

PAUL CLIFFORD - VOLUME 7.

EDWARD BULWER-LYTTON*

CHAPTER XXXIV.

O Fortuna, viris invida fortibus
Quam non aqua bonis praemia dividis.
SENECA.

.....
And as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first he flew.

.....
Here, to the houseless child of want,
My door is open still.
GOLDSMITH.

Slowly for Lucy waned the weeks of a winter which to her was the most dreary portion of life she had ever passed. It became the time for the judge to attend one of those periodical visitations so fraught with dread and dismay to the miserable inmates of the dark abodes which the complex laws of this country so bounteously supply,—those times of great hilarity and eating to the legal gentry,—

”Who feed on crimes and fatten on distress,
And wring vile mirth from suffering’s last excess.”

Ah! excellent order of the world, which it is so wicked to disturb! How miraculously beautiful must be that system which makes wine out of the scorching tears of guilt; and from the suffocating suspense, the agonized fear, the compelled and self-mocking bravery, the awful sentence, the despairing death-pang of one man, furnishes the smirking expectation of fees, the jovial meeting, and the mercenary holiday to another! ”Of Law, nothing less can be said than that her seat is the bosom of God.”— [Hooker’s Ecclesiastical Polity.]—To be sure not; Richard Hooker, you are perfectly right. The divinity of a sessions and the inspiration of the Old Bailey are undeniable!

The care of Sir William Brandon had effectually kept from Lucy’s ear the knowledge of her lover’s ignominious situation. Indeed, in her delicate

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health even the hard eye of Brandon and the thoughtless glance of Mauleverer perceived the danger of such a discovery. The earl, now waiting the main attack on Lucy till the curtain had forever dropped on Clifford, proceeded with great caution and delicacy in his suit to his purposed bride. He waited with the more patience inasmuch as he had drawn in advance on his friend Sir William for some portion of the heiress's fortune; and he readily allowed that he could not in the mean while have a better advocate than he found in Brandon. So persuasive, indeed, and so subtle was the eloquence of this able sophist, that often in his artful conversations with his niece he left even on the unvitiated and strong though simple mind of Lucy an uneasy and restless impression, which time might have ripened into an inclination towards the worldly advantages of the marriage at her command. Brandon was no bungling mediator or violent persecutor. He seemed to acquiesce in her rejection of Mauleverer. He scarcely recurred to the event. He rarely praised the earl himself, save for the obvious qualities of liveliness and good-nature. But he spoke, with all the vivid colours he could infuse at will into his words, of the pleasures and the duties of rank and wealth. Well could he appeal alike to all the prejudices and all the foibles of the human breast, and govern virtue through its weaknesses. Lucy had been brought up, like the daughters of most country gentlemen of ancient family, in an undue and idle consciousness of superior birth; and she was far from inaccessible to the warmth and even feeling (for here Brandon was sincere) with which her uncle spoke of the duty of raising a gallant name sunk into disrepute, and sacrificing our own inclination for the redecorating the mouldered splendour of those who have gone before us. If the confusion of idea occasioned by a vague pomposity of phrase, or the infant inculcation of a sentiment that is mistaken for a virtue, so often makes fools of the wise on the subject of ancestry; if it clouded even the sarcastic and keen sense of Brandon himself, we may forgive its influence over a girl so little versed in the arts of sound reasoning as poor Lucy, who, it may be said, had never learned to think until she had learned to love. However, the impression made by Brandon, in his happiest moments of persuasion, was as yet only transient; it vanished before the first thought of Clifford, and never suggested to her even a doubt as to the suit of Mauleverer.

When the day arrived for Sir William Brandon to set out on the circuit, he called Barlow, and enjoined on that acute and intelligent servant the strictest caution with respect to Lucy. He bade him deny her to every one, of whatever rank, and carefully to look into every newspaper that was brought to her, as well as to withhold every letter, save such as were addressed to her in the judge's own handwriting. Lucy's maid Brandon had already won over to silence; and the uncle now pleased himself with thinking that he had put an effectual guard to every chance of discovery. The identity of Lovett with Clifford had not yet even been rumoured; and Mauleverer had rightly judged of Clifford, when he believed the prisoner would himself take every precaution against the detection of that fact. Clifford answered the earl's note, and promised, in a letter couched in so affecting yet so manly a tone of gratitude that even

Brandon was touched when he read it. And since his confinement and partial recovery of health, the prisoner had kept himself closely secluded, and refused all visitors. Encouraged by this reflection, and the belief in the safety of his precautions, Brandon took leave of Lucy. "Farewell!" said he, as he embraced her affectionately. "Be sure that you write to me, and forgive me if I do not answer you punctually. Take care of yourself, my sweet niece, and let me see a fresher colour on that soft cheek when I return!"

"Take care of yourself rather, my dear, dear uncle," said Lucy, clinging to him and weeping, as of late her weakened nerves caused her to do at the least agitation. "Why may I not go with you? You have seemed to me paler than usual the last three or four days, and you complained yesterday. Do let me go with you. I will be no trouble, none at all; but I am sure you require a nurse."

"You want to frighten me, my pretty Lucy," said Brandon, shaking his head with a smile. "I am well, very well. I felt a strange rush of blood towards the head yesterday, it is true; but I feel to-day stronger and lighter than I have done for years. Once more, God bless you, my child!"

And Brandon tore himself away, and commenced his journey.

The wandering and dramatic course of our story now conducts us to an obscure lane in the metropolis, leading to the Thames, and makes us spectators of an affecting farewell between two persons, whom the injustice of fate and the persecutions of men were about perhaps forever to divide.

"Adieu, my friend!" said Augustus Tomlinson, as he stood looking full on that segment of the face of Edward Pepper which was left unconcealed by a huge hat and a red belcher handkerchief. Tomlinson himself was attired in the full costume of a dignified clergyman. "Adieu, my friend, since you will remain in England,—adieu! I am, I exult to say, no less sincere a patriot than you. Heaven be my witness, how long I looked repugantly on poor Lovett's proposal to quit my beloved country. But all hope of life here is now over; and really, during the last ten days I have been so hunted from corner to corner, so plagued with polite invitations, similar to those given by a farmer's wife to her ducks, 'Dilly, dilly, dilly, come and be killed!' that my patriotism has been prodigiously cooled, and I no longer recoil from thoughts of self-banishment. 'The earth,' my dear Ned, as a Greek sage has very well observed,—'the earth is the same everywhere!' and if I am asked for my home, I can point, like Anaxagoras, to heaven!"

"'Pon my soul, you affect me!" said Ned, speaking thick, either from grief or the pressure of the belcher handkerchief on his mouth; "it is quite beautiful to hear you talk!"

"Bear up, my dear friend," continued Tomlinson; "bear up against your

present afflictions. What, to a man who fortifies himself by reason and by reflection on the shortness of life, are the little calamities of the body? What is imprisonment or persecution or cold or hunger? By the by, you did not forget to put the sandwiches into my coat-pocket!"

"Hush!" whispered Ned, and he moved on involuntarily; "I see a man at the other end of the street."

"Let us quicken our pace," said Tomlinson; and the pair proceeded towards the river.

"And now," began Ned, who thought he might as well say something about himself; for hitherto Augustus, in the ardour of his friendship, had been only discussing his own plans,—and now,—that is to say, when I leave you,—I shall hasten to dive for shelter, until the storm blows over. I don't much like living in a cellar and wearing a smock frock; but those concealments have something interesting in them, after all! The safest and snuggest place I know of is the Pays Bas, about Thames Court; so I think of hiring an apartment underground, and taking my meals at poor Lovett's old quarters, the Mug,—the police will never dream of looking in these vulgar haunts for a man of my fashion."

"You cannot then tear yourself from England?" said Tomlinson.

"No, hang it! the fellows are so cursed unmanly on the other side of the water. I hate their wine and their parley woo. Besides, there is no fun there."

Tomlinson, who was absorbed in his own thoughts, made no comment on his friend's excellent reasons against travel; and the pair now approached the brink of the river. A boat was in waiting to receive and conduct to the vessel in which he had taken his place for Calais the illustrious emigrant. But as Tomlinson's eye fell suddenly on the rude boatmen and the little boat which were to bear him away from his native land; as he glanced, too, across the blue waters, which a brisk wind wildly agitated, and thought how much rougher it would be at sea, where "his soul" invariably "sickened at the heaving wave,"—a whole tide of deep and sorrowful emotions rushed upon him.

He turned away. The spot on which he stood was a piece of ground to be let (as a board proclaimed) upon a building lease; below, descended the steps which were to conduct him to the boat; around, the desolate space allowed him to see in far and broad extent the spires and domes and chimneys of the great city whose inhabitants he might never plunder more. As he looked and looked, the tears started to his eyes, and with a gust of enthusiasm, little consonant with his temperate and philosophical character, he lifted his right hand from his black breeches-pocket, and burst into the following farewell to the metropolis of his native shores:—

”Farewell, my beloved London, farewell! Where shall I ever find a city like you? Never, till now, did I feel how inexpressibly dear you were to me. You have been my father and my brother and my mistress and my tailor and my shoemaker and my hatter and my cook and my wine-merchant! You and

I never misunderstood each other. I did not grumble when I saw what fine houses and good strong boxes you gave to other men. No! I rejoiced at their prosperity. I delighted to see a rich man,—my only disappointment was in stumbling on a poor one. You gave riches to my neighbours; but, O generous London, you gave those neighbours to me! Magnificent streets, all Christian virtues abide within you! Charity is as common as smoke! Where, in what corner of the habitable world, shall I find human beings with so many superfluities? Where shall I so easily decoy, from benevolent credulity, those superfluities to myself? Heaven only knows, my dear, dear, darling London, what I lose in you! O public charities! O public institutions! O banks that belie mathematical axioms and make lots out of nothing! O ancient constitution always to be questioned! O modern improvements that never answer! O speculations! O companies! O usury laws which guard against usurers, by making as many as possible! O churches in which no one profits, save the parson, and the old women that let pews of an evening! O superb theatres, too small for parks, too enormous for houses, which exclude comedy and comfort, and have a monopoly for performing nonsense gigantically! O houses of plaster, built in a day! O palaces four yards high, with a dome in the middle, meant to be invisible!

[We must not suppose this apostrophe to be an anachronism. Tomlinson, Of course, refers to some palace of his day; one of the boxes—Christmas boxes—given to the king by his economical nation of shopkeepers. We suppose it is either pulled down or blown down long ago; it is doubtless forgotten by this time, except by antiquaries. Nothing is so ephemeral as great houses built by the people. Your kings play the deuce with their playthings!]

”O shops worth thousands, and O shopkeepers not worth a shilling! O system of credit by which beggars are princes, and princes are beggars! O imprisonment for debt, which lets the mare be stolen, and then locks up the bridle! O sharpers, bubbles, senators, beaux, taverns, brothels, clubs, houses private and public!—O LONDON, in a word, receive my last adieu! Long may you flourish in peace and plenteousness! May your knaves be witty, and your fools be rich! May you alter only two things, —your damnable tricks of transportation and hanging! Those are your sole faults; but for those I would never desert you. Adieu!”

Here Tomlinson averted his head, and then hastily shaking the hand of Long Ned with a tremulous and warm grasp, he hurried down the stairs and entered the boat. Ned remained motionless for some moments, following him with his eyes as he sat at the end of the boat, waving a white pocket-handkerchief. At length a line of barges snatched him from the sight of the lingerer; and Ned, slowly turning away, muttered,—”Yes, I

have always heard that Dame Lobkins's was the safest asylum for misfortune like mine. I will go forthwith in search of a lodging, and to-morrow I will make my breakfast at the Mug!"

Be it our pleasing task, dear reader, to forestall the good robber, and return, at the hour of sunrise on the day following Tomlinson's departure, to the scene at which our story commenced. We are now once more at the house of Mrs. Margery Lobkins.

The room which served so many purposes was still the same as when Paul turned it into the arena of his mischievous pranks. The dresser, with its shelves of mingled delf and pewter, occupied its ancient and important station. Only it might be noticed that the pewter was more dull than of yore, and that sundry cracks made their erratic wanderings over the yellow surface of the delf. The eye of the mistress had become less keen than heretofore, and the care of the hand maid had, of necessity, relaxed. The tall clock still ticked in monotonous warning; the blanket-screen, haply innocent of soap since we last described it, many-storied and polyballaded, still unfolded its ample leaves "rich with the spoils of time;" the spit and the musket yet hung from the wall in amicable proximation. And the long, smooth form, "with many a holy text thereon bestrewn," still afforded rest to the weary traveller, and an object to the vacant stare of Mrs. Margery Lobkins, as she lolled in her opposite seat and forgot the world. But poor Piggy Lob!—there was the alteration! The soul of the woman was gone; the spirit had evaporated from the human bottle! She sat, with open mouth and glassy eye, in her chair, sidling herself to and fro, with the low, peevish sound of fretful age and bodily pain; sometimes this querulous murmur sharpened into a shrill but unmeaning scold: "There now, you gallows-bird! you has taken the swipes without chalking; you wants to cheat the poor widow; but I sees you, I does! Providence protects the aged and the innocent—Oh, oh! these twinges will be the death o' me. Where's Martha? You jade, you! you wiperous hussy, bring the tape; does n't you see how I suffers? Has you no bowels, to let a poor Christian cretur perish for want o' help! That's with 'em, that's the way! No one cares for I now,—no one has respect for the gray 'airs of the old!" And then the voice dwindled into the whimpering "tenor of its way."

Martha, a strapping wench with red hair streaming over her "hills of snow," was not, however, inattentive to the wants of her mistress. "Who knows," said she to a man who sat by the hearth, drinking tea out of a blue mug, and toasting with great care two or three huge rounds of bread for his own private and especial nutriment,— "who knows," said she, "what we may come to ourselves?" And, so saying, she placed a glowing tumbler by her mistress's elbow.

But in the sunken prostration of her intellect, the old woman was insensible even to her consolation. She sipped and drank, it is true; but as if the stream warmed not the benumbed region through which it passed, she continued muttering in a crazed and groaning key,—

"Is this your gratitude, you sarpent! Why does not you bring the tape, I tells you? Am I of a age to drink water like a 'oss, you nasty thing! Oh, to think as ever I should live to be deserted!"

Inattentive to these murmurs, which she felt unreasonable, the bouncing Martha now quitted the room to repair to her "upper household" avocations. The man at the hearth was the only companion left to the widow. Gazing at her for a moment, as she sat whining, with a rude compassion in his eye, and slowly munching his toast, which he had now buttered and placed in a delf plate on the hob, this person thus soothingly began:—

"Ah, Dame Lobkins, if so be as 'ow little Paul vas a vith you, it would be a gallows comfort to you in your latter hend!"

The name of Paul made the good woman incline her bead towards the speaker; a ray of consciousness shot through her bedulled brain.

"Little Paul,—eh, sirs! where is Paul? Paul, I say, my ben cull. Alack! he's gone,—left his poor old nurse to die like a cat in a cellar. Oh, Dummie, never live to be old, man! They leaves us to oursel's, and then takes away all the lush with 'em! I has not a drop o' comfort in the 'varsal world!"

Dummie, who at this moment had his own reasons for soothing the dame, and was anxious to make the most of the opportunity of a conversation as unwitnessed as the present, replied tenderly, and with a cunning likely to promote his end, reproached Paul bitterly for never having informed the dame of his whereabouts and his proceedings. "But come, dame," he wound up, "come, I guess as how he is better nor all that, and that you need not beat your hold brains to think where he lies, or vot he's a doing. Blow me tight, Mother Lob,—I ax pardon, Mrs. Margery, I should say,—if I vould not give five bob, ay, and five to the tail o' that, to know what the poor lad is about; I takes a mortal hinterest in that 'ere chap!"

"Oh! oh!" groaned the old woman, on whose palsied sense the astute inquiries of Dummie Dunnaker fell harmless; "my poor sinful carcass! what a way it be in!"

Artfully again did Dummie Dunnaker, nothing defeated, renew his attack; but fortune does not always favour the wise, and it failed Dummie now, for a twofold reason,—first, because it was not possible for the dame to comprehend him; secondly, because even if it had been, she had nothing to reveal. Some of Clifford's pecuniary gifts had been conveyed anonymously, all without direction or date; and for the most part they had been appropriated by the sage Martha, into whose hands they fell, to her own private uses. Nor did the dame require Clifford's grateful

charity; for she was a woman tolerably well off in this world, considering how near she was waxing to another. Longer, however, might Dummie have tried his unavailing way, had not the door of the inn creaked on its hinges, and the bulky form of a tall man in a smockfrock, but with a remarkably fine head of hair, darkened the threshold. He honoured the dame, who cast on him a lacklustre eye, with a sulky yet ambrosial nod, seized a bottle of spirits and a tumbler, lighted a candle, drew a small German pipe and a tobacco-box from his pouch, placed these several luxuries on a small table, wheeled it to a far corner of the room, and throwing himself into one chair, and his legs into another, he enjoyed the result of his pains in a moody and supercilious silence. Long and earnestly did the meek Dummie gaze on the face of the gentleman before him. It had been some years since he had last beheld it; but it was one which did not easily escape the memory; and although its proprietor was a man who had risen in the world, and had gained the height of his profession (a station far beyond the diurnal sphere of Dummie Dunnaker), and the humble purloiner was therefore astonished to encounter him in these lower regions, yet Dummie's recollection carried him back to a day when they had gone shares together without respect of persons, and been right jolly partners in the practical game of beggar my neighbour. While, however, Dummie Dunnaker, who was a little inclined to be shy, deliberated as to the propriety of claiming acquaintanceship, a dirty boy, with a face which betokened the frost, as Dummie himself said, like a plum dying of the scarlet fever, entered the room, with a newspaper in his dexter paw.

"Great news! great news!" cried the urchin, imitating his vociferous originals in the street; "all about the famous Captain Lovett, as large as life!"

"'Old your blarney, you blattergow!" said Dummie, rebukingly, and seizing the journal.

"Master says as how he must have it to send to Clapham, and can't spare it for more than a 'our!" said the boy, as he withdrew.

"I 'members the day," said Dummie, with the zeal of a clansman, "when the Mug took a paper all to itsel' instead o' 'iring it by the job like!"

Thereon he opened the paper with a fillip, and gave himself tip to the lecture. But the tall stranger, half rising with a start, exclaimed,—

"Can't you have the manners to be communicative? Do you think nobody cares about Captain Lovett but yourself?" On this, Dummie turned round on his chair, and, with a "Blow me tight, you're velcome, I'm sure," began as follows (we copy the paper, not the diction of the reader):—

"The trial of the notorious Lovett commences this day. Great exertions have been made by people of all classes to procure seats in the Town Hall, which will be full to a degree never before known

in this peaceful province. No less than seven indictments are said to await the prisoner; it has been agreed that the robbery of Lord Mauleverer should be the first to come on. The principal witness in this case against the prisoner is understood to be the king's evidence, MacGrawler. No news as yet have been circulated concerning the suspected accomplices, Augustus Tomlinson and Edward Pepper. It is believed that the former has left the country, and that the latter is lurking among the low refuges of guilt with which the heart of the metropolis abounds. Report speaks highly of the person and manners of Lovett. He is also supposed to be a man of some talent, and was formerly engaged in an obscure periodical edited by MacGrawler, and termed the 'Althenaeum,' Or 'Asinaeum.' Nevertheless, we apprehend that his origin is remarkably low, and suitable to the nature of his pursuits. The prisoner will be most fortunate in a judge. Never did any one holding the same high office as Sir William Brandon earn an equal reputation in so short a time. The Whigs are accustomed to sneer at us, when we insist on the private virtues of our public men. Let them look to Sir William Brandon, and confess that the austerest morals maybe linked with the soundest knowledge and the most brilliant genius. The opening address of the learned judge to the jury at——is perhaps the most impressive and solemn piece of eloquence in the English language!"

A cause for this eulogium might haply be found in another part of the paper, in which it was said,—

"Among the higher circles, we understand, the rumour has gone forth that Sir William Brandon is to be recalled to his old parliamentary career in a more elevated scene. So highly are this gentleman's talents respected by his Majesty and the ministers, that they are, it is reported, anxious to secure his assistance in the House of Lords!"

When Dummie had spelt his "toilsome march" through the first of the above extracts he turned round to the tall stranger, and, eying him with a sort of winking significance, said,—

"So MacGrawler peaches,—blows the gaff on his pals, eh! Vel, now, I always suspected that 'ere son of a gun! Do you know, he used to be at the Mug many 's a day, a teaching our little Paul, and says I to Piggy Lob, says I, 'Blow me tight, but that cove is a queer one! and if he does not come to be scragged,' says I, 'it vill only be because he'll turn a rusty, and scrag one of his pals!' So you sees" (here Dummie looked round, and his voice sank into a whisper),—"so you sees, Meester Pepper, I vas no fool there!"

Long Ned dropped his pipe, and said sourly and with a suspicious frown, "What! you know me?"

"To be sure and sartin I does," answered little Dummie, walking to the table where the robber sat. "Does not you know I?"

Ned regarded the interrogator with a sullen glance, which gradually brightened into knowledge. "Ah!" said he, with the air of a Brummel, "Mr. Bummie, or Dummie, I think, eh! Shake a paw,—I'm glad to see you. Recollect the last time I saw you, you rather affronted me. Never mind. I dare say you did not mean it."

Encouraged by this affable reception from the highwayman, though a little embarrassed by Ned's allusion to former conduct on his part, which he felt was just, Dummie grinned, pushed a stool near Ned, sat himself down, and carefully avoiding any immediate answer to Ned's complaints, rejoined,—

"Do you know, Meester Pepper, you struck I all of a heap? I could not have s'posed as how you'd condescend nowadays to come to the Mug, where I never seed you but once afore. Lord love ye, they says as 'ow you go to all the fine places in ruffles, with a pair of silver pops in your vaistcoat pocket! Vy, the boys hereabout say that you and Meester Tomlinson, and this 'ere poor devil in quod, vere the finest gemmen in town; and, Lord, for to think of your civility to a pitiful ragmerchant, like I!"

"Ah!" said Ned, gravely, "there are sad principles afloat now. They want to do away with all distinctions in ranks,—to make a duke no better than his valet, and a gentleman highwayman class with a filcher of fogles.' But, damme, if I don't think misfortune levels us all quite enough; and misfortune brings me here, little Dummie."

"Ah! you wants to keep out of the vay of the bulkies!" "Right. Since poor Lovett was laid by the heels, which I must say was the fault of his own deuced gentlemanlike behaviour to me and Augustus (you've heard of Guz, you say), the knot of us seems quite broken. One's own friends look inclined to play one false; and really, the queer cuffins hover so sharply upon us that I thought it safe to duck for a time. So I have taken a lodging in a cellar, and I intend for the next three months to board at the Mug. I have heard that I may be sure of lying snug here. Dummie, your health! Give us the baccy."

"I say, Meester Pepper," said Dummie, clearing his throat, when he had obeyed the request, "can you tell I, if so be you 'as met in your travels our little Paul? Poor chap! You knows as 'ow and vy he was sent to quod by Justice Burnflat. Vel, ven he got out, he vent to the devil, or summut like it, and ve have not 'card a vord of him since. You 'members the lad,—a 'nation fine cull, tall and straight as a harrow!"

"Why, you fool," said Ned, "don't you know"—then checking himself suddenly, "Ah! by the by, that rigmarole oath! I was not to tell; though now it's past caring for, I fear! It is no use looking after the seal

when the letter's burned."

"Blow me," cried Dunnaker, with unaffected vehemence, "I sees as how you know vot's come of he! Many's the good turn I'll do you, if you vill but tell I."

"Why, does he owe you a dozen bobs; or what, Dummie?" said Ned.

"Not he,—not he," cried Dummie.

"What then, you want to do him a mischief of some sort?"

"Do little Paul a mischief!" ejaculated Dummie; "vy, I've known the cull ever since he was that high! No, but I wants to do him a great sarvice, Meester Pepper, and myself too,—and you to boot, for aught that I know, Meester Pepper."

"Humph!" said Ned,—"humph! what do you mean? I do, it is true, know where Paul is; but you must tell me first why you wish to know, otherwise you may ask your grandfather for me."

A long, sharp, wistful survey did Mr. Dummie Dunnaker cast around him before he rejoined. All seemed safe and convenient for confidential communication. The supine features of Mrs. Lobkins were hushed in a drowsy stupor; even the gray cat that lay by the fire was curled in the embrace of Morpheus. Nevertheless, it was in a close whisper that Dummie spoke.

"I dares be bound, Meester Pepper, that you 'members vell ven Harry Cook, the great highvayman,—poor fellow! he's gone where ve must all go,—brought you, then quite a gossoon,' for the first time to the little back parlour at the Cock and Hen, Dewereux Court?"

Ned nodded assent.

"And you 'members as how I met Harry and you there, and I vas all afeard at you,—'cause vy? I had never seen you afore, and ve vas a going to crack a swell's crib. And Harry spoke up for you, and said as 'ow though you had just gone on the town, you was already prime up to gammon. You 'members, eh?"

"Ay, I remember all," said Ned; "it was the first and only house I ever had a hand in breaking into. Harry was a fellow of low habits; so I dropped his acquaintance, and took solely to the road, or a chance ingenuity now and then. I have no idea of a gentleman turning cracksman."

"Vel, so you vent vith us, and ve slipped you through a pane in the kitchen-window. You vas the least of us, big as you be now; and you vent round and opened the door for us; and ven you had opened the door, you

saw a voman had joined us, and you were a funk'd then, and stayed without the crib, to keep vatch while ve vent in."

"Well, well," cried Ned, "what the devil has all this rigmarole got to do with Paul?"

"Now don't be glimflashy, but let me go on smack right about. Vell, ven ve came out, you minds as 'ow the voman had a bundle in her arms, and you spake to her; and she answered you roughly, and left us all, and vent straight home; and ve vent and fenced the swag' that wery night and afterwards napped the regulars. And sure you made us laugh 'artily, Meester Pepper, when you said, says you, 'That 'ere voman is a rum blo' en.' So she vas, Meester Pepper!"

[The reader has probably observed the use made by Dummie and Mrs. Lobkins of Irish phraseology or pronunciation, This is a remarkable trait in the dialect of the lowest orders in London, owing, we suppose, to their constant association with emigrants from "the first flower of the earth." Perhaps it is a modish affectation among the gentry of St. Giles's, just as we eke out our mother-tongue with French at Mayfair.]

"Oh, spare me," said Ned, affectedly, "and make haste; you keep me all in the dark. By the way, I remember that you joked me about the bundle; and when I asked what the woman had wrapped in it, you swore it was a child. Rather more likely that the girl, whoever she was, would have left a child behind her than carried one off!" The face of Dummie waxed big with conscious importance.

"Vell, now, you would not believe us; but it vas all true. That 'ere bundle vas the voman's child,—I s'pose an unnatural von by the gemman; she let us into the 'ouse on condition we helped her off with it. And, blow me tight, but ve paid ourselves vel for our trouble. That 'ere voman vas a strange cretur; they say she had been a lord's blowen; but howsomever, she was as 'ot-'eaded and hodd as if she had been. There vas old Nick's hown row made on the matter, and the revard for our [de]tection vas so great, that as you vas not much tried yet, Harry thought it best for to take you vith 'im down to the country, and told you as 'ow it vas all a flam about the child in the bundle!"

"Faith," said Ned, "I believed him readily enough; and poor Harry was twisted shortly after, and I went into Ireland for safety, where I stayed two years,—and deuced good claret I got there!"

"So, whiles you vas there," continued Dummie, "poor Judy, the voman, died,—she died in this very 'ouse, and left the horphan to the [af]fection of Piggy Lob, who was 'nation fond of it surely! Oh! but I 'members vot a night it vas ven poor Judy died; the vind vistled like mad, and the rain tumbled about as if it had got a holiday; and there the poor creature lay raving just over 'ed of this room we sits in! Laus-a-

me, vat a sight it vas!”

Here Dummie paused, and seemed to recall in imagination the scene he had witnessed; but over the mind of Long Ned a ray of light broke slowly.

”Whew!” said he, lifting up his forefinger, ”whew! I smell a rat; this stolen child, then, was no other than Paul. But, pray, to whom did the house belong? For that fact Harry never communicated to me. I only heard the owner was a lawyer, or parson, or some such thing.”

”Vy now, I’ll tell you, but don’t be glimflashy. So, you see, ven Judy died, and Harry was scragged, I vas the only von living who vas up to the secret; and vhen Mother Lob vas a taking a drop to comfort her vhen Judy vent off, I hopens a great box in which poor Judy kept her duds and rattletaps, and surely I finds at the bottom of the box hever so many letters and sick like,—for I knew as ’ow they vas there; so I vhips these off and carries ’em ’ome with me, and soon arter, Mother Lob sold me the box o’ duds for two quids—’cause vy? I vas a rag-merchant. So now I ’solved, since the secret vas all in my hown keeping, to keep it as tight as vinkey; for first, you sees as ’ow I vas afeard I should be hanged if I vent for to tell,—’cause vy? I stole a vatch, and lots more, as vell as the hurchin; and next I vas afeard as ’ow the mother might come back and haunt me the same as Sall haunted Villy, for it vas a ’orrid night ven her soul took ving. And hover and above this, Meester Pepper, I thought summut might turn hup by and by, in vchich it would be best for I to keep my hown counsel and nab the revard, if I hever durst make myself known.”

Here Dummie proceeded to narrate how frightened he had been lest Ned should discover all, when (as it may be remembered, Pepper informed Paul at the beginning of this history) he encountered that worthy at Dame Lobkins’s house; how this fear had induced him to testify to Pepper that coldness and rudeness which had so enraged the haughty highwayman; and how great had been his relief and delight at finding that Ned returned to the Mug no more. He next proceeded to inform his new confidant of his meeting with the father (the sagacious reader knows where and when), and of what took place at that event. He said how, in his first negotiation with the father, prudently resolving to communicate drop by drop such information as he possessed, he merely, besides confessing to a share in the robbery, stated that he thought he knew the house, etc., to which the infant had been consigned,—and that, if so, it was still alive; but that he would inquire. He then related how the sanguine father, who saw that hanging Dummie for the robbery of his house might not be half so likely a method to recover his son as bribery and conciliation, not only forgave him his former outrage, but whetted his appetite to the search by rewarding him for his disclosure. He then proceeded to state how, unable anywhere to find Paul, or any trace of him, he amused the sire from time to time with forged excuses; how, at first, the sums he received made him by no means desirous to expedite a discovery that would terminate such satisfactory receipts; how at length the magnitude of the proffered

reward, joined to the threats of the sire, had made him become seriously anxious to learn the real fate and present "whereabout" of Paul; how, the last time he had seen the father, he had, by way of propitiation and first fruit, taken to him all the papers left by the unhappy mother and secreted by himself; and how he was now delighted to find that Ned was acquainted with Paul's address. Since he despaired of finding Paul by his own exertions alone, he became less tenacious of his secret; and he now proffered Ned, on discovery of Paul, a third of that reward the whole of which he had once hoped to engross.

Ned's eyes and mouth opened at this proposition. "But the name,—the name of the father? You have not told me that yet!" cried he, impatiently.

"Noa, noa!" said Dummie, archly, "I does n't tell you all, till you tells I summut. Where's little Paul, I say; and where be us to get at him?"

Ned heaved a sigh.

"As for the oath," said he, musingly, "it would be a sin to keep it, now that to break it can do him no harm, and may do him good, especially as, in case of imprisonment or death, the oath is not held to be binding; yet I fear it is too late for the reward. The father will scarcely thank you for finding his son!—Know, Dummie, that Paul is in jail, and that he is one and the same person as Captain Lovett!" Astonishment never wrote in more legible characters than she now displayed on the rough features of Dummie Dunnaker. So strong are the sympathies of a profession compared with all others, that Dummie's first confused thought was that of pride. "The great Captain Lovett!" he faltered.

"Little Paul at the top of the profession! Lord, Lord! I always said as how he'd the ambition to rise!"

"Well, well, but the father's name?"

At this question the expression of Dummie's face fell; a sudden horror struggled to his eyes—

CHAPTER XXXV.

Why is it that at moments there creeps over us an awe, a terror, overpowering but undefined? Why is it that we shudder without a cause, and feel the warm life-blood stand still in its courses?

Are the dead too near?

FALKLAND

Ha! sayest thou! Hideous thought, I feel it twine
O'er my iced heart, as curls around his prey
The sure and deadly serpent!
.....
What! in the hush and in the solitude
Passed that dread soul away?
Love and Hatred.

The evening prior to that morning in which the above conversation occurred, Brandon passed alone in his lodging at —— . He had felt himself too unwell to attend the customary wassail, and he sat indolently musing in the solitude of the old-fashioned chamber to which he was consigned. There, two wax-candles on the smooth, quaint table dimly struggled against the gloom of heavy panels, which were relieved at unfrequent intervals by portraits in oaken frames, dingy, harsh, and important with the pomp of laced garments and flowing wigs. The predilection of the landlady for modern tastes had, indeed, on each side of the huge fireplace suspended more novel masterpieces of the fine arts. In emblematic gorgeousness hung the pictures of the four Seasons, buxom wenches all, save Winter, who was deformedly bodied forth in the likeness of an aged carle. These were interspersed by an engraving of Lord Mauleverer, the lieutenant of the neighbouring county, looking extremely majestic in his peer's robes; and by three typifications of Faith, Hope, and Charity,—ladies with whom it may be doubted if the gay earl ever before cultivated so close an intimacy. Curtains, of that antique chintz in which fascies of stripes are alternated by rows of flowers, filled the interstices of three windows; a heavy sideboard occupied the greater portion of one side of the room; and on the opposite side, in the rear of Brandon, a vast screen stretched its slow length along, and relieved the unpopulated and as it were desolate comfort of the apartment.

Pale and imperfectly streamed the light upon Brandon's face, as he sat in his large chair, leaning his cheek on one hand, and gazing with the unconscious earnestness of abstraction on the clear fire. At that moment a whole phalanx of gloomy thought was sweeping in successive array across his mind. His early ambition, his ill-omened marriage, the causes of his after-rise in the wrong-judging world, the first dawn of his reputation, his rapid and flattering successes, his present elevation, his aspiring hope of far higher office, and more patrician honours,—all these phantoms passed before him in checkered shadow and light; but ever with each stalked one disquieting and dark remembrance,—the loss of his only son.

Weaving his ambition with the wish to revive the pride of his hereditary name, every acquisition of fortune or of fame rendered him yet more anxious to find the only one who could perpetuate these hollow distinctions to his race.

"I shall recover him yet!" he broke out suddenly and aloud. As he spoke,

a quick, darting, spasmodic pain ran shivering through his whole frame, and then fixed for one instant on his heart with a gripe like the talons of a bird; it passed away, and was followed by a deadly sickness. Brandon rose, and filling himself a large tumbler of water, drank with avidity. The sickness passed off like the preceding pain; but the sensation had of late been often felt by Brandon, and disregarded,—for few persons were less afflicted with the self-torture of hypochondria; but now, that night, whether it was more keen than usual, or whether his thought had touched on the string that jars naturally on the most startling of human anticipations, we know not, but, as he resumed his seat, the idea of his approaching dissolution shot like an ice-bolt through his breast.

So intent was this scheming man upon the living objects of the world, and so little were his thoughts accustomed to turn toward the ultimate goal of all things, that this idea obtruding itself abruptly upon him, startled him with a ghastly awe. He felt the colour rush from his cheek, and a tingling and involuntary pain ran wandering through the channels of his blood, even from the roots of the hair to the soles of his feet. But the stern soul of Brandon was not one which shadows could long affright. He nerved himself to meet the grim thought thus forced upon his mental eye, and he gazed on it with a steady and enduring look.

”Well,” thought he, ”is my hour coming, or have I yet the ordinary term of mortal nature to expect? It is true, I have lately suffered these strange revulsions of the frame with somewhat of an alarming frequency; perhaps this medicine, which healed the anguish of one infirmity, has produced another more immediately deadly. Yet why should I think this? My sleep is sound and calm, my habits temperate, my mind active and clear as in its best days. In my youth I never played the traitor with my constitution; why should it desert me at the very threshold of my age? Nay, nay, these are but passing twitches, chills of the blood that begins to wax thin. Shall I learn to be less rigorous in my diet? Perhaps wine may reward my abstinence in avoiding it for my luxuries, by becoming a cordial to my necessities! Ay, I will consult,—I will consult, I must not die yet. I have—let me see, three—four grades to gain before the ladder is scaled. And, above all, I must regain my child! Lucy married to Mauleverer, myself a peer, my son wedded to-whom? Pray God he be not married already! My nephews and my children nobles! the house of Brandon restored, my power high in the upward gaze of men, my fame set on a more lasting basis than a skill in the quirks of law,—these are yet to come; these I will not die till I have enjoyed! Men die not till their destinies are fulfilled. The spirit that swells and soars within me says that the destiny of William Brandon is but half begun!”

With this conclusion, Brandon sought his pillow. What were the reflections of the prisoner whom he was to judge? Need we ask? Let us picture to ourselves his shattered health, the languor of sickness heightening the gloom which makes the very air of a jail; his certainty of the doom to be passed against him; his knowledge that the uncle of

Lucy Brandon was to be his judge, that Mauleverer was to be his accuser, and that in all human probability the only woman he had ever loved must sooner or later learn the criminality of his life and the ignominy of his death; let us but glance at the above blackness of circumstances that surrounded him, and it would seem that there is but little doubt as to the complexion of his thoughts! Perhaps, indeed, even in that terrible and desolate hour one sweet face shone on him, "and dashed the darkness all away." Perhaps, too, whatever might be the stings of his conscience, one thought, one remembrance of a temptation mastered and a sin escaped, brought to his eyes tears that were sweet and healing in their source. But the heart of a man in Clifford's awful situation is dark and inscrutable; and often when the wildest and gloomiest external circumstances surround us, their reflection sleeps like a shadow, calm and still upon the mind.

The next morning, the whole town of (a town in which, we regret to say, an accident once detained ourself for three wretched days, and which we can, speaking therefore from profound experience, assert to be in ordinary times the most melancholy and peopleless-looking congregation of houses that a sober imagination can conceive) exhibited a scene of such bustle, animation, and jovial anxiety as the trial for life or death to a fellow-creature can alone excite in the phlegmatic breasts of the English. Around the court the crowd thickened with every moment, until the whole marketplace in which the townhall was situated became one living mass. The windows of the houses were filled with women, some of whom had taken that opportunity to make parties to breakfast; and little round tables, with tea and toast on them, caught the eyes of the grinning mobists as they gaped impatiently upwards.

"Ben," said a stout yeoman, tossing up a halfpenny, and catching the said coin in his right hand, which he immediately covered with the left,—
"Ben, heads or tails that Lovett is hanged; heads hanged, tails not, for a crown."

"Petticoats, to be sure," quoth Ben, eating an apple; and it was heads!

"Damme, you've lost!" cried the yeoman, rubbing his rough hands with glee.

It would have been a fine sight for Asmodeus, could he have perched on one of the house tops of the market-place of ——, and looked on the murmuring and heaving sea of mortality below. Oh! the sight of a crowd round a court of law or a gibbet ought to make the devil split himself with laughter.

While the mob was fretting, and pushing, and swearing, and grinning, and betting, and picking pockets, and trampling feet, and tearing gowns, and scrambling nearer and nearer to the doors and windows of the court, Brandon was slowly concluding his abstemious repast, preparatory to attendance on his judicial duties. His footman entered with a letter.

Sir William glanced rapidly over the seal (one of those immense sacrifices of wax used at that day), adorned with a huge coat-of-arms, surmounted with an earl's coronet, and decorated on either side with those supporters so dear to heraldic taste. He then tore open the letter, and read as follows:—

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,—You know that in the last conversation I had the Honour to hold with you I alluded, though perhaps somewhat distantly, to the esteem which his Majesty had personally expressed for your principles and talents, and his wish to testify it at the earliest opportunity. There will be, as you are doubtless aware, an immediate creation of four peerages. Your name stands second on the list. The choice of title his Majesty graciously leaves to you; but he has hinted that the respectable antiquity of your family would make him best pleased were you to select the name of your own family-seat, which, if I mistake not, is Warlock. You will instruct me at your leisure as to the manner in which the patent should be made out, touching the succession, etc. Perhaps (excuse the license of an old friend) this event may induce you to forsake your long-cherished celibacy. I need not add that this accession of rank will be accompanied by professional elevation. You will see by the papers that the death of ——leaves vacant the dignity of Chief Baron; and I am at length empowered to offer you a station proportioned to your character and talents.

With great consideration, believe me, my dear Sir, Very truly yours,

Private and Confidential.

Brandon's dark eye glanced quickly from the signature of the premier, affixed to this communication, towards the mirror opposite him. He strode to it, and examined his own countenance with a long and wistful gaze. Never, we think, did youthful gallant about to repair to the trysting-spot, in which fair looks make the greatest of earthly advantages, gaze more anxiously on the impartial glass than now did the ascetic and scornful judge; and never, we ween, did the eye of the said gallant retire with a more satisfied and triumphant expression.

"Yes, yes!" muttered the judge, "no sign of infirmity is yet written here; the blood flows clear and warm enough; the cheek looks firm too, and passing full, for one who was always of the lean kine. Aha! this letter is a cordial, an elixir vitro. I feel as if a new lease were granted to the reluctant tenant. Lord Warlock, the first Baron of Warlock, Lord Chief Baron,—what next?"

As he spoke, he strode unconsciously away, folding his arms with that sort of joyous and complacent gesture which implies the idea of a man hugging himself in a silent delight. Assuredly had the most skilful physician then looked upon the ardent and all-lighted face, the firm step, the elastic and muscular frame, the vigorous air of Brandon, as he

mentally continued his soliloquy, he would have predicted for him as fair a grasp on longevity as the chances of mortal life will allow. He was interrupted by the servant entering.

"It is twenty-five minutes after nine, sir," said he, respectfully.

"Sir,—sir!" repeated Brandon. "Ah, well! so late!"

"Yes, sir, and the sheriff's carriage is almost at the door."

"Humph! Minister,—Peer,—Warlock,—succession. My son, my son! would to God that I could find thee!"

Such were Brandon's last thoughts as he left the room. It was with great difficulty, so dense was the crowd, that the judge drove up to the court. As the carriage slowly passed, the spectators pressed to the windows of the vehicle, and stood on tiptoe to catch a view of the celebrated lawyer. Brandon's face, never long indicative of his feelings, had now settled into its usual gravity; and the severe loftiness of his look chilled, while it satisfied, the curiosity of the vulgar. It had been ordered that no person should be admitted until the judge had taken his seat on the bench; and this order occasioned so much delay, owing to the accumulated pressure of the vast and miscellaneous group, that it was more than half an hour before the court was able to obtain that decent order suiting the solemnity of the occasion. At five minutes before ten a universal and indescribable movement announced that the prisoner was put to the bar. We read in one of the journals of that day, that "on being put to the bar, the prisoner looked round with a long and anxious gaze, which at length settled on the judge, and then dropped, while the prisoner was observed to change countenance slightly. Lovett was dressed in a plain dark suit; he seemed to be about six feet high; and though thin and worn, probably from the effect of his wound and imprisonment, he is remarkably well made, and exhibits the outward appearance of that great personal strength which he is said to possess, and which is not unfrequently the characteristic of daring criminals. His face is handsome and prepossessing, his eyes and hair dark, and his complexion pale, possibly from the effects of his confinement; there was a certain sternness in his countenance during the greater part of the trial. His behaviour was remarkably collected and composed. The prisoner listened with the greatest attention to the indictment, which the reader will find in another part of our paper, charging him with the highway robbery of Lord Mauleverer, on the night of the of last. He occasionally inclined his body forward, and turned his ear towards the court; and he was observed, as the jury were sworn, to look steadily in the face of each. He breathed thick and hard when the various aliases he had assumed—Howard, Cavendish, Jackson, etc.,—were read; but smiled with an unaccountable expression when the list was completed, as if exulting at the varieties of his ingenuity. At twenty-five minutes past ten Mr. Dyebright, the counsel for the crown, stated the case to the jury."

Mr. Dyebright was a lawyer of great eminence; he had been a Whig all his life, but had latterly become remarkable for his insincerity, and subservience to the wishes of the higher powers. His talents were peculiar and effective. If he had little eloquence, he had much power; and his legal knowledge, was sound and extensive. Many of his brethren excelled him in display; but no one, like him, possessed the secret of addressing a jury. Winningly familiar; seemingly candid to a degree that scarcely did justice to his cause, as if he were in an agony lest he should persuade you to lean a hair-breadth more on his side of the case than justice would allow; apparently all made up of good, homely, virtuous feeling, a disinterested regard for truth, a blunt yet tender honesty, seasoned with a few amiable fireside prejudices, which always come home to the hearts of your fathers of families and thorough-bred Britons; versed in all the niceties of language, and the magic of names; if he were defending crime, carefully calling it misfortune; if attacking misfortune, constantly calling it crime,—Mr. Dyebright was exactly the man born to pervert justice, to tickle jurors, to cozen truth with a friendly smile, and to obtain a vast reputation as an excellent advocate. He began with a long preliminary flourish on the importance of the case. He said that he should with the most scrupulous delicacy avoid every remark calculated to raise unnecessary prejudice against the prisoner. He should not allude to his unhappy notoriety, his associations with the lowest dregs. (Here up jumped the counsel for the prisoner, and Mr. Dyebright was called to order.) "God knows," resumed the learned gentleman, looking wistfully at the jury, "that my learned friend might have spared himself this warning. God knows that I would rather fifty of the wretched inmates of this county jail were to escape unharmed than that a hair of the prisoner you behold at the bar should be unjustly touched. The life of a human being is at stake; we should be guilty ourselves of a crime which on our deathbeds we should tremble to recall, were we to suffer any consideration, whether of interest or of prejudice, or of undue fear for our own properties and lives, to bias us even to the turning of a straw against the unfortunate prisoner. Gentlemen, if you find me travelling a single inch from my case,—if you find me saying a single word calculated to harm the prisoner in your eyes, and unsupported by the evidence I shall call,—then I implore you not to depend upon the vigilance of my learned friend, but to treasure these my errors in your recollection, and to consider them as so many arguments in favour of the prisoner. If, gentlemen, I could by any possibility imagine that your verdict would be favourable to the prisoner, I can, unaffectedly and from the bottom of my heart, declare to you that I should rejoice; a case might be lost, but a fellow-creature would be saved! Callous as we of the legal profession are believed, we have feelings like you; and I ask any one of you, gentlemen of the jury, any one who has ever felt the pleasures of social intercourse, the joy of charity, the heart's reward of benevolence,—I ask any one of you, whether, if he were placed in the arduous situation I now hold, all the persuasions of vanity would not vanish at once from his mind, and whether his defeat as an advocate would not be rendered dear to him by the common and fleshly sympathies of a man. But, gentlemen" (Mr. Dyebright's voice at once deepened and

faltered), "there is a duty, a painful duty, we owe to our country; and never, in the long course of my professional experience, do I remember an instance in which it was more called forth than in the present. Mercy, gentlemen, is dear, very dear to us all; but it is the deadliest injury we can inflict on mankind when it is bought at the expense of justice."

The learned gentleman then, after a few further prefatory observations, proceeded to state how, on the night of —— last, Lord Mauleverer was stopped and robbed by three men masked, of a sum of money amounting to above L350, a diamond snuff-box, rings, watch, and a case of most valuable jewels,—how Lord Mauleverer, in endeavouring to defend himself, had passed a bullet through the clothes of one of the robbers,—how it would be proved that the garments of the prisoner, found in a cave in Oxfordshire, and positively sworn to by a witness he should produce, exhibited a rent similar to such a one as a bullet would produce,—how, moreover, it would be positively sworn to by the same witness, that the prisoner Lovett had come to the cavern with two accomplices not since taken up, since their rescue by the prisoner, and boasted of the robbery he had just committed; that in the clothes and sleeping apartment of the robber the articles stolen from Lord Mauleverer were found; and that the purse containing the notes for L300, the only thing the prisoner could probably have obtained time to carry off with him, on the morning on which the cave was entered by the policemen, was found on his person on the day on which he had attempted the rescue of his comrades, and had been apprehended in that attempt. He stated, moreover, that the dress found in the cavern, and sworn to by one witness he should produce as belonging to the prisoner, answered exactly to the description of the clothes worn by the principal robber, and sworn to by Lord Mauleverer, his servant, and the postilions. In like manner the colour of one of the horses found in the cavern corresponded with that rode by the highwayman. On these circumstantial proofs, aided by the immediate testimony of the king's evidence (that witness whom he should produce) he rested a case which could, he averred, leave no doubt on the minds of an impartial jury. Such, briefly and plainly alleged, made the substance of the details entered into by the learned counsel, who then proceeded to call his witnesses. The evidence of Lord Mauleverer (who was staying at Mauleverer Park, which was within a few miles of—) was short and clear (it was noticed as a singular circumstance, that at the end of the evidence the prisoner bowed respectfully to his lordship). The witness of the postilions and of the valet was no less concise; nor could all the ingenuity of Clifford's counsel shake any part of their evidence in his cross-examination. The main witness depended on by the crown was now summoned, and the solemn countenance of Peter MacGrawler rose on the eyes of the jury. One look of cold and blighting contempt fell on him from the eye of the prisoner, who did not again deign to regard him during the whole of his examination.

The witness of MacGrawler was delivered with a pomposity worthy of the ex-editor of the "Asinaeum." Nevertheless, by the skill of Mr. Dyebright, it was rendered sufficiently clear a story to leave an

impression on the jury damnatory to the interests of the prisoner. The counsel on the opposite side was not slow in perceiving the ground acquired by the adverse party; so, clearing his throat, he rose with a sneering air to the cross-examination.

"So, so," began Mr. Botheram, putting on a pair of remarkably large spectacles, wherewith he truculently regarded the witness,— "so, so, Mr. MacGrawler,—is that your name, eh, eh? Ah, it is, is it? A very respectable name it is too, I warrant. Well, sir, look at me. Now, on your oath, remember, were you ever the editor of a certain thing published every Wednesday, and called the 'Athenaeum,' or the 'Asinaeum,' or some such name?"

Commencing with this insidious and self-damnatory question, the learned counsel then proceeded, as artfully as he was able, through a series of interrogatories calculated to injure the character, the respectable character, of MacGrawler, and weaken his testimony in the eyes of the jury. He succeeded in exciting in the audience that feeling of merriment wherewith the vulgar are always so delighted to intersperse the dull seriousness of hanging a human being. But though the jury themselves grinned, they were not convinced. The Scotsman retired from the witness-box "scotched," perhaps, in reputation, but not "killed" as to testimony. It was just before this witness concluded, that Lord Mauleverer caused to be handed to the judge a small slip of paper, containing merely these words in pencil:—

DEAR BRANDON,—A dinner waits you at Mauleverer Park, only three miles hence. Lord—and the Bishop of—meet you. Plenty of news from London, and a letter about you, which I will show to no one till we meet. Make haste and hang this poor fellow, that I may see you the sooner; and it is bad for both of us to wait long for a regular meal like dinner. I can't stay longer, it is so hot, and my nerves were always susceptible.

Yours, MAULEVERER.

If you will come, give me a nod. You know my hour,—it is always the same.

The judge, glancing over the note, inclined his head gravely to the earl, who withdrew; and in one minute afterwards, a heavy and breathless silence fell over the whole court. The prisoner was called upon for his defence: it was singular what a different sensation to that existing in their breasts the moment before crept thrillingly through the audience. Hushed was every whisper, vanished was every smile that the late cross-examination had excited; a sudden and chilling sense of the dread importance of the tribunal made itself abruptly felt in the minds of every one present.

Perhaps, as in the gloomy satire of Hogarth (the moral Mephistopheles of

painters), the close neighbourhood of pain to mirth made the former come with the homelier shock to the heart; be that as it may, a freezing anxiety, numbing the pulse and stirring through the air, made every man in that various crowd feel a sympathy of awe with his neighbour, excepting only the hardened judge and the hackneyed lawyers, and one spectator,—an idiot who had thrust himself in with the general press, and stood, within a few paces of the prisoner, grinning unconsciously, and every now and then winking with a glassy eye at some one at a distance, whose vigilance he had probably eluded.

The face and aspect, even the attitude, of the prisoner were well fitted to heighten the effect which would naturally have been created by any man under the same fearful doom. He stood at the very front of the bar, and his tall and noble figure was drawn up to its full height; a glow of excitement spread itself gradually over features at all times striking, and lighted an eye naturally eloquent, and to which various emotions at that time gave a more than commonly deep and impressive expression. He began thus:—

”My lord, I have little to say, and I may at once relieve the anxiety of my counsel, who now looks wistfully upon me, and add that that little will scarcely embrace the object of defence. Why should I defend myself? Why should I endeavour to protract a life that a few days, more or less, will terminate, according to the ordinary calculations of chance? Such as it is and has been, my life is vowed to the law, and the law will have the offering. Could I escape from this indictment, I know that seven others await me, and that by one or the other of these my conviction and my sentence must come. Life may be sweet to all of us, my lord; and were it possible that mine could be spared yet a while, that continued life might make a better atonement for past actions than a death which, abrupt and premature, calls for repentance while it forbids redress.

”But when the dark side of things is our only choice, it is useless to regard the bright; idle to fix our eyes upon life, when death is at hand; useless to speak of contrition, when we are denied its proof. It is the usual policy of prisoners in my situation to address the feelings and flatter the prejudices of the jury; to descant on the excellence of our laws, while they endeavour to disarm them; to praise justice, yet demand mercy; to talk of expecting acquittal, yet boast of submitting without a murmur to condemnation. For me, to whom all earthly interests are dead, this policy is idle and superfluous. I hesitate not to tell you, my lord judge,—to proclaim to you, gentlemen of the jury,—that the laws which I have broken through my life I despise in death! Your laws are but of two classes; the one makes criminals, the other punishes them. I have suffered by the one; I am about to perish by the other.

”My lord, it was the turn of a straw which made me what I am. Seven years ago I was sent to the house of correction for an offence which I did not commit. I went thither, a boy who had never infringed a single law; I came forth, in a few weeks, a man who was prepared to break all

laws! Whence was this change? Was it my fault, or that of my condemners? You had first wronged me by a punishment which I did not deserve; you wronged me yet more deeply when (even had I been guilty of the first offence) I was sentenced to herd with hardened offenders, and graduates in vice and vice's methods of support. The laws themselves caused me to break the laws: first, by implanting within me the goading sense of injustice; secondly, by submitting me to the corruption of example. Thus, I repeat,—and I trust my words will sink solemnly into the hearts of all present,—your legislation made me what I am; and it now destroys me, as it has destroyed thousands, for being what it made me! But for this, the first aggression on me, I might have been what the world terms honest,—I might have advanced to old age and a peaceful grave through the harmless cheateries of trade or the honoured falsehoods of a profession. Nay, I might have supported the laws which I have now braved; like the counsel opposed to me, I might have grown sleek on the vices of others, and advanced to honour by my ingenuity in hanging my fellow-creatures! The canting and prejudging part of the Press has affected to set before you the merits of 'honest ability,' or 'laborious trade,' in opposition to my offences. What, I beseech you, are the props of your 'honest' exertion,—the profits of 'trade'? Are there no bribes to menials? Is there no adulteration of goods? Are the rich never duped in the price they pay? Are the poor never wronged in the quality they receive? Is there honesty in the bread you eat, in a single necessity which clothes or feeds or warms you? Let those whom the law protects consider it a protector: when did it ever protect me? When did it ever protect the poor man? The government of a State, the institutions of law, profess to provide for all those who 'obey.' Mark! a man hungers,—do you feed him? He is naked,—do you clothe him? If not, you break your covenant, you drive him back to the first law of nature, and you hang him, not because he is guilty, but because you have left him naked and starving! [A murmur among the mob below, with great difficulty silenced.] One thing only I will add, and that not to move your mercy,—no, nor to invest my fate with an idle and momentary interest,—but because there are some persons in this world who have not known me as the criminal who stands before you, and whom the tidings of my fate may hereafter reach; and I would not have those persons view me in blacker colours than I deserve. Among all the rumours, gentlemen, that have reached you, through all the tales and fables kindled from my unhappy notoriety and my approaching doom, I put it to you, if you have heard that I have committed one sanguinary action or one ruinous and deliberate fraud. You have heard that I have lived by the plunder of the rich,—I do not deny the charge. From the grinding of the poor, the habitual overreaching, or the systematic pilfering of my neighbours, my conscience is as free as it is from the charge of cruelty and bloodshed. Those errors I leave to honest mediocrity or virtuous exertion! You may perhaps find, too, that my life has not passed through a career of outrage without scattering some few benefits on the road. In destroying me, it is true that you will have the consolation to think that among the benefits you derive from my sentence will be the salutary encouragement you give to other offenders to offend to the last, degree, and to divest

outrage of no single aggravation! But if this does not seem to you any very powerful inducement, you may pause before you cut off from all amendment a man who seems neither wholly hardened nor utterly beyond atonement. My lord, my counsel would have wished to summon witnesses,—some to bear testimony to redeeming points in my own character, others to invalidate the oath of the witness against me,—a man whom I saved from destruction in order that he might destroy me. I do not think either necessary. The public Press has already said of me what little good does not shock the truth; and had I not possessed something of those qualities which society does not disesteem, you would not have beheld me here at this hour! If I had saved myself as well as my companions, I should have left this country, perhaps forever, and commenced a very different career abroad. I committed offences; I eluded you; I committed what, in my case, was an act of duty: I am seized, and I perish. But the weakness of my body destroys me, not the strength of your malice. Had I” (and as the prisoner spake, the haughty and rapid motion, the enlarging of the form, produced by the passion of the moment, made impressively conspicuous to all the remarkable power of his frame),—”had I but my wonted health, my wonted command over these limbs and these veins, I would have asked no friend, no ally, to favour my escape. I tell you, engines and guardians of the law, that I would have mocked your chains and defied your walls, as ye know that I have mocked and defied them before. But my blood creeps now only in drops through its courses; and the heart that I had of old stirs feebly and heavily within me.” The prisoner paused a moment, and resumed in an altered tone: ”Leaving, then, my own character to the ordeal of report, I cannot perhaps do better than leave to the same criterion that of the witness against me. I will candidly own that under other circumstances it might have been otherwise. I will candidly avow that I might have then used such means as your law awards me to procure an acquittal and to prolong my existence,—though in a new scene; as it is, what matters the cause in which I receive my sentence? Nay, it is even better to suffer by the first than to linger to the last. It is some consolation not again to stand where I now stand; to go through the humbling solemnities which I have this day endured; to see the smile of some, and retort the frown of others; to wrestle with the anxiety of the heart, and to depend on the caprice of the excited nerves. It is something to feel one part of the drama of disgrace is over, and that I may wait unmolested in my den until, for one time only, I am again the butt of the unthinking and the monster of the crowd. My lord, I have now done! To you, whom the law deems the prisoner’s counsel,—to you, gentlemen of the jury, to whom it has delegated his fate,—I leave the chances of my life.”

The prisoner ceased; but the same heavy silence which, save when broken by one solitary murmur, had lain over the court during his speech, still continued even for several moments after that deep and firm voice had died on the ear. So different had been the defence of the prisoner from that which had been expected; so assuredly did the more hackneyed part of the audience, even as he had proceeded, imagine that by some artful turn he would at length wind into the usual courses of defence,—that when his

unfaltering and almost stern accents paused, men were not prepared to feel that his speech was finished, and the pause involuntarily jarred on them as untimeous and abrupt. At length, when each of the audience slowly awoke to the conviction that the prisoner had indeed concluded his harangue, a movement, eloquent of feelings released from a suspense, which had been perhaps the more earnest and the more blended with awe, from the boldness and novelty of the words on which it hung, circled round the court. The jurors looked confusedly at each other, but not one of them spoke, even by a whisper; their feelings, which had been aroused by the speech of the prisoner, had not from its shortness, its singularity, and the haughty impolicy of its tone, been so far guided by its course as to settle into any state of mind clearly favourable to him, or the reverse; so that each man waited for his neighbour to speak first, in order that he might find, as it were, in another, a kind of clew to the indistinct and excited feelings which wanted utterance in himself.

The judge, who had been from the first attracted by the air and aspect of the prisoner, had perhaps, notwithstanding the hardness of his mind, more approvingly than any one present listened to the defence; for in the scorn of the hollow institutions and the mock honesty of social life, so defyingly manifested by the prisoner, Brandon recognized elements of mind remarkably congenial to his own; and this sympathy was heightened by the hardihood of physical nerve and moral intrepidity displayed by the prisoner,—qualities which among men of a similar mould often form the strongest motive of esteem, and sometimes (as we read of in the Imperial Corsican and his chiefs) the only point of attraction! Brandon was, however, soon recalled to his cold self by a murmur of vague applause circling throughout the common crowd, among whom the general impulse always manifests itself first, and to whom the opinions of the prisoner, though but imperfectly understood, came more immediately home than they did to the better and richer classes of the audience. Ever alive to the decorums of form, Brandon instantly ordered silence in the court; and when it was again restored, and it was fully understood that the prisoner's defence had closed, the judge proceeded to sum up.

It is worthy of remark that many of the qualities of mind which seem most unamiable in private life often conduce with a singular felicity to the ends of public; and thus the stony firmness characteristic of Brandon was a main cause which made him admirable as a judge,—for men in office err no less from their feelings than their interests.

Glancing over his notes, the judge inclined himself to the jury, and began with that silver ringing voice which particularly distinguished Brandon's eloquence, and carried with it in high stations so majestic and candid a tone of persuasion. He pointed out, with a clear brevity, the various points of the evidence; he dwelt for a moment on the attempt to cast disrepute upon the testimony of MacGrawler, but called a proper attention to the fact that the attempt had been unsupported by witnesses or proof. As he proceeded, the impression made by the prisoner on the minds of the jury slowly melted away; and perhaps, so much do men soften

when they behold clearly the face of a fellow-man dependent on them for life, it acted disadvantageously on the interests of Clifford, that during the summing up he leaned back in the dock, and prevented his countenance from being seen. When the evidence had been gone through, the judge concluded thus:—

”The prisoner, who in his defence (on the principles and opinions of which I now forbear to comment) certainly exhibited the signs of a superior education, and a high though perverted ability, has alluded to the reports circulated by the public Press, and leaned some little stress on the various anecdotes tending to his advantage, which he supposes have reached your ears. I am by no means willing that the prisoner should be deprived of whatever benefit may be derivable from such a source; but it is not in this place, nor at this moment, that it can avail him. All you have to consider is the evidence before you. All on which you have to decide is, whether the prisoner be or be not guilty of the robbery of which he is charged. You must not waste a thought on what redeems or heightens a supposed crime,—you must only decide on the crime itself. Put away from your minds, I beseech you, all that interferes with the main case. Put away also from your motives of decision all forethought of other possible indictments to which the prisoner has alluded, but with which you are necessarily unacquainted. If you doubt the evidence, whether of one witness or of all, the prisoner must receive from you the benefit of that doubt. If not, you are sworn to a solemn oath, which ordains you to forego all minor considerations,—which compels you to watch narrowly that you be not influenced by the infirmities natural to us all, but criminal in you, to lean towards the side of a mercy that would be rendered by your oath a perjury to God, and by your duty as impartial citizens a treason to your country. I dismiss you to the grave consideration of the important case you have heard; and I trust that He to whom all hearts are open and all secrets are known, will grant you the temper and the judgment to form a right decision!”

There was in the majestic aspect and thrilling voice of Brandon something which made the commonest form of words solemn and impressive; and the hypocrite, aware of this felicity of manner, generally, as now, added weight to his concluding words by a religious allusion or a Scriptural phraseology. He ceased; and the jury, recovering the effect of his adjuration, consulted for a moment among themselves. The foreman then, addressing the court on behalf of his fellow-jurors, requested leave to retire for deliberation. An attendant bailiff being sworn in, we read in the journals of the day, which noted the divisions of time with that customary scrupulosity rendered terrible by the reflection how soon all time and seasons may perish for the hero of the scene, that ”it was at twenty-five minutes to two that the jury withdrew.”

Perhaps in the whole course of a criminal trial there is no period more awful than that occupied by the deliberation of the jury. In the present case the prisoner, as if acutely sensible of his situation, remained in the rear of the dock, and buried his face in his hands. They who stood

near him observed, however, that his breast did not seem to swell with the convulsive emotion customary to persons in his state, and that not even a sigh or agitated movement escaped him. The jury had been absent about twenty minutes, when a confused noise was heard in the court. The face of the judge turned in commanding severity towards the quarter whence it proceeded. He perceived a man of a coarse garb and mean appearance endeavouring rudely and violently to push his way through the crowd towards the bench, and at the same instant he saw one of the officers of the court approaching the disturber of its tranquillity with no friendly intent. The man, aware of the purpose of the constable, exclaimed with great vehemence, "I will give this to my lord the judge, blow me if I von't!" and as he spoke he raised high above his head a soiled scrap of paper folded awkwardly in the shape of a letter. The instant Brandon's eye caught the rugged features of the intrusive stranger, he motioned with rather less than his usual slowness of gesture to one of his official satellites. "Bring me that paper instantly!" he whispered.

The officer bowed and obeyed. The man, who seemed a little intoxicated, gave it with a look of ludicrous triumph and self-importance.

"Stand away, man!" he added to the constable, who now laid hand on his collar. "You'll see vot the judge says to that 'ere bit of paper; and so vill the prisoner, poor fellow!"

This scene, so unworthy the dignity of the court, attracted the notice and (immediately around the intruder) the merriment of the crowd; and many an eye was directed towards Brandon, as with calm gravity he opened the note and glanced over the contents. In a large school-boy hand-it was the hand of Long Ned-were written these few words:

MY LORD JUDGE,-I make bold to beg you will do all you can for the prisoner at the barre, as he is no other than the "Paul" I spoke to your Worship about. You know what I mean.

DUMMIE DUNNAKER.

As he read this note, the judge's head was observed to droop suddenly, as if by a sickness or a spasm; but he recovered himself instantly, and whispering the officer who brought him the note, said, "See that that madman be immediately removed from the court, and lock him up alone. He is so deranged as to be dangerous!"

The officer lost not a moment in seeing the order executed. Three stout constables dragged the astounded Dummie from the court in an instant, yet the more ruthlessly for his ejaculating,-

"Eh, sirs, what's this? I tells you I have saved the judge's hown flesh and blood! Vy, now, gently, there; you'll smart for this, my fine fellow! Never you mind, Paul, my 'arty; I 'se done you a pure good--"

"Silence!" proclaimed the voice of the judge; and that voice came forth with so commanding a tone of power that it awed Dummie, despite his intoxication. In a moment more, and ere he had time to recover, he was without the court. During this strange hubbub, which nevertheless scarcely lasted above two or three minutes, the prisoner had not once lifted his head, nor appeared aroused in any manner from his reverie; and scarcely had the intruder been withdrawn before the jury returned.

The verdict was, as all had foreseen, "Guilty;" but it was coupled with a strong recommendation to mercy.

The prisoner was then asked, in the usual form, whether he had to say anything why sentence of death should not be passed against him.

As these dread words struck upon his ear, slowly the prisoner rose. He directed first towards the jury a brief and keen glance, and his eyes then rested full, and with a stern significance, on the face of his judge.

"My lord," he began, "I have but one reason to advance against the sentence of the law. If you have interest to prevent or mitigate it, that reason will, I think, suffice to enlist you on my behalf. I said that the first cause of those offences against the law which brings me to this bar was the committing me to prison on a charge of which I was wholly innocent! My lord judge, you were the man who accused me of that charge, and subjected me to that imprisonment! Look at me well, my lord, and you may trace in the countenance of the hardened felon you are about to adjudge to death the features of a boy whom, some seven years ago, you accused before a London magistrate of the theft of your watch. On the oath of a man who has one step on the threshold of death, the accusation was unjust. And, fit minister of the laws you represent! you, who will now pass my doom,—You were the cause of my crimes! My lord, I have done. I am ready to add another to the long and dark list of victims who are first polluted and then sacrificed by the blindness and the injustice of human codes!"

While Clifford spoke, every eye turned from him to the judge, and every one was appalled by the ghastly and fearful change which had fallen over Brandon's face. Men said, afterwards, that they saw written there, in terrible distinctness, the characters of death; and there certainly seemed something awful and preternatural in the bloodless and haggard calmness of his proud features. Yet his eye did not quail, nor the muscles of his lip quiver; and with even more than his wonted loftiness, he met the regard of the prisoner. But, as alone conspicuous throughout the motionless and breathless crowd the judge and criminal gazed upon each other, and as the eyes of the spectators wandered on each, a thrilling and electric impression of a powerful likeness between the doomed and the doomer, for the first time in the trial, struck upon the audience, and increased, though they scarcely knew why, the sensation of

pain and dread which the prisoner's last words excited. Perhaps it might have chiefly arisen from a common expression of fierce emotion conquered by an iron and stern character of mind; or perhaps, now that the ashy paleness of exhaustion had succeeded the excited flush on the prisoner's face, the similarity of complexion thus obtained made the likeness more obvious than before; or perhaps the spectators had not hitherto fixed so searching, or, if we may so speak, so alternating a gaze upon the two. However that be, the resemblance between the men, placed as they were in such widely different circumstances,—that resemblance which, as we have hinted, had at certain moments occurred startlingly to Lucy,—was plain and unavoidably striking: the same the dark hue of their complexions; the same the haughty and Roman outline of their faces; the same the height of the forehead; the same even a displeasing and sarcastic rigidity of mouth, which made the most conspicuous feature in Brandon, and which was the only point that deteriorated from the singular beauty of Clifford. But, above all, the same inflexible, defying, stubborn spirit, though in Brandon it assumed the stately cast of majesty, and in Clifford it seemed the desperate sternness of the bravo, stamped itself in both. Though Clifford ceased, he did not resume his seat, but stood in the same attitude as that in which he had reversed the order of things, and merged the petitioner in the accuser; and Brandon himself, without speaking or moving, continued still to survey him; so, with erect fronts and marble countenances, in which what was defying and resolute did not altogether quell the mortal leaven of pain and dread, they looked as might have looked the two men in the Eastern story who had the power of gazing each other unto death.

What at that moment was raging in Brandon's heart, it is in vain to guess. He doubted not for a moment that he beheld before him his long lost, his anxiously demanded son! Every fibre, every corner of his complex and gloomy soul, that certainly reached, and blasted with a hideous and irresistible glare. The earliest, perhaps the strongest, though often the least acknowledged principle of his mind was the desire to rebuild the fallen honours of his house; its last scion he now beheld before him, covered with the darkest ignominies of the law! He had coveted worldly honours; he beheld their legitimate successor in a convicted felon! He had garnered the few affections he had spared from the objects of pride and ambition, in his son. That son he was about to adjudge to the gibbet and the hangman! Of late he had increased the hopes of regaining his lost treasure, even to an exultant certainty. Lo! the hopes were accomplished! How? With these thoughts warring, in what manner we dare not even by an epithet express, within him, we may cast one hasty glance on the horror of aggravation they endured, when he heard the prisoner accuse Him as the cause of his present doom, and felt himself at once the murderer and the judge of his son!

Minutes had elapsed since the voice of the prisoner ceased; and Brandon now drew forth the black cap. As he placed it slowly over his brows, the increasing and corpse-like whiteness of his face became more glaringly visible, by the contrast which this dread head-gear presented. Twice as

he essayed to speak his voice failed him, and an indistinct murmur came forth from his hueless lips, and died away like a fitful and feeble wind. But with the third effort the resolution and long self-tyranny of the man conquered, and his voice went clear and unfaltering through the crowd, although the severe sweetness of its wonted tones was gone, and it sounded strange and hollow on the ears that drank it.

"Prisoner at the bar! it has become my duty to announce to you the close of your mortal career. You have been accused of a daring robbery, and after an impartial trial a jury of your countrymen and the laws of your country have decided against you. The recommendation to mercy" (here, only throughout his speech, Brandon gasped convulsively for breath) "so humanely added by the jury, shall be forwarded to the supreme power; but I cannot flatter you with much hope of its success." (The lawyers looked with some surprise at each other; they had expected a far more unqualified mandate, to abjure all hope from the jury's recommendation.) "Prisoner, for the opinions you have expressed, you are now only answerable to your God; I forbear to arraign them. For the charge you have made against me, whether true or false, and for the anguish it has given me, may you find pardon at another tribunal! It remains for me only—under a reserve too slight, as I have said, to afford you a fair promise of hope—only to—to" (all eyes were on Brandon; he felt it, exerted himself for a last effort, and proceeded)—"to pronounce on you the sharp sentence of the law! It is, that you be taken back to the prison whence you came, and thence (when the supreme authority shall appoint) to the place of execution, to be there hanged by the neck till you are dead; and the Lord God Almighty have mercy on your soul!"

With this address concluded that eventful trial; and while the crowd, in rushing and noisy tumult, bore towards the door, Brandon, concealing to the last with a Spartan bravery the anguish which was gnawing at his entrails, retired from the awful pageant. For the next half-hour he was locked up with the strange intruder on the proceedings of the court. At the end of that time the stranger was dismissed; and in about double the same period Brandon's servant re-admitted him, accompanied by another man, with a slouched hat and in a carman's frock. The reader need not be told that the new comer was the friendly Ned, whose testimony was indeed a valuable corroborative to Dummie's, and whose regard for Clifford, aided by an appetite for rewards, had induced him to venture to the town of —, although he tarried concealed in a safe suburb, until reassured by a written promise from Brandon of safety to his person, and a sum for which we might almost doubt whether he would not have consented (so long had he been mistaking means for an end) to be hanged himself. Brandon listened to the details of these confederates; and when they had finished, he addressed them thus: "I have heard you, and am convinced you are liars and impostors. There is the money I promised you" (throwing down a pocket-book),—"take it; and, hark you, if ever you dare whisper, ay, but a breath of the atrocious lie you have now forged, be sure I will have you dragged from the recess or nook of infamy in which you may hide your heads, and hanged for the crimes you have already committed. I am

not the man to break my word. Begone! quit this town instantly! If in two hours hence you are found here, your blood be on your own heads! Begone, I say!"

These words, aided by a countenance well adapted at all times to expressions of a menacing and ruthless character, at once astounded and appalled the accomplices. They left the room in hasty confusion; and Brandon, now alone, walked with uneven steps (the alarming weakness and vacillation of which he did not himself feel) to and fro the apartment. The hell of his breast was stamped upon his features, but he uttered only one thought aloud,—

"I may,—yes, yes,—I may yet conceal this disgrace to my name!"

His servant tapped at the door to say that the carriage was ready, and that Lord Mauleverer had bid him remind his master that they dined punctually at the hour appointed.

"I am coming!" said Brandon, with a slow and startling emphasis on each word. But he first sat down and wrote a letter to the official quarter, strongly aiding the recommendation of the Jury; and we may conceive how pride clung to him to the last, when he urged the substitution for death of transportation for life! As soon as he had sealed this letter, he summoned an express, gave his orders coolly and distinctly, and attempted with his usual stateliness of step to walk through a long passage which led to the outer door. He found himself fail. "Come hither," he said to his servant, "give me your arm!"

All Brandon's domestics, save the one left with Lucy, stood in awe of him; and it was with some hesitation that his servant ventured to inquire if his master felt well.

Brandon looked at him, but made no reply. He entered his carriage with slight difficulty, and telling the coachman to drive as fast as possible, pulled down (a general custom with him) all the blinds of the windows.

Meanwhile Lord Mauleverer, with six friends, was impatiently awaiting the arrival of the seventh guest.

"Our August friend tarries!" quoth the Bishop of ——, with his hands folded across his capacious stomach. "I fear the turbot your lordship spoke of may not be the better for the length of the trial."

"Poor fellow!" said the Earl of ——, slightly yawning.

"Whom do you mean?" asked Lord Mauleverer, with a smile,— "the bishop, the judge, or the turbot?"

"Not one of the three, Mauleverer,—I spoke of the prisoner."

"Ah, the fine dog! I forgot him," said Mauleverer. "Really, now you mention him, I must confess that he inspires me with great compassion; but, indeed, it is very wrong in him to keep the judge so long!"

"Those hardened wretches have such a great deal to say," mumbled the bishop, sourly.

"True!" said Mauleverer; "a religious rogue would have had some bowels for the state of the church esurient."

"Is it really true, Mauleverer," asked the Earl of —, "that Brandon is to succeed?"

"So I hear," said Mauleverer. "Heavens, how hungry I am!"

A groan from the bishop echoed the complaint.

"I suppose it would be against all decorum to sit down to dinner without him?" said Lord —.

"Why, really, I fear so," returned Mauleverer. "But our health—our health is at stake; we will only wait five minutes more. By Jove, there's the carriage! I beg your pardon for my heathen oath, my lord bishop."

"I forgive you!" said the good bishop, smiling.

The party thus engaged in colloquy were stationed at a window opening on the gravel road, along which the judge's carriage was now seen rapidly approaching; this window was but a few yards from the porch, and had been partially opened for the better reconnoitring the approach of the expected guest.

"He keeps the blinds down still! Absence of mind, or shame at unpunctuality,—which is the cause, Mauleverer?" said one of the party.

"Not shame, I fear!" answered Mauleverer. "Even the indecent immorality of delaying our dinner could scarcely bring a blush to the parchment skin of my learned friend."

Here the carriage stopped at the porch; the carriage door was opened.

"There seems a strange delay," said Mauleverer, peevishly. "Why does not he get out?"

As he spoke, a murmur among the attendants, who appeared somewhat strangely to crowd around the carriage, smote the ears of the party.

"What do they say,—what?" said Mauleverer, putting his hand to his ear.

The bishop answered hastily; and Mauleverer, as he heard the reply, forgot for once his susceptibility to cold, and hurried out to the carriage door. His guests followed.

They found Brandon leaning against the farther corner of the carriage,—a corpse. One hand held the check-string, as if he had endeavoured involuntarily but ineffectually to pull it. The right side of his face was partially distorted, as by convulsion or paralysis; but not sufficiently so to destroy that remarkable expression of loftiness and severity which had characterized the features in life. At the same time the distortion which had drawn up on one side the muscles of the mouth had deepened into a startling broadness the half sneer of derision that usually lurked around the lower part of his face. Thus unwitnessed and abrupt had been the disunion of the clay and spirit of a man who, if he passed through life a bold, scheming, stubborn, unwavering hypocrite, was not without something high even amidst his baseness, his selfishness, and his vices; who seemed less to have loved sin than by some strange perversion of reason to have disdained virtue, and who, by a solemn and awful suddenness of fate (for who shall venture to indicate the judgment of the arch and unseen Providence, even when it appears to mortal eye the least obscured?), won the dreams, the objects, the triumphs of hope, to be blasted by them at the moment of acquisition!

CHAPTER XXXVI.

AND LAST.

Subtle, Surly,—Mammon, Dol,
Hot Ananias, Dapper, Dragger,—all
With whom I traded.
The Alchemist.

As when some rural citizen-retired for a fleeting holiday, far from the cares of the world *„strepitumque Romae,—[” And the roar of Rome.”]*—to the sweet shades of Pentonville or the remoter plains of Clapham—conducts some delighted visitor over the intricacies of that Daedalian masterpiece which he is pleased to call his labyrinth or maze,—now smiling furtively at his guest’s perplexity, now listening with calm superiority to his futile and erring conjectures, now maliciously accompanying him through a flattering path in which the baffled adventurer is suddenly checked by the blank features of a thoroughfareless hedge, now trembling as he sees the guest stumbling unawares into the right track, and now relieved as he beholds him after a pause of deliberation wind into the wrong,—even so, O pleasant reader! doth the sage novelist conduct thee through the labyrinth of his tale, amusing himself with thy self-deceits, and spinning forth, in prolix

pleasure, the quiet yarn of his entertainment from the involutions which occasion thy fretting eagerness and perplexity. But as when, thanks to the host's good-nature or fatigue, the mystery is once unravelled, and the guest permitted to penetrate even into the concealed end of the leafy maze, the honest cit, satisfied with the pleasant pains he has already bestowed upon his visitor, puts him not to the labour of retracing the steps he hath so erratically trod, but leads him in three strides, and through a simpler path, at once to the mouth of the maze, and dismisseth him elsewhere for entertainment; even so will the prudent narrator, when the intricacies of his plot are once unfolded, occasion no stale and profitless delays to his wearied reader, but conduct him, with as much brevity as convenient, without the labyrinth which has ceased to retain the interest of a secret.

We shall therefore, in pursuance of the tit's policy, relate as rapidly as possible that part of our narrative which yet remains untold. On Brandon's person was found the paper which had contained so fatal an intelligence of his son; and when brought to Lord Mauleverer, the words struck that person (who knew Brandon had been in search of his lost son, whom we have seen that he had been taught however to suppose illegitimate, though it is probable that many doubts whether he had not been deceived must have occurred to his natural sagacity) as sufficiently important to be worth an inquiry after the writer. Dummie was easily found, for he had not yet turned his back on the town when the news of the judge's sudden death was brought back to it; and taking advantage of that circumstance, the friendly Dunnaker remained altogether in the town (albeit his long companion deserted it as hastily as might be), and whiled the time by presenting himself at the jail, and after some ineffectual efforts winning his way to Clifford. Easily tracked by the name he had given to the governor of the jail, he was conducted the same day to Lord Mauleverer; and his narrative, confused as it was, and proceeding even from so suspicious a quarter, thrilled those digestive organs, which in Mauleverer stood proxy for a heart, with feelings as much resembling awe and horror as our good peer was capable of experiencing. Already shocked from his worldly philosophy of indifference by the death of Brandon, he was more susceptible to a remorseful and salutary impression at this moment than he might have been at any other; and he could not, without some twinges of conscience, think of the ruin he had brought on the mother of the being he had but just prosecuted to the death. He dismissed Dummie, and after a little consideration he ordered his carriage, and leaving the funeral preparations for his friend to the care of his man of business, he set off for London, and the house, in particular, of the Secretary of the Home Department. We would not willingly wrong the noble penitent; but we venture a suspicion that he might not have preferred a personal application for mercy to the prisoner to a written one, had he not felt certain unpleasant qualms in remaining in a country-house overshadowed by ceremonies so gloomy as those of death. The letter of Brandon and the application of Mauleverer obtained for Clifford a relaxation of his sentence. He was left for perpetual transportation. A ship was already

about to sail; and Mauleverer, content with having saved his life, was by no means anxious that his departure from the country should be saddled with any superfluous delay.

Meanwhile the first rumour that reached London respecting Brandon's fate was that he had been found in a fit, and was lying dangerously ill at Mauleverer's; and before the second and more fatally sure report arrived, Lucy had gathered from the visible dismay of Barlow, whom she anxiously cross-questioned, and who, really loving his master, was easily affected into communication, the first and more flattering intelligence. To Barlow's secret delight, she insisted instantly on setting off to the supposed sick man; and accompanied by Barlow and her woman, the affectionate girl hastened to Mauleverer's house on the evening after the day the earl left it. Lucy had not proceeded far before Barlow learned, from the gossip of the road, the real state of the case. Indeed, it was at the first stage that with a mournful countenance he approached the door of the carriage, and announcing the inutility of proceeding farther, begged of Lucy to turn back. So soon as Miss Brandon had overcome the first shock which this intelligence gave her, she said with calmness,—

"Well, Barlow, if it be so, we have still a duty to perform. Tell the postboys to drive on!"

"Indeed, madam, I cannot see what use it can be fretting yourself,—and you so poorly. If you will let me go, I will see every attention paid to the remains of my poor master."

"When my father lay dead," said Lucy, with a grave and sad sternness in her manner, "he who is now no more sent no proxy to perform the last duties of a brother; neither will I send one to discharge those of a niece, and prove that I have forgotten the gratitude of a daughter. Drive on!"

We have said that there were times when a spirit was stricken from Lucy little common to her in general; and now the command of her uncle sat upon her brow. On sped the horses, and for several minutes Lucy remained silent. Her woman did not dare to speak. At length Miss Brandon turned, and, covering her face with her hands, burst into tears so violent that they alarmed her attendant even more than her previous stillness. "My poor, poor uncle!" she sobbed; and those were all her words.

We must pass over Lucy's arrival at Lord Mauleverer's house; we must pass over the weary days which elapsed till that unconscious body was consigned to dust with which, could it have retained yet one spark of its haughty spirit, it would have refused to blend its atoms. She had loved the deceased incomparably beyond his merits, and resisting all remonstrance to the contrary and all the forms of ordinary custom, she witnessed herself the dreary ceremony which bequeathed the human remains of William Brandon to repose and to the worm. On that same day Clifford received the mitigation of his sentence, and on that day another trial

awaited Lucy. We think briefly to convey to the reader what that scene was; we need only observe that Dummie Dunnaker, decoyed by his great love for little Paul, whom he delightedly said he found not the least "stuck up by his great fame and helevation," still lingered in the town, and was not only aware of the relationship of the cousins, but had gleaned from Long Ned, as they journeyed down to —, the affection entertained by Clifford for Lucy. Of the manner in which the communication reached Lucy, we need not speak; suffice it to say, that on the day in which she had performed the last duty to her uncle, she learned for the first time her lover's situation.

On that evening, in the convict's cell, the cousins met.

Their conference was low, for the jailer stood within hearing; and it was broken by Lucy's convulsive sobs. But the voice of one whose iron nerves were not unworthy of the offspring of William Brandon, was clear and audible to her ear, even though uttered in a whisper that scarcely stirred his lips. It seemed as if Lucy, smitten to the inmost heart by the generosity with which her lover had torn himself from her at the time that her wealth might have raised him in any other country far above the perils and the crimes of his career in this; perceiving now, for the first time, and in all their force, the causes of his mysterious conduct; melted by their relationship, and forgetting herself utterly in the desolation and dark situation in which she beheld one who, whatever his crimes, had not been criminal towards her;—it seemed as if, carried away by these emotions, she had yielded altogether to the fondness and devotion of her nature,—that she had wished to leave home and friends and fortune, and share with him his punishment and his shame.

"Why," she faltered,— "why—why not? We are all that is left to each other in the world! Your father and mine were brothers; let me be to you as a sister. What is there left for me here? Not one being whom I love, or who cares for me,—not one!"

It was then that Clifford summoned all his courage, as he answered. Perhaps, now that he felt (though here his knowledge was necessarily confused and imperfect) his birth was not unequal to hers; now that he read, or believed he read, in her wan cheek and attenuated frame that desertion to her was death, and that generosity and self-sacrifice had become too late,—perhaps these thoughts, concurring with a love in himself beyond all words, and a love in her which it was above humanity to resist, altogether conquered and subdued him. Yet, as we have said, his voice breathed calmly in her ear; and his eye only, which brightened with a steady and resolute hope, betrayed his mind. "Live, then!" said he, as he concluded. "My sister, my mistress, my bride, live! In one year from this day—I repeat—I promise it thee!"

The interview was over, and Lucy returned home with a firm step. She was on foot. The rain fell in torrents, yet even in her precarious state her health suffered not; and when within a week from that time she read that

Clifford had departed to the bourne of his punishment, she read the news with a steady eye and a lip that, if it grew paler, did not quiver.

Shortly after that time Miss Brandon departed to an obscure town by the seaside; and there, refusing all society, she continued to reside. As the birth of Clifford was known but to few, and his legitimacy was unsuspected by all except, perhaps, by Mauleverer, Lucy succeeded to the great wealth of her uncle; and this circumstance made her more than ever an object of attraction in the eyes of her noble adorer. Finding himself unable to see her, he wrote to her more than one moving epistle; but as Lucy continued inflexible, he at length, disgusted by her want of taste, ceased his pursuit, and resigned himself to the continued sterility of unwedded life. As the months waned, Miss Brandon seemed to grow weary of her retreat; and immediately on attaining her majority, which she did about eight months after Brandon's death, she transferred the bulk of her wealth to France, where it was understood (for it was impossible that rumour should sleep upon an heiress and a beauty) that she intended in future to reside. Even Warlock (that spell to the proud heart of her uncle) she ceased to retain. It was offered to the nearest relation of the family at a sum which he did not hesitate to close with; and by the common vicissitudes of Fortune, the estate of the ancient Brandons has now, we perceive by a weekly journal, just passed into the hands of a wealthy alderman.

It was nearly a year since Brandon's death when a letter bearing a foreign postmark came to Lucy. From that time her spirits—which before, though subject to fits of abstraction, had been even and subdued, not sad—rose into all the cheerfulness and vivacity of her earliest youth. She busied herself actively in preparations for her departure from this country; and at length the day was fixed, and the vessel was engaged. Every day till that one, did Lucy walk to the seaside, and ascending the highest cliff, spend hours, till the evening closed, in watching, with seemingly idle gaze, the vessels that interspersed the sea; and with every day her health seemed to strengthen, and the soft and lucid colour she had once worn, to rebloom upon her cheek.

Previous to her departure Miss Brandon dismissed her servants, and only engaged one female, a foreigner, to accompany her. A certain tone of quiet command, formerly unknown to her, characterized these measures, so daringly independent for one of her sex and age. The day arrived,—it was the anniversary of her last interview with Clifford. On entering the vessel it was observed that she trembled violently, and that her face was as pale as death. A stranger, who had stood aloof wrapped in his cloak, darted forward to assist her; that was the last which her discarded and weeping servants beheld of her from the pier where they stood to gaze.

Nothing more in this country was ever known of the fate of Lucy Brandon; and as her circle of acquaintances was narrow, and interest in her fate existed vividly in none save a few humble breasts, conjecture was never keenly awakened, and soon cooled into forgetfulness. If it favoured,

after the lapse of years, any one notion more than another, it was that she had perished among the victims of the French Revolution.

Meanwhile let us glance over the destinies of our more subordinate acquaintances.

Augustus Tomlinson, on parting from Long Ned, had succeeded in reaching Calais; and after a rapid tour through the Continent, he ultimately betook himself to a certain literary city in Germany, where he became distinguished for his metaphysical acumen, and opened a school of morals on the Grecian model, taught in the French tongue. He managed, by the patronage he received and the pupils he enlightened, to obtain a very decent income; and as he wrote a folio against Locke, proved that men had innate feelings, and affirmed that we should refer everything not to reason, but to the sentiments of the soul, he became greatly respected for his extraordinary virtue. Some little discoveries were made after his death, which perhaps would have somewhat diminished the general odour of his sanctity, had not the admirers of his school carefully hushed up the matter, probably out of respect for the "sentiments of the soul!"

Pepper, whom the police did not so anxiously desire to destroy as they did his two companions, might have managed, perhaps many years longer, to graze upon the public commons, had not a letter, written somewhat imprudently, fallen into wrong hands. This, though after creating a certain stir it apparently died away, lived in the memory of the police, and finally conspired, with various peccadilloes, to produce his downfall. He was seized, tried, and sentenced to seven years' transportation. He so advantageously employed his time at Botany Bay, and arranged things there so comfortably to himself, that at the expiration of his sentence he refused to return home. He made an excellent match, built himself an excellent house, and remained in "the land of the blest" to the end of his days, noted to the last for the redundancy of his hair and a certain ferocious coxcombry of aspect.

As for Fighting Attie and Gentleman George, for Scarlet Jem and for Old Bags, we confess ourselves destitute of any certain information of their latter ends. We can only add, with regard to Fighting Attie, "Good luck be with him wherever he goes!" and for mine host of the Jolly Angler, that, though we have not the physical constitution to quaff "a bumper of blue ruin," we shall be very happy, over any tolerable wine and in company with any agreeable convivialist, to bear our part in the polished chorus of—

"Here's to Gentleman George, God bless him!"

Mrs. Lobkins departed this life like a lamb; and Dummie Dunnaker obtained a license to carry on the business at Thames Court. He boasted, to the last, of his acquaintance with the great Captain Lovett, and of the affability with which that distinguished personage treated him. Stories he had, too, about Judge Brandon, but no one believed a syllable of them;

and Dummie, indignant at the disbelief, increased, out of vehemence, the marvel of the stories, so that, at length, what was added almost swallowed up what was original, and Dummie himself might have been puzzled to satisfy his own conscience as to what was false and what was true.

The erudite Peter MacGrawler, returning to Scotland, disappeared by the road. A person singularly resembling the sage was afterward seen at Carlisle, where he discharged the useful and praiseworthy duties of Jack Ketch. But whether or not this respectable functionary was our identical Simon Pure, our ex-editor of "The Asinaeum," we will not take upon ourselves to assert.

Lord Mauleverer, finally resolving on a single life, passed the remainder of his years in indolent tranquillity. When he died, the newspapers asserted that his Majesty was deeply affected by the loss of so old and valued a friend. His furniture and wines sold remarkably high; and a Great Man, his particular intimate, who purchased his books, startled to find, by pencil marks, that the noble deceased had read some of them, exclaimed, not altogether without truth,

"Ah! Mauleverer might have been a deuced clever fellow—if he had liked it!"

The earl was accustomed to show as a curiosity a ring of great value, which he had received in rather a singular manner. One morning a packet was brought him which he found to contain a sum of money, the ring mentioned, and a letter from the notorious Lovett, in which that person in begging to return his lordship the sums of which he had twice assisted to rob him, thanked him, with earnest warmth, for the consideration testified towards him in not revealing his identity with Captain Clifford; and ventured, as a slight testimony of respect, to inclose the aforesaid ring with the sum returned.

About the time Mauleverer received this curious packet, several anecdotes of a similar nature appeared in the public journals; and it seemed that Lovett had acted upon a general principle of restitution,—not always, it must be allowed, the offspring of a robber's repentance. While the idle were marvelling at these anecdotes, came the tardy news that Lovett, after a single month's sojourn at his place of condemnation, had, in the most daring and singular manner, effected his escape. Whether, in his progress up the country, he had been starved or slain by the natives, or whether, more fortunate, he had ultimately found the means of crossing seas, was as yet unknown. There ended the adventures of the gallant robber; and thus, by a strange coincidence, the same mystery which wrapped the fate of Lucy involved also that of her lover. And here, kind reader, might we drop the curtain on our closing scene, did we not think it might please thee to hold it up yet one moment, and give thee another view of the world behind.

In a certain town of that Great Country where shoes are imperfectly polished—[See Captain Hall's late work on America]—and opinions are not prosecuted, there resided, twenty years after the date of Lucy Brandon's departure from England, a man held in high and universal respect, not only for the rectitude of his conduct, but for the energies of his mind, and the purposes to which they were directed. If you asked who cultivated that waste, the answer was, "Clifford!" who procured the establishment of that hospital, "Clifford!" who obtained the redress of such a public grievance, "Clifford!" who struggled for and won such a popular benefit, "Clifford!" In the gentler part of his projects and his undertakings—in that part, above all, which concerned the sick or the necessitous—this useful citizen was seconded, or rather excelled, by a being over whose surpassing loveliness Time seemed to have flown with a gentle and charming wing. There was something remarkable and touching in the love which this couple (for the woman we refer to was Clifford's wife) bore to each other; like the plant on the plains of Hebron, the time which brought to that love an additional strength brought to it also a softer and a fresher verdure. Although their present neighbours were unacquainted with the events of their earlier life previous to their settlement at ——, it was known that they had been wealthy at the time they first came to reside there, and that, by a series of fatalities, they had lost all. But Clifford had borne up manfully against fortune; and in a new country, where men who prefer labour to dependence cannot easily starve, he had been enabled to toil upward through the severe stages of poverty and hardship with an honesty and vigour of character which won him, perhaps, a more hearty esteem for every successive effort than the display of his lost riches might ever have acquired him. His labours and his abilities obtained gradual but sure success; and he now enjoyed the blessings of a competence earned with the most scrupulous integrity, and spent with the most kindly benevolence. A trace of the trials they had passed through was discernible in each; those trials had stolen the rose from the wife's cheek, and had sown untimely wrinkles in the broad brow of Clifford. There were moments, too, but they were only moments, when the latter sank from his wonted elastic and healthful cheerfulness of mind into a gloomy and abstracted revery; but these moments the wife watched with a jealous and fond anxiety, and one sound of her sweet voice had the power to dispel their influence; and when Clifford raised his eyes, and glanced from her tender smile around his happy home and his growing children, or beheld through the very windows of his room the public benefits he had created, something of pride and gladness glowed on his countenance, and he said, though with glistening eyes and subdued voice, as his looks returned once more to his wife, "I owe these to thee!"

One trait of mind especially characterized Clifford,—indulgence to the faults of others. "Circumstances make guilt," he was wont to say; "let us endeavour to correct the circumstances, before we rail against the guilt!" His children promised to tread in the same useful and honourable path that he trod himself. Happy was considered that family which had the hope to ally itself with his.

Such was the after-fate of Clifford and Lucy. Who will condemn us for preferring the moral of that fate to the moral which is extorted from the gibbet and the hulks,—which makes scarecrows, not beacons; terrifies our weakness, not warms our reason. Who does not allow that it is better to repair than to perish,—better, too, to atone as the citizen than to repent as the hermit? Oh, John Wilkes, Alderman of London, and Drawcansir of Liberty, your life was not an iota too perfect,—your patriotism might have been infinitely purer, your morals would have admitted indefinite amendment, you are no great favourite with us or with the rest of the world,—but you said one excellent thing, for which we look on you with benevolence, nay, almost with respect. We scarcely know whether to smile at its wit or to sigh at its wisdom. Mark this truth, all ye gentlemen of England who would make law as the Romans made fasces,—a bundle of rods with an axe in the middle,—mark it, and remember! long may it live, allied with hope in ourselves, but with gratitude in our children,—long after the book which it now "adorns" and "points" has gone to its dusty slumber,—long, long after the feverish hand which now writes it down can defend or enforce it no more: "THE VERY WORST USE TO WHICH YOU CAN PUT A MAN IS TO HANG HIM!"

NOTE.

In the second edition of this novel there were here inserted two "characters" of "Fighting Attie" and "Gentleman George," omitted in the subsequent edition published by Mr. Bentley in the "Standard Novels." At the request of some admirers of those eminent personages, who considered the biographical sketches referred to impartial in themselves, and contributing to the completeness of the design for which men so illustrious were introduced, they are here retained, though in the more honourable form of a separate and supplementary notice.

FIGHTING ATTIE.

When he dies, the road will have lost a great man, whose foot was rarely out of his stirrup, and whose clear head guided a bold hand. He carried common-sense to its perfection, and he made the straight path the sublimest. His words were few, his actions were many. He was the Spartan of Tobymen, and laconism was the short soul of his professional legislation!

Whatever way you view him, you see those properties of mind which command fortune; few thoughts not confusing each other,—simple elements, and bold. His character in action maybe summed in two phrases,—"a fact seized, and a stroke made." Had his intellect been more luxurious, his resolution might have been less hardy; and his hardiness made his greatness. He was one of those who shine but in action,—chimneys (to adapt the simile of Sir Thomas More) that seem useless till you light your fire. So in calm moments you dreamed not of his utility, and only

on the road you were struck dumb with the outbreaking of his genius. Whatever situation he was called to, you found in him what you looked for in vain in others; for his strong sense gave to Attie what long experience ought, but often fails, to give to its possessors. His energy triumphed over the sense of novel circumstance, and he broke in a moment through the cobwebs which entangled lesser natures for years. His eye saw a final result, and disregarded the detail. He robbed his man without chicanery; and took his purse by applying for it rather than scheming. If his enemies wish to detract from his merit,—a merit great, dazzling, and yet solid,—they may, perhaps, say that his genius fitted him better to continue exploits than to devise them; and thus that, besides the renown which he may justly claim, he often wholly engrossed that fame which should have been shared by others: he took up the enterprise where it ceased at Labour, and carried it onwards, where it was rewarded with Glory. Even this charge proves a new merit of address, and lessens not the merit less complicated the have allowed him before. The fame he has acquired may excite our emulation; the envy he has not appeased may console us for obscurity.

A stanza of Greek poetry—Thus, not too vigorously, translated by Mr. West,—

”But wrapped in error is the human mind,
And human bliss is ever insecure—
Know we what fortune shall remain behind?
Know we how long the present shall endure?”

GENTLEMAN GEORGE.

For thee, Gentleman George, for thee, what conclusive valediction remains? Alas! since we began the strange and mumming scene wherein first thou wert introduced, the grim foe hath knocked thrice at thy gates; and now, as we write,—[In 1830]—thou art departed thence,—thou art no more! A new lord presides to thine easy-chair, a new voice rings from thy merry board,—thou art forgotten! thou art already, like these pages, a tale that is told to a memory that retaineth not! Where are thy quips and cranks; where thy stately coxcombs and thy regal gauds? Thine house and thy pagoda, thy Gothic chimney and thy Chinese sign-post,—these yet ask the concluding hand. Thy hand is cold; their completion, and the enjoyment the completion yields, are for another! Thou sowest, and thy follower reaps; thou buildest, thy successor holds; thou plantest, and thine heir sits beneath the shadow of thy trees,—

”Neque harum, quas colis, arborum
Te, praeter invisas cupressos,
Ulla brevem dominum sequetur!”

[”Nor will any of these trees thou didst cultivate follow thee, the shortlived lord, save the hateful Cyprus.”]

At this moment thy life,—for thou veert a Great Man to thine order, and they have added thy biography to that of Abershaw and Sheppard,—thy life is before us. What a homily in its events! Gayly didst thou laugh into thy youth, and run through the courses of thy manhood. Wit sat at thy table, and Genius was thy comrade. Beauty was thy handmaid; and Frivolity played around thee,—a buffoon that thou didst ridicule, and ridiculing enjoy! Who among us can look back to thy brilliant era, and not sigh to think that the wonderful men who surrounded thee, and amidst whom thou wert a centre and a nucleus, are for him but the things of history, and the phantoms of a bodiless tradition? Those brilliant suppers, glittering with beauty, the memory of which makes one spot (yet inherited by Bachelor Bill) a haunted and a fairy ground; all who gathered to that Armida's circle,—the Grammonts and the Beauvilliers and the Rochefoucaulds of England and the Road,—who does not feel that to have seen these, though but as Gil Blas saw the festivities of his actors, from the sideboard and behind the chair, would have been a triumph for the earthlier feelings of his old age to recall? What, then, must it have been to have seen them as thou didst see,—thou, the deceased and the forgotten!—seen them from the height of thy youth and power and rank (for early wert thou keeper to a public), and reckless spirits, and lusty capacities of joy? What pleasures where sense lavished its uncounted varieties? What revellings where wine was the least excitement?

Let the scene shift. How stirring is the change! Triumph and glitter and conquest! For thy public was a public of renown; thither came the Warriors of the Ring,—the Heroes of the Cross,—and thou, their patron, wert elevated on their fame! "Principes pro victoria pugnant, comites pro Principe."—[Chiefs for the victory fight,—for chiefs the soldiers]—What visions sweep across us! What glories didst thou witness! Over what conquests didst thou preside! The mightiest epoch, the most wonderful events which the world, _thy_ world, ever knew,—of these was it not indeed, and dazzlingly thine,—

"To share the triumph and partake the gale"?

Let the scene shift. Manhood is touched by age; but Lust is "heeled" by Luxury, and Pomp is the heir of Pleasure; gewgaws and gaud, instead of glory, surround, rejoice, and flatter thee to the last. There rise thy buildings; there lie, secret but gorgeous, the tabernacles of thine ease; and the earnings of thy friends, and the riches of the people whom they plunder, are waters to thine imperial whirlpool. Thou art lapped in ease, as is a silkworm; and profusion flows from thy high and unseen asylum as the rain poureth from a cloud.—Much didst thou do to beautify chimney-tops, much to adorn the snuggeries where thou didst dwell. Thieving with thee took a substantial shape; and the robberies Of the public passed into a metempsychosis of mortar, and became public-houses. So there and thus, building and planning, didst thou spin out thy latter yarn, till Death came upon thee; and when we looked around, lo! thy brother was on thy hearth. And thy parasites and thy comrades and thine

ancient pals and thy portly blowens, they made a murmur, and they packed up their goods; but they turned ere they departed, and they would have worshipped thy brother as they worshipped thee,—but he would not! And thy sign-post is gone and mouldered already; and to the Jolly Angler has succeeded the Jolly Tar! And thy picture is disappearing fast from the print-shops, and thy name from the mouths of men! And thy brother, whom no one praised while thou didst live, is on a steeple of panegyric built above the churchyard that contains thy grave. O shifting and volatile hearts of men! Who would be keeper of a public? Who dispense the wine and the juices that gladden, when the moment the pulse of the band ceases, the wine and the juices are forgotten?

To History,—for thy name will be preserved in that record which, whether it be the calendar of Newgate or of nations, telleth its alike how men suffer and sin and perish,—to History we leave the sum and balance of thy merits and thy faults. The sins that were thine were those of the man to whom pleasure is all in all: thou wert, from root to branch, sap and in heart, what moralists term the libertine; hence the light wooing, the quick desertion, the broken faith, the organized perfidy, that manifested thy bearing to those gentler creatures who called thee 'Gentleman George.' Never to one solitary woman, until the last dull flame of thy dotage, didst thou so behave as to give no foundation to complaint and no voice to wrong. But who shall say be honest to one, but laugh at perfidy to another? Who shall wholly confine treachery to one sex, if to that sex he hold treachery no offence? So in thee, as in all thy tribe, there was a laxness of principle, an insincerity of faith, even unto men: thy friends, when occasion suited, thou couldst forsake; and thy luxuries were dearer to thee than justice to those who supplied them. Men who love and live for pleasure as thou, are usually good-natured; for their devotion to pleasure arises from the strength of their constitution, and the strength of their constitution preserves them from the irritations of weaker nerves. So went thou good-natured and often generous; and often with thy generosity didst thou unite a delicacy that showed thou hadst an original and a tender sympathy with men. But as those who pursue pleasure are above all others impatient of interruption, so to such as interfered with thy main pursuit thou didst testify a deep, a lasting, and a revengeful anger. Yet let not such vices of temperament be too severely judged! For to thee were given man's two most persuasive tempters, physical and moral,—Health and Power! Thy talents, such as they were,—and they were the talents of a man of the world,—misled rather than guided thee, for they gave thy mind that demi-philosophy, that indifference to exalted motives, which is generally found in a clever rake. Thy education was wretched; thou hadst a smattering of Horace, but thou couldst not write English, and thy letters betray that thou went wofully ignorant of logic. The fineness of thy taste has been exaggerated; thou wert unacquainted with the nobleness of simplicity; thy idea of a whole was grotesque and overloaded, and thy fancy in details was gaudy and meretricious. But thou hadst thy hand constantly in the public purse, and thou hadst plans and advisers forever before thee; more than all, thou didst find the houses in that neighbourhood wherein thou

didst build, so preternaturally hideous that thou didst require but little science to be less frightful in thy creations. If thou didst not improve thy native village and thy various homes with a solid, a lofty, and a noble taste, thou didst nevertheless very singularly improve. And thy posterity, in avoiding the faults of thy masonry, will be grateful for the effects of thy ambition. The same demi-philosophy which influenced thee in private life exercised a far benigner and happier power over thee in public. Thou wert not idly vexatious in vestries, nor ordinarily tyrannic in thy parish; if thou wert ever arbitrary it was only when thy pleasure was checked, or thy vanity wounded. At other times thou didst leave events to their legitimate course, so that in thy latter years thou wert justly popular in thy parish; and in the grave thy great good fortune will outshine thy few bad qualities, and men will say of thee with a kindly, not an erring judgment, "In private life he was not worse than the Rufers who came to this bar; in public life he was better than those who kept a public before him." Hark! those huzzas! what is the burden of that chorus? Oh, grateful and never time-serving Britons, have ye modified already for another the song ye made so solely in honour of Gentleman George: and must we, lest we lose the custom of the public and the good things of the tap-room,—roust we roar with throats yet hoarse with our fervour for the old words, our ardour for the new—

"Here's to Mariner Bill, God bless him!
God bless him!
God bless him!
Here 's to Mariner Bill, God bless him!"