

'I have paid as much for very green stuff,' said Mrs. Mullins.

'And now, Master Diggs,' said Tummas, 'what is the price of the best tea a pound? We be good customers, and mean to treat our wives and sweethearts here. I think we must order half a chest.'

This time there was a greater delay in complying with the gentle hint; but, the Hell-cats getting obstreperous, the tea was at length furnished and divided among the women. This gracious office devolved on the wife of Tummas, who soon found herself assisted by a spontaneous committee, of which the comely dame was the most prominent and active member. Nothing could be more considerate, good-natured, and officious than the mode and spirit with which she divided the stores. The flitches were cut up and apportioned in like manner. The scene was as gay and bustling as a fair.

'It is as good as grand tommy-day,' said the

comely dame, with a self-complacent smile, as she strutted about, smiling and dispensing patronage.

The orders for bacon and tea were followed by a popular demand for cheese. The female committee received all the plunder and were active in its distribution. At length a rumour got about that Master Joseph was entering the names of all present in the tommy-books, so that eventually the score might be satisfied. The mob had now much increased. There was a panic among the women, and indignation among the men: a Hell-cat advanced and announced that, unless the tommy-books were all given up to be burnt, they would pull down the house. There was no reply: some of the Hell-cats advanced; the women cheered; a crowbar fell upon the door; Master Joseph fired, wounded a woman and killed a child.

There rose one of those universal shrieks of wild passion which announce that men have discarded all the trammels of civilisation, and found in their licentious rage new and unforeseen sources of power and vengeance. Where it came from, how it was obtained, who prompted the thought, who first accomplished it, were alike impossible to trace; but, as it were in a moment, a number of trusses of straw were piled up before the house and set on fire, the gates of the timber-yard were forced, and a quantity of scantlings and battens soon fed the flame. Everything indeed that could stimulate the fire was employed; and every one was occupied in the service. They ran to the water side and plundered the barges, and threw the huge blocks of coal upon the enormous bonfire. Men, women, and children were alike at work with the eagerness and energy of fiends. The
roof of the house caught fire: the dwelling burned rapidly; you could see the flames like the tongues of wild beasts, licking the bare and vanishing walls; a single being was observed amid the fiery havoc, shrieking and desperate; he clung convulsively to a huge account-book. It was Master Joseph. His father had made his escape from the back of the premises and had counselled his son instantly to follow him, but Master Joseph wished to rescue the ledger as well as their lives, and the delay ruined him.

'He has got the tommy-book,' cried Liza Gray. The glare of the clear flame fell for a moment upon his countenance of agony; the mob gave an infernal cheer, then, some part of the building falling in, there rose a vast cloud of smoke and rubbish, and he was seen no more.
to say we can't understand politics, with a Queen on the throne.'

'She has got her ministers to tell her what to do,' said Mrs. Carey, taking a pinch of snuff. 'Poor innocent young creature, it often makes my heart ache to think how she is beset.'

'Over the left,' said Julia. 'If the ministers try to come into her bed-chamber, she knows how to turn them to the right about.'

'And as for that,' said Harriet, 'why are we not to interfere with politics as much as the swell ladies in London?'

'Don't you remember, too, at the last election here,' said Caroline, 'how the fine ladies from the castle came and canvassed for Colonel Rosemary?'

'Ah!' said Julia, 'I must say I wish the Colonel had beat that horrid Muddlefist. If we can't have our own man, I am all for the nobs against the middle class.'

'We'll have our own man soon, I expect,' said Harriet. 'If the people don't work, how are the aristocracy to pay the police?'

'Only think!' said Widow Carey, shaking her head. 'Why, at your time of life, my dears, we never even heard of these things, much less talked of them.'

'I should think you didn't, widow, and because why?' said Julia; 'because there was no march of mind then. But we know the time of day now as well as any of them.'

'Lord, my dear,' said Mrs. Carey; 'what's the use of all that? What we want is, good wages and plenty to do; and as for the rest, I don't grudge the Queen her throne, nor the noblemen and gentlemen their good things. Live and let live, say I.'

'Why you are a regular oligarch, widow,' said Harriet.

'Well, Miss Harriet,' replied Mrs. Carey a little nettled, 'tisn't calling your neighbours names that settles any question. I'm quite sure that Julia will agree to that, and Caroline too. And perhaps I might call you something if I chose, Miss Harriet; I've heard things said before this that I should blush to say, and blush to hear too. But I won't demean myself, no I won't. Hollyhock, indeed! Why hollyhock?'

At this moment entered the Dandy and Devilsdust.

'Well, young ladies,' said the Dandy, 'A-swelling the receipt of customs by the consumption of Congo! That won't do, Julia; it won't indeed. Ask Dusty. If you want to beat the enemy, you must knock up the revenue. How d'ye do, widow?'

'The same to you, Dandy Mick. We is deploring the evils of the times here in a neighbourly way.'

'Oh, the times will soon mend,' said the Dandy, gaily.

'Well, so I think,' said the widow; 'for when things are at the worst, they always say——'

'But you always say they cannot mend, Mick,' said Julia interrupting her.

'Why, in a sense, Julia, in a certain sense you are right; but there are two senses to everything, my girl,' and Mick began singing, and then executed a hornpipe, to the gratification of Julia and her guests. 'Tis genteel,' said Mick, receiving their approbation. 'You remember it at the circus?'

'I wonder when we shall have the circus again?' said Caroline.

'Not with the present rate of wages,' said Devilsdust.
‘It’s very hard,’ said Caroline, ‘that the middle class are always dropping our wages. One really has no amusements now. How do I miss the Temple!’

‘We’ll have the Temple open again before long,’ said the Dandy.

‘That will be sweet!’ exclaimed Caroline. ‘I often dream of that foreign nobleman who used to sing, “Oh, no, we never!”’

‘Well, I cannot make out what puts you in such spirits, Mick,’ said Julia. ‘You told me only this morning that the thing was up, and that we should soon be slaves for life; working sixteen hours a day for no wages, and living on oatmeal porridge and potatoes, served out by the millocrats like a regular Bastile.’

‘But, as Madam Carey says, when things are at the worst——’

‘Oh! I did say it,’ said the widow, ‘surely, because you see, at my years, I have seen so many ups and downs, though I always say——’

‘Come, Dusty,’ said Julia, ‘you are more silent than ever. You won’t take a dish, I know; but tell us the news, for I am sure you have something to say.’

‘I should think we had,’ said Dusty.

Here all the girls began talking at the same time, and, without waiting for the intelligence, favouring one another with their guesses of its import.

‘I am sure its Shuffle and Screw going to work half time,’ said Harriet; ‘I always said so.’

‘It’s something to put down the people,’ said Julia.

‘I suppose the nobs have met, and are going to drop wages again.’

‘I think Dusty is going to be married,’ said Caroline.

‘Not at this rate of wages, I should hope,’ said Mrs. Carey, getting in a word.

‘I should think not,’ said Devilsdust. ‘You are a sensible woman, Mrs. Carey. And I don’t know exactly what you mean, Miss Caroline,’ he added a little confused. For Devilsdust was a silent admirer of Caroline, and had been known to say to Mick, who told Julia, who told her friend, that if he ever found time to think of such things, that was the sort of girl he should like to make the partner of his life.

‘But Dusty,’ said Julia, ‘now what is it?’

‘Why, I thought you all knew,’ said Mick.

‘Now, now,’ said Julia, ‘I hate suspense. I like news to go round like a fly-wheel.

‘Well,’ said Devilsdust, drily, ‘this is Saturday, young women, and Mrs. Carey too, you will not deny that.’

‘I should think not,’ said Mrs. Carey, ‘by the token I kept a stall for thirty year in our market, and never gave it up till this summer, which makes me always think that, though I have seen many ups and downs, this——’

‘Well, what has Saturday to do with us?’ said Caroline; ‘for neither Dandy Mick nor you can take us to the Temple, or any other genteel place, since they are all shut, from the Corn Laws, or some other cause or other.’

‘I believe it’s the machines more than the Corn Laws that have shut up the Temple,’ said Harriet. ‘Machines, indeed! Fancy preferring a piece of iron or wood to your own flesh and blood! And they call that Christianlike!’
‘It is Saturday,’ said Julia, ‘sure enough; and if I don’t lie in bed to-morrow till sunset, may I get a bate ticket for every day for a week to come.’

‘Well, go it, my hearty!’ said Mick to Devilsdust.

‘It is Saturday, that they have all agreed.’

‘And to-morrow is Sunday,’ said Devilsdust, solemnly.

‘And next day is the blackest day in all the week,’ said Julia. ‘When I hear the factory bell on Monday morning, I feel just the same as I did when I crossed with my uncle from Liverpool to Seaton to eat shrimps. Wasn’t I sick coming home, that’s all!’

‘You won’t hear that bell sound next Monday,’ said Devilsdust, solemnly.

‘You don’t mean that?’ said Julia.

‘Why, what’s the matter?’ said Caroline. ‘Is the Queen dead?’

‘No bell on Monday morning?’ said Mrs. Carey, incredulously.

‘Not a single ring, if all the capitalists in Mowbray were to pull together at the same rope,’ said Devilsdust.

‘What can it be?’ said Julia. ‘Come, Mick; Dusty is always so long telling us anything.’

‘Why, we are going to have the devil’s own strike,’ said Mick, unable any longer to contain himself, and dancing with glee.

‘A strike!’ said Julia.

‘I hope they will destroy the machines,’ said Harriet.

‘And open the Temple,’ said Caroline, ‘or else it will be very dull.’

‘I have seen a many strikes,’ said the widow; ‘but as Chaffing Jack was saying to me the other day——’

‘Chaffing Jack be hanged!’ said Mick. ‘Such a slow coach won’t do in these high-pressure times. We are going to do the trick, and no mistake. There shan’t be a capitalist in England who can get a day’s work out of us, even if he makes the operatives his junior partners.’

‘I never heard of such things,’ said Mrs. Carey, in amazement.

‘It’s all booked, though,’ said Devilsdust. ‘We’ll clean out the Savings Banks; the Benefits and Burials will shell out. I am treasurer of the Ancient Shepherds, and we passed a resolution yesterday unanimously, that we would devote all our funds to the sustenance of labour in this last and triumphant struggle against capital.’

‘Lor!’ said Caroline; ‘I think it will be very jolly.’

‘As long as you can give us money, I don’t care, for my part, how long we stick out,’ said Julia.

‘Well,’ said Mrs. Carey, ‘I didn’t think there was so much spirit in the place. As Chaffing Jack was saying the other day——’

‘There is no spirit in the place,’ said Devilsdust, ‘but we mean to infuse some. Some of our friends are going to pay you a visit to-morrow.’

‘And who may they be?’ said Caroline.

‘To-morrow is Sunday,’ said Devilsdust, ‘and the miners mean to say their prayers in Mowbray Church.’

‘Well, that will be a shindy!’ said Caroline.

‘It’s a true bill, though,’ said Mick. ‘This time to-morrow you will have ten thousand of them in this town, and if every mill and work in it and ten mile round is not stopped, my name is not Mick Radley.’
CHAPTER LXVII.

THE LIBERATOR OF THE PEOPLE.

It was Monday morning. Hatton, enveloped in his chamber robe and wearing his velvet cap, was lounging in the best room of the principal commercial inn of Mowbray, over a breakfast-table covered with all the delicacies of which a northern matin meal may justly boast. There were pies of spiced meat and trout fresh from the stream, hams that Westphalia never equalled, pyramids of bread of every form and flavour adapted to the surrounding fruits, some conserved with curious art, and some just gathered from the bed or from the tree.

'It is very odd,' said Hatton to his companion Morley, 'you can't get coffee anywhere.'

Morley, who had supposed that coffee was about the commonest article of consumption in Mowbray, looked a little surprised; but at this moment Hatton's servant entered with a mysterious yet somewhat triumphant air, ushering in a travelling biggin of their own, fuming like one of the springs of Geyser.

'Now try that,' said Hatton to Morley as the servant poured him out a cup; 'you won't find that so bad.'

Does the town continue pretty quiet?' inquired Morley of the servant, as he was leaving the room.

'Quite quiet, I believe, sir, but a great many people in the streets. All the mills are stopped.'

'Well, this is a strange business,' said Hatton, when they were once more alone. 'You had no idea of it when I met you on Saturday?'

'None; on the contrary, I felt convinced that there were no elements of general disturbance in this district. I thought from the first that the movement would be confined to Lancashire and would easily be arrested; but the feebleness of the government, the want of decision, perhaps the want of means, have permitted a flame to spread, the extinction of which will not soon be witnessed.'

'Do you mean that?'

'Whenever the mining population is disturbed, the disorder is obstinate. On the whole, they endure less physical suffering than most of the working classes, their wages being considerable; and they are so brutalised that they are more difficult to operate on than our reading and thinking population of the factories. But, when they do stir, there is always violence and a determined course. When I heard of their insurrection on Saturday, I was prepared for great disturbances in their district; but that they should suddenly resolve to invade another country, as it were, the seat of another class of labour, and where the hardships, however severe, are not of their own kind, is to me amazing, and convinces me that there is some political head behind the scenes, and that this move, however unintentional on the part of the miners themselves, is part of some comprehensive scheme which, by widening the scene of action and
combining several counties and classes of labour in the broil, must inevitably embarrass and perhaps paralyse the government.

'There is a good deal in what you say,' said Hatton, taking a strawberry with rather an absent air; and then he added, 'You remember a conversation we once had, the eve of my departure from Mowbray in '39?'

'I do,' said Morley, reddening.

'The miners were not so ready then,' said Hatton. 'They were not,' said Morley, speaking with some confusion.

'Well, they are here now,' said Hatton.

'They are,' said Morley, thoughtfully, but more collected.

'You saw them enter yesterday?' said Hatton. 'I was sorry I missed it, but I was taking a walk with the Gerards up Dale, to see the cottage where they once lived, and which they used to talk so much about! Was it a strong body?'

'I should say about two thousand men, and, as far as bludgeons and iron staves go, armed.'

'A formidable force with no military to encounter them.'

'Inexhaustible, especially with a favourable population.'

'You think the people were not grieved to see them?'

'Certainly. Left alone, they might have remained quiet; but they only wanted the spark. We have a number of young men here who have for a long time been murmuring against our inaction and what they call want of spirit. The Lancashire strike set them all a-go; and, had any popular leader, Gerard for ex-

ample, or Warner, resolved to move, they were ready."

'The times are critical,' said Hatton, wheeling his armchair from the table and resting his feet on the empty fireplace. 'Lord de Mowbray had no idea of all this. I was with him on my way here, and found him quite tranquil. I suppose the invasion of yesterday has opened his eyes a little.'

'What can he do?' said Morley. 'It is useless to apply to the government. They have no force to spare. Look at Lancashire: a few dragoons and rifles, hurried about from place to place and harassed by night service; always arriving too late, and generally attacking the wrong point, some diversion from the main scheme. Now, we had a week ago some of the 17th Lancers here. They have been marched into Lancashire. Had they remained, the invasion would never have occurred.'

'You haven't a soldier at hand?'

'Not a man; they have actually sent for a party of the 73rd from Ireland to guard us. Mowbray may be burnt before they land.'

'And the castle too,' said Hatton, quietly. 'These are indeed critical times, Mr. Morley. I was thinking, when walking with our friend Gerard yesterday, and hearing him and his charming daughter dilate upon the beauties of the residence which they had forfeited, I was thinking what a strange thing life is, and that the fact of a box of papers belonging to him being in the possession of another person who only lives close by, for we were walking through Mowbray woods—'

At this moment a waiter entered, and said there was one without who wished to speak with Mr. Morley.
'Let him come up,' said Hatton; 'he will give us some news, perhaps.'

And there was accordingly shown up a young man who had been a member of the convention in '39 with Morley, afterwards of the secret council with Gerard, the same young man who had been the first arrested on the night that Sybil was made a prisoner, having left the scene of their deliberations for a moment in order to fetch her some water. He too had been tried, convicted, and imprisoned, though for a shorter time than Gerard; and he was the Chartist apostle who had gone and resided at Wodgate, preached the faith to the barbarians, converted them, and was thus the primary cause of the present invasion of Mowbray.

'Ah! Field,' said Morley, 'is it you?'

'You are surprised to see me;' and then the young man looked at Hatton.

'A friend,' said Morley; 'speak as you like.'

'Our great man, the leader and liberator of the people,' said Field, with a smile, 'who has carried all before him, and who, I verily believe, will carry all before him, for Providence has given him those super-human energies which can alone emancipate a race, wishes to confer with you on the state of this town and neighbourhood. It has been represented to him that no one is more knowing and experienced than yourself in this respect; besides, as the head of our most influential organ in the press, it is in every way expedient that you should see him. He is at this moment below, giving instructions and receiving reports of the stoppage of all the country works; but, if you like, I will bring him up here, we shall be less disturbed.'

'By all means,' said Hatton, who seemed to apprehend that Morley would make some difficulties. 'By all means.'

'Stop,' said Morley; 'have you seen Gerard?'

'No,' said Field. 'I wrote to him some time back, but his reply was not encouraging. I thought his spirit was perhaps broken.'

'You know that he is here?'

'I concluded so, but we have not seen him; though, to be sure, we have seen so many and done so much since our arrival yesterday, it is not wonderful. By-the-bye, who is this black-coat you have here, this St. Lys? We took possession of the church yesterday on our arrival, for it is a sort of thing that pleases the miners and colliers wonderfully, and I always humour them. This St. Lys preached us such a sermon that I was almost afraid at one time the game would be spoiled. Our great man was alarmingly taken by it, was saying his prayers all day, and had nearly marched back again: had it not been for the excellence of the rum-and-water at our quarters, the champion of the Charter would have proved a pious recreant.'

'St. Lys will trouble you,' said Morley. 'Alas for poor human nature, when violence can only be arrested by superstition!'

'Come, don't you preach,' said the Chartist. 'The Charter is a thing the people can understand, especially when they are masters of the country; but as for moral force, I should like to know how I could have marched from Wodgate to Mowbray with that on my banner.'

'Wodgate,' said Morley, 'that's a queer place.'

'Wodgate,' said Hatton; 'what Wodgate is that?'

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At this moment a great noise sounded without the room, the door was banged, there seemed a scuffling, some harsh high tones, the deprecatory voices of many waiters. The door was banged again, and this time flew open; while, exclaiming in an insolent coarse voice, 'Don't tell me of your private rooms; who is master here, I should like to know?' there entered a very thickset man, rather under the middle size, with a brutal and grimy countenance, wearing the unbut-toned coat of a police sergeant conquered in fight, a cocked hat, with a white plume, which was also a trophy of war, a pair of leather breeches and topped boots, which from their antiquity had the appearance of being his authentic property. This was the leader and Liberator of the people of England. He carried in his hand a large hammer, which he had never parted with during the whole of the insurrection; and, stopping when he had entered the room and surveying its inmates with an air at once stupid and arrogant, recognising Field the Chartist, he hallooed out, 'I tell you, I want him. He's my lord chancellor and prime minister, my head and principal doggy; I can't go or without him. Well, what do think?' he said, advancing to Field; 'there's a pretty go! They won't stop the works at the big country mill you were talking of. They won't, won't they? Is my word the law of the land, or is it not? Have I given my commands that all labour shall cease till the Queen sends me a message that the Charter is established, and is a man who has a mill to shut his gates upon my forces, and pump upon my people with engines? There shall be fire for this water;' and, so saying, the Liberator sent his hammer with such force upon the table, that the plate and porcelain and accumu-

lated luxuries of Mr. Hatton's breakfast perilously vibrated.

'We will inquire into this, sir,' said Field, 'and we will take the necessary steps.'

'We will inquire into this, and we will take the necessary steps,' said the Liberator, looking round with an air of pompous stupidity; and then, taking up some peaches, he began devouring them with considerable zest.

'Would the Liberator like to take some breakfast?' said Mr. Hatton.

The Liberator looked at his host with a glance of senseless intimidation, and then, as if not condescending to communicate directly with ordinary men, he uttered in a more subdued tone to the Chartist these words, 'Glass of ale.'

Ale was instantly ordered for the Liberator, who after a copious draught assumed a less menacing air, and smacking his lips, pushed aside the dishes, and sat down on the table, swinging his legs.

'This is my friend of whom I spoke, and whom you wished to see, sir,' said the Chartist; 'the most distinguished advocate of popular rights we possess, the editor of the Mowbray Phalanx, Mr. Morley.'

Morley slightly advanced; he caught the Liberator's eye, who scrutinised him with extreme earnestness, and then, jumping from the table, shouted: 'Why, this is the muff that called on me in Hell-house Yard three years ago.'

'I had that honour,' said Morley, quietly.

' Honour be hanged!' said the Bishop; 'you know something about somebody; I couldn't squeeze you then, but by G—— I will have it out of you now.
Now, cut it short; have you seen him, and where does he live?

'I came then to gain information, not to give it,' said Morley. 'I had a friend who wished much to see this gentleman.'

'He ain't no gentleman,' said the Bishop; 'he's my brother: but I tell you what, I'll do something for him now. I'm cock of the walk, you see; and that's a sort of thing that don't come twice in a man's life. One should feel for one's flesh and blood; and if I find him out, I'll make his fortune, or my name is not Simon Hatton.'

The creator and counsellor of peers started in his chair, and looked aghast. A glance was interchanged between him and Morley, which revealed their mutual thoughts; and the great antiquary, looking at the Liberator with a glance of blended terror and disgust, walked away to the window.

'Suppose you put an advertisement in your paper,' continued the Bishop. 'I know a traveller who lost his keys at the Yard, and got them back again by those same means. Go on advertising till you find him, and my prime minister and principal doggy here shall give you an order on the town-council for your expenses.'

Morley bowed his thanks in silence.

The Bishop continued: 'What's the name of the man who has got the big mill here, about three mile off, who won't stop his works, and ducked my men this morning with his engines? I'll have fire, I say, for that water; do you hear that, Master Newspaper? I'll have fire for that water before I am many hours older.'

'The Liberator means Trafford,' said the Chartist.
CHAPTER LXVIII.

A WALK IN MOWBRAY PARK.

ABOUT noon of this day there was a great stir in Mowbray. It was generally whispered about that the Liberator, at the head of the Hell-cats, and all others who chose to accompany them, was going to pay a visit to Mr. Trafford's settlement, in order to avenge an insult which his envoy had experienced early in the morning, when, accompanied by a rabble of two or three hundred persons, they had repaired to the Mowedale works, in order to signify the commands of the Liberator that labour should stop, and, if necessary, to enforce those commands. The injunctions were disregarded; and when the mob, in pursuance of their further instructions, began to force the great gates of the premises, in order that they might enter the building, drive the plugs out of the steam-boilers, and free the slaves enclosed, a masked battery of powerful engines was suddenly opened upon them, and the whole band of patriots were deluged. It was impossible to resist a power which seemed inexhaustible, and, wet to their skins, and amid the laughter of their adversaries, they fled. This ridiculous catastrophe had terribly excited the ire of the Liberator. He vowed vengeance, and as, like all great revolutionary characters and military leaders, the only foundation of his power was constant employment for his troops and constant excitement for the populace, he determined to place himself at the head of the chastising force, and make a great example, which should establish his awful reputation, and spread the terror of his name throughout the district.

Field, the Chartist, had soon discovered who were the rising spirits of Mowbray; and Devilsdust and Dandy Mick were both sworn on Monday morning of the council of the Liberator, and took their seats at the board accordingly. Devilsdust, used to public business, and to the fulfilment of responsible duties, was calm and grave, but equally ready and determined. Mick's head, on the contrary, was quite turned by the importance of his novel position. He was greatly excited, could devise nothing, and would do anything, always followed Devilsdust in council; but when he executed their joint decrees, and showed himself about the town, he strutted like a peacock, swore at the men, and winked at the girls, and was the idol and admiration of every gaping or huzzaing youngker.

There was a large crowd assembled in the Market Place, in which were the Liberator's lodgings, many of them armed in their rude fashion, and all anxious to march. Devilsdust was with the great man and Field; Mick below was marshalling the men, and swearing like a trooper at all who disobeyed, or who misunderstood him.

'Come, stupid,' said he, addressing Tummas, 'what are you staring about? Get your men in order, or I'll be among you.'
‘Stoopid!’ said Tummas, staring at Mick with immense astonishment. ‘And who are you who says “Stoopid?”’ A white-livered handloom as I dare say, or a son-of-a-gun of a factory slave. Stoopid, indeed! What next, when a Hell-cat is to be called stoopid by such a thing as you?’

‘I’ll give you a piece of advice, young man,’ said Master Nixon, taking his pipe out of his mouth, and blowing an immense puff: ‘just you go down the shaft for a couple of months, and then you’ll learn a little of life, which is very useful.’

The lively temperament of the Dandy would here probably have involved him in an inconvenient embroilment, had not some one at this moment touched him on the shoulder, and, looking round, he recognised Mr. Morley. Notwithstanding the difference of their political schools, Mick had a profound respect for Morley, though why he could not perhaps precisely express. But he had heard Devilsdust for years declare that Stephen Morley was the deepest head in Mowbray; and though he regretted the unfortunate weakness in favour of that imaginary abstraction, called moral force, for which the editor of the Phalanx was distinguished, still Devilsdust used to say, that if ever the great revolution were to occur, by which the rights of labour were to be recognised, though bolder spirits and brawner arms might consummate the change, there was only one head among them that would be capable, when they had gained their power, to guide it for the public weal, and, as Devilsdust used to add, ‘carry out the thing,’ and that was Morley.

It was a fine summer day, and Mowedale was as resplendent as when Egremont, amid its beauties, first began to muse over the beautiful. There was the same bloom over the sky, the same shadowy lustre on the trees, the same sparkling brilliancy on the waters. A herdsman, following some kine, was crossing the stone bridge; and, except their lowing as they stopped and sniffed the current of fresh air in its centre, there was not a sound.

Suddenly the tramp and hum of a multitude broke upon the sunshiny silence. A vast crowd, with some assumption of an ill-disciplined order, approached from the direction of Mowbray. At their head rode a man on a white mule. Many of his followers were armed with bludgeons and other rude weapons, and moved in files. Behind them spread a more miscellaneous throng, in which women were not wanting, and even children. They moved rapidly; they swept by the former cottage of Gerard; they were in sight of the settlement of Trafford.

‘All the waters of the river shall not douse the blaze that I will light up to-day,’ said the Liberator.

‘He is a most inveterate capitalist,’ said Field, ‘and would divert the minds of the people from the Five Points by allotting them gardens and giving them baths.’

‘We will have no more gardens in England; everything shall be open,’ said the Liberator, ‘and baths shall only be used to drown the enemies of the people. I always was against washing; it takes the marrow out of a man.’

‘Here we are,’ said Field, as the roofs and bower of the village, the spire and the spreading factory, broke upon them. ‘Every door and every window closed! The settlement is deserted. Some one has been before us, and apprised them of our arrival.’
'Will they pour water on me?' said the Bishop. 'It must be a stream indeed that shall put out the blaze that I am going to light. What shall we do first? Halt, there, you men,' said the Liberator, looking back with that scowl which his apprentices never could forget. 'Will you halt, or won't you? or must I be among you?'

There was a tumultuous shuffling, and then a comparative silence.

The women and children of the village had been gathered into the factory yard, the great gates of which were closed.

'What shall we burn first?' asked the Bishop.

'We may as well parley with them a little,' said Field; 'perhaps we may contrive to gain admission, and then we can sack the whole affair and let the people burn the machinery. It will be a great moral lesson.'

'As long as there is burning,' said the Bishop, 'I don't care what lessons you teach them. I leave them to you; but I will have fire to put out that water.'

'I will advance,' said Field; and so saying, he went forward and rang at the gate; the Bishop, on his mule, with a dozen Hell-cats accompanying him; the great body of the people about twenty yards withdrawn.

'Who rings?' asked a loud voice.

'One who, by the order of the Liberator, wishes to enter and see whether his commands for a complete cessation of labour have been complied with in this establishment.'

'Very good,' said the Bishop.

'There is no hand at work here;' said the voice; 'and you may take my word for it.'

'Your word be hanged,' said the Bishop. 'I want to know——'

'Hush, hush!' said Field; and then in a louder voice he said, 'It may be so; but as our messengers this morning were not permitted to enter, and were treated with great indignity——'

'That's it,' said the Bishop.

'With great indignity,' continued Field, 'we must have ocular experience of the state of affairs, and I beg and recommend you therefore at once to let the Liberator enter.'

'None shall enter here,' replied the unseen guardian of the gate.

'That's enough,' cried the Bishop.

'Beware!' said Field.

'Whether you let us in or not, 'tis all the same,' said the Bishop; 'I will have fire for your water, and I have come for that. Now, lads!'

'Stop,' said the voice of the unseen. 'I will speak to you.'

'He is going to let us in,' whispered Field to the Bishop.

And suddenly there appeared on the flat roof of the lodge that was on one side of the gates, Gerard. His air, his figure, his position were alike commanding, and at the sight of him a loud and spontaneous cheer burst from the assembled thousands. It was the sight of one who was, after all, the most popular leader of the people that had ever figured in these parts, whose eloquence charmed and commanded, whose disinterestedness was acknowledged, whose sufferings had created sympathy, whose courage, manly bearing, and famous feats of strength were a source to them of pride. There was not a Mowbray
man whose heart did not throb with emotion, and whose memory did not recall the orations from the Druids’ altar and the famous meetings on the moor. ‘Gerard for ever!’ was the universal shout.

The Bishop, who liked no one to be cheered except himself, like many great men, was much disgusted, a little perplexed. ‘What does all this mean?’ he whispered to Field. ‘I came here to burn down the place.’

‘Wait awhile,’ said Field, ‘we must humour the Mowbray men a bit. This is their favourite leader, at least was in old days. I know him well; he is a bold and honest man.’

‘Is this the man who ducked my people?’ asked the Bishop, fiercely.

‘Hush!’ said Field; ‘he is going to speak.’

‘My friends,’ said Gerard, ‘if we are not friends, who should be? (loud cheers, and cries of “Very true,”) if you come here to learn whether the Mowbray men are stopped, I give you my word there is not a machine or man that stirs here at this moment (great cheering). I believe you’ll take my word (cheers and cries of “We will”). I believe I’m known at Mowbray (“Gerard for ever!”) and on Mowbray Moor too (tumultuous cheering). We have met together before this (“That we have”), and shall meet again (great cheering). The people haven’t so many friends that they should quarrel with well-wishers. The master here has done his best to soften your lots. He is not one of those who deny that labour has rights (loud cheers). I say that Mr. Trafford has always acknowledged the rights of labour (prolonged cheers, and cries of “So he has”). Well, is he the man that we should injure? (“No, no.”) What if he did give a cold reception to some visitors this morning (groans); perhaps they wore faces he was not used to (loud cheers and laughter from the Mowbray people). I dare say they mean as well as we do; no doubt of that; but still a neighbour’s a neighbour (immense cheering). Now, my lads, three cheers for the national holiday;’ and Gerard gave the time, and his voice was echoed by the thousands present. ‘The master here has no wish to interfere with the national holiday; all he wants to secure is that all mills and works should alike stop (cries of “Very just!”). And I say so, too,’ continued Gerard. ‘It is just; just and manly, and like a true-born Englishman, as he is, who loves the people, and whose fathers before him loved the people (great cheering). Three cheers for Mr. Trafford, I say;’ and they were given; ‘and three cheers for Mrs. Trafford too, the friend of the poor!’ Here the mob became not only enthusiastic, but maudlin; all vowing to each other that Trafford was a true-born Englishman and his wife a very angel upon earth. This popular feeling is so contagious that even the Hell-cats shared it, cheering, shaking hands with each other, and almost shedding tears, though it must be confessed, they had some vague idea that it was all to end in something to drink.

Their great leader, however, remained unmoved, and nothing but his brutal stupidity could have prevented him from endeavouring to arrest the tide of public feeling; but he was quite bewildered by the diversion, and for the first time failed in finding a prompter in Field. The Chartist was cowed by Gerard; his old companion in scenes that the memory lingered over, and whose superior genius had often
controlled and often led him. Gerard, too, had recognised him, and had made some personal allusion and appeal to him, which alike touched his conscience and flattered his vanity. The ranks were broken, the spirit of the expedition had dissolved; the great body were talking of returning, some of the stragglers, indeed, were on their way back; the Bishop, silent and confused, kept knocking the mane of his mule with his hammer.

‘Now,’ said Morley, who during this scene had stood apart, accompanied by Devilsdust and Dandy Mick; ‘now,’ said Morley to the latter, ‘now is your time.’

‘Gentlemen!’ sang out Mick.

‘A speech, a speech!’ cried out several.

‘Listen to Mick Radley,’ whispered Devilsdust, moving swiftly among the mob, and addressing every one he met of influence. ‘Listen to Mick Radley; he has something important.’

‘Radley for ever! Listen to Mick Radley! Go it, Dandy! Pitch it into them! Silence for Dandy Mick! Jump up on that ere bank;’ and on the bank Mick mounted accordingly.

‘Gentlemen,’ said Mick.

‘Well, you have said that before.’

‘I like to hear him say “Gentlemen;” it’s respectful.’

‘Gentlemen,’ said the Dandy, ‘the national holiday has begun —’

‘Three cheers for it!’

‘Silence! hear the Dandy!’

‘The national holiday has begun,’ continued Mick, ‘and it seems to me the best thing for the people to do is to take a walk in Lord de Mowbray’s park.’

This proposition was received with one of those wild shouts of approbation which indicate that the orator has exactly hit his audience between wind and water. The fact is, the public mind at this instant wanted to be led, and in Dandy Mick a leader appeared. A leader, to be successful, should embody in his system the necessities of his followers, express what every one feels, but no one has had the ability or the courage to pronounce.

The courage, the adroitness, the influence of Gerard had reconciled the people to the relinquishment of the great end for which they had congregated; but neither man nor multitude like to make preparations without obtaining a result. Every one wanted to achieve some object by the movement; and at this critical juncture an object was proposed, and one which promised novelty, amusement, excitement. The Bishop, whose consent must be obtained, but who relinquished an idea with the same difficulty with which he had imbibed it, alone murmured, and kept saying to Field, ‘I thought we came to burn down this mill! A bloody-minded capitalist, a man that makes gardens, and forces the people to wash themselves! What is all this?’

Field said what he could, while Devilsdust, leaning over the mule’s shoulder, cajoled the other ear of the Bishop, who at last gave his consent with almost as much reluctance as George the Fourth did to the emancipation of the Roman Catholics; but he made his terms, and said, in a sulky voice, he must have a glass of ale.

‘Drink a glass of ale with Lord de Mowbray,’ said Devilsdust.
CHAPTER LXXI.

Mr. Mountchesney Temporises.

When the news had arrived in the morning at Mowbray, that the messengers of the Bishop had met with a somewhat queer reception at the Mowbray works, Gerard, prescient that some trouble might in consequence occur there, determined to repair at once to the residence of his late employer. It so happened that Monday was the day on which the cottages up the Dale and on the other side of the river were visited by an envoy of Ursula Trafford, and it was the office of Sybil this morning to fulfil the duties of that mission of charity. She had mentioned this to her father on the previous day, and as, in consequence of the strike, he was no longer occupied, he had proposed to accompany his daughter on the morrow. Together therefore they had walked until they arrived, it being then about two hours to noon, at the bridge, a little above their former residence. Here they were to separate. Gerard embraced his daughter with even more than usual tenderness; and, as Sybil crossed the bridge, she looked round at her father, and her glance caught his, turned for the same fond purpose.

SYBIL

Sybil was not alone; Harold, who had ceased to gambol, but who had gained in stature, majesty, and weight what he had lost of lithe and frolic grace, was by her side. He no longer danced before his mistress, coursed away and then returned, or vented his exuberant life in a thousand feats of playful vigour; but, sedate and observant, he was always at hand, ever sagacious, and seemed to watch her every glance.

The day was beautiful, the scene was fair, the spot indeed was one which rendered the performance of gracious offices to Sybil doubly sweet. She ever begged of the Lady Superior that she might be her minister to the cottages up Dale. They were full of familiar faces. It was a region endeared to Sybil by many memories of content and tenderness. And as she moved along to-day, her heart was light, and the natural joyousness of her disposition, which so many adverse circumstances had tended to repress, was visible in her sunny face. She was happy about her father. The invasion of the miners, instead of prompting him, as she had feared, to some rash conduct, appeared to have filled him only with disgust. Even now he was occupied in a pursuit of order and peace, counselling prudence and protecting the benevolent.

She passed through a copse which skirted those woods of Mowbray wherein she had once so often rambled with one whose image now hovered over her spirit. Ah! what scenes and changes, dazzling and dark, had occurred since the careless though thoughtful days of her early girlhood! Sybil mused: she recalled the moonlit hour, when Mr. Franklin first paid a visit to their cottage, their walks and wan-

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dering, the expeditions which she planned, and the explanations which she so artlessly gave him. Her memory wandered to their meeting in Westminster, and all the scenes of sorrow and of softness of which it was the herald. Her imagination raised before her in colours of light and life the morning, the terrible morning, when he came to her desperate rescue; his voice sounded in her ear; her cheek glowed as she recalled their tender farewell.

It was past noon: Sybil had reached the term of her expedition, had visited her last charge; she was emerging from the hills into the open country, and about to regain the river road that would in time have conducted her to the bridge. On one side of her was the moor, on the other a wood that was the boundary of Mowbray Park. And now a number of women met her, some of whom she recognised, and had indeed visited earlier in the morning. Their movements were disordered; distress and panic were expressed on their countenances. Sybil stopped, she spoke to some, the rest gathered round her. The Hell-cats were coming, they said; they were on the other side of the river, burning mills, destroying all they could put their hands on, man, woman, and child.

Sybil, alarmed for her father, put to them some questions, to which they gave incoherent answers. It was however clear that they had seen no one, and knew nothing of their own experience. The rumour had reached them that the mob was advancing up Dale; those who had apprised them had, according to their statement, absolutely witnessed the approach of the multitude, and so they had locked up their cottages, crossed the bridge, and run away to the woods and moor. Under these circumstances, deeming that there might be much exaggeration, Sybil at length resolved to advance, and in a few minutes those whom she had encountered were out of sight. She patted Harold, who looked up in her face and gave a bark, significant of his approbation of her proceeding, and also of his consciousness that something strange was going on. She had not proceeded very far before two men on horseback, at full gallop, met her. They pulled up as soon as they observed her, and said, ‘You had better go back as fast as you can: the mob is out, and coming up Dale in great force.’

Sybil inquired, with much agitation, whether they had themselves seen the people, and they replied that they had not, but that advices had been received from Mowbray of their approach, and, as for themselves, they were hurrying at their utmost speed to a town ten miles off, where they understood some yeomanry were stationed, and to whom the Mayor of Mowbray had last night sent a dispatch. Sybil would have inquired whether there were time for her to reach the bridge and join her father at the factory of Trafford, but the horsemen were impatient and rode off. Still she determined to proceed. All that she now aimed at was to reach Gerard and share his fate.

A boat put across the river, with two men and a crowd of women. The mob had been seen; at least there was positively one person present who had distinguished them in the extreme distance, or rather the cloud of dust which they had created; there were dreadful stories of their violence and devastation. It was understood that a body meant to attack Trafford’s works, but, as the narrator added, it was very proba-
ble that the greater part would cross the bridge and so on to the moor, where they would hold a meeting.

Sybil would fain have crossed in the boat, but there was no one to assist her. They had escaped, and meant to lose no time in finding a place of refuge for the moment. They were sure if they recrossed now, they must meet the mob. They were about to leave Sybil in infinite distress, when a lady, driving herself in a pony carriage, with a couple of grooms behind her, mounted also on ponies of the same form and colour, came up from the direction of the moor, and, observing the group and Sybil much agitated, pulled up and inquired the cause. One of the men, frequently interrupted by all the women, immediately entered into a narrative of the state of affairs, for which the lady was evidently quite unprepared, for her alarm was considerable.

'And this young person will persist in crossing over,' continued the man. 'It's nothing less than madness. I tell her she will meet instant death or worse.'

'It seems to me very rash,' said the lady in a kind tone, and who seemed to recognise her.

'Alas! what am I to do!' exclaimed Sybil. 'I left my father at Mr. Trafford's!'

'Well, we have no time to lose,' said the man, whose companion had now fastened the boat to the bank, and so, wishing them good-morning, and followed by the whole of his cargo, they went on their way.

But just at this moment a gentleman, mounted on a knowing little cob, came galloping up, exclaiming as he reached the pony carriage, 'My dear Joan, I am looking after you. I have been in the greatest alarm for you. There are riots on the other side of the river, and I was afraid you might have crossed the bridge.'

Upon this Lady Joan related to Mr. Mountchesney how she had just become acquainted with the intelligence, and then they conversed together for a moment or so in a whisper: when, turning round to Sybil, she said, 'I think you had really better come home with us till affairs are a little more quiet.'

'You are most kind,' said Sybil, 'but if I could get back to the town through Mowbray Park, I think I might do something for my father!'

'We are going to the castle through the park at this moment,' said the gentleman. 'You had better come with us. There you will at least be safe, and perhaps we shall be able to do something for the good people in trouble over the water;' and, so saying, nodding to a groom, who, advancing, held his cob, the gentleman dismounted, and approaching Sybil with great courtesy, said, 'I think we ought all of us to know each other. Lady Joan and myself had once the pleasure of meeting you, I think, at Mr. Trafford's. It is a long time ago, but,' he added in a subdued tone, 'you are not a person to forget.'

Sybil was insensible to Mr. Mountchesney's gallantry but, alarmed and perplexed, she yielded to the representations of himself and Lady Joan, and got into the phaeton. Turning from the river, they pursued a road which, after a short progress, entered the park, Mr. Mountchesney cantering on before them, Harold following. They took their way for about a mile through a richly-wooded demesne, Lady Joan addressing many observations with great kindness to Sybil,
and frequently endeavouring, though in vain, to divert her agitated thoughts, till they at length emerged from the more covered parts into extensive lawns, while on a rising ground, which they rapidly approached, rose Mowbray Castle, a modern castellated building, raised in a style not remarkable for its taste or correctness, but vast, grand, and imposing.

‘And now,’ said Mr. Mountchesney, riding up to them and addressing Sybil, ‘I will send off a scout immediately for news of your father. In the meantime let us believe the best!’ Sybil thanked him with cordiality, and then she entered Mowbray Castle.

CHAPTER LXX.

The Fall of Mowbray Castle.

In less than an hour after the arrival of Sybil at Mowbray Castle, the scout that Mr. Mountchesney had sent off to gather news returned, and with intelligence of the triumph of Gerard’s eloquence, that all had ended happily, and that the people were dispersing, and returning to the town.

Kind as was the reception accorded to Sybil by Lady de Mowbray and her daughter, on her arrival, the remembrance of the perilous position of her father had totally disqualified her from responding to their advances. Acquainted with the cause of her anxiety and depression, and sympathising with womanly softness with her distress, nothing could be more considerate than their behaviour. It touched Sybil much, and she regretted the harsh thoughts that irresistible circumstances had forced her to cherish respecting persons who, now that she saw them in their domestic and unaffected hour, had apparently many qualities to conciliate and to charm. When the good news arrived of her father’s safety, and safety achieved in a manner so flattering to a daughter’s pride, it
came upon a heart predisposed to warmth and kindness, and all her feelings opened. The tears stood in her beautiful eyes, and they were tears not only of tenderness but gratitude. Fortunately Lord de Mowbray was at the moment absent, and, as the question of the controverted inheritance was a secret to every member of the family except himself, the name of Gerard excited no invidious sensation in the circle. Sybil was willing to please, and to be pleased; every one was captivated by her beauty, her grace, her picturesque expression, and sweet simplicity. Lady de Mowbray serenely smiled, and frequently, when unobserved, viewed her through her eye-glass. Lady Joan, much softened by marriage, would show her the castle; Lady Maud was in ecstasies with all that Sybil said or did; while Mr. Mountchesney, who had thought of little else but Sybil ever since Lady Maud's report of her seraphic singing, and who had not let four-and-twenty hours go by without discovering, with all the practised art of St. James's, the name and residence of the unknown fair, flattered himself he was making great play, when Sybil, moved by his kindness, distinguished him by frequent notice. They had viewed the castle, they were in the music-room, Sybil had been prevailed upon, though with reluctance, to sing. Some Spanish church music which she found there called forth all her powers; all was happiness, delight, rapture, Lady Maud in a frenzy of friendship, Mr. Mountchesney convinced that the country in August might be delightful, and Lady Joan almost gay because Alfred was pleased. Lady de Mowbray had been left in her boudoir with the Morning Post. Sybil had just finished a ravishing air, there was a murmur of luncheon, when suddenly Harold, who had persisted in following his mistress, and whom Mr. Mountchesney had gallantly introduced into the music-room, rose, and coming forward from the corner in which he reposed, barked violently.

'How now!' said Mr. Mountchesney.

'Harold!' said Sybil in a tone of remonstrance and surprise.

But the dog not only continued to bark, but even howled. At this moment the groom of the chambers entered the room abruptly, and with a face of mystery said that he wished to speak with Mr. Mountchesney. That gentleman immediately withdrew. He was absent some little time, the dog very restless, Lady Joan becoming disquieted, when he returned. His changed air struck the vigilant eye of his wife.

'What has happened, Alfred?' she said.

'Oh! don't be alarmed,' he replied with an obvious affection of ease. 'There are some troublesome people in the park; stragglers, I suppose, from the riots. The gate-keeper ought not to have let them pass. I have given directions to Bentley what to do, if they come to the castle.'

'Let us go to mamma,' said Lady Joan.

And they were all about leaving the music-room, when a servant came running in and called out, 'Mr. Bentley told me to say, sir, they are in sight.'

'Very well,' said Mr. Mountchesney in a calm tone, but changing colour. 'You had better go to your mamma, Joan, and take Maud and our friend with you. I will stay below for a while,' and, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his wife, Mr. Mountchesney went to the hall.

'I don't know what to do, sir,' said the house-steward. 'They are a very strong party.'
‘Close all the windows, lock and bar all the doors,’ said Mr. Mountchesney. ‘I am frightened,’ he continued, ‘about your lord. I fear he may fall in with these people.’

‘My lord is at Mowbray,’ said Mr. Bentley. ‘He must have heard of this mob there.’

And now, emerging from the plantations and entering on the lawns, the force and description of the invading party were easier to distinguish. They were numerous, though consisting of only a section of the original expedition, for Gerard had collected a great portion of the Mowbray men, and they preferred being under his command to following a stranger, whom they did not much like, on a somewhat licentious adventure of which their natural leader disapproved. The invading section, therefore, were principally composed of Hell-cats, though, singular enough, Morley, of all men in the world, accompanied them, attended by Devilsdust, Dandy Mick, and others of that youthful class of which these last were the idols and heroes. There were perhaps eighteen hundred or two thousand persons armed with bars and bludgeons, in general a grimy crew, whose dress and appearance revealed the kind of labour to which they were accustomed. The difference between them and the minority of Mowbray operatives was instantly recognisable.

When they perceived the castle, this dreadful band gave a ferocious shout. Lady de Mowbray showed blood; she was composed and courageous. She observed the mob from the window, and reassuring her daughters and Sybil, she said she would go down and speak to them. She was on the point of leaving the room with this object, when Mr. Mountchesney entered, and, hearing her purpose, dissuaded her from attempting it. ‘Leave all to me,’ he said; ‘and make yourselves quite easy; they will go away; I am certain they will go away,’ and he again quitted them.

In the meantime, Lady de Mowbray and her friends observed the proceedings below. When the main body had advanced within a few hundred yards of the castle, they halted, and seated themselves on the turf. This step reassured the garrison: it was generally held to indicate that the intentions of the invaders were not of a very settled or hostile character; that they had visited the place probably in a spirit of frolic, and if met with tact and civility might ultimately be induced to retire from it without much annoyance. This was evidently the opinion of Mr. Mountchesney from the first, and when an uncouth being, on a white mule, attended by twenty or thirty miners, advanced to the castle, and asked for Lord de Mowbray, Mr. Mountchesney met them with kindness, saying he regretted his father-in-law was absent, expressed his readiness to represent him, and inquired their pleasure. His courteous bearing evidently had an influence on the Bishop, who, dropping his usual brutal tone, mumbled something about his wish to drink Lord de Mowbray’s health.

‘You shall all drink his health,’ said Mr. Mountchesney, humouring him, and he gave directions that a couple of barrels of ale should be broached in the park before the castle. The Bishop was pleased, the people were in good humour, some men began dancing; it seemed that the cloud had blown over, and Mr. Mountchesney sent up a bulletin to Lady de Mowbray, that all danger was past, and that he hoped in ten minutes they would all have disappeared.
The ten minutes had expired: the Bishop was still drinking ale, and Mr. Mountchesney still making civil speeches, and keeping his immediate attendance in humour.

‘I wish they would go,’ said Lady de Mowbray.

‘How wonderfully Alfred has managed them,’ said Lady Joan.

‘After all,’ said Lady Maud, ‘it must be confessed that the people——’ Her sentence was interrupted; Harold who had been shut out, but who had lain down withoutquietly, though moaning at intervals, now sprang at the door with so much force that it trembled on its hinges, while the dog again barked with renewed violence. Sybil went to him: he seized her dress with his teeth, and would have pulled her away. Suddenly uncouth and mysterious sounds were heard, there was a loud shriek, the gong in the hall thundered, the great alarum-bell of the tower sounded without, and the housekeeper, followed by the female domestics, rushed into the room.

‘Oh! my lady, my lady,’ they all exclaimed at the same time, ‘the Hell-cats are breaking into the castle.’

Before any one of the terrified company could reply, the voice of Mr. Mountchesney was heard. He was approaching them; he was no longer calm. He hurried into the room; he was pale, evidently greatly alarmed. ‘I have come to you,’ he said; ‘these fellows have got in below. While there is time, and we can manage them, you must leave the place.’

‘I am ready for anything,’ said Lady de Mowbray.

Lady Joan and Lady Maud wrung their hands in frantic terror. Sybil, very pale, said, ‘Let me go down; I may know some of these men.’

‘No, no,’ said Mr. Mountchesney. ‘They are not Mowbray people. It would not be safe.’

Dreadful sounds were now heard; a blending of shouts and oaths, and hideous merriment. Their hearts trembled.

‘The mob are in the house, sir,’ called out Mr. Bentley, rushing up to them. ‘They say they will see everything.’

‘Let them see everything,’ said Lady de Mowbray, ‘but make a condition that they first let us go. Try, Alfred, try to manage them before they are utterly ungovernable.’

Mr. Mountchesney again left them on this desperate mission. Lady de Mowbray and all the women remained in the chamber. Not a word was spoken; the silence was complete. Even the maidservants had ceased to sigh and sob. A feeling something like desperation was stealing over them.

The dreadful sounds continued, increased. They seemed to approach nearer. It was impossible to distinguish a word, and yet their import was frightful and ferocious.

‘Lord have mercy on us all!’ exclaimed the housekeeper, unable to refrain herself. The maids began to cry.

After an absence of about five minutes, Mr. Mountchesney again hurried in, and, leading away Lady de Mowbray, he said, ‘You haven’t a moment to lose. Follow us!’

There was a general rush, and, following Mr. Mountchesney, they passed rapidly through several apartments, the fearful noises every moment increas-
‘Come on,’ said Mr. Mountchesney. ‘The mob have possession of the castle. It is our only chance.’

‘But the mob are here,’ said Lady de Mowbray, much terrified.

‘I see some Mowbray faces,’ said Sybil, springing forward, with a flashing eye and a glowing cheek. ‘Bamford and Samuel Carr! Bamford, if you be my father’s friend, aid us now; and Samuel Carr, I was with your mother this morning; did she think I should meet her son thus? No, you shall not enter,’ said Sybil, advancing. They recognised her, they paused. ‘I know you, Couchman; you told us once at the convent that we might summon you in our need. I summon you now. Oh, men, men!’ she exclaimed, clasping her hands, ‘What is this? Are you led away by strangers to such deeds? Why, I know you all! You came here to aid, I am sure, and not to harm. Guard these ladies, save them from these foreigners! There’s Butler, he’ll go with us, and Godfrey Wells. Shall it be said you let your neighbours be plundered and assailed by strangers and never try to shield them? Now, my good friends, I entreat, I adjure you, Butler, Wells, Couchman, what would Walter Gerard say, your friend that you have so often followed, if he saw this?’

‘Gerard for ever!’ shouted Couchman.

‘Gerard for ever!’ exclaimed a hundred voices.

‘Tis his blessed daughter,’ said others; ‘tis Sybil, our angel Sybil!’

‘Stand by Sybil Gerard.’

Sybil had made her way upon the terrace, and had collected around her a knot of stout followers, who, whatever may have been their original motive, were now resolved to do her bidding. The object of Mr. Mountchesney was to descend the side-step of the terrace and gain the flower-garden, whence there were means of escape. But the throng was still too fierce to permit Lady de Mowbray and her companions to attempt the passage, and all that Sybil and her followers could at present do, was to keep the mob from entering the library, and to exert themselves to obtain fresh recruits.

At this moment an unexpected aid arrived.

‘Keep back there! I call upon you in the name of God to keep back!’ exclaimed a voice of one struggling and communing with the rioters, a voice which all immediately recognised. It was that of Mr. St. Lys. ‘Charles Gardner, I have been your friend. The aid I gave you was often supplied to me by this house. Why are you here?’

‘For no evil purpose, Mr. St. Lys. I came, as others did, to see what was going on.’

‘Then you see a deed of darkness. Struggle against it. Aid me and Philip Warner in this work; it will support you at the judgment. Tressel, Tressel, stand by me and Warner. That’s good, that’s right. And you too, Daventry, and you, and you. I knew you would wash your hands of this fell deed. It is not Mowbray men would do this. That’s right, that’s right! Form a band. Good again. There’s not a man that joins us now who does not make a friend for life.’

Mr. St. Lys had been in the neighbourhood when the news of the visit of the mob to the castle reached
him. He anticipated the perilous consequences. He hastened immediately to the scene of action. He had met Warner, the handloom weaver, in his way, and enlisted his powerful influence with the people on his side.

The respective bands of Sybil and Mr. St. Lys in time contrived to join. Their numbers were no longer contemptible; they were animated by the words and presence of their leaders: St. Lys struggling in their midst; Sybil maintaining her position on the terrace, and inciting all around her to courage and energy.

The multitude were kept back, the passage to the side-steps of the terrace was clear.

"Now," said Sybil, and she encouraged Lady de Mowbray, her daughters, and followers to advance. It was a fearful struggle to maintain the communication, but it was a successful one. They proceeded breathless and trembling, until they reached what was commonly called the grotto, but which was, in fact, a subterranean way excavated through a hill and leading to the bank of the river where there were boats. The entrance of this tunnel was guarded by an iron gate, and Mr. Mountsheasy had secured the key. The gate was opened, Warner and his friends made almost superhuman efforts at this moment to keep back the multitude; Lady de Mowbray and her daughters had passed through, when there came one of those violent undulations usual in mobs, and which was occasioned by a sudden influx of persons attracted by what was occurring, and Sybil and those who immediately surrounded her and were guarding the retreat were carried far away. The gate was closed, the rest of the party had passed, but Sybil was left, and found herself entirely among strangers.

In the meantime the castle was in the possession of the mob. The first great rush was to the cellars: the Bishop himself headed this onset, nor did he rest until he was seated among the prime bins of the noble proprietor. This was not a crisis of corkscrews; the heads of the bottles were knocked off with the same promptitude and dexterity as if they were shelling nuts or decapitating shrimps; the choicest wines of Christendom were poured down the thirsty throats that ale and spirits alone had hitherto stimulated: Tummas was swallowing Burgundy; Master Nixon had got hold of a batch of Tokay; while the Bishop himself, seated on the ground and leaning against an arch, the long perspective of the cellars full of rabidous figures brandishing bottles and torches, alternately quaffed some very old Port and some Madeira of many voyages, and was making up his mind as to their respective and relative merits.

While the cellars and offices were thus occupied, bands were parading the gorgeous saloons and gazing with wonderment on their decorations and furniture. Some grimy ruffians had thrown themselves with disdainful delight on the satin couches and the state beds; others rifled the cabinets with an idea that they must be full of money, and finding little in their way, had strewn their contents, papers and books, and works of art, over the floors of the apartments; sometimes a band who had escaped from below with booty came up to consummate their orgies in the magnificence of the dwelling-rooms. Among these were Nixon and his friends, who stared at the pictures and stood before the tall mirrors with still greater astonishment. Indeed, many of them had never seen an ordinary looking-glass in their lives.
‘Tis Natur!’ said Master Nixon, surveying himself, and turning to Juggins.

Many of these last grew frantic, and finished their debauch by the destruction of everything around them.

But while these scenes of brutal riot were occurring, there was one select but resolute band who shared in none of these excesses. Morley, followed by half a dozen Mowbray lads and two chosen Hell-cats, leaving all the confusion behind, had ascended the great staircase, traced his way down a corridor to the winding steps of the Round Tower, and, supplied with the necessary instruments, had forced his entrance into the muniment room of the castle. It was a circular chamber lined with tall fire-proof cases. These might have presented invincible obstacles to any other than the pupils of Bishop Hatton; as it was, in some instances the locks, in others the hinges, yielded in time, though after prolonged efforts, to the resources of their art; and while Dandy Mick and his friends kept watch at the entrance, Morley and Devilsdust proceeded to examine the contents of the cases: piles of parchment deeds, bundles of papers arranged and docketed, many boxes of various size and materials; but the desired object was not visible. A baffled expression came over the face of Morley; he paused for an instant in his labours. The thought of how much he had sacrificed for this, and only to fail, came upon him: upon him, the votary of moral power in the midst of havoc which he had organised and stimulated. He cursed Baptist Hatton in his heart.

‘The knaves have destroyed them,’ said Devilsdust. ‘I thought how it would be. They never would run the chance of a son of labour being lord of all this.’

Some of the cases were very deep, and they had hitherto in general, in order to save time, proved their contents with an iron rod. Now Morley, with a desperate air, mounting on some steps that were in the room, commenced formally rifling the cases and throwing their contents on the floor; it was soon strewn with deeds and papers and boxes which he and Devilsdust the moment they had glanced at them hurled away. At length, when all hope seemed to have vanished, clearing a case which at first appeared only to contain papers, Morley struck something at its back; he sprang forward with outstretched arm, his body was half hid in the Cabinet, and he pulled out with triumphant exultation the box, painted blue and blazoned with the arms of Value. It was neither large nor heavy; he held it out to Devilsdust without saying a word, and Morley, descending the steps, sat down for a moment on a pile of deeds and folded his arms.

At this juncture the discharge of musketry was heard.

‘Hilloa!’ said Devilsdust with a queer expression. Morley started from his seat, Dandy Mick rushed into the room. ‘Troops, troops! there are troops here!’ he exclaimed.

‘Let us descend,’ said Morley, ‘In the confusion we may escape. I will take the box,’ and they left the muniment room.

One of their party, whom Mick had sent forward to reconnoitre, fell back upon them. ‘They are not troops,’ he said; ‘they are yeomanry; they are firing away and cutting every one down. They have cleared the ground-floor of the castle, and are in complete possession below. We cannot escape this way.’
Those accursed locks!' said Morley, clenching the box. 'Time has beat us. Let us see, let us see.' He ran back into the muniment room and examined the egress from the window. It was just possible for any one very lithe and nimble to vault upon the roof of the less elevated part of the castle. Revolving this, another scout rushed in and said, 'Comrades, they are here! they are ascending the stairs.' Morley stamped on the ground with rage and despair. Then seizing Mick by the hand he said, 'You see this window; can you by any means reach that roof?' 'One may as well lose one's neck that way,' said Mick. 'I'll try.' 'Oif! if you land I will throw this box after you. Now mind; take it to the convent at Mowbray, and deliver it yourself from me to Sybil Gerard. It is light; there are only papers in it; but they will give her her own again, and she will not forget you.' 'Never mind that,' said Mick. 'I only wish I may live to see her.'

The tramp of the ascending troopers was heard. 'Good-bye, my hearties,' said Mick, and he made the spring. He seemed stunned, but he might recover. Morley watched him and flung the box. 'And now,' he said, drawing a pistol, 'we may fight our way yet. I'll shoot the first man who enters, and then you must rush on with your bludgeons.'

The force that had so unexpectedly arrived at this scene of devastation was a troop of the yeomanry regiment of Lord Marney. The strike in Lancashire and the revolt in the mining districts had so completely drained this county of military, that the Lord Lieutenant had insisted on Lord Marney quitting his agricultural neighbourhood, and quartering himself in the region of factories. Within the last two days he had fixed his head-quarters at a large manufacturing town within ten miles of Mowbray, and a despatch on Sunday evening from the mayor of that town having reached him, apprising him of the invasion of the miners, Egremont had received orders to march with his troop there on the following morning.

Egremont had not departed more than two hours, when the horsemen whom Sybil had met arrived at Lord Marney's head-quarters, bringing a most alarming and exaggerated report of the insurrection and of the havoc that was probably impending. Lord Marney, being of opinion that Egremont's forces were by no means equal to the occasion, resolved therefore at once to set out for Mowbray with his own troop. Crossing Mowbray Moor, he encountered a great multitude, now headed for purposes of peace by Walter Gerard. His mind inflamed by the accounts he had received, and hating at all times any popular demonstration, his lordship resolved without inquiry or preparation immediately to disperse them. The Riot Act was read with the rapidity with which grace is sometimes said at the head of a public table, a ceremony of which none but the performer and his immediate friends are conscious. The people were fired on and sabred. The indignant spirit of Gerard resisted; he struck down a trooper to the earth, and incited those about him not to yield. The father of Sybil was picked out, the real friend and champion of the people, and shot dead. Instantly arose a groan which almost quelled the spirit of Lord Marney, though armed and at the head of armed men. The people who before this were in general scared and
dispersing, ready indeed to fly in all directions, no sooner saw their beloved leader fall, than a feeling of frenzy came over them. They defied the troopers, though themselves armed only with stones and bludgeons; they rushed at the horsemen and tore them from their saddles, while a shower of stones rattled on the helmet of Lord Marney and seemed never to cease. In vain the men around him charged the infuriated throng; the people returned to their prey, nor did they rest until Lord Marney fell lifeless on Mowbray Moor, literally stoned to death.

These disastrous events of course occurred at a subsequent period of the day to that on which half-a-dozen troopers were ascending the staircase of the Round Tower of Mowbray Castle. The distracted house-steward of Lord de Mowbray had met and impressed upon them, now that the castle was once more in their possession, the expediency of securing the muniment room, for Mr. Bentley had witnessed the ominous ascent of Morley and his companions to that important chamber.

Morley and his companions had taken up an advantageous position at the head of the staircase.

'Surrender,' said the commander of the yeomanry. 'Resistance is useless.'

Morley presented his pistol, but, before he could pull the trigger, a shot from a trooper in the rear, and who from his position could well observe the intention of Morley, struck Stephen in the breast; still he fired but aimless and without effect. The troopers pushed on; Morley, fainting, fell back with his friends, who were frightened, except Devilsdust, who had struck hard and well, and who in turn had been slightly sabred. The yeomanry entered the muniment room almost at the same time as their foes, leaving Devilsdust behind them, who had fallen, and who, cursing the capitalist who had wounded him, managed to escape. Morley fell when he had regained the room. The rest surrendered.

'Morley! Stephen Morley!' exclaimed the commander of the yeomanry. 'You, you here!'

'Yes. I am sped,' he said in a faint voice. 'No, no succour. It is useless, and I desire none. Why I am here is a mystery; let it remain so. The world will misjudge me; the man of peace they will say was a hypocrite. The world will be wrong, as it always is. Death is bitter,' he said, with a deep sigh, and speaking with great difficulty, 'more bitter from you; but just. We have struggled together before, Egremont. I thought I had scotched you then, but you escaped. Our lives have been a struggle since we first met. Your star has controlled mine; and now I feel I have sacrificed life and fame, dying men prophesy, for your profit and honour. O Sybil!' and with this name, half-sighed upon his lips, the votary of moral power and the apostle of community ceased to exist.

Meanwhile Sybil, separated from her friends, who had made their escape through the grotto, was left with Harold only for her protector, for she had lost even Warner in the crush. She looked around in vain for some Mowbray face that she could recognise, but after some fruitless research, a loud shouting in the distance, followed by the firing of musketry, so terrified all around her, that the mob in her immediate neighbourhood dispersed as if by magic; and she remained alone crouching in a corner of the flower-garden, while dreadful shouts and shrieks and yells
resounded from the distance, with occasional firing, the smoke floating to her retreat. She could see from where she stood the multitude flying about the park in all directions, and therefore she thought it best to remain in her present position and await the terrible events. She concluded that some military force had arrived and hoped that if she could maintain her present post, the extreme danger might pass. But while she indulged in these hopes, a dark cloud of smoke came descending in the garden. It could not be produced by musket or carbine: its volume was too heavy even for ordnance; and in a moment there were sparks mingled with its black form; and then the shouting and shrieking which had in some degree subsided, suddenly broke out again with increased force and wildness. The castle was on fire.

Whether from heedlessness or from insane intention, for the deed sealed their own doom, the drunken Hell-cats, brandishing their torches, while they rifled the cellars and examined every closet and corner of the offices, had set fire to the lower part of the building, and the flames, that had for some time burnt unseen, had now gained the principal chambers. The Bishop was lying senseless in the main cellar, surrounded by his chief officers in the same state: indeed the whole of the basement was covered with the recumbent figures of Hell-cats, as black and as thick as torpid flies during the last days of their career. The funeral pile of the children of Woden was a sumptuous one; it was prepared and lighted by themselves; and the flame that, rising from the keep of Mowbray, announced to the startled country that in a short hour the splendid mimicry of Norman rule would cease to exist, told also the pitiless fate of

the ruthless savage, who, with analogous pretension, had presumed to style himself the Liberator of the people.

The clouds of smoke, the tongues of flame that now began to mingle with them, the multitude whom this new incident and impending catastrophe summoned back to the scene, forced Sybil to leave the garden and enter the park. It was in vain she endeavoured to gain some part less frequented than the rest, and to make her way unobserved. Suddenly a band of drunken ruffians, with shouts and oaths, surrounded her; she shrieked in frantic terror; Harold sprung at the throat of the foremost; another advanced, Harold left his present prey and attacked the new assailant. The brave dog did wonders, but the odds were fearful; and the men had bludgeons, were enraged, and had already wounded him. One ruffian had grasped the arm of Sybil, another had clenched her garments, when an officer, covered with dust and gore, sabre in hand, jumped from the terrace, and hurried to the rescue. He cut down one man, thrust away another, and, placing his left arm round Sybil, he defended her with his sword, while Harold, now become furious, flew from man to man, and protected her on the other side. Her assailants were routed, they made a staggering flight! the officer turned round and pressed Sybil to his heart.

'We will never part again,' said Egremont.

'Never!' murmured Sybil.
CHAPTER LXXI.

THE LADY OF MOWBRAY.

IT WAS the spring of last year, and Lady Bardolf was making a morning visit to Lady St. Julians.

'I heard they were to be at Lady Palmerston's last night,' said Lady St. Julians.

'No,' said Lady Bardolf shaking her head, 'they make their first appearance at Deloraine House. We meet there on Thursday, I know.'

'Well, I must say,' said Lady St. Julians, 'that I am curious to see her.'

'Lord Valentine met them last year at Naples.'

'And what does he say of her?'

'Oh! he raves!'

'What a romantic history! And what a fortunate man is Lord Marney! If one could only have foreseen events!' exclaimed Lady St. Julians. 'He was always a favourite of mine, though. But still I thought his brother was the very last person who ever would die. He was so very hard!'

'I fear Lord Marney is entirely lost to us,' said Lady Bardolf, looking very solemn.

'Ah! he always had a twist,' said Lady St. Julians, 'and used to breakfast with that horrid Mr. Trenchard, and do that sort of things. But still, with his immense fortune, I should think he would become rational.'

'You may well say immense,' said Lady Bardolf.

'Mr. Ormsby, and there is no better judge of another man's income, says there are not three peers in the kingdom who have so much a year clear.'

'They say the Mowbray estate is forty thousand a year,' said Lady St. Julians. 'Poor Lady de Mowbray! I understand that Mr. Mountchesney has resolved not to appeal against the verdict.'

'You know he has not the shadow of a chance,' said Lady Bardolf. 'Ah! what changes we have seen in that family! They say the writ of right killed poor Lord de Mowbray, but to my mind he never recovered the burning of the castle. We went over to them directly, and I never saw a man so cut up. We wanted them to come to us at Firebrace, but he said he should leave the county immediately. I remember Lord Bardolf mentioning to me that he looked like a dying man.'

'Well, I must say,' said Lady St. Julians, rallying as it were from a fit of abstraction, 'that I am most curious to see Lady Marney.'

The reader will infer from this conversation, that Dandy Mick, in spite of his stunning fall, and all dangers which awaited him on his recovery, had contrived in spite of fire and flame, sabre and carbine, trampling troopers, and plundering mobs, to reach the convent of Mowbray with the box of papers. There he inquired for Sybil, in whose hands, and whose hands alone, he was enjoined to deposit them. She was still absent; but, faithful to his instructions, Mick would deliver his charge to none other, and,
exhausted by the fatigues of the terrible day, he remained in the courtyard of the convent, lying down with the box for his pillow, until Sybil, under the protection of Egremont, herself returned. Then he fulfilled his mission. Sybil was too agitated at the moment to perceive all its import, but she delivered the box into the custody of Egremont, who desiring Mick to follow him to his hotel, bade farewell to Sybil, who, equally with himself, was then ignorant of the fatal encounter on Mowbray Moor.

We must drop a veil over the anguish which its inevitable and speedy revelation brought to the daughter of Gerard. Her love for her father was one of those profound emotions which seemed to form a constituent part of her existence. She remained for a long period in helpless woe, soothed only by the sacred cares of Ursula. There was another mourner in this season of sorrow who must not be forgotten; and that was Lady Marney. All that tenderness and the most considerate thought could devise to soften sorrow, and reconcile her to a change of life which at the first has in it something depressing, were extended by Egremont to Arabella. He supplied in an instant every arrangement which had been neglected by his brother, but which could secure her convenience, and tend to her happiness. Between Marney Abbey, where he insisted for the present that Arabella should reside, and Mowbray, Egremont passed his life for many months, until, by some management which we need not trace or analyse, Lady Marney came over one day to the convent at Mowbray, and carried back Sybil to Marney Abbey, never again to quit it until on her bridal day, when the Earl and Countess of Marney departed for Italy, where they passed nearly a year, and from which they had just returned at the commencement of this chapter.

During the previous period, however, many important events had occurred. Lord Marney had placed himself in communication with Mr. Hatton, who had soon become acquainted with all that had occurred in the muniment room of Mowbray Castle. The result was not what he had once anticipated; but for him it was not without some compensatory circumstances. True, another and an unexpected rival had stepped on the stage, with whom it was vain to cope; but the idea that he had deprived Sybil of her inheritance, had, ever since he had become acquainted with her, been the plague-spot of Hatton's life, and there was nothing that he desired more ardently than to see her restored to her rights, and to be instrumental in that restoration. How successful he was in pursuing her claim, the reader has already learnt.

Dandy Mick was rewarded for all the dangers he had encountered in the service of Sybil, and what he conceived was the vindication of popular rights. Lord Marney established him in business, and Mick took Devilsdust for a partner. Devilsdust, having thus obtained a position in society, and become a capitalist, thought it but a due homage to the social deencies to assume a decorous appellation, and he called himself by the name of the town where he was born. The firm of Radley, Mowbray, and Co. is a rising one; and will probably furnish in time a crop of members of Parliament and peers of the realm. Devilsdust married Caroline, and Mrs. Mowbray became a great favourite. She was always, perhaps, a little too fond of junketing, but she had a
sweet temper and a gay spirit, and sustained her husband in the agonies of a great speculation, or the despair of glutted markets. Julia became Mrs. Radley, and was much esteemed: no one could behave better. She was more orderly than Caroline, and exactly suited Mick, who wanted a person near him of decision and method. As for Harriet, she is not yet married. Though pretty and clever, she is selfish, and a screw. She has saved a good deal, and has a considerable sum in the savings' bank, but, like many heiresses, she cannot bring her mind to share her money with another. The great measures of Sir Robert Peel, which produced three good harvests, have entirely revived trade at Mowbray. The Temple is again open, newly-painted, and re-burnished, and Chaffing Jack has of course ‘rallied,’ while good Mrs. Carey still gossips with her neighbours round her well-stored stall, and tells wonderful stories of the great stick-out and riots of ’42.

And thus I conclude the last page of a work which, though its form be light and unpretending, would yet aspire to suggest to its readers some considerations of a very opposite character. A year ago, I presumed to offer to the public some volumes that aimed at calling their attention to the state of our political parties; their origin, their history, their present position. In an age of political infidelity, of mean passions, and petty thoughts, I would have impressed upon the rising race not to despair, but to seek in a right understanding of the history of their country and in the energies of heroic youth, the elements of national welfare. The present work advances another step in the same enterprise. From the state of parties it now would draw public thought to the state of the people whom those parties for two centuries have governed. The comprehension and the cure of this greater theme depend upon the same agencies as the first: it is the past alone that can explain the present, and it is youth alone that can mould the remedial future. The written history of our country for the last ten reigns has been a mere phantasma, giving to the origin and consequence of public transactions a character and colour in every respect dissimilar to their natural form and hue. In this mighty mystery all thoughts and things have assumed an aspect and title contrary to their real quality and style: Oligarchy has been called liberty; an exclusive priesthood has been christened a National Church; sovereignty has been the title of something that has had no dominion, while absolute power has been wielded by those who profess themselves the servants of the people. In the selfish strife of factions, two great existences have been blotted out of the history of England, the monarch and the multitude; as the power of the crown has diminished, the privileges of the people have disappeared; till at length the sceptre has become a pageant, and its subject has degenerated again into a serf.

It is nearly fourteen years ago, in the popular frenzy of a mean and selfish revolution which emancipated neither the crown nor the people, that I first took the occasion to intimate, and then to develop, to the first assembly of my countrymen that I ever had the honour to address, these convictions. They have been misunderstood, as is ever for a season the fate of truth, and they have obtained for their proponent much misrepresentation, as must ever be the lot of those who will not follow the beaten track
of a fallacious custom. But time, that brings all things, has brought also to the mind of England some suspicion that the idols they have so long worshipped, and the oracles that have so long deluded them, are not the true ones. There is a whisper rising in this country that loyalty is not a phrase, faith not a delusion, and popular liberty something more diffusive and substantial than the profane exercise of the sacred rights of sovereignty by political classes.

That we may live to see England once more possess a free monarchy, and a privileged and prosperous people, is my prayer; that these great consequences can only be brought about by the energy and devotion of our youth is my persuasion. We live in an age when to be young and to be indifferent can be no longer synonymous. We must prepare for the coming hour. The claims of the future are represented by suffering millions; and the youth of a nation are the trustees of posterity.
The duchess opened the library door, where she had been informed she should find Lord Montacute.

(See page 72.)
TANCREDO
OR
THE NEW CRUSADE

BY
BENJAMIN DISRAELI
EARL OF BEACONSFIELD

VOLUME I.

M. WALTER DUNNE
NEW YORK AND LONDON
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(ix)
TANCRED
OR
THE NEW CRUSADE

CHAPTER I.

A Matter of Importance.

In that part of the celebrated parish of St. George which is bounded on one side by Piccadilly and on the other by Curzon Street, is a district of a peculiar character. 'Tis a cluster of small streets of little houses, frequently intersected by mews, which here are numerous, and sometimes gradually, rather than abruptly, terminating in a ramification of those mysterious regions. Sometimes a group of courts develops itself, and you may even chance to find your way into a small market-place. Those, however, who are accustomed to connect these hidden residences of the humble with scenes of misery and characters of violence, need not apprehend in this district any appeal to their sympathies, or any shock to their tastes. All
is extremely genteel; and there is almost as much repose as in the golden saloons of the contiguous palaces. At any rate, if there be as much vice, there is as little crime.

No sight or sound can be seen or heard at any hour, which could pain the most precise or the most fastidious. Even if a chance oath may float on the air from the stable-yard to the lodging of a French cook, 'tis of the newest fashion, and, if responded to with less of novel charm, the repartee is at least conveyed in the language of the most polite of nations. They bet upon the Derby in these parts a little, are interested in Goodwood, which they frequent, have perhaps, in general, a weakness for play, live highly, and indulge those passions which luxury and refinement encourage; but that is all.

A policeman would as soon think of reconnoitring these secluded streets as of walking into a house in Park Lane or Berkeley Square, to which, in fact, this population in a great measure belongs. For here reside the wives of house-stewards and of butlers, in tenements furnished by the honest savings of their husbands, and let in lodgings to increase their swelling incomes; here dwells the retired servant, who now devotes his practised energies to the occasional festival, which, with his accumulations in the three per cents., or in one of the public-houses of the quarter, secures him at the same time an easy living, and the casual enjoyment of that great world which lingers in his memory. Here may be found his grace's coachman, and here his lordship's groom, who keeps a book and breeds periodically too speculative footmen, by betting odds on his master's horses. But, above all, it is in this district that the cooks have ever sought a favourite and elegant abode. An air of stillness and serenity, of exhausted passions and suppressed emotion, rather than of sluggishness and of dullness, distinguishes this quarter during the day.

When you turn from the vitality and brightness of Piccadilly, the park, the palace, the terraced mansions, the sparkling equipages, the cavaliers cantering up the hill, the swarming multitude, and enter the region of which we are speaking, the effect is at first almost unearthly. Not a carriage, not a horseman, scarcely a passenger; there seems some great and sudden collapse in the metropolitan system, as if a pest had been announced, or an enemy were expected in alarm by a vanquished capital. The approach from Curzon Street has not this effect. Hyde Park has still about it something of Arcadia. There are woods and waters, and the occasional illusion of an illimitable distance of sylvan joyance. The spirit is allured to gentle thoughts as we wander in what is still really a lane, and, turning down Stanhope Street, behold that house which the great Lord Chesterfield tells us, in one of his letters, he was 'building among the fields.' The caving of the rocks in his gardens sustains the tone of mind, and Curzon Street, after a long, straggling, sawney course, ceasing to be a thoroughfare, and losing itself in the gardens of another palace, is quite in keeping with all the accessories.

In the night, however, the quarter of which we are speaking is alive. The manners of the population follow those of their masters. They keep late hours. The banquet and the ball dismiss them to their homes at a time when the trades of ordinary regions move in their last sleep, and dream of opening shutters and decking the windows of their shops.
At night, the chariot whirls round the frequent corners of these little streets, and the opening valves of the mews vomit forth their legion of broughams. At night, too, the footman, taking advantage of a ball at Holderness, or a concert at Lansdowne House, and knowing that, in either instance, the link-boy will answer when necessary for his summoned name, ventures to look in at his club, reads the paper, talks of his master or his mistress, and perhaps throws a main. The shops of this district, depending almost entirely for their custom on the classes we have indicated, and kept often by their relations, follow the order of the place, and are most busy when other places of business are closed.

A gusty March morning had subsided into a sunny afternoon, nearly two years ago, when a young man, slender, above the middle height, with a physiognomy thoughtful yet delicate, his brown hair worn long, slight whiskers, on his chin a tuft, knocked at the door of a house in Carrington Street, May Fair. His mien and his costume denoted a character of the class of artists. He wore a pair of green trousers, braided with a black stripe down their sides, puckered towards the waist, yet fitting with considerable precision to the boot of French leather that enclosed a well-formed foot. His waistcoat was of maroon velvet, displaying a steel watch-chain of refined manufacture, and a black satin cravat, with a coral brooch. His bright blue frockcoat was frogged and braided like his trousers. As the knocker fell from the primrose-coloured glove that screened his hand, he uncovered, and passing his fingers rapidly through his hair, resumed his new silk hat, which he placed rather on one side of his head.

‘Ah! Mr. Leander, is it you?’ exclaimed a pretty girl, who opened the door and blushed. ‘And how is the good papa, Eugenie? Is he at home? For I want to see him much.’

‘I will show you up to him at once, Mr. Leander, for he will be very happy to see you. We have been thinking of hearing of you,’ she added, talking as she ushered her guest up the narrow staircase. ‘The good papa has a little cold: ’tis not much, I hope; caught at Sir Wallinger’s, a large dinner; they would have the kitchen windows open, which spoilt all the entrées, and papa got a cold; but I think, perhaps, it is as much vexation as anything else, you know if anything goes wrong, especially with the entrées—

‘He feels as a great artist must,’ said Leander, finishing her sentence. ‘However, I am not sorry at this moment to find him a prisoner, for I am pressed to see him. It is only this morning that I have returned from Mr. Coningsby’s at Hellingsley: the house full, forty covers every day, and some judges. One does not grudge one’s labour if we are appreciated,’ added Leander; ‘but I have had my troubles. One of my marmitons has disappointed me: I thought I had a genius, but on the third day he lost his head; and had it not been—Ah! good papa,’ he exclaimed, as the door opened, and he came forward and warmly shook the hand of a portly man, advanced in middle life, sitting in an easy chair, with a glass of sugared water by his side, and reading a French newspaper in his chamber robe, and with a white cotton nightcap on his head.

‘Ah! my child,’ said Papa Prévost, ‘is it you? You see me a prisoner; Eugenie has told you; a din-
ner at a merchant's; dressed in a draught; everything spoiled, and I——' and sighing, Papa Prevost sipped his _eau sucrée._

'We have all our troubles,' said Leander, in a conso

...
Prevost. ‘Gaillard and Abreu will not serve under you, eh? And if they would, they could not be trusted. They would betray you at the tenth hour.’

‘What I want are generals of division, not commanders-in-chief. Abreu is sufficiently bon garçon, but he has taken an engagement with Monsieur de Sidonia, and is not permitted to go out.’

‘With Monsieur de Sidonia! You once thought of that, my Leander. And what is his salary?’

‘Not too much; four hundred and some perquisites. It would not suit me; besides, I will take no engagement but with a crowned head. But Abreu likes travelling, and he has his own carriage, which pleases him.’

‘There are Philippon and Dumoreau,’ said Prevost; ‘they are very safe.’

‘I was thinking of them,’ said Leander, ‘they are safe, under you. And there is an Englishman, Smit, he is chef at Sir Stanley’s, but his master is away at this moment. He has talent.’

‘Yourself, four chefs, with your marmitons; it would do,’ said Prevost.

‘For the kitchen,’ said Leander; ‘but who is to dress the tables?’

‘Ah!’ exclaimed Papa Prevost, shaking his head.

‘Daubuz’ head man, Trenton, is the only one I could trust; and he wants fancy, though his style is broad and bold. He made a pyramid of pines relieved with grapes, without destroying the outline, very good, this last week, at Hellingsley. But Trenton has been upset on the railroad, and much injured. Even if he recover, his hand will tremble so for the next month that I could have no confidence in him.’

‘Perhaps you might find some one at the Duke’s?’

‘Out of the question!’ said Leander; ‘I make it always a condition that the head of every department shall be appointed by myself. I take Pellerini with me for the confectionery. How often have I seen the effect of a first-rate dinner spoiled by a vulgar dessert! I laid flat on the table, for example, or with ornaments that look as if they had been hired at a pastrycook’s: triumphal arches, and Chinese pagodas, and solitary pines springing up out of ice-tubs surrounded with peaches, as if they were in the window of a fruiter of Covent Garden.’

‘Ah! it is incredible what uneducated people will do,’ said Prevost. ‘The dressing of the tables was a department of itself in the Imperial kitchen.’

‘It demands an artist of a high calibre,’ said Leander. ‘I know only one man who realises my idea, and he is at St. Petersburg. You do not know Anustase? There is a man! But the Emperor has him secure. He can scarcely complain, however, since he is decorated, and has the rank of full colonel.’

‘Ah!’ said Prevost, mournfully, ‘there is no recognition of genius in this country. What think you of Vanesse, my child? He has had a regular education.’

‘In a bad school; as a pis aller one might put up with him. But his eternal tiers of bonbons! As if they were ranged for a supper of the Carnival, and my guests were going to pelt each other! No, I could not stand Vanesse, papa.’

‘The dressing of the table: ’tis a rare talent,’ said Prevost, mournfully, ‘and always was. In the Imperial kitchen——’

‘Papa,’ said Eugenie, opening the door, and putting in her head, ‘here is Monsieur Vanillette just
come from Brussels. He has brought you a basket of truffles from Ardennes. I told him you were on business, but to-night, if you be at home, he could come.

'Vanillette!' exclaimed Prevost, starting in his chair, 'our little Vanillette! There is your man, Leander. He was my first pupil, as you were my last, my child. Bring up our little Vanillette, Eugenie. He is in the household of King Leopold, and his forte is dressing the table!'
besides his own. He was one of the chief pillars of their cause; but he was not only independent, he was conscientious and had scruples. Saratoga staggered him. The defection of the Montacute votes, at this moment, would have at once terminated the struggle between England and her colonies. A fresh illustration of the advantages of our parliamentary constitution! The independent Mr. Montacute, however, stood by his sovereign; his five votes continued to cheer the noble lord in the blue ribbon, and their master took his seat and the oaths in the House of Lords, as Earl of Bellamont and Viscount Montacute.

This might be considered sufficiently well for one generation; but the silver spoon which some fairy had placed in the cradle of the Earl of Bellamont was of colossal proportions. The French Revolution succeeded the American war, and was occasioned by it. It was but just, therefore, that it also should bring its huge quota to the elevation of the man whom a colonial revolt had made an earl. Amid the panic of Jacobinism, the declamations of the friends of the people, the sovereign having no longer Hanover for a refuge, and the prime minister examined as a witness in favour of the very persons whom he was trying for high treason, the Earl of Bellamont made a calm visit to Downing Street, and requested the revival of all the honours of the ancient Earls and Dukes of Bellamont in his own person. Mr. Pitt, who was far from favourable to the exclusive character which distinguished the English peerage in the last century, was himself not disinclined to accede to the gentle request of his powerful supporter; but the king was less flexible. His Majesty, indeed, was on principle not opposed to the revival of titles in families to

whom the domains without the honours of the old nobility had descended; and he recognised the claim of the present Earls of Bellamont eventually to regain the strawberry leaf which had adorned the coronet of the father of the present countess. But the king was of opinion that this supreme distinction ought only to be conferred on the blood of the old house, and that a generation, therefore, must necessarily elapse before a Duke of Bellamont could again figure in the golden book of the English aristocracy.

But George the Third, with all his firmness, was doomed to frequent discomfiture. His lot was cast in troubled waters, and he had often to deal with individuals as inflexible as himself. Benjamin Franklin was not more calmly contumacious than the individual whom his treason had made an English peer. In that age of violence, change and panic, power, directed by a clear brain and an obdurate spirit, could not fail of its aim; and so it turned out, that, in the very teeth of the royal will, the simple country gentleman, whose very name was forgotten, became, at the commencement of this century, Duke of Bellamont, Marquis of Montacute, Earl of Bellamont, Dacre, and Villeroy, with all the baronies of the Plantagenets in addition. The only revenge of the king was, that he never would give the Duke of Bellamont the garter. It was as well perhaps that there should be something for his son to desire.

The Duke and Duchess of Bellamont were the handsomest couple in England, and devoted to each other, but they had only one child. Fortunately, that child was a son. Precious life! The Marquis of Montacute was married before he was of age. Not a moment was to be lost to find heirs for all these
honours. Perhaps, had his parents been less precipitate, their object might have been more securely obtained. The union was not a happy one. The first duke had, however, the gratification of dying a grandfather. His successor bore no resemblance to him, except in that beauty which became a characteristic of the race. He was born to enjoy, not to create. A man of pleasure, the chosen companion of the Regent in his age of riot, he was cut off in his prime; but he lived long enough to break his wife’s heart and his son’s spirit; like himself, too, an only child.

The present Duke of Bellamont had inherited something of the clear intelligence of his grandsire, with the gentle disposition of his mother. His fair abilities, and his benevolent inclinations, had been cultivated. His mother had watched over the child, in whom she found alike the charm and consolation of her life. But, at a certain period of youth, the formation of character requires a masculine impulse, and that was wanting. The duke disliked his son; in time he became even jealous of him. The duke had found himself a father at too early a period of life. Himself in his lusty youth, he started with alarm at the form that recalled his earliest and most brilliant hour, and who might prove a rival. The son was of a gentle and affectionate nature, and sighed for the tenderness of his harsh and almost vindictive parent. But he had not that passionate soul which might have appealed, and perhaps not in vain, to the dormant sympathies of the being who had created him. The young Montacute was by nature of an extreme shyness, and the accidents of his life had not tended to dissipate his painful want of self-confidence. Physically courageous, his moral timidity was remark-}

able. He alternately blushed or grew pale in his rare interviews with his father, trembled in silence before the undeserved sarcasm, and often endured the unjust accusation without an attempt to vindicate himself. Alone, and in tears alike of woe and indignation, he cursed the want of resolution or ability which had again missed the opportunity that, both for his mother and himself, might have placed affairs in a happier position. Most persons, under these circumstances, would have become bitter, but Montacute was too tender for malice, and so he only turned melancholy.

On the threshold of manhood, Montacute lost his mother, and this seemed the catastrophe of his unhappy life. His father neither shared his grief, nor attempted to alleviate it. On the contrary, he seemed to redouble his efforts to mortify his son. His great object was to prevent Lord Montacute from entering society, and he was so complete a master of the nervous temperament on which he was acting that there appeared a fair chance of his succeeding in his benevolent intentions. When his son’s education was completed, the duke would not furnish him with the means of moving in the world in a becoming manner, or even sanction his travelling. His Grace was resolved to break his son’s spirit by keeping him immured in the country. Other heirs apparent of a rich seignory would soon have removed these difficulties. By bill or by bond, by living usury, or by post-obit liquidation, by all the means that private friends or public offices could supply, the sinews of war would have been forthcoming. They would have beaten their fathers’ horses at Newmarket, eclipsed them with their mistresses, and, sitting for their boroughs, voted against their party. But Montacute was not
one of those young heroes who rendered so distin-
guished the earlier part of this century. He had passed
his life so much among women and clergymen that
he had never emancipated himself from the old law
that enjoined him to honour a parent. Besides, with
all his shyness and timidity, he was extremely proud.
He never forgot that he was a Montacute, though he
had forgotten, like the world in general, that his
grandfather once bore a different and humbler name.
All merged in the great fact, that he was the living
representative of those Montacutes of Bellamont, whose
wild and politic achievements, or the sustained splen-
dour of whose stately life had for seven hundred
years formed a stirring and superb portion of the his-
tory and manners of our country. Death was prefer-
able, in his view, to having such a name soiled in
the haunts of jockeys and courtesans and usurers;
and, keen as was the anguish which the conduct of
the duke to his mother or himself had often occa-
sioned him, it was sometimes equalled in degree by
the sorrow and the shame which he endured when
he heard of the name of Bellamont only in connection
with some stratagem of the turf or some frantic revel.
Without a friend, almost without an acquaintance,
Montacute sought refuge in love. She who shed over
his mournful life the divine ray of feminine sympathy
was his cousin, the daughter of his mother's brother,
an English peer, but resident in the north of Ireland,
where he had vast possessions. It was a family oth-
erwise little calculated to dissipate the reserve and
gloom of a depressed and melancholy youth; puritan-
ical, severe and formal in their manners, their relaxa-
tions a Bible Society, or a meeting for the conversion
of the Jews. But Lady Katherine was beautiful, and
all were kind to one to whom kindness was strange,
and the soft pathos of whose solitary spirit demanded
affection.
Montacute requested his father's permission to
marry his cousin, and was immediately refused. The
duke particularly disliked his wife's family; but the
fact is, he had no wish that his son should ever
marry. He meant to perpetuate his race himself, and
was at this moment, in the midst of his orgies, med-
itating a second alliance, which should compensate
him for his boyish blunder. In this state of affairs,
Montacute, at length stung to resistance, inspired by
the most powerful of passions, and acted upon by a
stronger volition than his own, was planning a mar-
rriage in spite of his father (love, a cottage by an
Irish lake, and seven hundred a-year) when intel-
ligence arrived that his father, whose powerful frame
and vigorous health seemed to menace a patriarchal
term, was dead.
The new Duke of Bellamont had no experience of
the world; but, though long cowed by his father, he
had a strong character. Though the circle of his ideas
was necessarily contracted, they were all clear and
firm. In his moody youth he had imbibed certain
impressions and arrived at certain conclusions, and
they never quitted him. His mother was his model
of feminine perfection, and he had loved his cousin
because she bore a remarkable resemblance to her
aunt. Again, he was of opinion that the tie between
the father and the son ought to be one of intimate
confidence and refined tenderness, and he resolved
that, if Providence favoured him with offspring, his
child should ever find in him absolute devotion of
thought and feeling.
A variety of causes and circumstances had impressed him with a conviction that what is called fashionable life was a compound of frivolity and fraud, of folly and vice; and he resolved never to enter it. To this he was, perhaps, in some degree unconsciously prompted by his reserved disposition, and by his painful sense of inexperience, for he looked forward to this world with almost as much of apprehension as of dislike. To politics, in the vulgar sense of the word, he had an equal repugnance. He had a lofty idea of his duty to his sovereign and his country, and felt within him the energies that would respond to a conjuncture. But he acceded to his title in a period of calmness, when nothing was called in question, and no danger was apprehended; and as for the fights of factions, the duke altogether held himself aloof from them; he wanted nothing, not even the blue ribbon which he was soon obliged to take. Next to his domestic hearth, all his being was concentrated in his duties as a great proprietor of the soil. On these he had long pondered, and these he attempted to fulfil. That performance, indeed, was as much a source of delight to him as of obligation. He loved the country and a country life. His reserve seemed to melt away the moment he was on his own soil. Courteous he ever was, but then he became gracious and hearty. He liked to assemble 'the county' around him; to keep 'the county' together; 'the county' seemed always his first thought; he was proud of 'the county,' where he reigned supreme, not more from his vast possessions than from the influence of his sweet yet stately character, which made those devoted to him who otherwise were independent of his sway.

From straitened circumstances, and without having had a single fancy of youth gratified, the Duke of Bellamont had been suddenly summoned to the lordship of an estate scarcely inferior in size and revenue to some continental principalities; to dwell in palaces and castles, to be surrounded by a disciplined retinue, and to find every wish and want gratified before they could be expressed or anticipated. Yet he showed no elation, and acceded to his inheritance as serene as if he had never felt a pang or proved a necessity. She whom in the hour of trial he had selected for the future partner of his life, though a remarkable woman, by a singular coincidence of feeling, for it was as much from her original character as from sympathy with her husband, confirmed him in all his moods.

Katherine, Duchess of Bellamont, was beautiful: small and delicate in structure, with a dazzling complexion, and a smile which, though rare, was of the most winning and brilliant character. Her rich brown hair and her deep blue eye might have become a dryad; but her brow denoted intellect of a high order, and her mouth spoke inexorable resolution. She was a woman of fixed opinions, and of firm and compact prejudices. Brought up in an austere circle, where on all matters irrevocable judgment had been passed, which enjoyed the advantages of knowing exactly what was true in dogma, what just in conduct, and what correct in manners, she had early acquired the convenient habit of decision, while her studious mind employed its considerable energies in mastering every writer who favoured those opinions which she had previously determined were the right ones.
The duchess was deep in the divinity of the seventeenth century. In the controversies between the two churches, she could have perplexed St. Omers or Maynooth. Chillingworth might be found her boudoir. Not that her Grace's reading was confined to divinity; on the contrary, it was various and extensive. Puritan in religion, she was precise in morals; but in both she was sincere. She was so in all things. Her nature was frank and simple; if she were inflexible, she at least wished to be just; and though very conscious of the greatness of her position, she was so sensible of its duties that there was scarcely any exertion which she would evade, or any humility from which she would shrink, if she believed she were doing her duty to her God or to her neighbour.

It will be seen, therefore, that the Duke of Bellamont found no obstacle in his wife, who otherwise much influenced his conduct, to the plans which he had pre-conceived for the conduct of his life after marriage. The duchess shrank, with a feeling of haughty terror from that world of fashion which would have so willingly greeted her. During the greater part of the year, therefore, the Bellamonts resided in their magnificent castle, in their distant county, occupied with all the business and the pleasures of the provinces. While the duke, at the head of the magistracy, in the management of his estates, and in the sports of which he was fond, found ample occupation, his wife gave an impulse to the charity of the county, founded schools, endowed churches, received their neighbours, read her books, and amused herself in the creation of beautiful gardens, for which she had a passion.
All that the world knew was, that there was a great peer who was called Duke of Bellamont; that there was a great house in London, with a courtyard, which bore his name; that he had a castle in the country, which was one of the boasts of England; and that this great duke had a duchess; but they never met them anywhere, nor did their wives and their sisters, and the ladies whom they admired, or who admired them, either at ball or at breakfast, either at morning dances or at evening déjeuners. It was clear, therefore, that the Bellamonts might be very great people, but they were not in 'society.'

It must have been some organic law, or some fate which uses structure for its fulfilment, but again it seemed that the continuance of the great house of Montacute should depend upon the life of a single being. The duke, like his father and his grandfather, was favoured only with one child, but that child was again a son. From the moment of his birth, the very existence of his parents seemed identified with his welfare. The duke and his wife mutually assumed to each other a secondary position, in comparison with that occupied by their offspring. From the hour of his birth to the moment when this history opens, and when he was about to complete his majority, never had such solicitude been lavished on human being as had been continuously devoted to the life of the young Lord Montacute. During his earlier education he scarcely quitted home. He had, indeed, once been shown to Eton, surrounded by faithful domestics, and accompanied by a private tutor, whose vigilance would not have disgraced a superintendent of police; but the scarlet fever happened to break out during his first half, and Lord Montacute was instantly snatched away from the scene of danger, where he was never again to appear. At eighteen he went to Christ-church. His mother, who had nursed him herself, wrote to him every day; but this was not found sufficient, and the duke hired a residence in the neighbourhood of the university, in order that they might occasionally see their son during term.
CHAPTER III.

A DISCUSSION ABOUT MONEY.

AW Eskdale just now,' said Mr. Cassilis, at White's, 'going down to the Duke of Bellamont's. Great doings there; son comes of age at Easter. Wonder what sort of fellow he is? Anybody know anything about him?'

'I wonder what his father's rent-roll is?' said Mr. Ormsby.

'They say it is quite clear,' said Lord Fitz-Heron.

'Safe for that,' said Lord Milford; 'and plenty of ready money, too, I should think, for one never heard of the present duke doing anything.'

'He does a good deal in his county,' said Lord Valentine.

'I don't call that anything,' said Lord Milford; 'but I mean to say he never played, was never seen at Newmarket, or did anything which anybody can remember. In fact, he is a person whose name you never by any chance hear mentioned.'

'He is a sort of cousin of mine,' said Lord Valentine; 'and we are all going down to the coming of age: that is, we are asked.'

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'Then you can tell us what sort of fellow the son is.'

'I never saw him,' said Lord Valentine; 'but I know the duchess told my mother last year, that Montacute, throughout his life, had never occasioned her a single moment's pain.'

Here there was a general laugh.

'Well, I have no doubt he will make up for lost time,' said Mr. Ormsby, demurely.

'Nothing like mamma's darling for upsetting a coach,' said Lord Milford. 'You ought to bring your cousin here, Valentine; we would assist the development of his unsophisticated intelligence.'

'If I go down, I will propose it to him.'

'Why if?' said Mr. Cassilis; 'sort of thing I should like to see once uncommonly: oxen roasted alive, old armour, and the girls of the village all running about as if they were behind the scenes.'

'Is that the way you did it at your majority, George?' said Lord Fitz-Heron.

'Egad! I kept my arrival at years of discretion at Brighton. I believe it was the last fun there ever was at the Pavilion. The poor dear king, God bless him! proposed my health, and made the devil's own speech; we all began to pipe. He was Regent then. Your father was there, Valentine; ask him if he remembers it. That was a scene! I won't say how it ended; but the best joke is, I got a letter from my governor a few days after, with an account of what they had all been doing at Brandon, and rowing me for not coming down, and I found out I had kept my coming of age the wrong day.'

'Did you tell them?'
‘Not a word: I was afraid we might have had to go through it over again.’

‘I suppose old Bellamont is the devil’s own screw,’ said Lord Milford. ‘Rich governors, who have never been hard up, always are.’

‘No: I believe he is a very good sort of fellow,’ said Lord Valentine; ‘at least my people always say so. I do not know much about him, for they never go anywhere.’

‘They have got Leander down at Montacute,’ said Mr. Cassillis. ‘Had not such a thing as a cook in the whole county. They say Lord Eskdale arranged the cuisine for them; so you will feed well, Valentine.’

‘That is something; and one can eat before Easter; but when the balls begin—’

‘Oh! as for that, you will have dancing enough at Montacute; it is expected on these occasions: Sir Roger de Coverley, tenants’ daughters, and all that sort of thing. Deuced funny, but I must say, if I am to have a lark, I like Vauxhall.’

‘I never met the Bellamonts,’ said Lord Milford, musingly. ‘Are there any daughters?’

‘None.’

‘That is a bore. A single daughter, even if there be a son, may be made something of; because, in nine cases out of ten, there is a round sum in the settlements for the younger children, and she takes it all.’

‘That is the case of Lady Blanche BickerstAFF, said Lord Fitz-Heron. ‘She will have a hundred thousand pounds.’

‘You don’t mean that!’ said Lord Valentine; ‘and she is a very nice girl, too.’

‘You are quite wrong about the hundred thousand, Fitz,’ said Lord Milford; ‘for I made it my business to inquire most particularly into the affair: it is only fifty.’

‘In these cases, the best rule is only to believe half,’ said Mr. Ormsby.

‘Then you have only got twenty thousand a-year, Ormsby,’ said Lord Milford, laughing, ‘because the world gives you forty.’

‘Well, we must do the best we can in these hard times,’ said Mr. Ormsby, with an air of mock resignation. ‘With your Dukes of Bellamont and all these grandees on the stage, we little men shall be scarcely able to hold up our heads.’

‘Come, Ormsby,’ said Lord Milford; ‘tell us the amount of your income tax.’

‘They say Sir Robert quite blushed when he saw the figure at which you were sacked, and declared it was downright spoliation.’

‘You young men are always talking about money,’ said Mr. Ormsby, shaking his head; ‘you should think of higher things.’

‘I wonder what young Montacute will be thinking of this time next year,’ said Lord Fitz-Heron.

‘There will be plenty of people thinking of him,’ said Mr. Cassillis. ‘Egad! you gentlemen must stir yourselves, if you mean to be turned off. You will have rivals.’

‘He will be no rival to me,’ said Lord Milford; ‘for I am an avowed fortune-hunter, and that you say he does not care for, at least, at present.’

‘And I marry only for love,’ said Lord Valentine, laughing; ‘and so we shall not clash.’

‘Ay, ay; but if he will not go to the heiresses,
the heiresses will go to him,' said Mr. Ormsby. 'I have seen a good deal of these things, and I generally observe the eldest son of a duke takes a fortune out of the market. Why, there is Beaumanoir, he is like Valentine; I suppose he intends to marry for love, as he is always in that way; but the heiresses never leave him alone, and in the long run you cannot withstand it; it is like a bribe; a man is indignant at the bare thought, refuses the first offer, and pockets the second.'

'It is very immoral, and very unfair,' said Lord Milford, 'that any man should marry for tin who does not want it.'
he observes the number of cross routes which branch off from the main road, and which, though of less dimensions, are equally remarkable for their masterly structure and compact condition.

Sometimes the land is cleared, and he finds himself by the homestead of a forest farm, and remarks the buildings, distinguished not only by their neatness, but the propriety of their rustic architecture. Still advancing, the deer become rarer, and the road is formed by an avenue of chestnuts; the forest, on each side, being now transformed into vegetable gardens. The stir of the population is soon evident. Persons are moving to and fro on the side path of the road. Horsemen and carts seem returning from market; women with empty baskets, and then the rare vision of a stage-coach. The postilion spurs his horses, cracks his whip, and dashes at full gallop into the town of Montacute, the capital of the forest.

It is the prettiest little town in the world, built entirely of hewn stone, the well-paved and well-lighted streets as neat as a Dutch village. There are two churches; one of great antiquity, the other raised by the present duke, but in the best style of Christian architecture. The bridge that spans the little but rapid river Belle, is perhaps a trifle too vast and Roman for its site; but it was built by the first duke of the second dynasty, who was always afraid of underbuilding his position. The town was also indebted to him for their hall, a Palladian palace. Montacute is a corporate town, and, under the old system, returned two members to Parliament. The amount of its population, according to the rule generally observed, might have preserved it from disfranchisement, but, as every house belonged to the duke, and as he

was what, in the confused phraseology of the revolutionary war, was called a Tory, the Whigs took care to put Montacute in Schedule A.

The town-hall, the market-place, a literary institution, and the new church, form, with some good houses of recent erection, a handsome square, in which there is a fountain, a gift to the town from the present duchess.

At the extremity of the town, the ground rises, and on a woody slope, which is in fact the termination of a long range of tableland, may be seen the towers of the outer court of Montacute Castle. The principal building, which is vast and of various ages, from the Plantagenets to the Guelphs, rises on a terrace, from which, on the side opposite to the town, you descend into a well-timbered inclosure, called the Home Park. Further on, the forest again appears; the deer again crouch in their fern, or glance along the vistas; nor does this green domain terminate till it touches the vast and purple moors that divide the kingdoms of Great Britain.

It was on an early day of April that the duke was sitting in his private room, a pen in one hand, and looking up with a face of pleasurable emotion at his wife, who stood by his side, her right arm sometimes on the back of his chair, and sometimes on his shoulder, while with her other hand, between the intervals of speech, she pressed a handkerchief to her eyes, bedewed with the expression of an affectionate excitement.

‘It is too much,’ said her Grace. ‘And done in such a handsome manner!’ said the duke.

‘I would not tell our dear child of it at this mo-
‘You are right, Kate. It will keep till the celebration is over. How delighted he will be!’

‘My dear George, I sometimes think we are too happy.’

‘You are not half as happy as you deserve to be,’ replied her husband, looking up with a smile of affection; and then he finished his reply to the letter of Mr. Hungerford, one of the county members, informing the duke, that now Lord Montacute was of age, he intended at once to withdraw from Parliament, having for a long time fixed on the majority of the heir of the house of Bellamont as the signal for that event. ‘I accepted the post,’ said Mr. Hungerford, ‘much against my will. Your Grace behaved to me at the time in the handsomest manner, and, indeed, ever since, with respect to this subject. But a Marquis of Montacute is, in my opinion, and, I believe I may add, in that of the whole county, our proper representative; besides, we want young blood in the House.’

‘It certainly is done in the handsomest manner,’ said the duke.

‘But then you know, George, you behaved to him in the handsomest manner; he says so, as you do indeed to everybody; and this is your reward.’

‘I should be very sorry, indeed, if Hungerford did not withdraw with perfect satisfaction to himself, and his family too,’ urged the duke; ‘they are most respectable people, one of the most respectable families in the county; I should be quite grieved if this step were taken without their entire and hearty concurrence.’

Of course it is,’ said the duchess, ‘with the entire and hearty concurrence of every one. Mr. Hungerford says so. And I must say that, though few things could have gratified me more, I quite agree with Mr. Hungerford that a Lord Montacute is the natural member for the county; and I have no doubt that if Mr. Hungerford, or any one else in his position, had not resigned, they never could have met our child without feeling the greatest embarrassment.’

‘A man though, and a man of Hungerford’s position, an old family in the county, does not like to figure as a warming-pan,’ said the duke, thoughtfully. ‘I think it has been done in a very handsome manner.’

‘And we will show our sense of it,’ said the duchess. ‘The Hungerfords shall feel, when they come here on Thursday, that they are among our best friends.’

‘That is my own Kate! Here is a letter from your brother. They will be here to-morrow. Eskdale cannot come over till Wednesday. He is at home, but detained by a meeting about his new harbour.’

‘I am delighted that they will be here to-morrow,’ said the duchess. ‘I am so anxious that he should see Kate before the castle is full, when he will have a thousand calls upon his time! I feel persuaded that he will love her at first sight. And as for their being cousins, why, we were cousins, and that did not hinder us from loving each other.’

‘If she resemble you as much as you resembled your aunt ——’ said the duke, looking up.

‘She is my perfect image, my very self, Harriet says, in disposition, as well as face and form.’
'Then our son has a good chance of being a very happy man,' said the duke.
'That he should come of age, enter Parliament, and marry in the same year! We ought to be very thankful. What a happy year!'
'But not one of these events has yet occurred,' said the duke, smiling.
'But they all will,' said the duchess, 'under Providence.'
'I would not precipitate marriage.'
'Certainly not; nor should I wish him to think of it before the autumn. I should like him to be married on our wedding-day.'

CHAPTER V.

THE HEIR COMES OF AGE.

The sun shone brightly, there was a triumphal arch at every road; the market-place and the town-hall were caparisoned like steeds for a tournament, every house had its garland; the flags were flying on every tower and steeple. There was such a peal of bells you could scarcely hear your neighbour's voice; then came discharges of artillery, and then bursts of music from various bands, all playing different tunes. The country people came trooping in, some on horseback, some in carts, some in procession. The Temperance band made an immense noise, and the Odd Fellows were loudly cheered. Every now and then one of the duke's yeomanry galloped through the town in his regimentals of green and silver, with his dark flowing plume and clattering sabre, and with an air of business-like desperation, as if he were carrying a message from the commander-in-chief in the thickest of the fight.

Before the eventful day of which this merry morn was the harbinger, the arrivals of guests at the castle had been numerous and important. First came the brother of the duchess, with his countess, and their
fair daughter the Lady Katherine, whose fate, unconsciously to herself, had already been sealed by her noble relatives. She was destined to be the third Katherine of Bellamont that her fortunate house had furnished to these illustrious walls. Nor, if unaware of her high lot, did she seem unworthy of it. Her mien was prophetic of the state assigned to her. This was her first visit to Montacute since her early childhood, and she had not encountered her cousin since their nursery days. The day after them, Lord Eskdale came over from his principal seat in the contiguous county, of which he was lord-lieutenant. He was the first cousin of the duke, his father and the second Duke of Bellamont having married two sisters, and of course intimately related to the duchess and her family. Lord Eskdale exercised a great influence over the house of Montacute, though quite unsought for by him. He was the only man of the world whom they knew, and they never decided upon anything out of the limited circle of their immediate experience without consulting him. Lord Eskdale had been the cause of their son going to Eton; Lord Eskdale had recommended them to send him to Christchurch. The duke had begged his cousin to be his trustee when he married; he had made him his executor, and had intended him as the guardian of his son. Although, from the difference of their habits, little thrown together in their earlier youth, Lord Eskdale had shown, even then, kind consideration for his relative; he had even proposed that they should travel together, but the old duke would not consent to this. After his death, however, being neighbours as well as relatives, Lord Eskdale had become the natural friend and counselor of his Grace.

The duke deservedly reposed in him implicit confidence, and entertained an almost unbounded admiration of his cousin's knowledge of mankind. He was scarcely less a favourite or less an oracle with the duchess, though there were subjects on which she feared Lord Eskdale did not entertain views as serious as her own; but Lord Eskdale, with an extreme carelessness of manner, and an apparent negligence of the minor arts of pleasing, was a consummate master of the feminine idiosyncrasy, and, from a French actress to an English duchess, was skilled in guiding women without ever letting the curb be felt. Scarcely a week elapsed, when Lord Eskdale was in the country, that a long letter of difficulties was not received by him from Montacute, with an earnest request for his immediate advice. His lordship, singularly averse to letter writing, and especially to long letter writing, used generally in reply to say that, in the course of a day or two, he should be in their part of the world, and would talk the matter over with them.

And, indeed, nothing was more amusing than to see Lord Eskdale, imperturbable, yet not heedless, with his peculiar calmness, something between that of a Turkish pasha and an English jockey, standing up with his back to the fire and his hands in his pockets, and hearing the united statement of a case by the Duke and Duchess of Bellamont; the serious yet quiet and unexaggerated narrative of his Grace, the impassioned interruptions, decided opinions, and lively expressions of his wife, when she felt the duke was not doing justice to the circumstances, or her view of them, and the Spartan brevity with which, when both his clients were exhausted, their counsel summed up the whole affair, and said three words
which seemed suddenly to remove all doubts, and to solve all difficulties. In all the business of life, Lord Eskdale, though he appreciated their native ability, and respected their considerable acquirements, which he did not share, looked upon his cousins as two children, and managed them as children; but he was really attached to them, and the sincere attachment of such a character is often worth more than the most passionate devotion. The last great domestic embarrassment at Montacute had been the affair of the cooks. Lord Eskdale had taken this upon his own shoulders, and, writing to Daubuz, had sent down Leander and his friends to open the minds and charm the palates of the north.

Lord Valentine and his noble parents, and their daughter, Lady Florentina, who was a great horsewoman, also arrived. The countess, who had once been a beauty with the reputation of a wit, and now set up for being a wit on the reputation of having been a beauty, was the lady of fashion of the party, and scarcely knew anybody present, though there were many who were her equals and some her superiors in rank. Her way was to be a little fine, always smiling and condescendingly amiable; when alone with her husband shrugging her shoulders somewhat, and vowing that she was delighted that Lord Eskdale was there, as she had somebody to speak to. It was what she called ‘quite a relief.’ A relief, perhaps, from Lord and Lady Mountjoy, whom she had been avoiding all her life; unfortunate people, who, with a large fortune, lived in a wrong square, and asked to their house everybody who was nobody; besides, Lord Mountjoy was vulgar, and laughed too loud, and Lady Mountjoy called you ‘my dear,’ and showed her teeth. A relief, perhaps, too, from the Hon. and Rev. Montacute Mountjoy, who, with Lady Eleanor, four daughters and two sons, had been invited to celebrate the majority of the future chieftain of their house. The countess had what is called ‘a horror of those Mountjoys, and those Montacute Mountjoys,’ and what added to her annoyance was, that Lord Valentine was always flirting with the Misses Montacute Mountjoy.

The countess could find no companions in the Duke and Duchess of Clanronald, because, as she told her husband, as they could not speak English and she could not speak Scotch, it was impossible to exchange ideas. The bishop of the diocese was there, toothless and tolerant, and wishing to be on good terms with all sects, provided they pay church-rates, and another bishop far more vigorous and of greater fame. By his administration the heir of Bellamont had entered the Christian Church, and by the imposition of his hands had been confirmed in it.

His lordship, a great authority with the duchess, was specially invited to be present on the interesting occasion, when the babe that he had held at the font, and the child that he had blessed at the altar, was about thus publicly to adopt and acknowledge the duties and responsibility of a man. But the countess, though she liked bishops, liked them, as she told her husband, ‘in their place.’ What that exactly was, she did not define; but probably their palaces or the House of Lords.

It was hardly to be expected that her ladyship would find any relief in the society of the Marquis and Marchioness of Hampshire; for his lordship passed his life in being the President of scientific and literary so-

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cieties, and was ready for anything from the Royal, if his turn ever arrived, to opening a Mechanics’ Institute in his neighbouring town. Lady Hampshire was an invalid; but her ailment was one of those mysteries which still remained insoluble, although, in the most liberal manner, she delighted to afford her friends all the information in her power. Never was a votary endowed with a faith at once so lively and so capricious. Each year she believed in some new remedy, and announced herself on the eve of some miraculous cure. But the saint was scarcely canonised before his claims to beatitude were impugned. One year Lady Hampshire never quitted Leamington; another, she contrived to combine the infinitesimal doses of Hahnemann with the colossal distractions of the metropolis. Now her sole conversation was the water cure. Lady Hampshire was to begin immediately after her visit to Montacute, and she spoke in her sawney voice of factitious enthusiasm, as if she pitied the lot of all those who were not about to sleep in wet sheets.

The members for the county, with their wives and daughters, the Hungerfords and the Ildertons, Sir Russell Malpas, or even Lord Hull, an Irish peer with an English estate, and who represented one of the divisions, were scarcely a relief. Lord Hull was a bachelor, and had twenty thousand a year, and would not have been too old for Florentina, if Lord Hull had only lived in ‘society,’ learnt how to dress and how to behave, and had avoided that peculiar coarseness of manners and complexion which seem the inevitable results of a provincial life. What are forty-five or even forty-eight years, if a man do not get up too early or go to bed too soon, if he be
dressed by the right persons, and, early accustomed to the society of women, he possesses that flexibility of manner and that readiness of genteel repartee which a feminine apprenticeship can alone confer? But Lord Hull was a man with a red face and a grey head on whom coarse indulgence and the selfish negligence of a country life had already conferred a shapeless form; and who, dressed something like a groom, sat at dinner in stolid silence by Lady Hampshire, who, whatever were her complaints, had certainly the art, if only from her questions, of making her neighbours communicative. The countess examined Lord Hull through her eye-glass with curious pity at so fine a fortune and so good a family being so entirely thrown away. Had he been brought up in a civilised manner, lived six months in May Fair, passed his carnival at Paris, never sported except in Scotland, and occasionally visited a German bath, even Lord Hull might have ‘fined down.’ His hair need not have been grey if it had been attended to; his complexion would not have been so glaring; his hands never could have grown to so huge a shape.

What a party, where the countess was absolutely driven to speculate on the possible destinies of a Lord Hull! But in this party there was not a single young man, at least not a single young man one had ever heard of, except her son, and he was of no use. The Duke of Bellamont knew no young men; the duke did not even belong to a club; the Duchess of Bellamont knew no young men; she never gave and she never attended an evening party. As for the county youth, the young Hungerfords and the young Ildertons, the best of them formed part of the London crowd.
Some of them, by complicated manoeuvres, might even have made their way into the countess's crowded saloons on a miscellaneous night. She knew the length of their tether. They ranged, as the Price Current says, from eight to three thousand a year. Not the figure that purchases a Lady Florentina!

There were many other guests, and some of them notable, though not of the class and character to interest the fastidious mother of Lord Valentine; but whoever and whatever they might be, of the sixty or seventy persons who were seated each day in the magnificent banqueting-room of Montacute Castle, feasting, amid pyramids of gold plate, on the masterpieces of Leander, there was not a single individual who did not possess one of the two great qualifications: they were all of them cousins of the Duke of Bellamont, or proprietors in his county.

But we must not anticipate, the great day of the festival having hardly yet commenced.

CHAPTER VI.

A Festal Day.

IN THE Home Park was a colossal pavilion, which held more than two thousand persons, and in which the townsfolk of Montacute were to dine; at equal distances were several smaller tents, each of different colours and patterns, and each bearing on a standard the name of one of the surrounding parishes which belonged to the Duke of Bellamont, and to the convenience and gratification of whose inhabitants these tents were to-day dedicated. There was not a man of Buddleton or Fuddleton; not a yeoman or peasant of Montacute super Mare or Montacute Abbots, nor of Percy Bellamont nor Friar's Bellamont, nor Winch nor Finch, nor of Mandeville Stokes nor Mandeville Bois; not a goodman true of Carleton and Ingleton and Kirkby and Dent, and Gillamoor and Padmore and Hutton le Hale; not a stout forester from the glades of Thorp, or the sylvan homes of Hurst Lydgate and Bishopstowe, that knew not where foamed and flowed the duke's ale, that was to quench the longings of his thirsty village. And their wives and daughters were equally welcome. At the entrance of

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each tent, the duke's servants invited all to enter, supplied them with required refreshments, or indicated their appointed places at the approaching banquet. In general, though there were many miscellaneous parties, each village entered the park in procession, with its flag and its band.

At noon the scene presented the appearance of an immense but well-ordered fair. In the background, men and boys climbed poles or raced in sacks, while the exploits of the gingers, their mischievous manoeuvres and subtle combinations, elicited frequent bursts of laughter. Further on, two long-menaced cricket matches called forth all the skill and energy of Fuddleton and Buddleton, and Winch and Finch.

The great throng of the population, however, was in the precincts of the terrace, where, in the course of the morning, it was known that the duke and duchess, with the hero of the day and all their friends, were to appear, to witness the sports of the people, and especially the feats of the morrice-dancers, who were at this moment practising before a very numerous and delighted audience. In the meantime, bells, drums, and trumpets, an occasional volley, and the frequent cheers and laughter of the multitude, combined with the brilliancy of the sun and the brightness of the ale to make a right gladsome scene.

'It's nothing to what it will be at night,' said one of the duke's footmen to his family, his father and mother, two sisters and a young brother, listening to him with open mouths, and staring at his state livery with mingled feelings of awe and affection. They had come over from Bellamont Friars, and their son had asked the steward to give him the care of the pavilion of that village, in order that he might look after his friends. Never was a family who esteemed themselves so fortunate or felt so happy. This was having a friend at court, indeed.

'It's nothing to what it will be at night,' said Thomas. 'You will have 'Hail, star of Bellamont!' and 'God save the Queen!' a crown, three stars, four flags, and two coronets, all in coloured lamps, letters six feet high, on the castle. There will be one hundred beacons lit over the space of fifty miles; the moment a rocket is shot off from the Round Tower; and as for fireworks, Bob, you'll see them at last. Bengal lights, and the largest wheels will be as common as squibs and crackers; and I have heard say, though it is not to be mentioned——' And he paused.

'Well, we'll not open our mouths,' said his father, earnestly.

'You had better not tell us,' said his mother, in a nervous paroxysm; 'for I am in such a fluster, I am sure I cannot answer for myself, and then Thomas may lose his place for breach of conference.'

'Nonsense, mother,' said his sisters, who snubbed their mother almost as readily as is the gracious habit of their betters. 'Pray tell us, Tom.'

'Ay, ay, Tom,' said his younger brother.

'Well,' said Tom, in a confidential whisper, 'won't there be a transparency! I have heard say the Queen never had anything like it. You won't be able to see it for the first quarter of an hour; there will be such a blaze of fire and rockets; but when it does come, they say it's like heaven opening; the young markiss on a cloud, with his hand on his heart, in his new uniform.'

'Dear me!' said the mother. 'I knew him before
he was weaned. The duchess suckled him herself, which shows her heart is very true; for they may say what they like, but if another's milk is in your child's veins, he seems, in a sort of way, as much her bairn as your own.

'Mother's milk makes a true born Englishman,' said the father; 'and I make no doubt our young markiss will prove the same.'

'How I long to see him!' exclaimed one of the daughters.

'And so do I!' said her sister; 'and in his uniform! How beautiful it must be!'

'Well, I don't know,' said the mother; 'and perhaps you will laugh at me for saying so, but after seeing my Thomas in his state livery, I don't care much for seeing anything else.'

'Mother, how can you say such things? I am afraid the crowd will be very great at the fireworks. We must try to get a good place.'

'I have arranged all that,' said Thomas, with a triumphant look. 'There will be an inner circle for the steward's friends, and you will be let in.'

'Oh!' exclaimed his sisters.

'Well, I hope I shall get through the day,' said his mother; 'but it's rather a trial, after our quiet life.'

'And when will they come on the terrace, Thomas?'

'You see, they are waiting for the corporation, that's the mayor and town council of Montacute; they are coming up with an address. There! Do you hear that? That's the signal gun. They are leaving the town-hall at this same moment. Now, in three-quarters of an hour's time or so, the duke and duchess, and the young markiss, and all of them, will come on the terrace. So you be alive, and draw near, and get a good place. I must look after these people.'

About the same time that the cannon announced that the corporation had quitted the town-hall, some one tapped at the chamber-door of Lord Eskdale, who was sealing a letter in his private room.

'Well, Harris?' said Lord Eskdale, looking up, and recognising his valet.

'His Grace has been inquiring for your lordship several times,' replied Mr. Harris, with a perplexed air.

'I shall be with him in good time,' replied his lordship, again looking down.

'If you could manage to come down at once, my lord,' said Mr. Harris.

'Why?'

'Mr. Leander wishes to see your lordship very much.'

'Ah! Leander!' said Lord Eskdale, in a more interested tone. 'What does he want?'

'I have not seen him,' said Mr. Harris; 'but Mr. Prevost tells me that his feelings are hurt.'

'I hope he has not struck,' said Lord Eskdale, with a comical glance.

'Something of that sort,' said Mr. Harris, very seriously.

Lord Eskdale had a great sympathy with artists; he was well acquainted with that irritability which is said to be the characteristic of the creative power; genius always found in him an indulgent arbiter. He was convinced that if the feelings of a rare spirit like Leander were hurt, they were not to be trifled with. He felt responsible for the presence of one so
eminent in a country where, perhaps, he was not properly appreciated; and Lord Eskdale descended to the steward's room with the consciousness of an important, probably a difficult, mission.

The kitchen of Montacute Castle was of the old style, fitted for baronial feasts. It covered a great space, and was very lofty. Now they build them in great houses on a different system; even more distinguished by height, but far more condensed in area, as it is thought that a dish often suffers from the distances which the cook has to move over in collecting its various component parts. The new principle seems sound; the old practice, however, was more picturesque. The kitchen at Montacute was like the preparation for the famous wedding feast of Prince Riquet with the Tuft, when the kind earth opened, and revealed that genial spectacle of white-capped cooks, and endless stoves and stewpans. The steady blaze of two colossal fires was shrouded by vast screens. Everywhere, rich materials and silent artists; business without bustle, and the all-pervading magic of method. Philippon was preparing a sauce; Dumoreau, in another quarter of the spacious chamber, was arranging some truffles; the Englishman, Smit, was fashioning a cutlet. Between these three generals of division aides-de-camp perpetually passed, in the form of active and observant marmitons, more than one of whom, as he looked on the great masters around him, and with the prophetic faculty of genius surveyed the future, exclaimed to himself, like Correggio, 'And I also will be a cook.'

In this animated and interesting scene was only one unoccupied individual, or rather occupied only with his own sad thoughts. This was Papa Prevost, leaning against rather than sitting on a dresser, with his arms folded, his idle knife stuck in his girdle, and the tassel of his cap awry with vexation. His gloomy brow, however, lit up as Mr. Harris, for whom he was waiting with anxious expectation, entered, and summoned him to the presence of Lord Eskdale, who, with a shrewd yet lounging air, which concealed his own foreboding perplexity, said, 'Well, Prevost, what is the matter? The people here been impertinent?'

Prevost shook his head. 'We never were in a house, my lord, where they were more obliging. It is something much worse.'

'Nothing wrong about your fish, I hope? Well, what is it?'

'Leander, my lord, has been dressing dinners for a week: dinners, I will be bound to say, which were never equalled in the Imperial kitchen, and the duke has never made a single observation, or sent him a single message. Yesterday, determined to outdo even himself, he sent up some escalopes de laitances de carpes à la Bellamont. In my time I have seen nothing like it, my lord. Ask Philippon, ask Dumoreau, what they thought of it! Even the Englishman, Smit, who never says anything, opened his mouth and exclaimed; as for the marmitons, they were breathless, and I thought Achille, the youth of whom I spoke to you, my lord, and who appears to me to be born with the true feeling, would have been overcome with emotion. When it was finished, Leander retired to his room—I attended him—and covered his face with his hands. Would you believe it, my lord! Not a word; not even a message. All this morning Leander has waited in the last hope. Nothing, absolutely nothing! How can he compose when he is
not appreciated? Had he been appreciated, he would
to-day not only have repeated the escaletes à la Bell-
lamont, but perhaps even invented what might have
outdone it. It is unheard of, my lord. The late lord
Monmouth would have sent for Leander the very
evening, or have written to him a beautiful letter,
which would have been preserved in his family; M.
de Sidonia would have sent him a tankard from his
table. These things in themselves are nothing; but
they prove to a man of genius that he is understood.
Had Leander been in the Imperial kitchen, or even
with the Emperor of Russia, he would have been
decorated!'

'Where is he?' said Lord Eskdale.

'He is alone in the cook's room.'

'I will go and say a word to him.'

Alone, in the cook's room, gazing in listless vac-
cancy on the fire, that fire which, under his influence,
had often achieved so many master-works, was the
great artist who was not appreciated. No longer
suffering under mortification, but overwhelmed by
that exhaustion which follows acute sensibility and
the over-tension of the creative faculty, he looked
round as Lord Eskdale entered, and when he per-
cieved who was his visitor, he rose immediately,
bowed very low, and then sighed.

'Prevost thinks we are not exactly appreciated
here,' said Lord Eskdale.

Leander bowed again, and still sighed.

'Prevost does not understand the affair,' continued
Lord Eskdale. 'Why I wished you to come down
here, Leander, was not to receive the applause of my
cousin and his guests, but to form their taste.'

Here was a great idea; exciting and ennobling. It
threw quite a new light upon the position of Leander.
He started; his brow seemed to clear. Leander, then,
like other eminent men, had duties to perform as well
as rights to enjoy; he had a right to fame, but it
was also his duty to form and direct public taste.
That then was the reason he was brought down to
Bellamont Castle; because some of the greatest per-
sonages in England, who never had eaten a proper
dinner in their lives, would have an opportunity, for
the first time, of witnessing art. What could the
praise of the Duke of Clanronald, or Lord Hampshire,
or Lord Hull, signify to one who had shared the con-
fidence of a Lord Monmouth, and whom Sir Alex-
ander Grant, the first judge in Europe, had declared
the only man of genius of the age? Leander erred
too in supposing that his achievements had been lost
upon the guests at Bellamont. Insensibly his feats had
set them a-thinking. They had been like Cossacks in
a picture-gallery; but the Clanronalds, the Hampshires,
the Hulls, would return to their homes impressed
with a great truth, that there is a difference between
eating and dining. Was this nothing for Leander to
have effected? Was it nothing, by this development
of taste, to assist in supporting that aristocratic in-
fluence which he wished to cherish, and which can
alone encourage art? If anything can save the aris-
tocracy in this levelling age, it is an appreciation of
men of genius. Certainly it would have been very
gratifying to Leander if his Grace had only sent him
a message, or if Lord Montacute had expressed a
wish to see him. He had been long musing over
some dish à la Montacute for this very day. The
young lord was reputed to have talent; this dish
might touch his fancy; the homage of a great artist
flatters youth; this offering of genius might colour his destiny. But what, after all, did this signify? Leander had a mission to perform.

’If I were you, I would exert myself, Leander,’ said Lord Eskdale.

’Ah! my lord, if all men were like you! If artists were only sure of being appreciated; if we were but understood, a dinner would become a sacrifice to the gods, and a kitchen would be Paradise.’

In the meantime, the mayor and town-councillors of Montacute, in their robes of office, and preceded by their bedels and their mace-bearer, have entered the gates of the castle. They pass into the great hall, the most ancient part of the building, with its open roof of Spanish chestnut, its screen and gallery and dais, its painted windows and marble floor. Ascending the dais, they are ushered into an antechamber, the first of that suite of state apartments that opens on the terrace. Leaving on one side the principal dining-room and the library, they proceeded through the green drawing-room, so called from its silken hangings, the red drawing-room, covered with ruby velvet, and both adorned, but not encumbered, with pictures of the choicest art, into the principal or duchesses’ drawing-room, thus entitled from its complete collection of portraits of Duchesses of Bellamont. It was a spacious and beautifully proportioned chamber, hung with amber satin, its ceiling by Zuccheri, whose rich colours were relieved by the burnished gilding. The corporation trod tremblingly over the gorgeous carpet of Axminster, which displayed, in vivid colours and colossal proportions, the shield and supporters of Bellamont, and threw a hasty glance at the vases of porphyry and malachite, and mosaic tables covered with precious toys, which were grouped about.

Thence they were ushered into the Montacute room, adorned, among many interesting pictures, by perhaps the finest performance of Lawrence, a portrait of the present duke, just after his marriage. Tall and graceful, with a clear dark complexion, regular features, eyes of liquid tenderness, a frank brow, and rich clustering hair, the accomplished artist had seized and conveyed the character of a high-spirited but gentle-hearted cavalier. From the Montacute chamber they entered the ball-room; very spacious, white and gold, a coved ceiling, large Venetian lustres, and the walls of looking-glass, enclosing friezes of festive sculpture. Then followed another antechamber, in the centre of which was one of the masterpieces of Canova. This room, lined with footmen in state liveries, completed the suite that opened on the terrace. The northern side of this chamber consisted of a large door, divided, and decorated in its panels with emblazoned shields of arms.

The valves being thrown open, the mayor and town-councillors of Montacute were ushered into a gallery one hundred feet long, and which occupied a great portion of the northern side of the castle. The panels of this gallery enclosed a series of pictures in tapestry, which represented the principal achievements of the third crusade. A Montacute had been one of the most distinguished knights in that great adventure, and had saved the life of Cœur de Lion at the siege of Ascalon. In after-ages a Duke of Bellamont, who was our ambassador at Paris, had given orders to the Gobelins factory for the execution of this series of pictures from cartoons by the most celebrated
artists of the time. The subjects of the tapestry had obtained for the magnificent chamber, which they adorned and rendered so interesting, the title of 'The Crusaders' Gallery.'

At the end of this gallery, surrounded by their guests, their relatives, and their neighbours; by high nobility, by reverend prelates, by the members and notables of the county, and by some of the chief tenants of the duke, a portion of whom were never absent from any great carousing or high ceremony that occurred within his walls, the Duke and Duchess of Bellamont and their son, a little in advance of the company, stood to receive the congratulatory addresses of the mayor and corporation of their ancient and faithful town of Montacute; the town which their fathers had built and adorned, which they had often represented in Parliament in the good old days, and which they took care should then enjoy its fair proportion of the good old things; a town, every house in which belonged to them, and of which there was not an inhabitant who, in his own person or in that of his ancestry, had not felt the advantages of the noble connection.

The duke bowed to the corporation, with the duchess on his left hand; and on his right there stood a youth, above the middle height and of a frame completely and gracefully formed. His dark brown hair, in those hyacinthine curls which Grecian poets have celebrated, and which Grecian sculptors have immortalised, clustered over his brow, which, however, they only partially concealed. It was pale, as was his whole countenance, but the liquid richness of the dark brown eye, and the colour of the lip, denoted anything but a languid circulation. The features were regular, and inclined rather to a refinement which might have imparted to the countenance a character of too much delicacy, had it not been for the deep meditation of the brow, and for the lower part of the visage, which intimated indomitable will and an iron resolution.

Placed for the first time in his life in a public position, and under circumstances which might have occasioned some degree of embarrassment even to those initiated in the world, nothing was more remarkable in the demeanour of Lord Montacute than his self-possession; nor was there in his carriage anything studied, or which had the character of being preconceived. Every movement or gesture was distinguished by what may be called a graceful gravity. With a total absence of that excitement which seemed so natural to his age and situation, there was nothing in his manner which approached to nonchalance or indifference. It would appear that he duly estimated the importance of the event they were commemorating, yet was not of a habit of mind that overestimated anything.
CHAPTER VII.

A STRANGE PROPOSAL.

The week of celebration was over: some few guests remained, near relatives, and not very rich, the Montacute Mountjoys, for example. They came from a considerable distance, and the duke insisted that they should remain until the duchess went to London, an event, by-the-bye, which was to occur very speedily. Lady Eleanor was rather agreeable, and the duchess a little liked her; there were four daughters, to be sure, and not very lively, but they sang in the evening.

It was a bright morning, and the duchess, with a heart prophetic of happiness, wished to disburthen it to her son; she meant to propose to him, therefore, to be her companion in her walk, and she had sent to his rooms in vain, and was inquiring after him, when she was informed that ‘Lord Montacute was with his Grace.’

A smile of satisfaction flitted over her face, as she recalled the pleasant cause of the conference that was now taking place between the father and the son.

Let us see how it advanced.

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The duke is in his private library, consisting chiefly of the statutes at large, Hansard, the Annual Register, Parliamentary Reports, and legal treatises on the powers and duties of justices of the peace. A portrait of his mother is over the mantel-piece: opposite it a huge map of the county. His correspondence on public business with the secretary of state, and the various authorities of the shire, is admirably arranged: for the duke was what is called an excellent man of business, that is to say, methodical, and an adept in all the small arts of routine. These papers were deposited, after having been ticketed with a date and a summary of their contents, and tied with much tape, in a large cabinet, which occupied nearly one side of the room, and on the top of which were busts in marble of Mr. Pitt, George III., and the Duke of Wellington.

The duke was leaning back in his chair, which it seemed, from his air and position, he had pushed back somewhat suddenly from his writing table, and an expression of painful surprise, it cannot be denied, dwelt on his countenance. Lord Montacute was on his legs, leaning with his left arm on the chimney-piece, very serious, and, if possible, paler than usual.

“You take me quite by surprise,” said the duke; “I thought it was an arrangement that would have deeply gratified you.”

Lord Montacute slightly bowed his head, but said nothing. His father continued.

‘Not wish to enter Parliament at present! Why, that is all very well, and if, as was once the case, we could enter Parliament when we liked, and how we liked, the wish might be very reasonable. If I could ring my bell, and return you member for Mont-
tacite with as much ease as I could send over to Bellamont to engage a special train to take us to town, you might be justified in indulging a fancy. But how and when, I should like to know, are you to enter Parliament now? This Parliament will last: it will go on to the lees. Lord Eskdale told me so not a week ago. Well then, at any rate, you lose three years: for three years you are an idler. I never thought that was your character. I have always had an impression you would turn your mind to public business, that the county might look up to you. If you have what are called higher views, you should not forget there is a great opening now in public life, which may not offer again. The Duke is resolved to give the preference, in carrying on the business of the country, to the aristocracy. He believes this is our only means of preservation. He told me so himself. If it be so, I fear we are doomed. I hope we may be of some use to our country without being ministers of state. But let that pass. As long as the Duke lives, he is omnipotent, and will have his way. If you come into Parliament now, and show any disposition for office, you may rely upon it you will not long be unemployed. I have no doubt I could arrange that you should move the address of next session. I dare say Lord Eskdale could manage this, and, if he could not, though I abhor asking a minister for anything, I should, under the circumstances, feel perfectly justified in speaking to the Duke on the subject myself, and,' added his Grace, in a lowered tone, but with an expression of great earnestness and determination, 'I flatter myself that if the Duke of Bellamont chooses to express a wish, it would not be disregarded.'

Lord Montacute cast his dark, intelligent eyes upon the floor, and seemed plunged in thought.

'Besides,' added the duke, after a moment's pause, and inferring, from the silence of his son, that he was making an impression, 'suppose Hungerford is not in the same humour this time three years which he is in now. Probably he may be; possibly he may not. Men do not like to be baulked when they think they are doing a very kind and generous and magnanimous thing. Hungerford is not a warming-pan; we must remember that; he never was originally, and if he had been, he has been member for the county too long to be so considered now. I should be placed in a most painful position, if, this time three years, I had to withdraw my support from Hungerford, in order to secure your return.'

'There would be no necessity, under any circumstances, for that, my dear father,' said Lord Montacute, looking up, and speaking in a voice which, though somewhat low, was of that organ that at once arrests attention; a voice that comes alike from the brain and from the heart, and seems made to convey both profound thought and deep emotion. There is no index of character so sure as the voice. There are tones, tones brilliant and gushing, which impart a quick and pathetic sensibility: there are others that, deep and yet calm, seem the just interpreters of a serene and exalted intellect. But the rarest and the most precious of all voices is that which combines passion and repose; and whose rich and restrained tones exercise, perhaps, on the human frame a stronger spell than even the fascination of the eye, or that bewitching influence of the hand, which is the privilege of the higher races of Asia.
'There would be no necessity, under any circumstances, for that, my dear father,' said Lord Montacute, 'for, to be frank, I believe I should feel as little disposed to enter Parliament three years hence as now.'

The duke looked still more surprised. 'Mr. Fox was not of age when he took his seat,' said his Grace. 'You know how old Mr. Pitt was when he was a minister. Sir Robert, too, was in harness very early. I have always heard the good judges say, Lord Eskdale, for example, that a man might speak in Parliament too soon, but it was impossible to go in too soon.'

'If he wished to succeed in that assembly,' replied Lord Montacute, 'I can easily believe it. In all things an early initiation must be of advantage. But I have not that wish.'

'I don't like to see a man take his seat in the House of Lords who has not been in the House of Commons. He seems to me always, in a manner, unfledged.'

'it will be a long time, I hope, my dear father, before I take my seat in the House of Lords,' said Lord Montacute, 'if, indeed, I ever do.'

'In the course of nature 'tis a certainty.'

'Suppose the Duke's plan for perpetuating an aristocracy do not succeed,' said Lord Montacute, 'and our house ceases to exist?'

His father shrugged his shoulders. 'It is not our business to suppose that. I hope it never will be the business of any one, at least seriously. This is a great country, and it has become great by its aristocracy.'

'You think, then, our sovereigns did nothing for

our greatness,—Queen Elizabeth, for example, of whose visit to Montacute you are so proud?'

'They performed their part.'

'And have ceased to exist. We may have performed our part, and may meet the same fate.'

'Why, you are talking liberalism!'

'Hardly that, my dear father, for I have not expressed an opinion.'

'I wish I knew what your opinions were, my dear boy, or even your wishes.'

'Well, then, to do my duty.'

'Exactly; you are a pillar of the State; support the State.'

'Ah! if any one would but tell me what the State is,' said Lord Montacute, sighing. 'It seems to me your pillars remain, but they support nothing; in that case, though the shafts may be perpendicular, and the capitals very ornate, they are no longer props, they are a ruin.'

'You would hand us over, then, to the tenpounders?'

'They do not even pretend to be a State,' said Lord Montacute; 'they do not even profess to support anything; on the contrary, the essence of their philosophy is, that nothing is to be established, and everything is to be left to itself.'

'The common sense of this country and the fifty pound clause will carry us through,' said the duke.

'Through what?' inquired his son.

'This—this state of transition,' replied his father.

'A passage to what?'

'Ah! that is a question the wisest cannot answer.'

'But into which the weakest, among whom I class myself, have surely a right to inquire.'
Unquestionably; and I know nothing that will tend more to assist you in your researches than acting with practical men.

'And practising all their blunders,' said Lord Montacute. 'I can conceive an individual who has once been entrapped into their haphazard courses, continuing in the fatal confusion to which he has contributed his quota; but I am at least free, and I wish to continue so.'

'And do nothing?'

'But does it follow that a man is infirm of action because he declines fighting in the dark?'

'And how would you act, then? What are your plans? Have you any?'

'I have.'

'Well, that is satisfactory,' said the duke, with animation. 'Whatever they are, you know you may count upon my doing everything that is possible to forward your wishes. I know they cannot be unworthy ones, for I believe, my child, you are incapable of a thought that is not good or great.'

'I wish I knew what was good and great,' said Lord Montacute; 'I would struggle to accomplish it.'

'But you have formed some views; you have some plans. Speak to me of them, and without reserve; as to a friend, the most affectionate, the most devoted.'

'My father,' said Lord Montacute, and moving, he drew a chair to the table, and seated himself by the duke, 'you possess and have a right to my confidence. I ought not to have said that I doubted about what was good; for I know you.'

'Sons like you make good fathers.'

'It is not always so,' said Lord Montacute; 'you have been to me more than a father, and I bear to you and to my mother a profound and fervent affection; an affection,' he added, in a faltering tone, 'that is rarer, I believe, in this age than it was in old days. I feel it at this moment more deeply,' he continued, in a firmer tone, 'because I am about to propose that we should for a time separate.'

The duke turned pale, and leaned forward in his chair, but did not speak.

'You have proposed to me to-day,' continued Lord Montacute, after a momentary pause, 'to enter public life. I do not shrink from its duties. On the contrary, from the position in which I am born, still more from the impulse of my nature, I am desirous to fulfil them. I have meditated on them, I may say, even for years. But I cannot find that it is part of my duty to maintain the order of things, for I will not call it system, which at present prevails in our country. It seems to me that it cannot last, as nothing can endure, or ought to endure, that is not founded upon principle; and its principle I have not discovered. In nothing, whether it be religion, or government, or manners, sacred or political or social life, do I find faith; and if there be no faith, how can there be duty? Is there such a thing as religious truth? Is there such a thing as political right? Is there such a thing as social propriety? Are these facts, or are they mere phrases? And if they be facts, where are they likely to be found in England? Is truth in our Church? Why, then, do you support dissent? Who has the right to govern? The monarch? You have robbed him of his prerogative. The aristocracy? You confess to me that we exist by sufferance. The people? They themselves tell you that they are nullities. Every ses-
sion of that Parliament in which you wish to introduce me, the method by which power is distributed is called in question, altered, patched up, and again impugned. As for our morals, tell me, is charity the supreme virtue, or the greatest of errors? Our social system ought to depend on a clear conception of this point. Our morals differ in different counties, in different towns, in different streets, even in different Acts of Parliament. What is moral in London is immoral in Montacute; what is crime among the multitude is only vice among the few.'

'You are going into first principles,' said the duke, much surprised.

'Give me then second principles,' replied his son; 'give me any.'

'We must take a general view of things to form an opinion,' said his father, mildly. 'The general condition of England is superior to that of any other country; it cannot be denied that, on the whole, there is more political freedom, more social happiness, more sound religion, and more material prosperity among us, than in any nation in the world.'

'I might question all that,' said his son; 'but they are considerations that do not affect my views. If other States are worse than we are, and I hope they are not, our condition is not mended, but the contrary, for we then need the salutary stimulus of example.'

'There is no sort of doubt,' said the duke, 'that the state of England at this moment is the most flourishing that has ever existed, certainly in modern times. What with these railroads, even the condition of the poor, which I admit was lately far from satisfactory, is infinitely improved. Every man has work who needs it, and wages are even high.'

'The railroads may have improved, in a certain sense, the condition of the working classes almost as much as that of members of Parliament. They have been a good thing for both of them. And if you think that more labour is all that is wanted by the people of England, we may be easy for a time. I see nothing in this fresh development of material industry, but fresh causes of moral deterioration. You have announced to the millions that there welfare is to be tested by the amount of their wages. Money is to be the cupel of their worth, as it is of all other classes. You propose for their conduct the least ennobling of all impulses. If you have seen an aristocracy invariably become degraded under such influence; if all the vices of a middle class may be traced to such an absorbing motive; why are we to believe that the people should be more pure, or that they should escape the catastrophe of the policy that confounds the happiness with the wealth of nations?'

The duke shook his head and then said, 'You should not forget we live in an artificial state.'

'So I often hear, sir,' replied his son; 'but where is the art? It seems to me the very quality wanting to our present condition. Art is order, method, harmonious results obtained by fine and powerful principles. I see no art in our condition. The people of this country have ceased to be a nation. They are a crowd, and only kept in some rude provisional discipline by the remains of that old system which they are daily destroying.'

'But what would you do, my dear boy?' said his Grace, looking up very distressed. 'Can you remedy the state of things in which we find ourselves?'

'I am not a teacher,' said Lord Montacute, morn-
fully; 'I only ask you, I supplicate you, my dear father, to save me from contributing to this quick corruption that surrounds us."

'You shall be master of your own actions. I offer you counsel, I give no commands; and, as for the rest, Providence will guard us.'

'If an angel would but visit our house as he visited the house of Lot!' said Montacute, in a tone almost of anguish.

'Angels have performed their part,' said the duke.

'We have received instructions from one higher than angels. It is enough for all of us.'

'It is not enough for me,' said Lord Montacute, with a glowing cheek, and rising abruptly. 'It was not enough for the Apostles; for though they listened to the sermon on the mount, and partook of the first communion, it was still necessary that He should appear to them again, and promise them a Comforter. I require one,' he added, after a momentary pause, but in an agitated voice. 'I must seek one. Yes! my dear father, it is of this that I would speak to you; it is this which for a long time has oppressed my spirit, and filled me often with intolerable gloom. We must separate. I must leave you, I must leave that dear mother, those beloved parents, in whom are concentrated all my earthly affections; but I obey an impulse that I believe comes from above. Dearest and best of men, you will not thwart me; you will forgive, you will aid me!' And he advanced and threw himself into the arms of his father.

The duke pressed Lord Montacute to his heart, and endeavoured, though himself agitated and much distressed, to penetrate the mystery of this ebullition. 'He says we must separate,' thought the duke to himself. 'Ah! he has lived too much at home, too much alone; he has read and pondered too much; he has moped. Eskdale was right two years ago. I wish I had sent him to Paris, but his mother was so alarmed; and, indeed, 'tis a precious life! The House of Commons would have been just the thing for him. He would have worked on committees and grown practical. But something must be done for him, dear child! He says we must separate; he wants to travel. And perhaps he ought to travel. But a life on which so much depends! And what will Katherine say? It will kill her. I could screw myself up to it. I would send him well attended. Brace should go with him; he understands the Continent; he was in the Peninsular war; and he should have a skilful physician. I see how it is; I must act with decision, and break it to his mother.'

These ideas passed through the duke's mind during the few seconds that he embraced his son, and endeavoured at the same time to convey consolation by the expression of his affection, and his anxiety at all times to contribute to his child's happiness.

'My dear son,' said the duke, when Lord Montacute had resumed his seat, 'I see how it is; you wish to travel?'

Lord Montacute bent his head, as if in assent.

'It will be a terrible blow to your mother; I say nothing of myself. You know what I feel for you. But neither your mother nor myself have a right to place our feelings in competition with any arrangement for your welfare. It would be in the highest degree selfish and unreasonable; and perhaps it will be well for you to travel awhile; and, as for Parliament, I am to see Hungerford this morning at Bella-
mont. I will try and arrange with him to postpone his resignation until the autumn, or, if possible, for some little time longer. You will then have accomplished your purpose. It will do you a great deal of good. You will have seen the world, and you can take your seat next year.'

The duke paused. Lord Montacute looked perplexed and distressed; he seemed about to reply, and then, leaning on the table, with his face concealed from his father, he maintained his silence. The duke rose, looked at his watch, said he must be at Bellamont by two o'clock, hoped that Brace would dine at the castle to-day, thought it not at all impossible Brace might, would send on to Montacute for him, perhaps might meet him at Bellamont. Brace understood the Continent, spoke several languages, Spanish among them, though it was not probable his son would have any need of that, the present state of Spain not being very inviting to the traveller.

'As for France,' said the duke, 'France is Paris, and I suppose that will be your first step; it generally is. We must see if your cousin, Henry Howard, is there. If so, he will put you in the way of everything. With the embassy and Brace, you would manage very well at Paris. Then, I suppose, you would like to go to Italy; that, I apprehend, is your great point. Your mother will not like your going to Rome. Still, at the same time, a man, they say, should see Rome before he dies. I never did. I have never crossed the sea except to go to Ireland. Your grandfather would never let me travel; I wanted to, but he never would. Not, however, for the same reasons which have kept you at home. Suppose you even winter at Rome, which I believe is the right thing, why, you

might very well be back by the spring. However, we must manage your mother a little about remaining over the winter, and, on second thoughts, we will get Bernard to go with you, as well as Brace and a physician, and then she will be much more easy. I think, with Brace, Bernard, and a medical man whom we can really trust, Harry Howard at Paris, and the best letters for every other place, which we will consult Lord Eskdale about, I think the danger will not be extreme.'

'I have no wish to see Paris,' said Lord Montacute, evidently embarrassed, and making a great effort to relieve his mind of some burden. 'I have no wish to see Paris.'

'I am very glad to hear that,' said his father, eagerly.

'Nor do I wish either to go to Rome,' continued his son.

'Well, well, you have taken a load off my mind, my dear boy. I would not confess it, because I wish to save you pain; but really, I believe the idea of your going to Rome would have been a serious shock to your mother. It is not so much the distance, though that is great, nor the climate, which has its dangers, but, you understand, with her peculiar views, her very strict——' The duke did not care to finish his sentence.

'Nor, my dear father,' continued Lord Montacute, 'though I did not like to interrupt you when you were speaking with so much solicitude and consideration for me, is it exactly travel, in the common acceptation of the term, that I feel the need of. I wish, indeed, to leave England; I wish to make an expedition; a progress to a particular point; without
wandering, without any intervening residence. In a word, it is the Holy Land that occupies my thought, and I propose to make a pilgrimage to the sepulchre of my Saviour.

The duke started, and sank again into his chair. 'The Holy Land! The Holy Sepulchre!' he exclaimed, and repeated to himself, staring at his son.

'Yes, sir, the Holy Sepulchre,' repeated Lord Montacute, and now speaking with his accustomed repose. 'When I remember that the Creator, since light sprang out of darkness, has deigned to reveal Himself to His creature only in one land, that in that land He assumed a manly form, and met a human death, I feel persuaded that the country sanctified by such intercourse and such events must be endowed with marvellous and peculiar qualities, which man may not in all ages be competent to penetrate, but which, nevertheless, at all times exercise an irresistible influence upon his destiny. It is these qualities that many times drew Europe to Asia during the middle centuries. Our castle has before this sent forth a De Montacute to Palestine. For three days and three nights he knelt at the tomb of his Redeemer. Six centuries and more have elapsed since that great enterprise. It is time to restore and renovate our communications with the Most High. I, too, would kneel at that tomb; I, too, surrounded by the holy hills and sacred groves of Jerusalem, would relieve my spirit from the bale that bows it down; would lift up my voice to heaven, and ask, What is duty, and what is faith? What ought I to do, and what ought I to believe?'

The Duke of Bellamont rose from his seat, and walked up and down the room for some minutes, in silence and in deep thought. At length, stopping and leaning against the cabinet, he said, 'What has occurred to-day between us, my beloved child, is, you may easily believe, as strange to me as it is agitating. I will think of all you have said; I will try to comprehend all you mean and wish. I will endeavour to do that which is best and wisest; placing above all things your happiness, and not our own. At this moment I am not competent to the task: I need quiet, and to be alone. Your mother, I know, wishes to walk with you this morning. She may be speaking to you of many things. Be silent upon this subject, until I have communicated with her. At present I will ride over to Bellamont. I must go; and, besides, it will do me good. I never can think very well except in the saddle. If Brace comes, make him dine here. God bless you.'

The duke left the room; his son remained in meditation. The first step was taken. He had poured into the interview of an hour the results of three years of solitary thought. A sound roused him; it was his mother. She had only learnt casually that the duke was gone; she was surprised he had not come into her room before he went; it seemed the first time since their marriage that the duke had gone out without first coming to speak to her. So she went to seek her son, to congratulate him on being a member of Parliament, on representing the county of which they were so fond, and of breaking to him a proposition which she doubted not he would find not less interesting and charming. Happy mother, with her only son, on whom she doted and of whom she was so justly proud, about to enter public life in which he was sure to distinguish himself, and to
marry a woman who was sure to make him happy! With a bounding heart the duchess opened the library door, where she had been informed she should find Lord Montacute. She had her bonnet on, ready for the walk of confidence, and, her face flushed with delight, she looked even beautiful. 'Ah!' she exclaimed, 'I have been looking for you, Tancred!'
out of suspense. ‘I have been walking with Tancred,’ she continued, ‘and intimated, but with great caution, all our plans and hopes. I asked him what he thought of his cousin; he agrees with us she is by far the most charming girl he knows, and one of the most agreeable. I impressed upon him how good she was. I wished to precipitate nothing. I never dreamed of their marrying until late in the autumn. I wished him to become acquainted with his new life, which would not prevent him seeing a great deal of Katherine in London, and then to visit them in Ireland, as you visited us, George; and then, when I was settling everything in the most delightful manner, what he was to do when he was kept up very late at the House, which is the only part I don’t like, and begging him to be very strict in making his servant always have coffee ready for him, very hot, and a cold fowl too, or something of the sort, he tells me, to my infinite astonishment, that the vacancy will not immediately occur, that he is not sorry for it, as he thinks it may be as well that he should go abroad. What can all this mean? Pray tell me; for Tancred has told me nothing, and, when I pressed him, waived the subject, and said we would all of us consult together.’

‘And so we will, Kate,’ said the duke, ‘but hardly at this moment, for dinner must be almost served. To be brief,’ he added, speaking in a light tone, ‘there are reasons which perhaps may make it expedient that Hungerford should not resign at the present moment; and as Tancred has a fancy to travel a little, it may be as well that we should take it into consideration whether he might not profitably occupy the interval in this manner.’

‘Profitably!’ said the duchess. ‘I never can understand how going to Paris and Rome, which young men always mean when they talk of travelling, can be profitable to him; it is the very thing which, all my life, I have been endeavouring to prevent. His body and his soul will be both imperilled; Paris will destroy his constitution, and Rome, perhaps, change his faith.’

‘I have more confidence in his physical power and his religious principle than you, Kate,’ said the duke, smiling. ‘But make yourself easy on these heads; Tancred told me this morning that he had no wish to visit either Rome or Paris.’

‘Well!’ exclaimed the duchess, somewhat relieved, ‘if he wants to make a little tour in Holland, I think I could bear it; it is a Protestant country, and there are no vermin. And then those dear Disbrowes, I am sure, would take care of him at The Hague.’

‘We will talk of all this to-night, my love,’ said the duke; and offering his arm to his wife, who was more composed, if not more cheerful, they descended to their guests.

Colonel Brace was there, to the duke’s great satisfaction. The colonel had served as a cornet in a dragoon regiment in the last campaign of the Peninsula war, and had marched into Paris. Such an event makes an indelible impression on the memory of a handsome lad of seventeen, and the colonel had not yet finished recounting his strange and fortunate adventures.

He was tall, robust, a little portly, but, well buckled, still presented a grand military figure. He was what you call a fine man; florid, with still a good head of hair though touched with grey, splen-
did moustaches, large fat hands, and a courtly demeanour not unmixed with a slight swagger. The colonel was a Montacute man, and had inherited a large house in the town and a small estate in the neighbourhood. Having sold out, he had retired to his native place, where he had become a considerable personage. The duke had put him in the commission, and he was the active magistrate of the district; he had reorganised the Bellamont regiment of yeomanry cavalry, which had fallen into sad decay during the late duke's time, but which now, with Brace for its lieutenant-colonel, was second to none in the kingdom. Colonel Brace was one of the best shots in the county; certainly the boldest rider among the heavy weights; and bore the palm from all with the rod, in a county famous for its feats in lake and river.

The colonel was a man of great energy, of good temper, of ready resource, frank, a little coarse, but hearty and honest. He adored the Duke and Duchess of Bellamont. He was sincere; he was not a parasite; he really believed that they were the best people in the world, and I am not sure that he had not some foundation for his faith. On the whole, he might be esteemed the duke's right-hand man. His Grace generally consulted the colonel on county affairs; the command of the yeomanry alone gave him a considerable position; he was the chief also of the militia staff; could give his opinion whether a person was to be made a magistrate or not; and had even been called into council when there was a question of appointing a deputy-lieutenant. The colonel, who was a leading member of the corporation of Montacute, had taken care to be chosen mayor this year; he had been also chairman of the Committee of Man-

agement during the celebration of Tancred's majority; had had the entire ordering of the fireworks, and was generally supposed to have given the design, or at least the leading idea, for the transparency.

We should notice also Mr. Bernard, a clergyman, and recently the private tutor of Lord Montacute, a good scholar; in ecclesiastical opinions, what is called high and dry. He was about five-and-thirty; well-looking, bashful. The duke intended to prefer him to a living when one was vacant; in the meantime he remained in the family, and at present discharged the duties of chaplain and librarian at Montacute, and occasionally assisted the duke as private secretary. Of his life, one third had been passed at a rural home, and the rest might be nearly divided between school and college.

These gentlemen, the distinguished and numerous family of the Montacute Mountjoys, young Hungerford, whom the duke had good-naturedly brought over from Bellamont for the sake of the young ladies, the duke and duchess, and their son, formed the party, which presented rather a contrast, not only in its numbers, to the series of recent banquets. They dined in the Montacute chamber. The party, without intending it, was rather dull and silent. The duchess was brooding over the disappointment of the morning; the duke trembled for the disclosures of the morrow. The Misses Mountjoy sang better than they talked; their mother, who was more lively, was seated by the duke, and confined her powers of pleasing to him. The Honourable and Reverend Montacute himself was an epicure, and disliked conversation during dinner. Lord Montacute spoke to Mr. Hungerford across the table, but Mr. Hungerford was whispering
despairing nothings in the ear of Arabella Mountjoy, and replied to his question without originating any in return, which of course terminates talk.

When the second course had arrived, the duke, who wanted a little more noise and distraction, fired off in despair a shot at Colonel Brace, who was on the left hand of the duchess, and set him on his yeomanry charger. From this moment affairs improved. The colonel made continual charges, and carried all before him. Nothing could be more noisy in a genteel way. His voice sounded like the bray of a trumpet amid the din of arms; it seemed that the moment he began, everybody and everything became animated and inspired by his example. All talked; the duke set them the fashion of taking wine with each other; Lord Montacute managed to entrap Arminta Mountjoy into a narrative in detail of her morning's ride and adventures; and, affecting scepticism as to some of the incidents, and wonder at some of the feats, produced a considerable addition to the general hubbub, which he instinctively felt that his father wished to encourage.

'I don't know whether it was the Great Western or the South Eastern,' continued Colonel Brace; 'but I know his leg is broken.'

'God bless me!' said the duke; 'and only think of my not hearing of it at Bellamont to-day!'

'I don't suppose they know anything about it,' replied the colonel. 'The way I know it is this: I was with Roby to-day, when the post came in, and he said to me, 'Here is a letter from Lady Malpas; I hope nothing is the matter with Sir Russell or any of the children.' And then it all came out. The train was blown up behind; Sir Russell was in a centre carriage, and was pitched right into a field. They took him into an inn, put him to bed, and sent for some of the top-sawyers from London, Sir Benjamin Brodie, and that sort of thing; and the moment Sir Russell came to himself, he said, 'I must have Roby, send for Roby, Roby knows my constitution.' And they sent for Roby. And I think he was right. The quantity of young officers I have seen sent right-about in the Peninsula, because they were attended by a parcel of men who knew nothing of their constitution! Why, I might have lost my own leg once, if I had not been sharp. I got a scratch in a little affair at Almeidas, charging the enemy a little too briskly; but we really ought not to speak of these things before the ladies——'

'My dear colonel,' said Lord Montacute, 'on the contrary, there is nothing more interesting to them. Miss Mountjoy was saying only yesterday, that there was nothing she found so difficult to understand as the account of a battle, and how much she wished to comprehend it.'

'That is because, in general, they are not written by soldiers,' said the colonel; 'but Napier's battles are very clear. I could fight every one of them on this table. That's a great book, that history of Napier; it has faults, but they are rather omissions than mistakes. Now that affair of Almeidas of which I was just speaking, and which nearly cost me my leg, it is very odd, but he has omitted mentioning it altogether.'

'But you saved your leg, colonel,' said the duke.

'Yes, I had the honour of marching into Paris, and that is an event not very easy to be forgotten, let me tell your Grace. I saved my leg because I knew my
constitution. For the very same reason by which I hope Sir Russell Malpas will save his leg. Because he will be attended by a person who knows his constitution. He never did a wiser thing than sending for Roby. For my part, if I were in garrison at Gibraltar to-morrow, and laid up, I would do the same; I would send for Roby. In all these things, depend upon it, knowing the constitution is half the battle.

All this time, while Colonel Brace was indulging in his garrulous comments, the Duke of Bellamont was drawing his moral. He had a great opinion of Mr. Roby, who was the medical attendant of the castle, and an able man. Mr. Roby was perfectly acquainted with the constitution of his son; Mr. Roby must go to the Holy Sepulchre. Cost what it might, Mr. Roby must be sent to Jerusalem. The duke was calculating all this time the income that Mr. Roby made. He would not put it down at more than five hundred pounds per annum, and a third of that was certainly afforded by the castle. The duke determined to offer Roby a thousand and his expenses to attend Lord Montacute. He would not be more than a year absent, and his practice could hardly seriously suffer while away, backed as he would be, when he returned, by the castle. And if it did, the duke must guarantee Roby against loss; it was a necessity, absolute and of the first class, that Tancred should be attended by a medical man who knew his constitution. The duke agreed with Colonel Brace that it was half the battle.

CHAPTER IX.

TANCRED, THE NEW CRUSADER.

‘I SERABLE mother that I am!’ exclaimed the duchess, and she clasped her hands in anguish.

‘My dearest Katherine!’ said the duke, ‘calm yourself.’

‘You ought to have prevented this, George; you ought never to have let things come to this pass.’

‘But, my dearest Katherine, the blow was as unlooked-for by me as by yourself. I had not, how could I have, a remote suspicion of what was passing through his mind?’

‘What, then, is the use of your boasted confidence with your child, which you tell me you have always cultivated? Had I been his father, I would have discovered his secret thoughts.’

‘Very possibly, my dear Katherine; but you are at least his mother, tenderly loving him, and tenderly loved by him. The intercourse between you has ever been of an extreme intimacy, and especially on the subjects connected with this fancy of his, and yet, you see, even you are completely taken by surprise.’

‘I once had a suspicion he was inclined to the Puseyite heresy, and I spoke to Mr. Bernard on the
subject, and afterwards to him, but I was convinced that I was in error. I am sure,' added the duchess, in a mournful tone, 'I have lost no opportunity of instilling into him the principles of religious truth. It was only last year, on his birthday, that I sent him a complete set of the publications of the Parker Society, my own copy of Jewel, full of notes, and my grandfather, the primate's, manuscript commentary on Chillingworth: a copy made purposely by myself.'

'I well know,' said the duke, 'that you have done everything for his spiritual welfare which ability and affection combined could suggest.'

'And it ends in this!' exclaimed the duchess.

'The Holy Land! Why, if he even reach it, the climate is certain death. The curse of the Almighty, for more than eighteen centuries, has been on that land. Every year it has become more sterile, more savage, more unwholesome, and more unearthly. It is the abomination of desolation. And now my son is to go there! Oh! he is lost to us for ever!'

'But, my dear Katherine, let us consult a little.'

'Consult! Why should I consult? You have settled everything, you have agreed to everything. You do not come here to consult me; I understand all that; you come here to break a foregone conclusion to a weak and miserable woman.'

'Do not say such things, Katherine!'

'What should I say? What can I say?'

'Anything but that. I hope that nothing will be done in this family without your full sanction.'

'Rest assured, then, that I will never sanction the departure of Tancred on this crusade.'

'Then he will never go, at least, with my consent,' said the duke; 'but Katherine, assist me, my dear wife. All shall be, shall ever be, as you wish; but I shrink from being placed, from our being placed, in collision with our child. The mere exercise of parental authority is a last resource; I would appeal first, rather to his reason, to his heart; your arguments, his affection for us, may yet influence him.'

'You tell me you have argued with him,' said the duchess in a melancholy tone.

'Yes, but you know so much more on these subjects than I do, indeed, upon all subjects; you are so clever, that I do not despair, my dear Katherine, of your producing an impression on him.'

'I would tell him at once,' said the duchess, firmly, 'that the proposition cannot be listened to.'

The duke looked very distressed. After a momentary pause, he said, 'If, indeed, you think that the best; but let us consult before we take that step, because it would seem to terminate all discussion, and discussion may yet do good. Besides, I cannot conceal from myself that Tancred in this affair is acting under the influence of very powerful motives; his feelings are highly strung; you have no idea, you can have no idea from what we have seen of him hitherto, how excited he is. I had no idea of his being capable of such excitement. I always thought him so very calm, and of such a quiet turn. And so, in short, my dear Katherine, were we to be abrupt at this moment, peremptory, you understand, I—I should not be surprised, were Tancred to go without our permission.'

'Impossible!' exclaimed the duchess, starting in her chair, but with as much consternation as confidence in her countenance. 'Throughout his life he has never disobeyed us.'
'And that is an additional reason,' said the duke, quietly, but in his sweetest tone, 'why we should not treat as a light ebullition this first instance of his preferring his own will to that of his father and mother.'

'He has been so much away from us these last three years,' said the duchess in a tone of great depression, 'and they are such important years in the formation of character! But Mr. Bernard, he ought to have been aware of all this; he ought to have known what was passing through his pupil's mind; he ought to have warned us. Let us speak to him; let us speak to him at once. Ring, my dear George, and request the attendance of Mr. Bernard.'

That gentleman, who was in the library, kept them waiting but a few minutes. As he entered the room, he perceived, by the countenances of his noble patrons, that something remarkable, and probably not agreeable, had occurred. The duke opened the case to Mr. Bernard with calmness; he gave an outline of the great catastrophe; the duchess filled up the parts, and invested the whole with a rich and even terrible colouring.

Nothing could exceed the astonishment of the late private tutor of Lord Montacute. He was fairly overcome; the communication itself was startling, the accessories overwhelmed him. The unspoken reproaches that beam’d from the duke’s mild eye; the withering glance of maternal desolation that met him from the duchess; the rapidity of her anxious and agitated questions; all were too much for the simple, though correct, mind of one unused to those passionate developments which are commonly called scenes. All that Mr. Bernard for some time could do was to sit with his eyes staring and mouth open, and repeat, with a bewildered air, 'The Holy Land, the Holy Sepulchre!' No, most certainly not; most assuredly; never in any way, by any word or deed, had Lord Montacute ever given him reason to suppose or imagine that his lordship intended to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, or that he was influenced by any of those views and opinions which he had so strangely and so uncompromisingly expressed to his father.

'But, Mr. Bernard, you have been his companion, his instructor, for many years,' continued the duchess, 'for the last three years especially, years so important in the formation of character. You have seen much more of Montacute than we have. Surely you must have had some idea of what was passing in his mind; you could not help knowing it; you ought to have known it; you ought to have warned, to have prepared us.'

'Madam,' at length said Mr. Bernard, more collected, and feeling the necessity and excitement of self-vindication, 'Madam, your noble son, under my poor tuition, has taken the highest honours of his university; his moral behaviour during that period has been immaculate; and as for his religious sentiments, even this strange scheme proves that they are, at any rate, of no light and equivocal character.'

'To lose such a son!' exclaimed the duchess, in a tone of anguish, and with streaming eyes.

The duke took her hand, and would have soothed her; and then, turning to Mr. Bernard, he said, in a lowered tone, 'We are very sensible how much we owe you; the duchess equally with myself. All we regret is, that some of us had not obtained a more
intimate acquaintance with the character of my son than it appears we have acquired.

‘My lord duke,’ said Mr. Bernard, ‘had yourself or her Grace ever spoken to me on this subject, I would have taken the liberty of expressing what I say now. I have ever found Lord Montacute inscrutable. He has formed himself in solitude, and has ever repelled any advance to intimacy, either from those who were his inferiors or his equals in station. He has never had a companion. As for myself, during the ten years that I have had the honour of being connected with him, I cannot recall a word or a deed on his part which towards me has not been courteous and considerate; but as a child he was shy and silent, and as a man, for I have looked upon him as a man in mind for these four or even five years, he has employed me as his machine to obtain knowledge. It is not very flattering to oneself to make these confessions, but at Oxford he had the opportunity of communicating with some of the most eminent men of our time, and I have always learnt from them the same result. Lord Montacute never disburthened. His passion for study has been ardent; his power of application is very great; his attention unwearyed as long as there is anything to acquire; but he never seeks your opinions, and never offers his own. The interview of yesterday with your Grace is the only exception with which I am acquainted, and at length throws some light on the mysteries of his mind.’

The duke looked sad; his wife seemed plunged in profound thought; there was a silence of many moments. At length the duchess looked up, and said, in a calmer tone, and with an air of great serious-

ness, ‘It seems that we have mistaken the character of our son. Thank you very much for coming to us so quickly in our trouble, Mr. Bernard. It was very kind, as you always are.’ Mr. Bernard took the hint, rose, bowed, and retired.

The moment that he had quitted the room, the eyes of the Duke and Duchess of Bellamont met. Who was to speak first? The duke had nothing to say, and therefore he had the advantage: the duchess wished her husband to break the silence, but, having something to say herself, she could not refrain from interrupting it. So she said, with a tearful eye, ‘Well, George, what do you think we ought to do?’

The duke had a great mind to propose his plan of sending Tancred to Jerusalem, with Colonel Brac, Mr. Bernard, and Mr. Roby, to take care of him, but he hardly thought the occasion was ripe enough for that; and so he suggested that the duchess should speak to Tancred herself.

‘No,’ said her Grace, shaking her head, ‘I think it better for me to be silent; at least at present. It is necessary, however, that the most energetic means should be adopted to save him, nor is there a moment to be lost. We must shrink from nothing for such an object. I have a plan. We will put the whole matter in the hands of our friend, the bishop. We will get him to speak to Tancred. I entertain not a doubt that the bishop will put his mind all right; clear all his doubts; remove all his scruples. The bishop is the only person, because, you see, it is a case political as well as theological, and the bishop is a great statesman as well as the first theologian of the age. Depend upon it, my dear George, that this is the wisest course, and, with the blessing of Provi-
dence, will effect our purpose. It is, perhaps, asking a good deal of the bishop, considering his important and multifarious duties, to undertake this office, but we must not be delicate when everything is at stake; and, considering he christened and confirmed Tancred, and our long friendship, it is quite out of the question that he can refuse. However, there is no time to be lost. We must get to town as soon as possible; to-morrow, if we can. I shall advance affairs by writing to the bishop on the subject, and giving him an outline of the case, so that he may be prepared to see Tancred at once on our arrival. What think you, George, of my plan?“

‘I think it quite admirable,’ replied his Grace, only too happy that there was at least the prospect of a lull of a few days in this great embarrassment.

CHAPTER X.

A VISIONARY.

BOUT the time of the marriage of the Duchess of Bellamont, her noble family, and a few of their friends, some of whom also believed in the millennium, were persuaded that the conversion of the Roman Catholic population of Ireland to the true faith, which was their own, was at hand. They had subscribed very liberally for the purpose, and formed an amazing number of sub-committees. As long as their funds lasted, their missionaries found proselytes. It was the last desperate effort of a Church that had from the first betrayed its trust. Twenty years ago, statistics not being so much in vogue, and the people of England being in the full efflorescence of that public ignorance which permitted them to believe themselves the most enlightened nation in the world, the Irish ‘difficulty’ was not quite so well understood as at the present day. It was then an established doctrine, and all that was necessary for Ireland was more Protestantism, and it was supposed to be not more difficult to supply the Irish with Protestantism than it had proved, in the instance of a recent famine, 1822,
to furnish them with potatoes. What was principally wanted in both cases were subscriptions.

When the English public, therefore, were assured by their co-religionists on the other side of St. George’s Channel, that at last the good work was doing; that the flame spread, even rapidly; that not only parishes but provinces were all agog, and that both town and country were quite in a heat of proselytism, they began to believe that at last the scarlet lady was about to be dethroned; they loosened their purse-strings; fathers of families contributed their zealous five pounds, followed by every other member of the household, to the babe in arms, who subscribed its fanatical five shillings. The affair looked well. The journals teemed with lists of proselytes and cases of conversion; and even orderly, orthodox people, who were firm in their own faith, but wished others to be permitted to pursue their errors in peace, began to congratulate each other on the prospect of our at last becoming a united Protestant people.

In the blaze and thick of the affair, Irish Protestants jubilant, Irish Papists denouncing the whole movement as fraud and trumpery, John Bull perplexed, but excited, and still subscribing, a young bishop rose in his place in the House of Lords, and, with a vehemence there unusual, declared that he saw ‘the finger of God in this second Reformation,’ and, pursuing the prophetic vein and manner, denounced ‘woe to those who should presume to lift up their hands and voices in vain and impotent attempts to stem the flood of light that was bursting over Ireland.’

In him, who thus plainly discerned ‘the finger of God’ in transactions in which her family and feel-

ings were so deeply interested, the young and enthusiastic Duchess of Bellamont instantly recognised the ‘man of God;’ and from that moment the right reverend prelate became, in all spiritual affairs, her infallible instructor, although the impending second Reformation did chance to take the untoward form of the emancipation of the Roman Catholics, followed in due season by the destruction of Protestant bishoprics, the sequestration of Protestant tithes, and the endowment of Maynooth.

In speculating on the fate of public institutions and the course of public affairs, it is important that we should not permit our attention to be engrossed by the principles on which they are founded and the circumstances which they present, but that we should also remember how much depends upon the character of the individuals who are in the position to superintend or to direct them.

The Church of England, mainly from its deficiency of oriental knowledge, and from a misconception of the priestly character which has been the consequence of that want, has fallen of late years into great straits; nor has there ever been a season when it has more needed for its guides men possessing the higher qualities both of intellect and disposition. About five-and-twenty years ago, it began to be discerned that the time had gone by, at least in England, for bishoprics to serve as appanages for the younger sons of great families. The Arch-Mediocrity who then governed this country, and the mean tenor of whose prolonged administration we have delineated in another work, was impressed with the necessity of reconstructing the episcopal bench on principles of personal distinction and ability. But his notion of
clerical capacity did not soar higher than a private tutor who had suckled a young noble into university honours; and his test of priestly celebrity was the decent editorship of a Greek play. He sought for the successors of the apostles, for the stewards of the mysteries of Sinai and of Calvary, among third-rate hunters after syllables.

These men, notwithstanding their elevation, with one exception, subsided into their native insignificance; and during our agitated age, when the principles of all institutions, sacred and secular, have been called in question; when, alike in the senate and the market-place, both the doctrine and the discipline of the Church have been impugned, its power assailed, its authority denied, the amount of its revenues investigated, their disposition criticised, and both attacked; not a voice has been raised by these mitred nullities, either to warn or to vindicate; not a phrase has escaped their lips or their pens, that ever influenced public opinion, touched the heart of nations, or guided the conscience of a perplexed people. If they were ever heard of it was that they had been pelted in a riot.

The exception which we have mentioned to their sorry careers was that of the too adventurous prophet of the second Reformation; the *duxor dubitantium* appealed to by the Duchess of Bellamont, to convince her son that the principles of religious truth, as well as of political justice, required no further investigation; at least by young marquesses.

The ready audacity with which this right reverend prelate had stood sponsor for the second Reformation is a key to his character. He combined a great talent for action with very limited powers of thought.

Bustling, energetic, versatile, gifted with an indomitable perseverance, and stimulated by an ambition that knew no repose, with a capacity for mastering details and an inordinate passion for affairs, he could permit nothing to be done without his interference, and consequently was perpetually involved in transactions which were either failures or blunders. He was one of those leaders who are not guides. Having little real knowledge, and not endowed with those high qualities of intellect which permit their possessor to generalise the details afforded by study and experience, and so deduce rules of conduct, his lordship, when he received those frequent appeals which were the necessary consequence of his officious life, became obscure, confused, contradictory, inconsistent, illogical. The oracle was always dark.

Placed in a high post in an age of political analysis, the bustling intermeddler was unable to supply society with a single solution. Enunciating second-hand, with characteristic precipitation, some big principle in vogue, as if he were a discoverer, he invariably shrank from its subsequent application the moment that he found it might be unpopular and inconvenient. All his quandaries terminated in the same catastrophe: a compromise. Abstract principles with him ever ended in concrete expediency. The aggregate of circumstances outweighed the isolated cause. The primordial tenet, which had been advocated with uncompromising arrogance, gently subsided into some second-rate measure recommended with all the artifice of an impenetrable ambiguity.

Beginning with the second Reformation, which was a little rash but dashing, the bishop, always ready, had in the course of his episcopal career placed
himself at the head of every movement in the Church which others had originated, and had as regularly withdrawn at the right moment, when the heat was over, or had become, on the contrary, excessive. Furiously evangelical, soberly high and dry, and fervently Puseyite, each phasis of his faith concludes with what the Spaniards term a ‘transaction.’ The saints are to have their new churches, but they are also to have their rubrics and their canons; the universities may supply successors to the apostles, but they are also presented with a church commission; even the Puseyites may have candles on their altars, but they must not be lighted.

It will be seen, therefore, that his lordship was one of those characters not ill-adapted to an eminent station in an age like the present, and in a country like our own; an age of movement, but of confused ideas; a country of progress, but too rich to risk much change. Under these circumstances, the spirit of a period and a people seeks a safety-valve in bustle. They do something, lest it be said that they do nothing. At such a time, ministers recommend their measures as experiments, and parliaments are ever ready to rescind their votes. Find a man who, totally destitute of genius, possesses nevertheless considerable talents; who has official aptitude, a volatility of routine rhetoric, great perseverance, a love of affairs; who, embarrassed neither by the principles of the philosopher nor by the prejudices of the bigot, can assume, with a cautious facility, the prevalent tone, and disembarrass himself of it, with a dexterous ambiguity, the moment it ceases to be predominant; recommending himself to the innovator by his approval of change ‘in the abstract,’ and to the con-
servative by his prudential and practical respect for that which is established; such a man, though he be one of an essentially small mind, though his intellectual qualities be less than moderate, with feeble powers of thought, no imagination, contracted sympathies, and a most loose public morality; such a man is the individual whom kings and parliaments would select to govern the State or rule the Church.

Change, ‘in the abstract,’ is what is wanted by a people who are at the same time inquiring and wealthy. Instead of statesmen they desire shufflers; and compromise in conduct and ambiguity in speech are, though nobody will confess it, the public qualities now most in vogue.

Not exactly, however, those calculated to meet the case of Tancred. The interview was long, for Tancred listened with apparent respect and deference to the individual under whose auspices he had entered the Church of Christ; but the replies to his inquiries, though more adroit than the duke’s, were in reality not more satisfactory, and could not, in any way, meet the inexorable logic of Lord Montacute. The bishop was as little able as the duke to indicate the principle on which the present order of things in England was founded; neither faith nor its consequence, duty, was at all illustrated or invigorated by his handling. He utterly failed in reconciling a belief in ecclesiastical truth with the support of religious dissent. When he tried to define in whom the power of government should repose, he was lost in a maze of phrases, and afforded his pupil not a single fact.

‘It cannot be denied,’ at length said Tancred, with great calmness, ‘that society was once regulated by
God, and that now it is regulated by man. For my part, I prefer divine to self-government, and I wish to know how it is to be attained.

'The Church represents God upon earth,' said the bishop.

'But the Church no longer governs man,' replied Tancred.

'There is a great spirit rising in the Church,' observed the bishop, with thoughtful solemnity; 'a great and excellent spirit. The Church of 1845 is not the Church of 1745. We must remember that; we know not what may happen. We shall soon see a bishop at Manchester.'

'But I want to see an angel at Manchester.'

'An angel!'

'Why not? Why should there not be heavenly messengers, when heavenly messages are most wanted?'

'We have received a heavenly message by one greater than the angels,' said the bishop. 'Their visits to man ceased with the mightier advent.'

'Then why did angels appear to Mary and her companions at the holy tomb?' inquired Tancred.

The interview from which so much was anticipated was not satisfactory. The eminent prelate did not realise Tancred's ideal of a bishop, while his lordship did not hesitate to declare that Lord Montacute was a visionary.
Irish episcopates. This was a queer suffrage for the apostle of the second Reformation. True it is that Whiggism was then in the ascendant, and two years afterwards, when Whiggism had received a heavy blow and great discouragement; when we had been blessed in the interval with a decided though feeble Conservative administration, and were blessed at the moment with a strong though undecided Conservative opposition; his lordship, with characteristic activity, had galloped across country into the right line again, denounced the Appropriation Clause in a spirit worthy of his earlier days, and, quite forgetting the ten Irish bishoprics, that only four-and-twenty months before he had doomed to destruction, was all for proselytising Ireland again by the efficacious means of Irish Protestant bishops.

'The bishop says that Tancred is a visionary,' said the duchess to her husband, with an air of great displeasure. 'Why, it is because he is a visionary that we sent him to the bishop. I want to have his false imaginings removed by one who has the competent powers of learning and argument, and the authority of a high and holy office. A visionary, indeed! Why, so are the Puseyites; they are visionaries, and his lordship has been obliged to deal with them; though, to be sure, if he spoke to Tancred in a similar fashion, I am not surprised that my son has returned unchanged! This is the most vexatious business that ever occurred to us. Something must be done; but what to fix on? What do you think, George? Since speaking to the bishop, of which you so much approved, has failed, what do you recommend?'

While the duchess was speaking, she was seated in her boudoir, looking into the Green Park; the duke's horses were in the courtyard, and he was about to ride down to the House of Lords; he had just looked in, as was his custom, to say farewell till they met again.

'I am sorry that the interview with the bishop has failed,' said the duke, in a hesitating tone, and playing with his riding-stick; and then walking up to the window and looking into the Park, he said, apparently after reflection, 'I always think the best person to deal with a visionary is a man of the world.'

'But what can men of the world know of such questions?' said the duchess, mournfully.

'Very little,' said her husband, 'and therefore they are never betrayed into arguments, which I fancy always make people more obstinate, even if they are confuted. Men of the world have a knack of settling everything without discussion; they do it by tact. It is astonishing how many difficulties I have seen removed—by Eskdale, for example—which it seemed that no power on earth could change, and about which we had been arguing for months. There was the Cheadle churches case, for example; it broke up some of the oldest friendships in the county; even Hungerford and Ildefonse did not speak. I never had a more anxious time of it; and, as far as I was personally concerned, I would have made any sacrifice to keep a good understanding in the county. At last I got the business referred to Eskdale, and the affair was ultimately arranged to everybody's satisfaction. I don't know how he managed: it was quite impossible that he could have offered any new arguments, but he did it by tact. Tact does not remove difficulties, but difficulties melt away under tact.'
'Heigho!' sighed the duchess. 'I cannot understand how 1 act can tell us what is religious truth, or prevent my son from going to the Holy Sepulchre.'

'Try,' said the duke.

'Shall you see our cousin to-day, George?'

'He is sure to be at the House,' replied the duke, eagerly. 'I tell you what I propose, Kate: Tancred is gone to the House of Commons to hear the debate on Maynooth; I will try and get our cousin to come home and dine with us, and then we can talk over the whole affair at once. What say you?'

'Very well.'

'We have failed with a bishop; we will now try a man of the world; and if we are to have a man of the world, we had better have a first-rate one, and everybody agrees that our cousin—'

'Yes, yes, George,' said the duchess, 'ask him to come; tell him it is very urgent, that we must consult him immediately; and then, if he be engaged, I dare say he will manage to come all the same.'

Accordingly, about half-past eight o'clock, the two peers arrived at Bellamont House together. They were unexpectedly late; they had been detained at the House. The duke was excited; even Lord Eskdale looked as if something had happened. Something had happened; there had been a division in the House of Lords. Rare and startling event! It seemed as if the peers were about to resume their functions. Divisions in the House of Lords are now-a-days so thinly scattered, that, when one occurs, the peers cackle as if they had laid an egg. They are quite proud of the proof of their still procreative powers. The division to-night had not been on a subject of any public interest or importance; but still it was a division, and, what was more, the Government had been left in a minority. True, the catastrophe was occasioned by a mistake. The dictator had been asleep during the debate, woke suddenly from a dyspeptic dream, would make a speech, and spoke on the wrong side. A lively colleague, not yet sufficiently broken in to the frigid discipline of the High Court of Registry, had pulled the great man once by his coat-tails, a House of Commons practice, permitted to the Cabinet when their chief is blundering, very necessary sometimes for a lively leader, but of which Sir Robert highly disapproves, as the arrangement of his coat-tails, next to beating the red box, forms the most important part of his rhetorical accessories. The dictator, when he at length comprehended that he had made a mistake, persisted in adhering to it; the division was called, some of the officials escaped, the rest were obliged to vote with their ruthless master; but his other friends, glad of an opportunity of asserting their independence and administering to the dictator a slight check in a quiet inoffensive way, put him in a minority; and the Duke of Bellamont and Lord Eskdale had contributed to this catastrophe.

Dinner was served in the library; the conversation during it was chiefly the event of the morning. The duchess, who, though not a partisan, was something of a politician, thought it was a pity that the dictator had ever stepped out of his military sphere; her husband, who had never before seen a man's coat-tails pulled when he was speaking, dilated much upon the singular circumstance of Lord Spur so disporting himself on the present occasion; while Lord Eskdale, who had sat for a long time in the House of Commons,
and who was used to everything, assured his cousin that the custom, though odd, was by no means irregular. 'I remember,' said his lordship, 'seeing Ripon, when he was Robinson, and Huskisson, each pulling one of Canning's coat-tails at the same time.'

Throughout dinner not a word about Tancred. Lord Eskdale neither asked where he was nor how he was. At length, to the great relief of the duchess, dinner was finished; the servants had disappeared. The duke pushed away the table; they drew their chairs round the hearth; Lord Eskdale took half a glass of Madeira, then stretched his legs a little, then rose, stirred the fire, and then, standing with his back to it and his hands in his pockets, said, in a careless tone approaching to a drawl, 'And so, duchess, Tancred wants to go to Jerusalem?'

'George has told you, then, all our troubles?'

'Only that; he left the rest to you, and I came to hear it.'

Whereupon the duchess went off, and spoke for a considerable time with great animation and ability, the duke hanging on every word with vigilant interest, Lord Eskdale never interrupting her for an instant; while she stated the case not only with the impassioned feeling of a devoted mother, but occasionally with all the profundity of a theologian. She did not conceal from him the interview between Tancred and the bishop; it was her last effort, and had failed; and so, 'after all our plans,' she ended, 'as far as I can form an opinion, he is absolutely more resolved than ever to go to Jerusalem.'

'Well,' said his lordship, 'it is at least better than going to the Jews, which most men do at his time of life.'

'I cannot agree even to that,' said the duchess; 'for I would rather that he should be ruined than die.'

'Men do not die as they used,' said his lordship. 'Ask the annuity offices; they have all raised their rates.'

'I know nothing about annuity offices, but I know that almost everybody dies who goes to those countries; look at young Fernborough, he was just Tancred's age; the fevers alone must kill him.'

'He must take some quinine in his dressing-case,' said Lord Eskdale.

'You jest, Henry,' said the duchess, disappointed, 'when I am in despair.'

'No,' said Lord Eskdale, looking up to the ceiling, 'I am thinking how you may prevent Tancred from going to Jerusalem, without, at the same time, opposing his wishes.'

'Ay, ay,' said the duke, 'that is it.' And he looked triumphantly to his wife, as much as to say, 'Now you see what it is to be a man of the world.'

'A man cannot go to Jerusalem as he would to Birmingham, by the next train,' continued his lordship; 'he must get something to take him; and if you make the sacrifice of consenting to his departure, you have a right to stipulate as to the manner in which he should depart. Your son ought to travel with a suite; he ought to make the voyage in his own yacht. Yachts are not to be found like hack cabs, though there are several for sale now; but then they are not of the admeasurement of which you approve for such a voyage and such a sea. People talk very lightly of the Mediterranean, but there are such things as white squalls. Anxious parents, and parents
so fond of a son as you are, and a son whose life for so many reasons is so precious, have a right to make it a condition of their consent to his departure, that he should embark in a vessel of considerable tonnage. He will find difficulty in buying one second-hand; if he finds one it will not please him. He will get interested in yacht-building, as he is interested now about Jerusalem: both boyish fancies. He will stay another year in England to build a yacht to take him to the Holy Land; the yacht will be finished this time twelvemonths; and, instead of going to Palestine, he will go to Cowes.'

"That is quite my view of the case," said the duke.

"It never occurred to me," said the duchess.

Lord Eskdale resumed his seat, and took another half-glass of Madeira.

"Well, I think it is very satisfactory, Katherine," said the duke, after a short pause.

"And what do you recommend us to do first?" said the duchess to Lord Eskdale.

"Let Tancred go into society; the best way for him to forget Jerusalem is to let him see London."

"But how can I manage it?" said the duchess. "I never go anywhere; nobody knows him, and he does not wish to know anybody."

"I will manage it, with your permission; 'tis not difficult; a young marquess has only to evince an inclination, and in a week's time he will be everywhere. I will tell Lady St. Julians and the great ladies to send him invitations; they will fall like a snow-storm. All that remains is for you to prevail upon him to accept them."

"And how shall I contrive it?" said the duchess.

"Easily," said Lord Eskdale. "Make his going into society, while his yacht is preparing, one of the conditions of the great sacrifice you are making. He cannot refuse you: 'tis but the first step. A youth feels a little repugnance to launching into the great world: 'tis shyness; but after the plunge, the great difficulty is to restrain rather than to incite. Let him but once enter the world, and be tranquil, he will soon find something to engage him."

"As long as he does not take to play," said the duke, "I do not much care what he does."

"My dear George!" said the duchess, "how can you say such things! I was in hopes, she added, in a mournful tone, 'that we might have settled him, without his entering what you call the world, Henry. Dearest child! I fancy him surrounded by pitfalls.'"
CHAPTER XII.

THE DREAMER ENTERS SOCIETY.

FTER this consultation with Lord Eskdale, the duchess became easier in her mind. She was of a sanguine temper, and with facility believed what she wished. Affairs stood thus: it was agreed by all that Tancred should go to the Holy Land, but he was to go in his own yacht; which yacht was to be of a firstrate burthen, and to be commanded by an officer in H.M.S.; and he was to be accompanied by Colonel Brace, Mr. Bernard, and Mr. Roby; and the servants were to be placed entirely under the control of some trusty foreigner accustomed to the East, and who was to be chosen by Lord Eskdale. In the meantime, Tancred had acceded to the wish of his parents, that until his departure he should mix much in society. The duchess calculated, that, under any circumstances, three months must elapse before all the arrangements were concluded; and she felt persuaded that, during that period, Tancred must become enamoured of his cousin Katherine, and that the only use of the yacht would be to take them all to Ireland. The duke was resolved only on two points: that his son should do exactly as his son liked, and that he himself would never take the advice, on any subject, of any other person than Lord Eskdale.

In the meantime Tancred was launched, almost unconsciously, into the great world. The name of the Marquess of Montacute was foremost in those delicate lists by which an eager and admiring public is apprised who, among their aristocracy, eat, drink, dance, and sometimes pray. From the saloons of Belgrave and Grosvenor Square to the sacred recesses of the Chapel Royal, the movements of Lord Montacute were tracked and registered, and were devoured every morning, oftener with a keener relish than the matin meal of which they formed a regular portion. England is the only country which enjoys the un-speakable advantage of being thus regularly, promptly, and accurately furnished with catalogues of those favoured beings who are deemed qualified to enter the houses of the great. What condescension in those who impart the information! What indubitable evidence of true nobility! What superiority to all petty vanity! And in those who receive it, what freedom from all little feelings! No arrogance on one side; on the other, no envy. It is only countries blessed with a free press that can be thus favoured. Even a free press is not alone sufficient. Besides a free press, you must have a servile public.

After all, let us be just. The uninitiated world is apt to believe that there is sometimes, in the outskirts of fashion, an eagerness, scarcely consistent with self-respect, to enter the mansions of the great. Not at all: few people really want to go to their grand parties. It is not the charms of conversation, the flash of wit or the blaze of beauty, the influential presence of the powerful and celebrated, all the splendour and
refinement, which, combined, offer in a polished saloon so much to charm the taste and satisfy the intellect, that the mass of social partisans care anything about. What they want is, not so much to be in her ladyship's house as in her ladyship's list. After the party at Coningsby Castle, our friend, Mrs. Guy Flouncey, at length succeeded in being asked to one of Lady St. Julians' assemblies. It was a great triumph, and Mrs. Guy Flouncey determined to make the most of it. She was worthy of the occasion. But alas! next morning, though admitted to the rout, Mrs. Guy Flouncey was left out of the list! It was a severe blow! But Mrs. Guy Flouncey is in every list now, and even strikes out names herself. But there never was a woman who advanced with such dexterity.

Lord Montacute was much shocked, when, one morning, taking up a journal, he first saw his name in print. He was alone, and he blushed; felt, indeed, extremely distressed, when he found that the English people were formally made acquainted with the fact that he had dined on the previous Saturday with the Earl and Countess of St. Julians; 'a grand banquet,' of which he was quite unconscious until he read it; and that he was afterwards 'observed' at the Opera.

He found that he had become a public character, and he was not by any means conscious of meriting celebrity. To be pointed at as he walked the streets, were he a hero, or had done, said, or written anything that anybody remembered, though at first painful and embarrassing, for he was shy, he could conceive ultimately becoming endurable, and not without a degree of excitement, for he was ambitious; but to be looked at because he was a young lord, and that this should be the only reason why the public should be informed where he dined, or where he amused himself, seemed to him not only vexatious but degrading. When he arrived, however, at a bulletin of his devotions, he posted off immediately to the Surrey Canal to look at a yacht there, and resolved not to lose unnecessarily one moment in setting off for Jerusalem.

He had from the first busied himself about the preparations for his voyage with all the ardour of youth; that is, with all the energy of inexperience, and all the vigour of simplicity. As everything seemed to depend upon his obtaining a suitable vessel, he trusted to no third person; had visited Cowes several times; advertised in every paper; and had already met with more than one yacht which at least deserved consideration. The duchess was quite frightened at his progress. 'I am afraid he has found one,' she said to Lord Eskdale; 'he will be off directly.'

Lord Eskdale shook his head. 'There are always things of this sort in the market. He will inquire before he purchases, and he will find that he has got hold of a slow coach.'

'A slow coach!' said the duchess, looking inquiringly. 'What is that?'

'A tub that sails like a collier, and which, instead of taking him to Jerusalem, will hardly take him to Newcastle.'

Lord Eskdale was right. Notwithstanding all his ardour, all his inquiries, visits to Cowes and the Surrey Canal, advertisements and answers to advertisements, time flew on, and Tancred was still without a yacht.
In this unsettled state, Tancred found himself one evening at Deloraine House. It was not a ball, it was only a dance, brilliant and select; but, all the same, it seemed to Tancred that the rooms could not be much more crowded. The name of the Marquess of Montacute, as it was sent along by the servants, attracted attention. Tancred had scarcely entered the world, his appearance had made a sensation, everybody talked of him, many had not yet seen him.

"Oh! that is Lord Montacute," said a great lady, looking through her glass; "very distinguished!"

"I tell you what," whispered Mr. Ormsby to Lord Valentine, "you young men had better look sharp; Lord Montacute will cut you all out!"

"Oh! he is going to Jerusalem," said Lord Valentine.

"Jerusalem!" said Mr. Ormsby, shrugging his shoulders. "What can he find to do at Jerusalem?"

"What, indeed," said Lord Milford. "My brother was there in '39; he got leave after the bombardment of Acre, and he says there is absolutely no sport of any kind."

"There used to be partridges in the time of Jeremiah," said Mr. Ormsby; "at least they told us so at the Chapel Royal last Sunday, where, by-the-bye, I saw Lord Montacute for the first time; and a deuced good-looking fellow he is," he added, musingly.

"Well, there is not a bird in the whole country now," said Lord Milford.

"Montacute does not care for sport," said Lord Valentine.

"What does he care for?" asked Lord Milford. "Because, if he wants any horses, I can let him have some."

"He wants to buy a yacht," said Lord Valentine; "and that reminds me that I heard to-day Exmouth wanted to get rid of "The Flower of Yarrow," and I think it would suit my cousin. I'll tell him of it." And he followed Tancred.

"You and Valentine must rub up your harness, Milford," said Mr. Ormsby; "there is a new champion in the field. We are talking of Lord Montacute," continued Mr. Ormsby, addressing himself to Mr. Melton, who joined them; "I tell Milford he will cut you all out."

"Well," said Mr. Melton, "for my part I have had so much success, that I have no objection, by way of change, to be for once eclipsed."

"Well done, Jemmy," said Lord Milford.

"I see, Melton," said Mr. Ormsby, "you are reconciled to your fate like a philosoper."

"Well, Montacute," said Lord St. Patrick, a good-tempered, witty Milesian, with a laughing eye, "when are you going to Jericho?"

"Tell me," said Tancred, in reply, and rather earnestly, "who is that?" And he directed the attention of Lord St. Patrick to a young lady, rather tall, a brilliant complexion, classic features, a profusion of light brown hair, a face of intelligence, and a figure rich and yet graceful.

"That is Lady Constance Rawleigh; if you like, I will introduce you to her. She is my cousin, and deuced clever. Come along!"

In the meantime, in the room leading to the sculpture gallery where they were dancing, the throng is even excessive. As the two great divisions, those who would enter the gallery and those who are quitting it, encounter each other, they exchange flying phrases as they pass.
not rendering them desperate. One at least of them was of a rank equal to that of Tancred. She had the reputation of being very clever, and of being able, if it pleased her, to breathe scorpions as well as brilliants and roses. It had got about that she admired intellect, and, though she claimed the highest social position, that a booby would not content her, even if his ears were covered with strawberry leaves.

In the cloak-room, Tancred was still at her side, and was presented to her mother, Lady Charmouth.

'Was it a great advantage, Tancred? said Constance, smiling;

'But not so much to-morrow, where I shall meet you,' said Tancred, 'unless you chance to dine at the Archbishop of York.'

'I am not going anywhere to-morrow,' said Constance, 'but I am going, where everybody else is going, to breakfast with Mrs. Guy Flouncey, at Craven Cottage. Why, will not you be there?

'I have not the honour of knowing her,' said Tancred.

'That is not of the slightest consequence; she will be very happy to have the honour of knowing you. I saw her in the dancing-room, but it is not worth while waiting to speak to her now. You shall receive an invitation the moment you are awake.'

'But to-morrow I have an engagement. I have to look at a yacht.'

'But that you can look at on Monday; besides, if you wish to know anything about yachts, you had
better speak to my brother, Fitz-Heron, who has built more than any man alive."

'The perhaps he has one that he wishes to part with?'
said Tancred.

'I have no doubt of it. You can ask him to-morrow at Mrs. Guy Flouncey's.'

'I will. Lady Charmouth's carriage is called. May I have the honour?' said Tancred, offering his arm.

CHAPTER XIII.

A FEMININE DIPLOMATIST.

HERE is nothing so remarkable as feminine influence. Although the character of Tancred was not completely formed—for that result depends, in some degree, upon the effect of circumstances at a certain time of life, as well as on the impulse of a natural bent—still the temper of his being was profound and steadfast. He had arrived, in solitude and by the working of his own thought, at a certain resolution, which had assumed to his strong and fervent imagination a sacred character, and which he was determined to accomplish at all costs. He had brought himself to the point that he would not conceive an obstacle that should baulk him. He had acceded to the conditions which had been made by his parents, for he was by nature dutiful, and wished to fulfil his purpose, if possible, with their sanction.

Yet he had entered society with repugnance, and found nothing in its general tone with which his spirit harmonised. He was alone in the crowd; silent, observing, and not charmed. There seemed to him generally a want of simplicity and repose; too
much flutter, not a little affectation. People met in
the thronged chambers, and interchanged brief words,
as if they were always in a hurry. ‘Have you been
here long? Where are you going next?’ These
were the questions which seemed to form the staple
of the small talk of a fashionable multitude. Why,
too, was there a smile on every countenance, which
often also assumed the character of a grin? No error
so common or so grievous as to suppose that a smile
is a necessary ingredient of the pleasing. There are
few faces that can afford to smile. A smile is some-
times bewitching, in general vapid, often a contor-
tion. But the bewitching smile usually bears from
the grave face. It is then irresistible. Tancred,
though he was unaware of it, was gifted with this
rare spell. He had inherited it from his mother; a
woman naturally earnest and serious, and of a singu-
lar simplicity, but whose heart when pleased spoke
in the dimpling sunshine of her cheek with exquisite
beauty. The smiles of the Duchess of Bellamont,
however, were like her diamonds, brilliant, but rarely
worn.
Tancred had not mounted the staircase of Dela-
raine House with any anticipation of pleasure. His
thoughts were far away amid cities of the desert, and
by the palmy banks of ancient rivers. He often took
refuge in these exciting and ennobling visions, to
maintain himself when he underwent the ceremony
of entering a great house. He was so shy in little
things, that to hear his name sounded from servant
to servant, echoing from landing-place to landing-
place, was almost overwhelming. Nothing but his
pride, which was just equal to his reserve, prevented
him from often turning back on the stairs and pre-
cipitately retreating. And yet he had not been ten
minutes in Deloraine House, before he had absolutely
requested to be introduced to a lady. It was the
first time he had ever made such a request.
He returned home, softly musing. A tone lingered
in his ear; he recalled the countenance of one absent.
In his dressing-room he lingered before he retired,
with his arm on the mantel-piece, and gazing with
abstraction on the fire.
When his servant called him, late in the morning,
he delivered to him a card from Mrs. Guy Flouncey,
inviting him on that day to Craven Cottage, at three
o’clock: ‘déjeuner at four o’clock precisely.’ Tancred
took the card, looked at it, and the letters seemed to
cluster together and form the countenance of Lady
Constance. ‘It will be a good thing to go,’ he said,
‘because I want to know Lord Fitz-Heron; he will be
of great use to me about my yacht.’ So he ordered
his carriage at three o’clock.
The reader must not for a moment suppose that
Mrs. Guy Flouncey, though she was quite as well
dressed, and almost as pretty, as she was when at
Coningsby Castle in 1837, was by any means the
same lady who then strove to amuse and struggled
to be noticed. By no means. In 1837, Mrs. Guy
Flouncey was nobody; in 1845, Mrs. Guy Flouncey
was somebody, and somebody of very great impor-
tance. Mrs. Guy Flouncey had invaded society, and
had conquered it, gradually, but completely, like the
English in India. Social invasions are not rare, but
they are seldom fortunate, or success, if achieved, is
partial, and then only sustained at immense cost, like
the French in Algiers.
The Guy Flounceys were not people of great for-
tune. They had a good fortune; seven or eight thousand a year. But then, with an air of great expenditure, even profusion, there was a basis of good management. And a good fortune with good management, and without that equivocal luxury, a great country-house, is almost equal to the great fortune of a peer. But they not only had no country-house, they had no children. And a good fortune, with good management, no country-house, and no children, is Aladdin's lamp.

Mr. Guy Flouncey was a sporting character. His wife had impressed upon him that it was the only way in which he could become fashionable and acquainted with 'the best men.' He knew just enough of the affair not to be ridiculous; and, for the rest, with a great deal of rattle and apparent heedlessness of speech and deed, he was really an extremely selfish and sufficiently shrewd person, who never compromised himself. It is astonishing with what dexterity Guy Flouncey could extricate himself from the jaws of a friend, who, captivated by his thoughtless candour and ostentatiously good heart, might be induced to request Mr. Flouncey to lend him a few hundreds, only for a few months, or, more diplomatically, might beg his friend to become his security for a few thousands, for a few years.

Mr. Guy Flouncey never refused these applications; they were exactly those to which it delighted his heart to respond, because nothing pleased him more than serving a friend. But then he always had to write a preliminary letter of preparation to his banker, or his steward, or his confidential solicitor; and, by some contrivance or other, without offending any one, rather with the appearance of conferring an obliga-

...
every year. Still, it was hard work, and not rapid. At a certain point they stuck, as all do. Most people, then, give it up; but patience, Buffon tells us, is genius, and Mrs. Guy Flouncey was, in her way, a woman of genius. Their dinners were, in a certain sense, established: these in return brought them to a certain degree into the dinner world; but balls, at least balls of a high calibre, were few, and as for giving a ball herself, Mrs. Guy Flouncey could no more presume to think of that than of attempting to prorogue Parliament. The house, however, got really celebrated for 'the best men.' Mrs. Guy Flouncey invited all the young dancing lords to dinner. Mothers will bring their daughters where there are young lords. Mrs. Guy Flouncey had an opera-box in the best tier, which she took only to lend to her friends; and a box at the French play, which she took only to see her foes. They were both at everybody's service, like Mr. Guy Flouncey's yacht, provided the persons who required them were members of that great world in which Mrs. Guy Flouncey had resolved to plant herself.

Mrs. Guy Flouncey was pretty; she was a flirt on principle; thus she had caught the Marquess of Beaumanoir, who, if they chanced to meet, always spoke to her, which gave Mrs. Guy Flouncey fashion. But Mrs. Guy Flouncey was nothing more than a flirt. She never made a mistake; she was born with strong social instincts. She knew that the fine ladies among whom, from the first, she had determined to place herself, were moral martinet sort of ison which she had prudently managed. She had not destroyed herself by any fatal preference. Still, her fashion among men necessarily made her unfashionable among women, who, if they did not absolutely hate her, which they would have done had she had a noble lover, were determined not to help her up the social ladder. Now she had a great friend, and one of the greatest of ladies. The moment she had pondered over years had arrived. Mrs. Guy Flouncey determined at once to test her position. Mrs. Guy Flouncey resolved on giving a ball.

But some of our friends in the country will say, 'Is that all? Surely it required no very great resolution, no very protracted pondering, to determine on giving a ball! Where is the difficulty? The lady has

contumely if committed by some 'shocking woman,' who has deprived perhaps a countess of the affections of a husband who has not spoken to her for years. But if the countess is to lose her husband, she ought to lose him to a viscountess, at least. In this way the earl is not lost to 'society.'

A great nobleman met Mrs. Guy Flouncey at a country-house, and was fairly captivated by her. Her pretty looks, her coquettish manner, her vivacity, her charming costume, above all, perhaps, her imperturbable good temper, pierced him to the heart. The great nobleman's wife had the weakness to be annoyed. Mrs. Guy Flouncey saw her opportunity. She threw over the earl, and became the friend of the countess, who could never sufficiently evince her gratitude to the woman who would not make love to her husband. This friendship was the incident for which Mrs. Guy Flouncey had been cruising for years. Men she had vanquished; they had given her a sort of I on which she had prudently managed. She had not destroyed herself by any fatal preference. Still, her fashion among men necessarily made her unfashionable among women, who, if they did not absolutely hate her, which they would have done had she had a noble lover, were determined not to help her up the social ladder. Now she had a great friend, and one of the greatest of ladies. The moment she had pondered over years had arrived. Mrs. Guy Flouncey determined at once to test her position. Mrs. Guy Flouncey resolved on giving a ball.

But some of our friends in the country will say, 'Is that all? Surely it required no very great resolution, no very protracted pondering, to determine on giving a ball! Where is the difficulty? The lady has
but to light up her house, hire the fiddlers, line her staircase with American plants, perhaps enclose her balcony, order Mr. Gunter to provide plenty of the best refreshments, and at one o’clock a superb supper, and, with the company of your friends, you have as good a ball as can be desired by the young, or endured by the old.

Innocent friends in the country! You might have all these things. Your house might be decorated like a Russian palace, blazing with the most brilliant lights and breathing the richest odours; you might have Jullien presiding over your orchestra, and a banquet worthy of the Romans. As for your friends, they might dance until daybreak, and agree that there never was an entertainment more tasteful, more sumptuous, and, what would seem of the first importance, more merry. But, having all these things, suppose you have not a list? You have given a ball, you have not a list. The reason is obvious: you are ashamed of your guests. You are not in ‘society.’

But even a list is not sufficient for success. You must also get a day: the most difficult thing in the world. After inquiring among your friends, and studying the columns of the Morning Post, you discover that, five weeks hence, a day is disengaged. You send out your cards; your house is dismantled; your lights are arranged; the American plants have arrived; the band, perhaps two bands, are engaged. Mr. Gunter has half dressed your supper, and made all your ice, when suddenly, within eight-and-forty hours of the festival which you have been five weeks preparing, the Marchioness of Deloraine sends out cards for a ball in honour of some European sovereign who has just alighted on our isle, and means to stay only a week, and at whose court, twenty years ago, Lord Deloraine was ambassador. Instead of receiving your list, you are obliged to send messengers in all directions to announce that your ball is postponed, although you are perfectly aware that not a single individual would have been present whom you would have cared to welcome.

The ball is postponed; and next day the Morning Post informs us it is postponed to that day week; and the day after you have circulated this interesting intelligence, you yourself, perhaps, have the gratification of receiving an invitation, for the same day, to Lady St. Julians: with ‘dancing’ neatly engraved in the corner. You yield in despair; and there are some ladies who, with every qualification for an excellent ball—guests, Gunter, American plants, pretty daughters—have been watching and waiting for years for an opportunity of giving it; and at last, quite hopeless, at the end of the season, expend their funds in a series of Greenwich banquets, which sometimes fortunately produce the results expected from the more imposing festivity.

You see, therefore, that giving a ball is not that matter-of-course affair you imagined; and that for Mrs. Guy Flouncey to give a ball and succeed, completely, triumphantly to succeed, was a feat worthy of that fine social general. Yet she did it. The means, like everything that is great, were simple. She induced her noble friend to ask her guests. Her noble friend canvassed for her as if it were a county election of the good old days, when the representation of a shire was the certain avenue to a peerage, instead of being, as it is now, the high road to a poor-law commissionship. Many were very glad to make the ac-
quaintance of Mrs. Guy Flouncey; many only wanted an excuse to make the acquaintance of Mrs. Guy Flouncey; they went to her party because they were asked by their dear friend, Lady Kingcastle. As for the potentates, there is no disguise on these subjects among them. They went to Mrs. Guy Flouncey's ball because one who was their equal, not only in rank, but in social influence, had requested it as a personal favour, she herself, when the occasion offered, being equally ready to advance their wishes. The fact was, that affairs were ripe for the recognition of Mrs. Guy Flouncey as a member of the social body. Circumstances had been long maturing. The Guy Flounceys, who, in the course of their preparatory career, had hopped from Park Crescent to Portman Square, had now perched upon their 'splendid mansion' in Belgrave Square. Their dinners were renowned. Mrs. Guy Flouncey was seen at all the 'best balls,' and was always surrounded by the 'best men.' Though a flirt and a pretty woman, she was a discreet parvenu, who did not entrap the affections of noble husbands. Above all, she was the friend of Lady Kingcastle, who called her and her husband 'those good Guy Flounceys.'

The ball was given; you could not pass through Belgrave Square that night. The list was published; it formed two columns of the Morning Post. Lady Kingcastle was honoured by the friendship of a royal duchess. She put the friendship to the proof, and her royal highness was seen at Mrs. Guy Flouncey's ball. Imagine the reception, the canopy, the scarlet cloth, the 'God save the King' from the band of the first guards, bivouacked in the hall, Mrs. Guy Flouncey herself performing her part as if she had received princesses of the blood all her life; so reverent and yet so dignified, so very calm and yet with a sort of winning, sunny innocence. Her royal highness was quite charmed with her hostess, praised her much to Lady Kingcastle, told her that she was glad that she had come, and even stayed half an hour longer than Mrs. Guy Flouncey had dared to hope. As for the other guests, the peerage was gutted. The Dictator himself was there, and, the moment her royal highness had retired, Mrs. Guy Flouncey devoted herself to the hero. All the great ladies, all the ambassadors, all the beauties, a full chapter of the Garter, a chorus among the 'best men' that it was without doubt the 'best ball' of the year, happy Mrs. Guy Flouncey! She threw a glance at her swing-glass while Mr. Guy Flouncey, who 'had not had time to get anything the whole evening,' was eating some supper on a tray in her dressing-room at five o'clock in the morning, and said, 'We have done it at last, my love!'

She was right; and from that moment Mrs. Guy Flouncey was asked to all the great houses, and became a lady of the most unexceptionable ton.

But all this time we are forgetting her déjeuner, and that Tancred is winding his way through the garden lanes of Fulham to reach Craven Cottage.
CHAPTER XIV.

THE CONINGSBYS.

The day was brilliant: music, sunshine, ravishing bonnets, little parasols that looked like large butterflies. The new phaetons gilded up, then carriages-and-four swept by; in general the bachelors were ensconced in their comfortable broughams, with their glasses down and their blinds drawn, to receive the air and to exclude the dust; some less provident were cavaliers, but, notwithstanding the well-watered roads, seemed a little dashed as they cast an anxious glance at the rose which adorned their button-hole, or fancied that they felt a flying black from a London chimney light upon the tip of their nose.

Within, the winding walks dimly echoed whispering words; the lawn was studded with dazzling groups; on the terrace by the river a dainty multitude beheld those celebrated waters which furnish flounders to Richmond and whitebait to Blackwall.

'Mrs. Coningsby shall decide,' said Lord Beaumanoir.

Edith and Lady Theresa Lyle stood by a statue that glittered in the sun, surrounded by a group of cavaliers; among them Lord Beaumanoir, Lord Melford, Lord Eugene de Vere. Her figure was not less lithe and graceful since her marriage, a little more voluptuous; her rich complexion, her radiant and abounding hair, and her long grey eye, now melting with pathos, and now twinkling with mockery, presented one of those faces of witchery which are beyond beauty.

'Mrs. Coningsby shall decide.'

'It is the very thing,' said Edith, 'that Mrs. Coningsby will never do. Decision destroys suspense, and suspense is the charm of existence.'

'But suspense may be agony,' said Lord Eugene de Vere, casting a glance that would read the innermost heart of Edith.

'And decision may be despair,' said Mrs. Coningsby.

'But we agreed the other night that you were to decide everything for us,' said Lord Beaumanoir; 'and you consented.'

'I consented the other night, and I retract my consent to-day; and I am consistent, for that is indecision.'

'You are consistent in being charming,' said Lord Eugene.

'Pleasing and original!' said Edith. 'By-the-bye, when I consented that the melancholy Jaques should be one of my aides-de-camp I expected him to maintain his reputation, not only for gloom but wit. I think you had better go back to the forest, Lord Eugene, and see if you cannot stumble upon a fool who may drill you in repartee. How do you do, Lady Riddlesworth?' and she bowed to two ladies who seemed inclined to stop, but Edith added, 'I heard
great applications for you this moment on the terrace.’

‘Indeed!’ exclaimed the ladies; and they moved on.

‘When Lady Riddlesworth joins the conversation it is like a stoppage in the streets. I invented a piece of intelligence to clear the way, as you would call out Fire! or The queen is coming! There used to be things called vers de société, which were not poetry; and I do not see why there should not be social illusions which are not fibs.’

‘I entirely agree with you,’ said Lord Milford;
‘and I move that we practise them on a large scale.’

‘Like the verses, they might make life more light,’ said Lady Theresa.

‘We are surrounded by illusions,’ said Lord Eugene, in a melancholy tone.

‘And shams of all descriptions,’ said Edith; ‘the greatest, a man who pretends he has a broken heart when all the time he is full of fun.’

‘There are a great many men who have broken hearts,’ said Lord Beaumanoir, smiling sorrowfully.

‘Cracked heads are much commoner,’ said Edith, ‘you may rely upon it. The only man I really know with a broken heart is Lord Fitz-Booby. I do think that paying Mount-Dullard’s debts has broken his heart. He takes on so; ’tis piteous. “My dear Mrs. Coningsby,” he said to me last night, “only think what that young man might have been; he might have been a lord of the treasury in ’35; why, if he had had nothing more in ’41, why, there’s a loss of between four and five thousand pounds; but with my claims—Sir Robert, having thrown the father over, was bound on his own principle to provide for the son—he might have got something better; and now he comes to me with his debts, and his reason for paying his debts, too, Mrs. Coningsby, because he is going to be married; to be married to a woman who has not a shilling. Why, if he had been in office, and only got 1,500/ a year, and married a woman with only another 1,500/, he would have had 3,000/ a year, Mrs. Coningsby; and now he has nothing of his own except some debts, which he wants me to pay, and settle 3,000/ a year on him besides.’”

They all laughed.

‘Aha!’ said Mrs. Coningsby, with a resemblance which made all start, ‘you should have heard it with the Fitz-Booby voice.’

The character of a woman rapidly develops after marriage, and sometimes seems to change, when in fact it is only complete. Hitherto we have known Edith only in her girlhood, bred up in a life of great simplicity, and under the influence of a sweet fancy, or an absorbing passion. Coningsby had been a hero to her before they met, the hero of nursery hours and nursery tales. Experience had not disturbed those dreams. From the moment they encountered each other at Millbank, he assumed that place in her heart which he had long occupied in her imagination; and, after their second meeting at Paris, her existence was merged in love. All the crosses and vexations of their early affection only rendered this state of being on her part more profound and engrossing. But though Edith was a most happy wife, and blessed with two children worthy of their parents, love exercises quite a different influence upon a woman when she has married, and especially when she has assumed a social position which deprives life of all its real cares. Under any circumstances, that
suspense, which, with all its occasional agony, is the
great spring of excitement, is over; but, generally
speaking, it will be found, notwithstanding the
proverb, that with persons of a noble nature, the
straitened fortunes which they share together, and
manage, and mitigate by mutual forbearance, are more
conducive to the sustainment of a high-toned and
romantic passion, than a luxurious prosperity.
The wife of a man of limited fortune, who, by
corrivance, by the concealed sacrifice of some ne-
cessity of her own, supplies him with some slight
enjoyment which he has never asked, but which she
fancies he may have sighed for, experiences, without
doubt, a degree of pleasure far more ravishing than
the patrician dame who stops her barouche at Storr
and Mortimer's, and out of her pin-money buys a
trinket for the husband whom she loves, and which
he finds, perhaps, on his dressing-table, on the anni-
versary of their wedding-day. That's pretty too and
touching, and should be encouraged; but the other
thrills, and ends in an embrace that is still poetry.
The Coningsbys shortly after their marriage had
been called to the possession of a great fortune, for
which, in every sense, they were well adapted. But
a great fortune necessarily brings with it a great
change of habits. The claims of society proportion-
ately increase with your income. You live less for
yourselves. For a selfish man, merely looking to his
luxurious ease, Lord Eskdale's idea of having ten
thousand a year, while the world suppose you have
only five, is the right thing. Coningsby, however,
looked to a great fortune as one of the means, rightly
employed, of obtaining great power. He looked also
to his wife to assist him in this enterprise.

Edith, from a native impulse, as well as from love
for him, responded to his wish. When they were
in the country, Hellingsley was a perpetual stream
and scene of splendid hospitality; there the flower of
London society mingled with all the aristocracy of
the county. Leander was often retained specially,
like a Wilde or a Kelly, to renovate the genius of
the habitual chief; not of the circuit, but the kitchen.
A noble mansion in Park Lane received them the
moment Parliament assembled. Coningsby was then
immersed in affairs, and counted entirely on Edith to
cherish those social influences which in a public
career are not less important than political ones. The
whole weight of the management of society rested on
her. She had to cultivate his alliances, keep together
his friends, arrange his dinner-parties, regulate his en-
gagements. What time for romantic love? They
were never an hour alone. Yet they loved not less;
but love had taken the character of enjoyment instead
of a wild bewitchment; and life had become an airy
bustle, instead of a storm, an agony, a hurricane of
the heart.

In this change in the disposition, not in the de-
gree, of their affection, for there was the same amount
of sweet solicitude, only it was duly apportioned to
everything that interested them, instead of being ex-
clusively devoted to each other, the character of Edith,
which had been swallowed up by the absorbing pas-
sion, rapidly developed itself amid the social circum-
stances. She was endued with great vivacity, a san-
guine and rather saucy spirit, with considerable talents,
and a large share of feminine vanity; that divine gift
which makes woman charming. Entirely sympathis-
ing with her husband, labouring with zeal to advance
his views, and living perpetually in the world, all these qualities came to light. During her first season she had been very quiet, not less observant, making herself mistress of the ground. It was prepared for her next campaign. When she evinced a disposition to take a lead, although found faultless the first year, it was suddenly remembered that she was a manufacturer's daughter; and she was once described by a great lady as 'that person whom Mr. Coningsby had married, when Lord Monmouth cut him off with a shilling.'

But Edith had anticipated these difficulties, and was not to be daunted. Proud of her husband, confident in herself, supported by a great establishment, and having many friends, she determined to exchange salutes with these social sharp-shooters, who are scarcely as courageous as they are arrogant. It was discovered that Mrs. Coningsby could be as malicious as her assailants, and far more epigrammatic. She could describe in a sentence and personify in a phrase. The *mot* was circulated, the *nom de niche* repeated. Surrounded by a brilliant band of youth and wit, even her powers of mimickry were revealed to the initiated. More than one social tyrant, whom all disliked, but whom none had ventured to resist, was made ridiculous. Flushed by success and stimulated by admiration, Edith flattered herself that she was assisting her husband while she was gratifying her vanity. Her adversaries soon vanished, but the powers that had vanquished them were too choice to be forgotten or neglected. The tone of raillery she had assumed for the moment, and extended, in self-defence, to persons, was adopted as a habit, and infused itself over affairs in general.

Mrs. Coningsby was the fashion; she was a wit as well as a beauty; a fascinating droll; dazzling and bewitching, the idol of every youth. Eugene de Vere was roused from his premature exhaustion, and at last found excitement again. He threw himself at her feet; she laughed at him. He asked leave to follow her footsteps; she consented. He was only one of a band of slaves. Lord Beaumanoir, still a bachelor, always hovered about her, feeding on her laughing words with a mild melancholy, and sometimes bandying repartee with a kind of tender and stately despair.

His sister, Lady Theresa Lyle, was Edith's great friend. Their dispositions had some resemblance. Marriage had developed in both of them a frolic grace. They hunted in couple; and their sport was brilliant. Many things may be said by a strong female alliance, that would assume quite a different character were they even to fall from the lips of an Aspasia to a circle of male votaries; so much depends upon the scene and the characters, the mode and the manner.

The good-natured world would sometimes pause in its amusement, and, after dwelling with statistical accuracy on the number of times Mrs. Coningsby had danced the polka, on the extraordinary things she said to Lord Eugene de Vere, and the odd things she and Lady Theresa Lyle were perpetually doing, would wonder, with a face and voice of innocence, 'how Mr. Coningsby liked all this?' There is no doubt what was the anticipation by the good-natured world of Mr. Coningsby's feelings. But they were quite mistaken. There was nothing that Mr. Coningsby liked more. He wished his wife to become a social power; and he wished his wife to be amused. He saw that, with the surface of a life of levity, she al-
ready exercised considerable influence, especially over
the young; and independently of such circumstances
and considerations, he was delighted to have a wife
who was not afraid of going into society by herself;
not one whom he was sure to find at home when he
returned from the House of Commons, not reproach-
ing him exactly for her social sacrifices, but looking a
victim, and thinking that she retained her hus-
band's heart by being a mope. Instead of that Con-
ingsby wanted to be amused when he came home,
and more than that, he wanted to be instructed in the
finest learning in the world.

As some men keep up their Greek by reading
every day a chapter in the New Testament, so Con-
ingsby kept up his knowledge of the world, by al-
ways, once at least in the four-and-twenty hours,
having a delightful conversation with his wife. The
processes were equally orthodox. Exempted from the
tax of entering general society, free to follow his own
pursuits, and to live in that political world which
alone interested him, there was not an anecdote, a
trait, a good thing said, or a bad thing done, which
did not reach him by a fine critic and a lively nar-
reator. He was always behind those social scenes
which, after all, regulate the political performers,
knew the springs of the whole machinery, the chang-
ings and the shifting, the fiery cars and golden
chariots which men might mount, and the trap-doors
down which men might fall.

But the Marquess of Montacute is making his re-
vence to Mrs. Guy Flouncey.

There was not at this moment a human being
whom that lady was more glad to see at her dejeuner;
but she did not show it in the least. Her self-pos-
session, indeed, was the finest work of art of the
day, and ought to be exhibited at the Adelaide Gal-
ley. Like all mechanical inventions of a high class,
it had been brought to perfection very gradually, and
after many experiments. A variety of combinations,
and an almost infinite number of trials, must have
been expended before the too-startling laugh of Con-
ingsby Castle could have subsided into the haughty
suavity of that sunny glance, which was not familiar
enough for a smile, nor foolish enough for a simper.
As for the rattling vein which distinguished her in
the days of our first acquaintance, that had long
ceased. Mrs. Guy Flouncey now seemed to share
the prevalent passion for genuine Saxon, and used
only monosyllables; while Fine ear himself would
have been sometimes at fault had he attempted to
give a name to her delicate breathings. In short, Mrs.
Guy Flouncey never did or said anything but in 'the
best taste.' It may, however, be a question, whether
she ever would have captivated Lord Monmouth, and
those who like a little nature and fun, if she had
made her first advances in this style. But that showed
the greatness of the woman. Then she was ready
for anything for promotion. That was the age of
forlorn hopes; but now she was a general of division,
and had assumed a becoming carriage.

This was the first déjeuner at which Tancred had
been present. He rather liked it. The scene, lawns
and groves and a glancing river, the air, the music,
our beautiful countrywomen, who, with their bril-
liant complexion and bright bonnets, do not shrink
from the daylight, these are circumstances which,
combined with youth and health, make a morning
festival, say what they like, particularly for the first
time, very agreeable, even if one be dreaming of Jerusalem. Strange power of the world, that the moment we enter it, our great conceptions dwindle! In youth it is quick sympathy that degrades them; more advanced, it is the sense of the ridiculous. But perhaps these reveries of solitude may not be really great conceptions; perhaps they are only exaggerations; vague, indefinite, shadowy, formed on no sound principles, founded on no assured basis.

Why should Tancred go to Jerusalem? What does it signify to him whether there be religious truth or political justice? He has youth, beauty, rank, wealth, power, and all in excess. He has a mind that can comprehend their importance and appreciate their advantages. What more does he require? Unreasonable boy! And if he reach Jerusalem, why should he find religious truth and political justice there? He can read of it in the travelling books, written by young gentlemen, with the best letters of introduction to all the consuls. They tell us what it is, a third-rate city in a stony wilderness. Will the Providence of fashion prevent this great folly about to be perpetrated by one born to be fashion’s most brilliant subject? A folly, too, which may end in a catastrophe? His parents, indeed, have appealed in vain; but the sneer of the world will do more than the supplication of the father. A mother’s tear may be disregarded, but the sigh of a mistress has changed the most obdurate. We shall see. At present Lady Constance Rawleigh expresses her pleasure at Tancred’s arrival, and his heart beats a little.

CHAPTER XV.

Disenchantment.

HEY are talking about it,’ said Lord Eskdale to the duchess, as she looked up to him with an expression of the deepest interest.

‘He asked St. Patrick to introduce him to her at Deloraine House, danced with her, was with her the whole evening, went to the breakfast on Saturday to meet her, instead of going to Blackwall to see a yacht he was after.’

‘If it were only Katherine,’ said the duchess, ‘I should be quite happy.’

‘Don’t be uneasy,’ said Lord Eskdale; ‘there will be plenty of Katherines and Constances, too, before he finishes. The affair is not much, but it shows, as I foretold, that, the moment he found something more amusing, his taste for yachting would pass off.’

‘You are right, you always are.’

What really was this affair, which Lord Eskdale held lightly? With a character like Tancred, everything may become important. Profound and yet simple, deep in self-knowledge yet inexperienced, his reserve, which would screen him from a thousand
dangers, was just the quality which would insure his
thraldom by the individual who could once effectually
melt the icy barrier and reach the central heat. At
this moment of his life, with all the repose, and
sometimes even the high ceremony, on the surface,
he was a being formed for high-reaching exploits,
ready to dare everything and reckless of all con-
sequences, if he proposed to himself an object which
he believed to be just and great. This temper of
mind would, in all things, have made him act with
that rapidity, which is rashness with the weak, and
decision with the strong. The influence of woman
on him was novel. It was a disturbing influence, on
which he had never counted in those dreams and
visions in which there had figured more heroes than
heroines. In the imaginary interviews in which he
had disciplined his solitary mind, his antagonists had
been statesmen, prelates, sages, and senators, with
whom he struggled and whom he vanquished.

He was not unequal in practice to his dreams.
His shyness would have vanished in an instant before
a great occasion; he could have addressed a public
assembly; he was capable of transacting important af-
fairs. These were all situations and contingencies
which he had foreseen, and which for him were not
strange; for he had become acquainted with them in
his reveries. But suddenly he was arrested by an in-
fluence for which he was unprepared; a precious
stone made him stumble who was to have scaled the
Alps. Why should the voice, the glance, of another
agitae his heart? The cherubim of his heroic thoughts
not only deserted him, but he was left without the
guardian angel of his shyness. He melted, and the
icberg might degenerate into a puddle.

Lord Eskdale drew his conclusions like a clever
man of the world, and in general he would have
been right; but a person like Tancred was in much
greater danger of being captured than a common-
place youth entering life with second-hand experience,
and living among those who ruled his opinions by
their sneers and sarcasms. A malicious tale by a
spiteful woman, the change ribaldry of a club-room
window, have often been the impure agencies which
have saved many a youth from committing a great
folly; but Tancred was beyond all these influences.
If they had been brought to bear on him, they would
rather have precipitated the catastrophe. His imagina-
tion would have immediately been summoned to the
rescue of his offended pride; he would have invested
the object of his regard with supernatural qualities, and
consoled her for the impertinence of society by his
devotion.

Lady Constance was clever; she talked like a mar-
rried woman, was critical, yet easy; and having gua-
noed her mind by reading French novels, had a
variety of conclusions on all social topics, which she
threw forth with unaltering promptness, and with
the well-arranged air of an impromptu. These were
all new to Tancred, and startling. He was attracted
by the brilliancy, though he often regretted the tone,
which he ascribed to the surrounding corruption from
which he intended to escape, and almost wished to
save her at the same time. Sometimes Tancred
looked unusually serious; but at last his rare and bril-
liant smile beamed upon one who really admired him,
was captivated by his intellect, his freshness, his dif-
ference from all around, his pensive beauty and his
grave innocence. Lady Constance was free from
affectation; she was frank and natural; she did not conceal the pleasure she had in his society; she conducted herself with that dignified facility, becoming a young lady who had already refused the hands of two future earls, and of the heir of the Clan-Alpins.

A short time after the déjeûner at Craven Cottage, Lord Montacute called on Lady Charmouth. She was at home, and received him with great cordiality, looking up from her frame of worsted work with a benign maternal expression; while Lady Constance, who was writing an urgent reply to a note that had just arrived, said rapidly some agreeable words of welcome, and continued her task. Tancred seated himself by the mother, made an essay in that small talk in which he was by no means practised, but Lady Charmouth helped him on without seeming to do so. The note was at length dispatched, Tancred of course still remaining at the mother's side, and Lady Constance too distant for his wishes. He had nothing to say to Lady Charmouth; he began to feel that the pleasure of feminine society consisted in talking alone to her daughter.

While he was meditating a retreat, and yet had hardly courage to rise and walk alone down a large long room, a new guest was announced. Tancred rose, and murmured good-morning; and yet, somehow or other, instead of quitting the apartment, he went and seated himself by Lady Constance. It really was as much the impulse of shyness, which sought a nook of refuge, as any other feeling that actuated him; but Lady Constance seemed pleased, and said in a low voice and in a careless tone, 'Tis Lady Brancepeth; do you know her? Mamma's great friend,' which meant, you need give yourself no trouble to talk to any one but myself.

After making herself very agreeable, Lady Constance took up a book which was at hand, and said, 'Do you know this?' And Tancred, opening a volume which he had never seen, and then turning to its titlepage, found it was 'The Revelations of Chaos,' a startling work just published, and of which a rumour had reached him.

'No,' he replied; 'I have not seen it.'

'I will lend it you if you like; it is one of those books one must read. It explains everything, and is written in a very agreeable style.'

'It explains everything!' said Tancred; 'it must, indeed, be a very remarkable book!'

'I think it will just suit you,' said Lady Constance. 'Do you know, I thought so several times while I was reading it.'

'To judge from the title, the subject is rather obscure,' said Tancred.

'No longer so,' said Lady Constance. 'It is treated scientifically; everything is explained by geology and astronomy, and in that way. It shows you exactly how a star is formed; nothing can be so pretty! A cluster of vapour, the cream of the Milky Way, a sort of celestial cheese, churned into light, you must read it, 'tis charming.'

'Nobody ever saw a star formed,' said Tancred.

'Perhaps not. You must read the "Revelations;" it is all explained. But what is most interesting, is the way in which man has been developed. You know, all is development. The principle is perpetually going on. First, there was nothing; then there was something; then, I forget the next, I think there were
shells, then fishes; then we came, let me see, did we come next? Never mind that; we came at last. And the next change there will be something very superior to us, something with wings. Ah! that’s it: we were fishes, and I believe we shall be crows. But you must read it.

‘I do not believe I ever was a fish,’ said Tancred.

‘Oh! but it is all proved; you must not argue on my rapid sketch; read the book. It is impossible to contradict anything in it. You understand, it is all science; it is not like those books in which one says one thing and another the contrary, and both may be wrong. Everything is proved: by geology, you know. You see exactly how everything is made; how many worlds there have been; how long they lasted; what went before, what comes next. We are a link in the chain, as inferior animals were that preceded us: we in turn shall be inferior; all that will remain of us will be some relics in a new red sandstone. This is development. We had fins; we may have wings.’

Tancred grew silent and thoughtful; Lady Brancepeth moved, and he rose at the same time. Lady Charmouth looked as if it were by no means necessary for him to depart, but he bowed very low, and then bade farewell to Lady Constance, who said, ‘We shall meet to-night.’

‘I was a fish, and I shall be a crow,’ said Tancred to himself, when the hall door closed on him.

‘What a spiritual mistress! And yesterday, for a moment, I almost dreamed of kneeling with her at the Holy Sepulchre! I must get out of this city as quickly as possible; I cannot cope with its corruption. The acquaintance, however, has been of use to me, for I think I have got a yacht by it. I believe it was providential, and a trial. I will go home and write instantly to Fitz-Heron, and accept his offer. One hundred and eighty tons: it will do; it must."

At this moment he met Lord Eskdale, who had observed Tancred from the end of Grosvenor Square, on the steps of Lord Charmouth’s door. This circumstance ill prepared Lord Eskdale for Tancred’s salutation.

‘My dear lord, you are just the person I wanted to meet. You promised to recommend me a servant who had travelled in the East.’

‘Well, are you in a hurry?’ said Lord Eskdale, gaining time, and pumping.

‘I should like to get off as soon as practicable.’

‘Humph!’ said Lord Eskdale. ‘Have you got a yacht?’

‘I have.’

‘Oh! So you want a servant?’ he added, after a moment’s pause.

‘I mentioned that, because you were so kind as to say you could help me in that respect.’

‘Ah! I did,’ said Lord Eskdale, thoughtfully.

‘But I want a great many things,’ continued Tancred. ‘I must make arrangements about money; I suppose I must get some letters; in fact, I want generally your advice.’

‘What are you going to do about the colonel and the rest?’

‘I have promised my father to take them,’ said Tancred, ‘though I feel they will only embarrass me. They have engaged to be ready at a week’s notice; I shall write to them immediately. If they do not fulfil their engagement, I am absolved from mine.’
'So you have got a yacht, eh?' said Lord Eskdale.
'I suppose you have bought the Basilisk?'
'Exactly.'
'She wants a good deal doing to her.
'Something, but chiefly for show, which I do not care about; but I mean to get away, and refit, if necessary, at Gibraltar. I must go.'
'Well, if you must go,' said his lordship, and then he added, 'and in such a hurry; let me see. You want a first-rate managing man, used to the East, and letters, and money, and advice. Hem! You don't know Sidonia?'
'Not at all.'
'He is the man to get hold of, but that is so difficult now. He never goes anywhere. Let me see, this is Monday; to-morrow is post-day, and I dine with him alone in the City. Well, you shall hear from me on Wednesday morning early, about everything; but I would not write to the colonel and his friends just yet.'

CHAPTER XVI.

TANCRED RESCUES A LADY IN DISTRESS.

Hat is most striking in London is its vastness. It is the illimitable feeling that gives it a special character. London is not grand. It possesses only one of the qualifications of a grand city, size; but it wants the equally important one, beauty. It is the union of these two qualities that produced the grand cities, the Romes, the Babylons, the hundred portals of the Pharaohs; multitudes and magnificence; the millions influenced by art. Grand cities are unknown since the beautiful has ceased to be the principle of invention. Paris, of modern capitals, has aspired to this character; but if Paris be a beautiful city, it certainly is not a grand one; its population is too limited, and, from the nature of their dwellings, they cover a comparatively small space. Constantinople is picturesque; nature has furnished a sublime site, but it has little architectural splendour, and you reach the environs with a fatal facility. London overpowers us with its vastness.

Place a Forum or an Acropolis in its centre, and the effect of the metropolitan mass, which now has
neither head nor heart, instead of being stupefying, would be ennobling. Nothing more completely represents a nation than a public building. A member of Parliament only represents, at the most, the united constituencies: but the Palace of the Sovereign, a National Gallery, or a Museum baptised with the name of the country, these are monuments to which all should be able to look up with pride, and which should exercise an elevating influence upon the spirit of the humblest. What is their influence in London? Let us not criticise what all condemn. But how remedy the evil? What is wanted in architecture, as in so many things, is a man. Shall we find a refuge in a Committee of Taste? Escape from the mediocrity of one to the mediocrity of many? We only multiply our feebleness, and aggravate our deficiencies. But one suggestion might be made. No profession in England has done its duty until it has furnished its victim. The pure administration of justice dates from the deposition of Macclesfield. Even our boasted navy never achieved a great victory until we shot an admiral. Suppose an architect were hanged? Terror has its inspiration as well as competition.

Though London is vast, it is very monotonous. All those new districts that have sprung up within the last half-century, the creatures of our commercial and colonial wealth, it is impossible to conceive anything more tame, more insipid, more uniform. Pan­cras is like Mary-le-bone, Mary-le-bone is like Paddington; all the streets resemble each other, you must read the names of the squares before you venture to knock at a door. This amount of building capital ought to have produced a great city. What an opportunity for architecture suddenly summoned to furnish habitations for a population equal to that of the city of Bruxelles, and a population, too, of great wealth. Mary-le-bone alone ought to have produced a revolution in our domestic architecture. It did nothing. It was built by Act of Parliament. Parliament prescribed even a façade. It is Parliament to whom we are indebted for your Gloucester Places, and Baker Streets, and Harley Streets, and Wimpole Streets, and all those flat, dull, spiritless streets, resembling each other like a large family of plain children, with Portland Place and Portman Square for their respectable parents. The influence of our Parliamentary Government upon the fine arts is a subject worth pursuing. The power that produced Baker Street as a model for street architecture in its celebrated Building Act, is the power that prevented Whitehall from being completed, and which sold to foreigners all the pictures which the King of England had collected to civilise his people.

In our own days we have witnessed the rapid creation of a new metropolitan quarter, built solely for the aristocracy by an aristocrat. The Belgrave district is as monotonous as Mary-le-bone; and is so contrived as to be at the same time insipid and tawdry. Where London becomes more interesting is Charlie­ Cross. Looking to Northumberland House, and turning your back upon Trafalgar Square, the Strand is perhaps the finest street in Europe, blending the architecture of many periods; and its river ways are a peculiar feature and rich with associations. Fleet Street, with its Temple, is not unworthy of being contiguous to the Strand. The fire of London has deprived us of the delight of a real old quarter of the city; but some bits remain, and everywhere there is...
In the vicinity of the port, Thames Street, Tower Hill, Billingsgate, Wapping, Rotherhithe, are the best parts of London; they are full of character: the buildings bear a nearer relation to what the people are doing than in the more polished quarters.

The old merchants of the times of the first Georges were a fine race. They knew their position, and built up to it. While the territorial aristocracy, pulling down their family hotels, were raising vulgar streets and squares upon their site, and occupying themselves one of the new tenements, the old merchants filled the straggling lanes, which connected the Royal Exchange with the port of London, with mansions which, if not exactly equal to the palaces of stately Venice, might at least vie with many of the hotels of old Paris. Some of these, though the great majority have been broken up into chambers and counting-houses, still remain intact.

In a long, dark, narrow, crooked street, which is still called a lane, and which runs from the south side of the street of the Lombards towards the river, there is one of these old houses of a century past, and which, both in its original design and present condition, is a noble specimen of its order. A pair of massy iron gates, of elaborate workmanship, separate the street from its spacious and airy court-yard, which is formed on either side by a wing of the mansion, itself a building of deep red brick, with a pediment, and pilasters, and copings of stone. A flight of steps leads to the lofty and central doorway; in the middle of the court there is a garden plot, including a fountain, and a fine plane tree.

The stillness, doubly effective after the tumult just quitted, the lulling voice of the water, the soothing aspect of the quivering foliage, the noble building, and the cool and capacious quadrangle, the aspect even of those who enter, and frequently enter, the precinct, and who are generally young men, gliding in and out, earnest and full of thought, all contribute to give to this locality something of the classic repose of a college, instead of a place agitated with the most urgent interests of the current hour; a place that deals with the fortunes of kings and empires, and regulates the most important affairs of nations, for it is the counting-house in the greatest of modern cities of the most celebrated of modern financiers.

It was the visit of Tancred to the City, on the Wednesday morning after he had met Lord Eskdale, that occasions me to touch on some of the characteristics of our capital. It was the first time that Tancred had ever been in the City proper, and it greatly interested him. His visit was prompted by receiving, early on Wednesday morning, the following letter:

"Dear Tancred: I saw Sidonia yesterday, and spoke to him of what you want. He is much occupied just now, as his uncle, who attended to affairs here, is dead, and, until he can import another uncle or cousin, he must steer the ship, as times are critical. He bade me say you might call upon him in the City to-day, at two o'clock. He lives in Sequin Court, near the Bank. You will have no difficulty in finding it. I recommend you to go, as he is the sort of man who will really understand what you mean, which neither your father nor myself do exactly; and, besides, he is a person to know."
'I enclose a line which you will send in, that there may be no mistake. I should tell you, as you are very fresh, that he is of the Hebrew race; so don't go on too much about the Holy Sepulchre.

‘Yours faithfully,

Eskdale.

'Spring Gardens, Wednesday morning.'

It is just where the street is most crowded, where it narrows, and losing the name of Cheapside, takes that of the Poultry, that the last of a series of stoppages occurred; a stoppage which, at the end of ten minutes, lost its inert character of mere obstruction, and developed into the livelier qualities of the row. There were oaths, contradictions, menaces: 'No, you sha'n't; Yes, I will; No, I didn't; Yes, you did; No, you haven't; Yes, I have;' the lashing of a whip, the interference of a policeman, a crash, a scream. Tancred looked out of the window of his brougham. He saw a chariot in distress, a chariot such as would have become an Ondine by the waters of the Serpentine, and the very last sort of equipage that you could expect to see smashed in the Poultry. It was really breaking a butterfly upon a wheel to crush its delicate springs, and crack its dark brown panels, soil its dainty hammer-cloth, and endanger the lives of its young coachman in a flaxen wig, and its two tall footmen in short coats, worthy of Cinderella.

The scream, too, came from a fair owner, who was surrounded by clamorous carmen and city marshals, and who, in an unknown land, was afraid she might be put in a city compter, because the people in the city had destroyed her beautiful chariot. Tancred let himself out of his brougham, and not with-
had taken a part in the proceedings at first, by addressing the carmen in French. This was too much, and the mob declared he was Don Carlos.

'You are too good,' said the lady, with a sweet expression.

Tancred opened the door of the chariot, the policemen pulled down the steps, the servants were told to do the best they could with the wrecked equipage; in a second the lady and her companion were in Tancred's brougham, who, desiring his servants to obey all their orders, disappeared, for the stoppage at this moment began to move, and there was no time for bandying compliments.

He had gained the pavement, and had made his way as far as the Mansion House, when, finding a group of public buildings, he thought it prudent to inquire which was the Bank.

'That is the Bank,' said a good-natured man, in a bustle, but taken by Tancred's unusual appearance.

'What do you want? I am going there.'

'I do not want exactly the Bank,' replied Tancred, 'but a place somewhere near it. Do you happen to know, sir, a place called Sequin Court?'

'I should think I did,' said the man, smiling. 'So you are going to Sidonia's?'
Tancred opened the door of the chariot.

'Tancred opened the door of the chariot,' said the lady, with a sweet expression.

Tancred opened the door of the chariot, the policemen pulled down the steps, the servants were told to do the best they could with the wrecked equipage; in a second the lady and her companion were in Tancred's brougham, who, desiring his servants to obey all their orders, disappeared, for the stoppage at this moment began to move, and there was no time for bandying compliments.

He had gained the pavement, and had made his way as far as the Mansion House, when, finding a group of public buildings, he thought it prudent to inquire in which one the Rue.
ANCRED entered Sequin Court; a chariot with a foreign coronet was at the foot of the great steps which he ascended. He was received by a fat hall porter, who would not have disgraced his father's establishment, and who, rising with lazy insolence from his hooded chair, when he observed that Tancred did not advance, asked the new comer what he wanted.

'I want Monsieur de Sidonia.'

'Can't see him now; he is engaged.'

'I have a note for him.'

'Very well, give it me; it will be sent in. You can sit here.' And the porter opened the door of a waiting-room, which Tancred declined to enter. 'I will wait here, thank you,' said Tancred, and he looked round at the old oak hall, on the walls of which were hung several portraits, and from which ascended one of those noble staircases never found in a modern London mansion. At the end of the hall, on a slab of porphyry, was a marble bust, with this inscription on it, 'FUNDATOR.' It was the first Sidonia, by Chantrey.
'I will wait here, thank you,' said Tancred, looking round; and then, with some hesitation, he added, 'I have an appointment here at two o'clock.'

As he spoke, that hour sounded from the belfry of an old city church that was at hand, and then was taken up by the chimes of a large German clock in the hall.

'It may be,' said the porter, 'but I can't disturb master now; the Spanish ambassador is with him, and others are waiting. When he is gone, a clerk will take in your letter with some others that are here.'

At this moment, and while Tancred remained in the hall, various persons entered, and, without noticing the porter, pursued their way across the apartment.

'And where are those persons going?' inquired Tancred.

The porter looked at the enquirer with a blended gaze of curiosity and contempt, and then negligently answered him without looking in Tancred's face, and while he was brushing up the hearth, 'Some are going to the counting-house, and some are going to the Bank, I should think.'

'I wonder if our hall porter is such an infernal bully as Monsieur de Sidonia's!' thought Tancred.

There was a stir. 'The ambassador is coming out,' said the hall porter; 'you must not stand in the way.'

The well-trained ear of this guardian of the gate was conversant with every combination of sound which the apartments of Sequin Court could produce. Close as the doors might be shut, you could not rise from your chair without his being aware of it; and

in the present instance he was correct. A door at the end of the hall opened, and the Spanish minister came forth.

'Stand aside,' said the hall porter to Tancred; and, summoning the servants without, he ushered his excellency with some reverence to his carriage.

'Now your letter will go in with the others,' he said to Tancred, whom for a few moments he left alone, and then returned, taking no notice of our young friend, but, depositing his bulky form in his hooded chair, he resumed the city article of the Times.

The letter ran thus:

'Dear Sidonia: This will be given you by my cousin Montacute, of whom I spoke to you yesterday. He wants to go to Jerusalem, which very much perplexes his family, for he is an only child. I don't suppose the danger is what they imagine. But still there is nothing like experience, and there is no one who knows so much of these things as yourself. I have promised his father and mother, very innocent people, whom of all my relatives, I most affect, to do what I can for him. If, therefore, you can aid Montacute, you will really serve me. He seems to have character, though I can't well make him out. I fear I indulged in the hock yesterday, for I feel a twinge. Yours faithfully,

'Eskdale.'

'The hall clock had commenced the quarter chimes, when a young man, fair and intelligent, and wearing spectacles, came into the hall, and, opening the door
of the waiting-room, looked as if he expected to find some one there; then, turning to the porter, he said, 'Where is Lord Montacute?'

The porter rose from his hooded chair, and put down the newspaper, but Tancred had advanced when he heard his name, and bowed, and followed the young man in spectacles, who invited Tancred to accompany him.

Tancred was ushered into a spacious and rather long apartment, panelled with old oak up to the white coved ceiling, which was richly ornamented. Four windows looked upon the fountain and the plane tree. A portrait by Lawrence, evidently of the same individual who had furnished the model to Chantrey, was over the high, old-fashioned, but very handsome marble mantel-piece. A Turkey carpet, curtains of crimson damask, some large tables covered with papers, several easy chairs, against the walls some iron cabinets, these were the furniture of the room, at one corner of which was a glass door, which led to a vista of apartments fitted up as counting-houses, filled with clerks, and which, if expedient, might be covered by a baize screen, which was now unclosed.

A gentleman writing at a table rose as he came in, and extending his hand said, as he pointed to a seat, 'I am afraid I have made you come out at an unusual hour.'

The young man in spectacles in the meanwhile retired; Tancred had bowed and murmured his compliments: and his host, drawing his chair a little from the table, continued: 'Lord Eskdale tells me that you have some thoughts of going to Jerusalem.'

'I have for some time had that intention.'

'It is a pity that you did not set out earlier in the year, and then you might have been there during the Easter pilgrimage. It is a fine sight.'

'It is a pity,' said Tancred; 'but to reach Jerusalem is with me an object of so much moment, that I shall be content to find myself there at any time, and under any circumstances.'

'It is no longer difficult to reach Jerusalem; the real difficulty is the one experienced by the crusaders, to know what to do when you have arrived there.'

'It is the land of inspiration,' said Tancred, slightly blushing; 'and when I am there, I would humble pray that my course may be indicated to me.'

'And you think that no prayers, however humble, would obtain for you that indication before your departure?'

'This is not the land of inspiration,' replied Tancred, timidly.

'But you have your Church,' said Sidonia.

'Which I hold of divine institution, and which should be under the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit,' said Tancred, dropping his eyes, and colouring still more as he found himself already trespassing on that delicate province of theology which always fascinated him, but which it had been intimated to him by Lord Eskdale that he should avoid.

'Is it wanting to you, then, in this conjuncture? inquired his companion.

'I find its opinions conflicting, its decrees contradictory, its conduct inconsistent,' replied Tancred. 'I have conferred with one who is esteemed its most eminent prelate, and I have left him with a conviction of what I had for some time suspected, that inspiration is not only a divine but a local quality.'
You and I have some reason to believe so,' said Sidonia. 'I believe that God spoke to Moses on Mount Horeb, and you believe that he was crucified, in the person of Jesus, on Mount Calvary. Both were, at least carnally, children of Israel: they spoke Hebrew to the Hebrews. The prophets were only Hebrews; the apostles were only Hebrews. The churches of Asia, which have vanished, were founded by a native Hebrew; and the church of Rome, which says it shall last for ever, and which converted this island to the faith of Moses and of Christ, vanishing the Druids, Jupiter Olympus, and Woden, who had successively invaded it, was also founded by a native Hebrew. Therefore, I say, your suspicion or your conviction is, at least, not a fantastic one.'

Tancred listened to Sidonia as he spoke with great interest, and with an earnest and now quite unembarrassed manner. The height of the argument had immediately surmounted all his social reserve. His intelligence responded to the great theme that had so long occupied his musing hours; and the unexpected character of a conversation which, as he had supposed, would have mainly treated of letters of credit, the more excited him.

'Then,' said Tancred, with animation, 'seeing how things are, that I am born in an age and in a country divided between infidelity on one side and anarchy of creeds on the other; with none competent to guide me, yet feeling that I must believe, for I hold that duty cannot exist without faith; is it so wild as some would think it, I would say is it unreasonable, that I should wish to do that which, six centuries ago, was done by my ancestor whose name I bear, and that I should cross the seas, and—? I hesitated.

'And visit the Holy Sepulchre,' said Sidonia.

'And visit the Holy Sepulchre,' said Tancred, solemny; 'for that, I confess, is my sovereign thought.

'Well, the crusades were of vast advantage to Europe,' said Sidonia, 'and renovated the spiritual hold which Asia has always had upon the North. It seems to wane at present, but it is only the decrease that precedes the new development.'

'It must be so,' said Tancred; 'for who can believe that a country once sanctified by the Divine Presence can ever be as other lands? Some celestial quality, distinguishing it from all other Æmes, must for ever linger about it. I would ask those mountains, that were reached by angels, why they no longer receive heavenly visitants. I would appeal to that Comforter promised to man, on the sacred spot on which the assurance of solace was made. I require a Comforter. I have appealed to the holy influence in vain in England. It has not visited me; I know none here on whom it has descended. I am induced, therefore, to believe that it is part of the divine scheme that its influence should be local; that it should be approached with reverence, not thoughtlessly and hurriedly, but with such difficulties and such an interval of time as a pilgrimage to a spot sanctified can alone secure.'

Sidonia listened to Tancred with deep attention. Lord Montacute was seated opposite the windows, so that there was a full light upon the play of the countenance, the expression of which Sidonia watched, while his keen and far-reaching vision traced at the same time the formation and development of the head of his visitor. He recognised in this youth not a vain and vague visionary, but a being in whom the facul-
ties of reason and imagination were both of the highest class, and both equally developed. He observed that he was of a nature passionately affectionate, and that he was of a singular audacity. He perceived that though, at this moment, Tancred was as ignorant of the world as a young monk, he possessed all the latent qualities which in future would qualify him to control society. When Tancred had finished speaking, there was a pause of a few seconds, during which Sidonia seemed lost in thought; then, looking up, he said, ‘It appears to me, Lord Montacute, that what you want is to penetrate the great Asian mystery.’

‘You have touched my inmost thought,’ said Tancred, eagerly. At this moment there entered the room, from the glass door, the same young man who had ushered Tancred into the apartment. He brought a letter to Sidonia. Lord Montacute felt confused; his shyness returned to him; he deplored the unfortunate interruption, but he felt he was in the way. He rose, and began to say good-morning, when Sidonia, without taking his eyes off the letter, saw him, and waving his hand, stopped him, saying, ‘I settled with Lord Eskdale that you were not to go away if anything occurred which required my momentary attention. So pray sit down, unless you have engagements.’ And Tancred again seated himself.

‘Write,’ continued Sidonia to the clerk, ‘that my letters are twelve hours later than the despatches, and that the City continued quite tranquil. Let the extract from the Berlin letter be left at the same time at the Treasury. The last bulletin?’

‘Consols drooping at half-past two; all the foreign funds lower; shares very active.’

They were once more alone.

‘When do you propose going?’

‘I hope in a week.’

‘Alone?’

‘I fear I shall have many attendants.’

‘That is a pity. Well, when you arrive at Jerusalem, you will naturally go to the convent of Terra Santa. You will make there the acquaintance of the Spanish prior, Alonzo Lara. He calls me cousin; he is a Nuevo of the fourteenth century. Very orthodox; but the love of the old land and the old language have come out in him, as they will, though his blood is no longer clear, but has been modified by many Gothic intermarriages, which was never our case. We are pure Sephardim. Lara thoroughly comprehends Palestine and all that pertains to it. He has been there a quarter of a century, and might have been Archbishop of Seville. You see, he is master of the old as well as the new learning; this is very important; they often explain each other. Your bishops here know nothing about these things. How can they? A few centuries back they were tattooed savages. This is the advantage which Rome has over you, and which you never can understand. That Church was founded by a Hebrew, and the magnetic influence lingers. But you will go to the fountain head. Theology requires an apprenticeship of some thousand years at least; to say nothing of clime and race. You cannot get on with theology as you do with chemistry and mechanics. Trust me, there is something deeper in it. I shall give you a note to Lara; cultivate him, he is the man you want. You will want others; they will come; but Lara has the first key.’
‘I am sorry to trouble you about such things,’ said Tancred, in a hesitating voice, ‘but perhaps I may not have the great pleasure to see you again, and Lord Eskdale said that I was to speak to you about some letters of credit.

‘Oh! we shall meet before you go. But what you say reminds me of something. As for money, there is only one banker in Syria; he is everywhere, at Aleppo, Damascus, Beirroot, Jerusalem. It is Besso. Before the expulsion of the Egyptians, he really ruled Syria, but he is still powerful, though they have endeavoured to crush him at Constantinople. I applied to Metternich about him, and, besides that, he is mine. I shall give you a letter to him, but not merely for your money affairs. I wish you to know him. He lives in splendour at Damascus, moderately at Jerusalem, where there is little to do, but which he loves as a residence, being a Hebrew. I wish you to know him. You will, I am sure, agree with me, that he is, without exception, the most splendid specimen of the animal man you ever became acquainted with. His name is Adam, and verily he looks as if he were in the garden of Eden before the fall. But his soul is as grand and as fine as his body. You will lean upon this man as you would on a faithful charger. His divan is charming; you will always find there the most intelligent people. You must learn to smoke. There is nothing that Besso cannot do; make him do everything you want; have no scruples; he will be gratified. Besides, he is one of those who kiss my signet. These two letters will open Syria to you, and any other land, if you care to proceed. Give yourself no trouble about any other preparations.’

‘And how am I to thank you?’ said Tancred, ris-
CHAPTER XVIII.

AN INTERESTING RENCONTREE.

HEN Tancred returned home, musing, from a visit to Sidonia, he found the following note:

‘Lady Bertie and Bellair returns Lord Montacute his carriage with a thousand compliments and thanks. She fears she greatly incommode Lord Montacute, but begs to assure him how very sensible she is of his considerate courtesy.

‘Upper Brook Street, Wednesday.’

The handwriting was of that form of scripture which attracts; refined yet energetic; full of character. Tancred recognised the titles of Bertie and Bellair as those of two not inconsiderable earldoms, now centred in the same individual. Lady Bertie and Bellair was herself a lady of the high nobility; a daughter of the present Duke of Fitz-Aquitaine; the son of that duke who was the father-in-law of Lord de Mowbray, and whom Lady Firebrace, the present Lady Bardolf, and Tadpole, had dexterously converted to conservatism by persuading him that he was to be Sir Robert’s Irish viceroy. Lady Bertie and Bellair, therefore, was first-cousin to Lady Joan Mountchesney, and her sister, who is still Lady Maud Fitz-Warene. Tancred was surprised that he never recollected to have met one so distinguished and so beautiful. His conversation with Sidonia, however, had driven the little adventure of the morning from his memory, and now that it was thus recalled to him, he did not dwell upon it. His being was absorbed in his paramount purpose. The sympathy of Sidonia, so complete, and as instructive as it was animating, was a sustaining power which we often need when we are meditating great deeds. How often, when all seems dark, and hopeless, and spiritless, and tame, when slight obstacles figure in the cloudy landscape as Alps, and the rushing cataracts of our invention have subsided into drizzle, a single phrase of a great man instantaneously flings sunshine on the intellectual landscape, and the habitual features of power and beauty, over which we have so long mused in secret confidence and love, resume all their energy and lustre.

The haunting thought that occasionally, notwithstanding his strong will, would perplex the soul and agitate the heart of Tancred; the haunting thought that, all this time, he was perhaps the dupe of boyish fantasies, was laid to-day. Sometimes he had felt, Why does no one sympathise with my views; why, though they treat them with conventional respect, is it clear that all I have addressed hold them to be absurd? My parents are pious and instructed; they are predisposed to view everything I say, or do, or think, with an even excessive favour. They think me moonstruck. Lord Eskdale is a perfect man of the world; proverbially shrewd, and celebrated for his judgment; he looks upon me as a raw boy, and believes that, if my father had kept me at Eton and
sent me to Paris, I should by this time have exhausted my crudities. The bishop is what the world calls a great scholar; he is a statesman who, aloof from faction, ought to be accustomed to take just and comprehensive views; and a priest who ought to be under the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit. He says I am a visionary. All this might well be disheartening; but now comes one whom no circumstances impel to judge my project with indulgence; who would, at the first glance, appear to have many prejudices arrayed against it, who knows more of the world than Lord Eskdale, and who appears to me to be more learned than the whole bench of bishops, and he welcomes my ideas, approves my conclusions, sympathises with my suggestions; develops, illustrates, enforces them; plainly intimates that I am only on the threshold of initiation, and would aid me to advance to the innermost mysteries.

There was this night a great ball at Lady Bardolf's, in Belgrave Square. One should generally mention localities, because very often they indicate character. Lady Bardolf lived next door to Mrs. Guy Flouncey. Both had risen in the world, though it requires some esoteric knowledge to recognise the patrician parvenu; and both had finally settled themselves down in the only quarter which Lady Bardolf thought worthy of her new coronet, and Mrs. Guy Flouncey of her new visiting list.

Lady Bardolf had given up the old family mansion of the Firebraces in Hanover Square, at the same time that she had resigned their old title. Politics being dead, in consequence of the majority of 1841, who, after a little kicking for the million, satisfactorily assured the minister that there was no vice in them,

Lady Bardolf had chalked out a new career, and one of a still more eminent and exciting character than her previous pursuit. Lady Bardolf was one of those ladies—there are several—who entertain the curious idea that they need only to be known in certain high quarters to be immediately selected as the principal objects of court favour. Lady Bardolf was always putting herself in the way of it; she never lost an opportunity; she never missed a drawing-room, contrived to be at all the court balls, plotted to be invited to a costume fête, and expended the tactics of a campaign to get asked to some grand château honoured by august presence. Still Her Majesty had not yet sent for Lady Bardolf. She was still very good friends with Lord Masque, for he had social influence, and could assist her; but as for poor Tadpole, she had sadly neglected him, his sphere being merely political, and that being no longer interesting. The honest gentleman still occasionally buzzed about her, slavering portentous stories about malcontent country gentlemen, rumbling Maynooth, and shaking his head at Young England. Tadpole was wont to say in confidence, that for his part he wished Sir Robert had left alone religion and commerce, and confined himself to finance, which was his forte as long as he had a majority to carry the projects which he found in the pigeon-holes of the Treasury, and which are always at the service of every minister.

Well, it was at Lady Bardolf's ball, close upon midnight, that Tancred, who had not long entered, and had not very far advanced in the crowded saloons, turning his head, recognised his heroine of the morning; his still more recent correspondent, Lady Bertie and Bellair. She was speaking to Lord Valentine. It
was impossible to mistake her; rapid as had been his former observation of her face, it was too remarkable to be forgotten, though the captivating details were only the result of his present more advantageous inspection. A small head and large dark eyes, dark as her rich hair which was quite unadorned, a pale but delicate complexion, small pearly teeth, were charms that crowned a figure rather too much above the middle height, yet undulating and not without grace. Her countenance was calm without being grave; she smiled with her eyes.

She was for a moment alone; she looked round, and recognised Tancred; she bowed to him with a beaming glance. Instantly he was at her side.

‘Our second meeting to-day,’ she said, in a low, sweet voice.

‘How came it that we never met before?’ he replied.

‘I have just returned from Paris; the first time I have been out; and, had it not been for you,’ she added, ‘I should not have been here to-night. I think they would have put me in prison.’

‘Lady Bardolf ought to be very much obliged to me, and so ought the world.’

‘I am,’ said Lady Bertie and Bellair.

‘That is worth everything else,’ said Tancred.

‘What a pretty carriage you have! I do not think I shall ever get into mine again. I am almost glad they have destroyed my chariot. I am sure I shall never be able to drive in anything else now except a brougham.’

‘Why did you not keep mine?’

‘You are magnificent; too gorgeous and oriental for these cold climes. You shower your presents as

if you were in the East, which Lord Valentine tells me you are about to visit. When do you leave us?’

‘I think of going immediately.’

‘Indeed!’ said Lady Bertie and Bellair, and her countenance changed. There was a pause, and then she continued playfully, yet as it were half in sadness, ‘I almost wish you had not come to my rescue this morning.’

‘And why?’

‘Because I do not like to make agreeable acquaintances only to lose them.

‘I think that I am most to be pitied,’ said Tancred. ‘You are wearied of the world very soon. Before you can know us, you leave us.’

‘I am not wearied of the world, for indeed, as you say, I know nothing of it. I am here by accident, as you were in the stoppage to-day. It will disperse, and then I shall get on.’

‘Lord Valentine tells me that you are going to realise my dream of dreams, that you are going to Jerusalem.’

‘Ah!’ said Tancred, kindling, ‘you too have felt that want?’

‘But I never can pardon myself for not having satisfied it,’ said Lady Bertie and Bellair in a mournful tone, and looking in his face with her beautiful dark eyes. ‘It is the mistake of my life, and now can never be remedied. But I have no energy. I ought, as a girl, when they opposed my purpose, to have taken up my palm’s staff, and never have rested content till I had gathered my shell on the strand of Joppa.’

‘It is the right feeling,’ said Tancred. ‘I am persuaded we ought all to go.’
'But we remain here,' said the lady, in a tone of suppressed and elegant anguish; 'here, where we all complain of our hopeless lives; with not a thought beyond the passing hour, yet all wrestling its wearisome and insipid moments.'

'Our lot is cast in a material age,' said Tancred.

'The spiritual can alone satisfy me,' said Lady Bertie and Bellair.

'Because you have a soul,' continued Tancred, with animation, 'still of a celestial hue. They are rare in the nineteenth century. Nobody now thinks about heaven. They never dream of angels. All their existence is concentrated in steamboats and railways.'

'You are right,' said the lady, earnestly; 'and you fly from it.'

'I go for other purposes; I would say even higher ones,' said Tancred.

'I can understand you; your feelings are my own. Jerusalem has been the dream of my life. I have always been endeavouring to reach it, but somehow or other I never got further than Paris.'

'And yet it is very easy now to get to Jerusalem,' said Tancred; 'the great difficulty, as a very remarkable man said to me this morning, is to know what to do when you are there.'

'Who said that to you?' inquired Lady Bertie and Bellair, bending her head.

'It was the person I was going to call upon when I met you; Monsieur de Sidonia.'

'Monsieur de Sidonia!' said the lady, with animation. 'Ah! you know him?'

'Not as much as I could wish. I saw him to-day for the first time. My cousin, Lord Eskdale, gave me a letter of introduction to him; for his advice and assistance about my journey. Sidonia has been a great traveller.'

'There is no person I wish to know so much as M. de Sidonia,' said Lady Bertie and Bellair. 'He is a great friend of Lord Eskdale, I think? I must get Lord Eskdale,' she added, musingly, 'to give me a little dinner, and ask M. de Sidonia to meet me.'

'He never goes anywhere; at least I have heard so,' said Tancred.

'He once used to do, and to give us great fêtes. I remember hearing of them before I was out. We must make him resume them. He is immensely rich.'

'I dare say he may be,' said Tancred. 'I wonder how a man with his intellect and ideas can think of the accumulation of wealth.'

'Tis his destiny,' said Lady Bertie and Bellair. 'He can no more disembarrass himself of his hereditary millions than a dynasty of the cares of empire. I wonder if he will get the Great Northern. They talked of nothing else at Paris.'

'Of what?' said Tancred.

'Oh! let us talk of Jerusalem!' said Lady Bertie and Bellair. 'Ah, here is Augustus! Let me make you and my husband acquainted.'

Tancred almost expected to see the moustached companion of the morning, but it was not so. Lord Bertie and Bellair was a tall, thin, distinguished, withered-looking young man, who thanked Tancred for his courtesy of the morning with a sort of gracious negligence, and, after some easy talk, asked Tancred to dine with them on the morrow. He was engaged, but he promised to call on Lady Bertie and Bellair immediately, and see some drawings of the Holy Land.
CHAPTER XIX.

LORD HENRY SYMPATHISES.

ASSING through a marble antechamber, Tancred was ushered into an apartment half saloon and half library; the choicely-bound volumes, which were not too numerous, were ranged on shelves inlaid in the walls, so that they ornamented, without diminishing, the apartment. These walls were painted in encaustic, corresponding with the coved ceiling, which was richly adorned in the same fashion. A curtain of violet velvet, covering if necessary the large window, which looked upon a balcony full of flowers, and the umbrageous Park; an Axminster carpet, manufactured to harmonise both in colour and design with the rest of the chamber; a profusion of luxurious seats; a large table of ivory marquetry, bearing a carved silver bell which once belonged to a pope; a Naiad, whose golden urn served as an inkstand; some daggers that acted as paper cutters, and some French books just arrived; a group of beautiful vases recently released from an Egyptian tomb and ranged on a tripod of malachite: the portrait of a statesman, and the bust of an emperor, and a sparkling fire, were all circumstances which made the room both interesting and comfortable in which Sidonia welcomed Tancred and introduced him to a guest who had preceded him, Lord Henry Sydney.

It was a name that touched Tancred, as it has all the youth of England, significant of a career that would rescue public life from that strange union of lax principles and contracted sympathies which now form the special and degrading features of British politics. It was borne by one whose boyhood we have painted amid the fields and schools of Eton, and the springtime of whose earliest youth we traced by the sedgy waters of the Cam. We left him on the threshold of public life; and, in four years, Lord Henry had created that reputation which now made him a source of hope and solace to millions of his countrymen. But they were four years of labour which outweighed the usual exertions of public men in double that space. His regular attendance in the House of Commons alone had given him as much Parliamentary experience as fell to the lot of many of those who had been first returned in 1837, and had been, therefore, twice as long in the House. He was not only a vigilant member of public and private committees, but had succeeded in appointing and conducting several on topics which he esteemed of high importance. Add to this, that he took an habitual part in debate, and was a frequent and effective public writer; and we are furnished with an additional testimony, if that indeed were wanting, that there is no incentive to exertion like the passion for a noble renown. Nor should it be forgotten, that, in all he accomplished, he had but one final purpose, and that the highest. The debate, the committee, the article in the Journal or the Review, the public meet-
ing, the private research, these were all means to advance that which he had proposed as the object of his public life, namely, to elevate the condition of the people.

Although there was no public man whose powers had more rapidly ripened, still it was interesting to observe that their maturity had been faithful to the healthy sympathies of his earlier years. The boy, whom we have traced intent upon the revival of the pastimes of the people, had expanded into the statesman, who, in a profound and comprehensive investigation of the elements of public wealth, had shown that a jaded population is not a source of national prosperity. What had been a picturesque emotion had now become a statistical argument. The material system that proposes the supply of constant till to a people as the perfection of polity, had received a staggering blow from the exertions of a young patrician, who announced his belief that labour had its rights as well as its duties. What was excellent about Lord Henry was, that he was not a mere philanthropist, satisfied to rouse public attention to a great social evil, or instantly to suggest for it some crude remedy.

A scholar and a man of the world, learned in history and not inexperienced in human nature, he was sensible that we must look to the constituent principles of society for the causes and the cures of great national disorders. He therefore went deeply into the question, nor shrank from investigating how far these disorders were produced by the operation or the desuetude of ancient institutions, and how far it might be necessary to call new influences into political existence for their remedy. Richly informed, still stu-

dious, fond of labour and indefatigable, of a gentle disposition though of an ardent mind, calm yet energetic, very open to conviction, but possessing an inflexibility amounting even to obstinacy when his course was once taken, a ready and improving speaker, an apt and attractive writer, affable and sincere, and with the undesigning faculty of making friends, Lord Henry seemed to possess all the qualities of a popular leader, if we add to them the golden ones: high lineage, an engaging appearance, youth, and a temperament in which the reason had not been developed to the prejudice of the heart.

'And when do you start for the Holy Land?' said Lord Henry to Tancred, in a tone and with a countenance which proved his sympathy.

'I have clutched my staff, but the caravan lingers.'

'I envy you!'

'Why do you not go?'

Lord Henry slightly shrugged his shoulders, and said, 'It is too late. I have begun my work and I cannot leave it.'

'If a Parliamentary career could save this country,' said Tancred, 'I am sure you would be a public benefactor. I have observed what you and Mr. Coningsby and some of your friends have done and said, with great interest. But Parliament seems to me to be the very place which a man of action should avoid. A Parliamentary career, that old superstition of the eighteenth century, was important when there were no other sources of power and fame. An aristocracy at the head of a people whom they had plundered of their means of education, required some cultivated tribunal whose sympathy might stimulate their intelligence and satisfy their vanity. Parliament was never
so great as when they debated with closed doors.

The public opinion, of which they never dreamed, has superseded the rhetorical club of our great-grandfathers. They know this well enough, and try to maintain their unnecessary position by affecting the character of men of business, but amateur men of business are very costly conveniences. In this age it is not Parliament that does the real work. It does not govern Ireland, for example. If the manufacturers want to change a tariff, they form a commercial league, and they effect their purpose. It is the same with the abolition of slavery, and all our great revolutions. Parliament has become as really insignificant as for two centuries it has kept the monarch. O'Connell has taken a good share of its power; Cobden has taken another; and I am inclined to believe,' said Tancred, 'though I care little about it, that, if our order had any spirit or prescience, they would put themselves at the head of the people, and take the rest.'

'Coningsby dines here to-day,' said Sidonia, who, unobserved, had watched Tancred as he spoke, with a searching glance.

'Notwithstanding what you say,' said Lord Henry, smiling, 'I wish I could induce you to remain and help us. You would be a great ally.'

'I go to a land,' said Tancred, 'that has never been blessed by that fatal drollery called a representative government, though Omnisience once deigned to trace out the polity which should rule it.'

At this moment the servant announced Lord and Lady Marney.

Political sympathy had created a close intimacy between Lord Marney and Coningsby. They were necessary to each other. They were both men entirely devoted to public affairs, and sitting in different Houses, both young, and both masters of fortunes of the first class, they were indicated as individuals who hereafter might take a lead, and, far from clashing, would co-operate with each other.

Through Coningsby the Marneys had become acquainted with Sidonia, who liked them both, particularly Sybil. Although received by society with open arms, especially by the high nobility, who affected to look upon Sybil quite as one of themselves, Lady Marney, notwithstanding the homage that everywhere awaited her, had already shown a disposition to retire as much as possible within the precinct of a chosen circle.

This was her second season, and Sybil ventured to think that she had made, in the general gaieties of her first, a sufficient oblation to the genius of fashion, and the immediate requirements of her social position. Her life was faithful to its first impulse. Devoted to the improvement of the condition of the people, she was the moving spring of the charitable development of this great city. Her house, without any pedantic effort, had become the focus of a refined society, who, though obliged to show themselves for the moment in the great carnival, wear their masks, blow their trumpets, and pelt the multitude with sugar-plums, were glad to find a place where they could at all times divest themselves of their mummery, and return to their accustomed garb of propriety and good taste.

Sybil, too, felt alone in the world. Without a relation, without an acquaintance of early and other days, she clung to her husband with a devotion
which was peculiar as well as profound. Egremont was to her more than a husband and a lover; he was her only friend; it seemed to Sybil that he could be her only friend. The disposition of Lord Marney was not opposed to the habits of his wife. Men, when they are married, often shrink from the glare and bustle of those social multitudes which are entered by bachelors with the excitement of knights-errant in a fairy wilderness, because they are supposed to be rife with adventures, and, perhaps, fruitful of a heroine. The adventure sometimes turns out to be a catastrophe, and the heroine a copy instead of an original; but let that pass.

Lord Marney liked to be surrounded by those who sympathised with his pursuit; and his pursuit was politics, and politics on a great scale. The commonplace career of official distinction was at his command. A great peer, with abilities and ambition, a good speaker, supposed to be a Conservative, he might soon have found his way into the cabinet, and, like the rest, have assisted in registering the decrees of one too powerful individual. But Lord Marney had been taught to think at a period of life when he little dreamed of the responsibility which fortune had in store for him.

The change in his position had not altered the conclusions at which he had previously arrived. He held that the state of England, notwithstanding the superficialities of a material prosperity, was one of impending doom, unless it were timely arrested by those who were in high places. A man of fine mind rather than of brilliant talents, Lord Marney found, in the more vivid and impassioned intelligence of Coningsby, the directing sympathy which he required. Tadpole looked upon his lordship as little short of insane. 'Do you see that man?' he would say, as Lord Marney rode by. 'He might be Privy Seal, and he throws it all away for the nonsense of Young England!'

Mrs. Coningsby entered the room almost on the footsteps of the Marneys.

'I am in despair about Harry,' she said, as she gave a finger to Sidonia, 'but he told me not to wait for him later than eight. I suppose he is kept at the House. Do you know anything of him, Lord Henry?'

'You may make yourself quite easy about him,' said Lord Henry. 'He promised Vavasour to support a motion which he has to-day, and perhaps speak on it. I ought to be there too, but Charles Buller told me there would certainly be no division and so I ventured to pair off with him,'

'He will come with Vavasour,' said Sidonia, 'who makes up our party. They will be here before we have seated ourselves.'

The gentlemen had exchanged the usual inquiry, whether there was anything new to-day, without waiting for the answer. Sidonia introduced Tancred and Lord Marney.

'And what have you been doing to-day?' said Edith to Sybil, by whose side she had seated herself.

'Lady Bardolf did nothing last night but gronder me, because you never go to her parties. In vain I said that you looked upon her as the most odious of her sex, and her balls the pest of society. She was not in the least satisfied. And how is Gerard?'

'Why, we really have been very uneasy about him,' said Lady Marney, 'but the last bulletin,' she added, with a smile, 'announces a tooth.'
'Next year you must give him a pony, and let him ride with my Harry; I mean my little Harry, Harry of Monmouth I call him; he is so like a portrait Mr. Coningsby has of his grandfather, the same debauched look.'

'Your dinner is served, sir!'

Sidonia offered his hand to Lady Marney; Edith was attended by Tancred. A door at the end of the room opened into a marble corridor, which led to the dining-room, decorated in the same style as the library. It was a suite of apartments which Sidonia used for an intimate circle like the present.
The room was otherwise illumined from the sides.

The guests had scarcely seated themselves when the two absent ones arrived.

'Well, you did not divide, Vavasour,' said Lord Henry.

'Did I not?' said Vavasour; 'and nearly beat the Government. You are a pretty fellow!'

'I was paired.'

'With some one who could not stay. Your brother, Mrs. Coningsby, behaved like a man, sacrificed his dinner, and made a capital speech.'

'Oh! Oswald, did he speak? Did you speak, Harry?'

'No; I voted. There was too much speaking as it was; if Vavasour had not replied, I believe we should have won.'

'But then, my dear fellow, think of my points; think how they laid themselves open!' said Coningsby.

'I have been talking with Montacute,' whispered Lord Henry to Coningsby, who was seated next to him. 'Wonderful fellow! You can conceive nothing richer! Very wild, but all the right ideas; exaggerated of course. You must get hold of him after dinner.'

'But they say he is going to Jerusalem.'

'But he will return.'

'I do not know that; even Napoleon regretted that he had ever re-crossed the Mediterranean. The East is a career.'

Mr. Vavasour was a social favourite; a poet and a real poet, and a troubadour, as well as a member of Parliament; travelled, sweet-tempered, and good-hearted; amusing and clever. With catholic sympathies and an eclectic turn of mind, Mr. Vavasour saw something good in everybody and everything, which is certainly amiable, and perhaps just, but disqualifies a man in some degree for the business of life, which requires for its conduct a certain degree of prejudice. Mr. Vavasour's breakfasts were renowned. Whatever your creed, class, or country, one might almost add your character, you were a welcome guest at his matutinal meal, provided you were celebrated. That qualification, however, was rigidly enforced.

It not rarely happened that never were men more incongruously grouped. Individuals met at his hospitable house who had never met before, but who for years had been cherishing in solitude mutual detestation, with all the irritable exaggeration of the literary character. Vavasour liked to be the Amphitryon of a cluster of personal enemies. He prided himself on figuring as the social medium by which rival reputations became acquainted, and paid each other in his presence the compliments which veiled their ineffable disgust. All this was very well at his rooms in the Albany, and only funny; but when he collected his menageries at his ancestral hall in a distant county, the sport sometimes became tragic.

A real philosopher, alike from his genial disposition and from the influence of his rich and various information, Vavasour moved amid the strife, sympathising with every one; and perhaps, after all, the philanthropy which was his boast was not untinged by a dash of humour, of which rare and charming quality he possessed no inconsiderable portion. Vavasour liked to know everybody who was known, and to see everything which ought to be seen. He also
At length, the second course being served, Mrs. Coningsby said, ‘I think you have all eaten enough: I have a piece of information for you. There is going to be a costume ball at the Palace.’

This announcement produced a number of simultaneous remarks and exclamations. ‘When was it to be? What was it to be? An age, or a country; or an olio of all ages and all countries?’

‘An age is a masquerade,’ said Sidonia. ‘The more contracted the circle, the more perfect the illusion.’

‘Oh, no!’ said Vavasour, shaking his head. ‘An age is the thing; it is a much higher thing. What can be finer than to represent the spirit of an age?’

‘And Mr. Vavasour to perform the principal part,’ said Mrs. Coningsby. ‘I know exactly what he means. He wants to dance the polka as Petrarch, and find a Laura in every partner.’

‘You have no poetical feeling,’ said Mr. Vavasour, waving his hand. ‘I have often told you so.’

‘You will easily find Lauras, Mr. Vavasour, if you often write such beautiful verses as I have been reading to-day,’ said Lady Marney.

‘You, on the contrary,’ said Mr. Vavasour, bowing, ‘have a great deal of poetical feeling, Lady Marney; I have always said so.’

‘But give us your news, Edith,’ said Coningsby. ‘Imagine our suspense, when it is a question, whether we are all to look picturesque or quizzical.’

‘Ah, you want to know whether you can go as Cardinal Mazarin, or the Duke of Ripperda, Harry. I know exactly what you all are now thinking of; whether you will draw the prize in the forthcoming lottery, and get exactly the epoch and the character which
suit you. Is it not so, Lord Montacute? Would not you like to practise a little with your crusados at the Queen's ball before you go to the Holy Sepulchre?

"I would rather hear your description of it," said Tancred.

"Lord Henry, I see, is half inclined to be your companion as a Red-cross Knight," continued Edith. "As for Lady Marney, she is the successor of Mrs. Fry, and would wish, I am sure, to go to the ball as her representative."

"And pray what are you thinking of being?" said Mr. Vavasour. "We should like very much to be favoured with Mrs. Coningsby's ideal of herself."

"Mrs. Coningsby leaves the ideal to poets. She is quite satisfied to remain what she is, and it is her intention to do so, though she means to go to Her Majesty's ball."

"I see that you are in the secret," said Lord Marney. "If I could only keep secrets, I might turn out something," said Mrs. Coningsby. "I am the depositary of so much that is occult — joys, sorrows, plots, and scrapes; but I always tell Harry, and he always betrays me. Well, you must guess a little. Lady Marney begins."

"Well, we were at one at Turin," said Lady Marney, "and it was oriental, Lalla Rookh. Are you to be a sultana?"

"Mrs. Coningsby shook her head."

"Come, Edith," said her husband; "if you know, which I doubt — "

"Oh! you doubt — "

"Valentine told me yesterday," said Mr. Vavasour, "in a mock peremptory tone, "that there would not be a ball."

"And Lord Valentine told me yesterday that there would be a ball, and what the ball would be; and what is more, I have fixed on my dress," said Mrs. Coningsby.

"Such a rapid decision proves that much antiquarian research is not necessary," said Sidonia. "Your period is modern."

"Ah!" said Edith, looking at Sidonia, "he always finds me out. Well, Mr. Vavasour, you will not be able to crown yourself with a laurel wreath, for the gentlemen will wear wigs."

"Louis Quatorze?" said her husband. "Peel as Louvois."

"No, Sir Robert would be content with nothing less than Le Grand Colbert, rue Richelieu, No. 15, grand magasin de nouveautés très-anciennes: prix fixé, avec quelques rabais."

"A description of Conservatism," said Coningsby.

The secret was soon revealed: every one had a conjecture and a commentary: gentlemen in wigs, and ladies powdered, patched, and sacked. Vavasour pondered somewhat dolefully on the anti-poetic spirit of the age; Coningsby hailed him as the author of Leonidas.

"And you, I suppose, will figure as one of the "boys" arrayed against the great Sir Robert?" said Mr. Vavasour, with a countenance of mock veneration for that eminent personage.

"The "boys" beat him at last," said Coningsby; and then, with a rapid precision and a richness of colouring which were peculiar to him, he threw out a sketch which placed the period before them; and they began to tear it to tatters, select the incidents, and apportion the characters.
Two things which are necessary to a perfect dinner are noiseless attendants, and a precision in serving the various dishes of each course, so that they may all be placed upon the table at the same moment. A deficiency in these respects produces that bustle and delay which distract many an agreeable conversation and spoil many a pleasant dish. These two excellent characteristics were never wanting at the dinners of Sidonia. At no house was there less parade. The appearance of the table changed as if by the waving of a wand, and silently as a dream. And at this moment, the dessert being arranged, fruits and their beautiful companions, flowers, reposed in alabaster baskets, raised on silver stands of filigree work.

There was half an hour of merry talk, graceful and gay: a good story, a bon-mot fresh from the mint, some raillery like summer lightning, vivid but not scorching.

'And now,' said Edith, as the ladies rose to return to the library, 'and now we leave you to Maynooth.'

'By-the-bye, what do they say to it in your House, Lord Marney?' inquired Henry Sydney, filling his glass.

'It will go down,' said Lord Marney. 'A strong dose for some, but they are used to potent potions.'

'The bishops, they say, have not made up their minds.'

'Fancy bishops not having made up their minds,' exclaimed Tancred: 'the only persons who ought never to doubt.'

'Except when they are offered a bishopric,' said Lord Marney.
face, he often indulged in quips and cranks that convulsed his neighbouring audience, who often, amid the long dreary nights of statistical imposture, sought refuge in his gay sarcasms, his airy personalities, and happy quotations.

"I do not see how there can be opinion without thought," said Tancred; "and I do not believe the public ever think. How can they? They have no time. Certainly we live at present under the empire of general ideas, which are extremely powerful. But the public have not invented those ideas. They have adopted them from convenience. No one has confidence in himself; on the contrary, every one has a mean idea of his own strength and has no reliance on his own judgment. Men obey a general impulse, they bow before an external necessity, whether for resistance or action. Individuality is dead; there is a want of inward and personal energy in man; and that is what people feel and mean when they go about complaining there is no faith."

"You would hold, then," said Henry Sydney, "that the progress of public liberty marches with the decay of personal greatness?"

"It would seem so."

"But the majority will always prefer public liberty to personal greatness," said Lord Marney.

"But, without personal greatness, you never would have had public liberty," said Coningsby.

"After all, it is civilisation that you are kicking against," said Vavasour.

"I do not understand what you mean by civilisation," said Tancred.

"The progressive development of the faculties of man," said Vavasour.

"Yes, but what is progressive development?" said Sidonia; "and what are the faculties of man? If development be progressive, how do you account for the state of Italy? One will tell you it is superstition, indulgences, and the Lady of Loretto; yet three centuries ago, when all these influences were much more powerful, Italy was the soul of Europe. The less prejudiced, a Puseyite for example, like our friend Vavasour, will assure us that the state of Italy has nothing to do with the spirit of its religion, but that it is entirely an affair of commerce; a revolution of commerce has convulsed its destinies. I cannot forget that the world was once conquered by Italians who had no commerce. Has the development of Western Asia been progressive? It is a land of tombs and ruins. Is China progressive, the most ancient and numerous of existing societies? Is Europe itself progressive? Is Spain a tithe as great as she was? Is Germany as great as when she invented printing; as she was under the rule of Charles the Fifth? France herself laments her relative inferiority to the past. But England flourishes. Is it what you call civilisation that makes England flourish? Is it the universal development of the faculties of man that has rendered an island, almost unknown to the ancients, the arbiter of the world? Clearly not. It is her inhabitants that have done this; it is an affair of race. A Saxon race, protected by an insular position, has stamped its diligent and methodic character on the century. And when a superior race, with a superior idea to work and order, advances, its state will be progressive, and we shall, perhaps, follow the example of the desolate countries. All is race; there is no other truth."
'Because it includes all others?' said Lord Henry.

'You have said it.'

'As for Vavasour's definition of civilisation,' said Coningsby, 'civilisation was more advanced in ancient than modern times; then what becomes of the progressive principle? Look at the great centuries of the Roman Empire! You had two hundred millions of human beings governed by a jurisprudence so philosophical that we have been obliged to adopt its laws, and living in perpetual peace. The means of communication, of which we now make such a boast, were far more vast and extensive in those days. What were the Great Western and the London and Birmingham to the Appian and Flaminian roads? After two thousand five hundred years, parts of these are still used. A man under the Antonines might travel from Paris to Antioch with as much ease and security as we go from London to York. As for free trade, there never was a really unshackled commerce except in the days when the whole of the Mediterranean coasts belonged to one power. What a chatter there is now about the towns, and how their development is cited as the peculiarity of the age, and the great security for public improvement. Why, the Roman Empire was the empire of great cities. Man was then essentially municipal.'

'What an empire!' said Sidonia. 'All the superior races in all the superior climes.'

'But how does all this accord with your and Coningsby's favourite theory of the influence of individual character?' said Vavasour to Sidonia; 'which I hold, by-the-bye,' he added rather pompously, 'to be entirely futile.'

'What is individual character but the personification of race,' said Sidonia, 'its perfection and choice exemplar? Instead of being an inconsistency, the belief in the influence of the individual is a corollary of the original proposition.'

'I look upon a belief in the influence of individual character as a barbarous superstition,' said Vavasour.

'Vavasour believes that there would be no heroes if there were a police,' said Coningsby; 'but I believe that civilisation is only fatal to minstrels, and that is the reason now we have no poets.'

'How do you account for the Polish failure in 1831?' said Lord Marney. 'They had a capital army, they were backed by the population, but they failed. They had everything but a man.'

'Why were the Whigs smashed in 1834?' said Coningsby, 'but because they had not a man?'

'What is the real explanation of the state of Mexico?' said Sidonia. 'It has not a man.'

'So much for progress since the days of Charles the Fifth,' said Henry Sydney. 'The Spaniards then conquered Mexico, and now they cannot govern it.'

'So much for race,' said Vavasour. 'The race is the same; why are not the results the same?'

'Because it is worn out,' said Sidonia. 'Why do not the Ethiopians build another Thebes, or excavate the colossal temples of the cataracts? The decay of a race is an inevitable necessity, unless it lives in deserts and never mixes its blood.'
CHAPTER XXI.

SWEET SYMPATHY.

AM sorry, my dear mother, that I cannot accompany you; but I must go down to my yacht this morning, and on my return from Greenwich I have an engagement.'

This was said about a week after the dinner at Sidonia's, by Lord Montacute to the duchess.

'That terrible yacht!' thought the duchess.

Her Grace, a year ago, had she been aware of it, would have deemed Tancred's engagement as fearful an affair. The idea that her son should have called every day for a week on a married lady, beautiful and attractive, would have filled her with alarm amounting almost to horror. Yet such was the innocent case. It might at the first glance seem difficult to reconcile the rival charms of the Basilisk and Lady Bertie and Bellair, and to understand how Tancred could be so interested in the preparations for a voyage which was to bear him from the individual in whose society he found a daily gratification. But the truth is, that Lady Bertie and Bellair was the only person who sympathised with his adventure.

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She listened with the liveliest concern to his account of all his progress; she even made many admirable suggestions, for Lady Bertie and Bellair had been a frequent visitor at Cowes, and was quite initiated in the mysteries of the dilettante service of the Yacht Club. She was a capital sailor; at least she always told Tancred so. But this was not the chief source of sympathy, or the principal bond of union, between them. It was not the voyage, so much as the object of the voyage, that touched all the passion of Lady Bertie and Bellair. Her heart was at Jerusalem. The sacred city was the dream of her life; and, amid the dissipation of May Fair and the distractions of Belgravia, she had in fact all this time only been thinking of Jehoshaphat and Sion. Strange coincidence of sentiment—strange and sweet!

The enamoured Montacute hung over her with pious rapture, as they examined together Mr. Roberts's Syrian drawings, and she alike charmed and astonished him by her familiarity with every locality and each detail. She looked like a beautiful prophetess as she dilated with solemn enthusiasm on the sacred scene. Tancred called on her every day, because when he called the first time he had announced his immediate departure, and so had been authorised to promise that he would pay his respects to her every day till he went. It was calculated that by these means, that is to say three or four visits, they might perhaps travel through Mr. Roberts's views together before he left England, which would facilitate their correspondence, for Tancred had engaged to write to the only person in the world worthy of receiving his letters. But, though separated, Lady Bertie and Bellair would be with him in spirit; and once she sighed
and seemed to murmur that if his voyage could only be postponed awhile, she might in a manner become his fellow-pilgrim, for Lord Bertie, a great sportsman, had a desire to kill antelopes, and, wearied with the monotonous slaughter of English preserves, tired even of the eternal moors, had vague thoughts of seeking new sources of excitement amid the snipes of the Grecian marshes, and the deer and wild boars of the desert and the Syrian hills.

While his captain was repeating his inquiries for instructions on the deck of the Basilisk at Greenwich, moored off the Trafalgar Hotel, Tancred fell into reveries of female pilgrims kneeling at the Holy Sepulchre by his side; then started, gave a hurried reply, and drove back quickly to town, to pass the remainder of the morning in Brook Street.

The two or three days had expanded into two or three weeks, and Tancred continued to call daily on Lady Bertie and Bellair, to say farewell. It was not wonderful: she was the only person in London who understood him; so she delicately intimated, so he profoundly felt. They had the same ideas; they must have the same idiosyncrasy. The lady asked with a sigh why they had not met before; Tancred found some solace in the thought that they had at least become acquainted. There was something about this lady very interesting besides her beauty, her bright intelligence, and her seraphic thoughts. She was evidently the creature of impulse; to a certain degree perhaps the victim of her imagination. She seemed misplaced in life. The tone of the century hardly suited her refined and romantic spirit. Her ethereal nature seemed to shrink from the coarse reality which invades in our days even the boudoirs of May Fair.

There was something in her appearance and the temper of her being which rebuked the material, sordid, calculating genius of our reign of Mammon.

Her presence in this world was a triumphant vindication of the claims of beauty and of sentiment. It was evident that she was not happy; for, though her fair brow always lighted up when she met the glance of Tancred, it was impossible not to observe that she was sometimes strangely depressed, often anxious and excited, frequently absorbed in reverie. Yet her vivid intelligence, the clearness and precision of her thought and fancy, never faltered. In the unknown yet painful contest, the intellectual always triumphed. It was impossible to deny that she was a woman of great ability.

Nor could it for a moment be imagined that these fitful moods were merely the routine intimations that her domestic hearth was not as happy as it deserved to be. On the contrary, Lord and Lady Bertie and Bellair were the very best friends; she always spoke of her husband with interest and kindness; they were much together, and there evidently existed between them mutual confidence. His lordship's heart, indeed, was not at Jerusalem; and perhaps this want of sympathy on a subject of such rare and absorbing interest might account for the occasional musings of his wife, taking refuge in her own solitary and devoutly passionate soul. But this deficiency on the part of his lordship could scarcely be alleged against him as a very heinous fault; it is far from usual to find a British noble who on such a topic entertains the notions and sentiments of Lord Montacute; almost as rare to find a British peeress who could respond to them with the same fervour and facility as the beau-
titul Lady Bertie and Bellair. The life of a British peer is mainly regulated by Arabian laws and Syrian customs at this moment; but, while he sabbatically abstains from the debate or the rubber, or regulates the quarterly performance of his judicial duties in his province by the advent of the sacred festivals, he thinks little of the land and the race who, under the immediate superintendence of the Deity, have by their sublime legislation established the principle of periodic rest to man, or by their deeds and their dogmas, commemorated by their holy anniversaries, have elevated the condition and softened the lot of every nation except their own.

'And how does Tancred get on?' asked Lord Eskdale one morning of the Duchess of Bellamont, with a dry smile. 'I understand that, instead of going to Jerusalem, he is going to give us a fish dinner.'

The Duchess of Bellamont had made the acquaintance of Lady Bertie and Bellair, and was delighted with her, although her Grace had been told that Lord Montacute called upon her every day. The proud, intensely proper, and highly prejudiced Duchess of Bellamont took the most charitable view of this sudden and fervent friendship. A female friend, who talked about Jerusalem, but kept her son in London, was in the present estimation of the duchess a real treasure, the most interesting and admirable of her sex. Their intimacy was satisfactorily accounted for by the invaluable information which she imparted to Tancred; what he was to see, do, eat, drink; how he was to avoid being poisoned and assassinated, escape fatal fevers, regularly attend the service of the Church of England in countries where there were no churches, and converse in languages of which he had no knowledge. He could not have a better counsellor than Lady Bertie, who had herself travelled, at least to the Faubourg St. Honoré, and, as Horace Walpole says, after Calais nothing astonishes. Certainly Lady Bertie had not been herself to Jerusalem, but she had read about it, and every other place. The duchess was delighted that Tancred had a companion who interested him. With all the impulse of her sanguine temperament, she had already accustomed herself to look upon the long-dreaded yacht as a toy, and rather an amusing one, and was daily more convinced of the prescient shrewdness of her cousin, Lord Eskdale.

Tancred was going to give them a fish dinner! A what? A sort of banquet which might have served for the marriage feast of Neptune and Amphitrite, and be commemorated by a constellation; and which ought to have been administered by the Nereids and the Naiads; terrines of turtle, pools of water *souchée*, flounders of every hue, and eels in every shape, cutlets of salmon, salmis of carp, ortolans represented by whitebait, and huge roasts carved out of the sturgeon. The appetite is distracted by the variety of objects, and tantalised by the restlessness of perpetual solicitation; not a moment of repose, no pause for enjoyment; eventually, a feeling of satiety, without satisfaction, and of repletion without sustenance; till, at night, gradually recovering from the whirl of the anomalous repast, famished yet incapable of flavour, the tortured memory can only recall with an effort, that it has dined off pink champagne and brown bread and butter!

What a ceremony to be presided over by Tancred of Montacute; who, if he deigned to dine at all, ought
to have dined at no less a round table than that of King Arthur. What a consummation of a sublime project! What a catastrophe of a spiritual career! A Greenwich party and a tavern bill!

All the world now is philosophical, and therefore they can account for this disaster. Without doubt we are the creatures of circumstances; and, if circumstances take the shape of a charming woman, who insists upon sailing in your yacht, which happens to be at Blackwall or Greenwich, it is not easy to discover how the inevitable consequences can be avoided. It would hardly do, off the Nore, to present your mistress with a sea-pie, or abruptly remind your farewell friends and sorrowing parents of their impending loss by suddenly serving up soup hermetically sealed, and roasting the embalmed joint, which ought only to have smoked amid the ruins of Thebes or by the cataracts of Nubia.

There are, however, two sides of every picture; a party may be pleasant, and even a fish dinner not merely a whirl of dishes and a clash of plates. The guests may be not too numerous, and well assorted; the attendance not too devoted, yet regardful; the weather may be charming, which is a great thing, and the giver of the dinner may be charmed, and that is everything.

The party to see the Basilisk was not only the most agreeable of the season, but the most agreeable ever known. They all said so when they came back. Mr. Vavasour, who was there, went to all his evening parties; to the assembly by the wife of a minister in Carlton Terrace; to a rout by the wife of the leader of opposition in Whitehall; to a literary soirée in Westminster, and a brace of balls in Portman and

Belgrave Squares; and told them all that they were none of them to be compared to the party of the morning, to which, it must be owned, he had greatly contributed by his good humour and merry wit. Mrs. Coningsby declared to every one that, if Lord Montacute would take her, she was quite ready to go to Jerusalem; such a perfect vessel was the Basilisk, and such an admirable sailor was Mrs. Coningsby, which, considering that the river was like a mill-pond, according to Tancred’s captain, or like a mirror, according to Lady Bertie and Bellair, was not surprising. The duke protested that he was quite glad that Montacute had taken to yachting, it seemed to agree with him so well; and spoke of his son’s future movements as if there were no such place as Palestine in the world. The sanguine duchess dreamed of Cowes regattas, and resolved to agree to any arrangement to meet her son’s fancy, provided he would stay at home, which she convinced herself he had now resolved to do.

‘Our cousin is so wise,’ she said to her husband, as they were returning. ‘What could the bishop mean by saying that Tancred was a visionary? I agree with you, George, there is no counsellor like a man of the world.’

‘I wish M. de Sidonia had come,’ said Lady Bertie and Bellair, gazing from the window of the Trafalgar on the moonlit river with an expression of abstraction, and speaking in a tone almost of melancholy.

‘I also wish it, since you do,’ said Tancred. ‘But they say he goes nowhere. It was almost presumptuous in me to ask him, yet I did so because you wished it.’
"I never shall know him," said Lady Bertie and Bellair, with some vexation.
"He interests you," said Tancred, a little piqued. 
"I had so many things to say to him," said her ladyship.
"Indeed!" said Tancred; and then he continued, "I offered him every inducement to come, for I told him it was to meet you; but perhaps if he had known that you had so many things to say to him, he might have relented.
"So many things! Oh! yes. You know he has been a great traveller; he has been everywhere; he has been at Jerusalem."
"Fortunate man!" exclaimed Tancred, half to himself. "Would I were there!"
"Would we were there, you mean," said Lady Bertie, in a tone of exquisite melody, and looking at Tancred with her rich, charged eyes.

His heart trembled; he was about to give utterance to some wild words, but they died upon his lips.
Two great convictions shared his being: the absolute necessity of at once commencing his pilgrimage, and the persuasion that life, without the constant presence of this sympathising companion, must be intolerable.
What was to be done? In his long reveries, where he had brooded over so many thoughts, some only of which he had as yet expressed to mortal ear, Tancred had calculated, as he believed, every combination of obstacle which his projects might have to encounter; but one, it now seemed, he had entirely omitted, the influence of woman. Why was he here? Why was he not away? Why had he not departed? The reflection was intolerable; it seemed to him even disgraceful. The being who would be content with
CHAPTER XXII.

THE CRUSADER RECEIVES A SHOCK.

Tancred passed a night of great disquiet. His mind was agitated, his purposes indefinite; his confidence in himself seemed to falter. Where was that strong will that had always sustained him? that faculty of instant decision which had given such vigour to his imaginary deeds? A shadowy haze had suffused his heroic idol, duty, and he could not clearly distinguish either its form or its proportions. Did he wish to go to the Holy Land or not? What a question? Had it come to that? Was it possible that he could whisper such an enquiry, even to his midnight soul? He did wish to go to the Holy Land; his purpose was not in the least faltering; he most decidedly wished to go to the Holy Land, but he wished also to go thither in the company of Lady Bertie and Bellair.

Tancred could not bring himself to desert the only being perhaps in England, excepting himself, whose heart was at Jerusalem; and that being a woman! There seemed something about it unknightly, unkind and cowardly, almost base. Lady Bertie was a heroine worthy of ancient Christendom rather than of en-

lightened Europe. In the old days, truly the good old days, when the magnetic power of Western Asia on the Gothic races had been more puissant, her noble yet delicate spirit might have been found beneath the walls of Ascalon or by the purple waters of Tyre. When Tancred first met her, she was dreaming of Palestine amid her frequent sadness; he could not, utterly void of all self-conceit as he was, be insensible to the fact that his sympathy, founded on such a divine congeniality, had often chased the cloud from her brow and lightened the burden of her drooping spirit. If she were sad before, what would she be now, deprived of the society of the only being to whom she could unfold the spiritual mysteries of her romantic soul? Was such a character to be left alone in this world of slang and scrip; of coarse motives and coarser words? Then, too, she was so intelligent and so gentle; the only person who understood him, and never grated for an instant on his high ideal. Her temper also was the sweetest in the world, eminent as her generous spirit. She spoke of others with so much kindness, and never indulged in that spirit of detraction or that love of personal gossip which Tancred had frankly told her he abhorred. Somehow or other it seemed that their tastes agreed on everything.

The agitated Tancred rose from the bed where the hope of slumber was vain. The fire in his dressing-room was nearly extinguished; wrapped in his chamber robe, he threw himself into a chair, which he drew near the expiring embers, and sighed.

Unhappy youth! For you commences that great hallucination, which all must prove, but which fortunately can never be repeated, and which, in mockery, we call first love. The physical frame has its infantile
disorders; the cough which it must not escape, the burning skin which it must encounter. The heart has also its childish and cradle malady, which may be fatal, but which, if once surmounted, enables the patient to meet with becoming power all the real convulsions and fevers of passion that are the heirloom of our after-life. They, too, may bring destruction; but, in their case, the cause and the effect are more proportioned. The heroine is real, the sympathy is wild but at least genuine, the catastrophe is that of a ship at sea which sinks with a rich cargo in a noble venture.

In our relations with the softer sex it cannot be maintained that ignorance is bliss. On the contrary, experience is the best security for enduring love. Love at first sight is often a genial and genuine sentiment, but first love at first sight is ever eventually branded as spurious. Still more so is that first love which suffuses less rapidly the spirit of the ecstatic votary, when he finds that by degrees his feelings, as the phrase runs, have become engrossed. Fondness is so new to him that he has repaid it with exaggerated idolatry, and become intoxicated by the novel gratification of his vanity. Little does he suspect that all this time his seventh heaven is but the crucible of self-love. In these cases, it is not merely that everything is exaggerated, but everything is factitious. Simultaneously, the imaginary attributes of the idol disappearing, and vanity being satiated, all ends in a crash of iconoclastic surfeit.

The embers became black, the night air had cooled the turbulent blood of Lord Montacute, he shivered, returned to his couch, and found a deep and invigorating repose.
cess; Lord Bertie particularly. It was not at all surprising, considering the innumerable kindnesses they had experienced at his hands, was it?

‘Nothing more natural,’ replied Tancred; and he turned the conversation.

Lady Bertie was much depressed this morning, so much so that it was impossible for Tancred not to notice her unequal demeanour. Her hand trembled as he touched it; her face, flushed when she entered, became deadly pale.

‘You are not well,’ he said. ‘I fear the open carriage last night has made you already repent our expedition.’

She shook her head. It was not the open carriage, which was delightful, nor the expedition, which was enchanting, that had affected her. Would that life consisted only of such incidents, of barouches and whitebait banquets! Alas! no, it was not these. But she was nervous, her slumbers had been disquieted, she had encountered alarming dreams; she had a profound conviction that something terrible was impending over her. And Tancred took her hand, to prevent, if possible, what appeared to be inevitable hysterics. But Lady Bertie and Bellair was a strong-minded woman, and she commanded herself.

‘I can bear anything,’ said Tancred, in a trembling voice, ‘but to see you unhappy.’ And he drew his chair nearer to hers.

Her face was hid, her beautiful face in her beautiful hand. There was silence and then a sigh.

‘Dear lady,’ said Lord Montacute.

‘What is it?’ murmured Lady Bertie and Bellair.

‘Why do you sigh?’

‘Because I am miserable.’

‘No, no, no, don’t use such words,’ said the distracted Tancred. ‘You must not be miserable; you shall not be.’

‘Can I help it? Are we not about to part?’

‘We need not part,’ he said, in a low voice.

‘Then you will remain?’ she said, looking up, and her dark brown eyes were fixed with all their fascination on the tortured Tancred.

‘Till we all go,’ he said, in a soothing voice.

‘That can never be,’ said Lady Bertie; ‘Augustus will never hear of it; he never could be absent more than six weeks from London, he misses his clubs so. If Jerusalem were only a place one could get at, something might be done; if there were a railroad to it for example.’

‘A railroad!’ exclaimed Tancred, with a look of horror. ‘A railroad to Jerusalem!’

‘No, I suppose there never can be one,’ continued Lady Bertie, in a musing tone. ‘There is no traffic. And I am the victim,’ she added, in a thrilling voice; ‘I am left here among people who do not comprehend me, and among circumstances with which I can have no sympathy. But go, Lord Montacute, go, and be happy, alone. I ought to have been prepared for all this; you have not deceived me. You told me from the first you were a pilgrim, but I indulged in a dream. I believe that I should not only visit Palestine, but even visit it with you.’ And she leant back in her chair and covered her face with her hands.

Tancred rose from his seat, and paced the chamber. His heart seemed to burst.

‘What is all this?’ he thought. ‘How came all this to occur? How has arisen this singular combi-
nation of unforeseen causes and undreamed-of circumstances, which baffles all my plans and resolutions, and seems, as it were, without my sanction and my agency, to be taking possession of my destiny and life? I am bewildered, confounded, incapable of thought or deed.'

His tumultuous reverie was broken by the sobs of Lady Bertie.

'By heaven, I cannot endure this!' said Tancred, advancing. 'Death seems to me preferable to her unhappiness. Dearest of women!'

'Do not call me that,' she murmured. 'I can bear anything from your lips but words of fondness. And pardon all this; I am not myself to-day. I had thought that I had steeled myself to all, to our inevitable separation; but I have mistaken myself, at least mis-calculated my strength. It is weak; it is very weak and very foolish, but you must pardon it. I am too much interested in your career to wish you to delay your departure a moment for my sake. I can bear our separation, at least I think I can. I shall quit the world, for ever. I should have done so had we not met. I was on the point of doing so when we did meet, when, when my dream was at length realised. Go, go; do not stay. Bless you, and write to me, if I be alive to receive your letters.'

'I cannot leave her,' thought the harrowed Tancred. 'It never shall be said of me that I could blight a woman's life, or break her heart.' But, just as he was advancing, the door opened, and a servant brought in a note, and, without looking at Tancred, who had turned to the window, disappeared. The desolation and despair which had been impressed on the countenance of Lady Bertie and Bellair vanished in an instant, as she recognised the handwriting of her correspondent. They were succeeded by an expression of singular excitement. She tore open the note; a stupefied seemed to spread over her features, and, giving a faint shriek, she fell into a swoon.

Tancred rushed to her side; she was quite insensible, and pale as alabaster. The note, which was only two lines, was open and extended in her hands. It was from no idle curiosity, but it was impossible for Tancred not to read it. He had one of those eagle visions that nothing could escape, and, himself extremely alarmed, it was the first object at which he unconsciously glanced in his agitation to discover the cause and the remedy for this crisis. The note ran thus:

'The Narrow Gauge has won. We are utterly done; and Snicks tells me you bought five hundred more yesterday, at ten. Is it possible?'

'3 o'clock.

'Is it possible?' echoed Tancred, as, entrusting Lady Bertie to her maid, he rapidly descended the staircase of her mansion. He almost ran to Davies Street, where he jumped into a cab, not permitting the driver to descend to let him in.

'Where to?' asked the driver.

'The city.'

'What part?'

'Never mind; near the Bank.'

Alighting from the cab, Tancred hurried to Sequin Court and sent in his card to Sidonia, who in a few moments received him. As he entered the great financier's room, there came out of it the man called in Brook Street the Baron.

'Well, how did your dinner go off?' said Sidonia.
looking with some surprise at the disturbed countenance of Tancred.

'Is it not very ridiculous, very impertinent I fear you will think it,' said Tancred, in a hesitating confused manner, 'but that person, that person who has just left the room; I have a particular reason, I have the greatest desire, to know who that person is.'

'That is a French capitalist,' replied Sidonia, with a slight smile, 'an eminent French capitalist, the Baron Villebecque de Château Neuf. He wants me to support him in a great railroad enterprise in his country; a new line to Strasbourg, and looks to a great traffic, I suppose, in pasties. But this cannot much interest you. What do you want really to know about him? I can tell you everything. I have been acquainted with him for years. He was the intendant of Lord Monmouth, who left him thirty thousand pounds, and he set up upon this at Paris as a millionaire. He is in the way of becoming one, has bought lands, is a deputy and a baron. He is rather a favourite of mine,' added Sidonia, 'and I have been able, perhaps, to assist him, for I knew him long before Lord Monmouth did, in a very different position from that which he now fills, though not one for which I have less respect. He was a fine comic actor in the courtly parts, and the most celebrated manager in Europe; always a fearful speculator, but he is an honest fellow, and has a good heart.

'He is a great friend of Lady Bertie and Bellair,' said Tancred, rather hesitatingly.

'Naturally,' said Sidonia.

'She also,' said Tancred, with a becalmed countenance, but a palpitating heart, 'is, I believe, much interested in railroads?'
me; and may the God of Sinai, in whom we all believe, guard over you, and prosper his enterprise!

'Sidonie.'

‘London, May, 1845.’

‘You can read Spanish,’ said Sidonia, giving him the letter. ‘The other I shall write in Hebrew, which you will soon read.’

A LETTER OF CREDIT.

To Adam Besso at Jerusalem.


‘My good Adam: If the youth who bears this require advances, let him have as much gold as would make the right-hand lion on the first step of the throne of Solomon the king; and if he want more, let him have as much as would form the lion that is on the left; and so on, through every stair of the royal seat. For all which will be responsible to you the child of Israel, who among the Gentiles is called

‘Sidonia.’