

ЭДВАРД БУЛЬВЕР-ЛИТТОН

PELHAM — COMPLETE

Edward Bulwer-Lytton

Pelham — Complete

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Baron Edward Bulwer Lytton

Pelham — Complete

VOLUME I

CHAPTER I

Ou peut-on etre mieux qu'au sein de sa famille?

—*French Song.*

[Where can on be better than in the bosom of one's family?]

I am an only child. My father was the younger son of one of our oldest earls; my mother the dowerless daughter of a Scotch peer. Mr. Pelham was a moderate whig, and gave sumptuous dinners; Lady Frances was a woman of taste, and particularly fond of diamonds and old china.

Vulgar people know nothing of the necessities required in good society, and the credit they give is as short as their pedigree. Six years after my birth, there was an execution in our house. My mother was just setting off on a visit to the Duchess of D____; she declared it was impossible to go without her diamonds. The chief of the bailiffs declared it was impossible to trust them out of his sight. The matter was compromised—the bailiff went with my mother to C____, and was introduced as my tutor. “A man of singular merit,” whispered my mother, “but so shy!” Fortunately, the bailiff was abashed, and by losing his impudence he kept the secret. At the end of the week, the diamonds went to the jeweller’s, and Lady Frances wore paste.

I think it was about a month afterwards that a sixteenth cousin left my mother twenty thousand pounds. “It will just pay off our most importunate creditors, and equip me for Melton,” said Mr. Pelham.

“It will just redeem my diamonds, and refurnish the house,” said Lady Frances.

The latter alternative was chosen. My father went down to run his last horse at Newmarket, and my mother received nine hundred people in a Turkish tent. Both were equally fortunate, the Greek and the Turk; my father’s horse lost, in consequence of which he pocketed five thousand pounds; and my mother looked so charming as a Sultana, that Seymour Conway fell desperately in love with her.

Mr. Conway had just caused two divorces; and of course, all the women in London were dying for him—judge then of the pride which Lady Frances felt at his addresses. The end of the season was unusually dull, and my mother, after having looked over her list of engagements, and ascertained that she had none remaining worth staying for, agreed to elope with her new lover.

The carriage was at the end of the square. My mother, for the first time in her life, got up at six o’clock. Her foot was on the step, and her hand next to Mr. Conway’s heart, when she remembered that her favourite china monster and her French dog were left behind. She insisted on returning—re-entered the house, and was coming down stairs with one under each arm, when she was met by my father and two servants. My father’s valet had discovered the flight (I forget how), and awakened his master.

When my father was convinced of his loss, he called for his dressing-gown—searched the garret and the kitchen—looked in the maid’s drawers and the cellaret—and finally declared he was

distracted. I have heard that the servants were quite melted by his grief, and I do not doubt it in the least, for he was always celebrated for his skill in private theatricals. He was just retiring to vent his grief in his dressing-room, when he met my mother. It must altogether have been an awkward rencontre, and, indeed, for my father, a remarkably unfortunate occurrence; for Seymour Conway was immensely rich, and the damages would, no doubt, have been proportionably high. Had they met each other alone, the affair might easily have been settled, and Lady Frances gone off in tranquillity;—those d—d servants are always in the way!

I have, however, often thought that it was better for me that the affair ended thus,—as I know, from many instances, that it is frequently exceedingly inconvenient to have one's mother divorced.

I have observed that the distinguishing trait of people accustomed to good society, is a calm, imperturbable quiet, which pervades all their actions and habits, from the greatest to the least: they eat in quiet, move in quiet, live in quiet, and lose their wife, or even their money, in quiet; while low persons cannot take up either a spoon or an affront without making such an amazing noise about it. To render this observation good, and to return to the intended elopement, nothing farther was said upon that event. My father introduced Conway to Brookes's, and invited him to dinner twice a week for a whole twelvemonth.

Not long after this occurrence, by the death of my grandfather, my uncle succeeded to the title and estates of the family. He was, as people justly observed, rather an odd man: built schools for peasants, forgave poachers, and diminished his farmers' rents; indeed, on account of these and similar eccentricities, he was thought a fool by some, and a madman by others. However, he was not quite destitute of natural feeling; for he paid my father's debts, and established us in the secure enjoyment of our former splendour. But this piece of generosity, or justice, was done in the most unhandsome manner; he obtained a promise from my father to retire from Brookes's, and relinquish the turf; and he prevailed upon my mother to take an aversion to diamonds, and an indifference to china monsters.

CHAPTER II

*Tell arts they have no soundness,
But vary by esteeming;
Tell schools they want profoundness,
And stand too much on seeming.
If arts and schools reply,
Give arts and schools the lie.*

—*The Soul's Errand.*

At ten years old I went to Eton. I had been educated till that period by my mother, who, being distantly related to Lord ——, (who had published “Hints upon the Culinary Art”), imagined she possessed an hereditary claim to literary distinction. History was her great forte; for she had read all the historical romances of the day, and history accordingly I had been carefully taught.

I think at this moment I see my mother before me, reclining on her sofa, and repeating to me some story about Queen Elizabeth and Lord Essex; then telling me, in a languid voice, as she sank back with the exertion, of the blessings of a literary taste, and admonishing me never to read above half an hour at a time for fear of losing my health.

Well, to Eton I went; and the second day I had been there, I was half killed for refusing, with all the pride of a Pelham, to wash tea-cups. I was rescued from the clutches of my tyrant by a boy not much bigger than myself, but reckoned the best fighter, for his size, in the whole school. His name was Reginald Glanville: from that period, we became inseparable, and our friendship lasted all the time he stayed at Eton, which was within a year of my own departure for Cambridge.

His father was a baronet, of a very ancient and wealthy family; and his mother was a woman of some talent and more ambition. She made her house one of the most recherchee in London. Seldom seen at large assemblies, she was eagerly sought after in the well winnowed soirees of the elect. Her wealth, great as it was, seemed the least prominent ingredient of her establishment. There was in it no uncalled for ostentation—no purse-proud vulgarity—no cringing to great, and no patronizing condescension to little people; even the Sunday newspapers could not find fault with her, and the querulous wives of younger brothers could only sneer and be silent.

“It is an excellent connexion,” said my mother, when I told her of my friendship with Reginald Glanville, “and will be of more use to you than many of greater apparent consequence. Remember, my dear, that in all the friends you make at present, you look to the advantage you can derive from them hereafter; that is what we call knowledge of the world, and it is to get the knowledge of the world that you are sent to a public school.”

I think, however, to my shame, that notwithstanding my mother's instructions, very few prudential considerations were mingled with my friendship for Reginald Glanville. I loved him with a warmth of attachment, which has since surprised even myself.

He was of a very singular character: he used to wander by the river in the bright days of summer, when all else were at play, without any companion but his own thoughts; and these were tinged, even at that early age, with a deep and impassioned melancholy. He was so reserved in his manner, that it was looked upon as coldness or pride, and was repaid as such by a pretty general dislike. Yet to those he loved, no one could be more open and warm; more watchful to gratify others, more indifferent to gratification for himself: an utter absence of all selfishness, and an eager and active benevolence were indeed the distinguishing traits of his character. I have seen him endure with a careless goodnature the most provoking affronts from boys much less than himself; but directly I, or any other of his immediate friends, was injured or aggrieved, his anger was almost implacable. Although he was of

a slight frame, yet early exercise had brought strength to his muscles, and activity to his limbs; and his skill in all athletic exercises whenever (which was but rarely) he deigned to share them, gave alike confidence and success to whatever enterprise his lion-like courage tempted him to dare.

Such, briefly and imperfectly sketched, was the character of Reginald Glanville—the one, who of all my early companions differed the most from myself; yet the one whom I loved the most, and the one whose future destiny was the most intertwined with my own.

I was in the head class when I left Eton. As I was reckoned an uncommonly well-educated boy, it may not be ungratifying to the admirers of the present system of education to pause here for a moment, and recal what I then knew. I could make twenty Latin verses in half an hour; I could construe, without an English translation, all the easy Latin authors, and many of the difficult ones, with it: I could read Greek fluently, and even translate it though the medium of a Latin version at the bottom of the page. I was thought exceedingly clever, for I had only been eight years acquiring all this fund of information, which, as one can never recal it in the world, you have every right to suppose that I had entirely forgotten before I was five and twenty. As I was never taught a syllable of English during this period; as when I once attempted to read Pope's poems, out of school hours, I was laughed at, and called "a sap;" as my mother, when I went to school, renounced her own instructions; and as, whatever school-masters may think to the contrary, one learns nothing now-a-days by inspiration: so of everything which relates to English literature, English laws, and English history (with the exception of the said story of Queen Elizabeth and Lord Essex,) you have the same right to suppose that I was, at the age of eighteen, when I left Eton, in the profoundest ignorance.

At this age, I was transplanted to Cambridge, where I bloomed for two years in the blue and silver of a fellow commoner of Trinity. At the end of that time (being of royal descent) I became entitled to an honorary degree. I suppose the term is in contradistinction to an honourable degree, which is obtained by pale men in spectacles and cotton stockings, after thirty-six months of intense application.

I do not exactly remember how I spent my time at Cambridge. I had a piano-forte in my room, and a private billiard-room at a village two miles off; and between these resources, I managed to improve my mind more than could reasonably have been expected. To say truth, the whole place reeked with vulgarity. The men drank beer by the gallon, and eat cheese by the hundred weight—wore jockey-cut coats, and talked slang—rode for wagers, and swore when they lost—smoked in your face, and expectorated on the floor. Their proudest glory was to drive the mail—their mightiest exploit to box with the coachman—their most delicate amour to leer at the barmaid.

It will be believed, that I felt little regret in quitting companions of this description. I went to take leave of our college tutor. "Mr. Pelham," said he, affectionately squeezing me by the hand, "your conduct has been most exemplary; you have not walked wantonly over the college grassplats, nor set your dog at the proctor—nor driven tandems by day, nor broken lamps by night—nor entered the chapel in order to display your intoxication—nor the lecture-room, in order to caricature the professors. This is the general behaviour of young men of family and fortune; but it has not been your's. Sir, you have been an honour to your college."

Thus closed my academical career. He who does not allow that it passed creditably to my teachers, profitably to myself, and beneficially to the world, is a narrow-minded and illiterate man, who knows nothing of the advantages of modern education.

CHAPTER III

*Thus does a false ambition rule us,
Thus pomp delude, and folly fool us.*

—*Shenstone.*

An open house, haunted with great resort.

—*Bishop Hall's Satires.*

I left Cambridge in a very weak state of health; and as nobody had yet come to London, I accepted the invitation of Sir Lionel Garrett to pay him a visit at his country seat. Accordingly, one raw winter's day, full of the hopes of the reviving influence of air and exercise, I found myself carefully packed up in three great coats, and on the high road to Garrett Park.

Sir Lionel Garrett was a character very common in England, and, in describing him, I describe the whole species. He was of an ancient family, and his ancestors had for centuries resided on their estates in Norfolk. Sir Lionel, who came to his majority and his fortune at the same time, went up to London at the age of twenty-one, a raw, uncouth sort of young man, in a green coat and lank hair. His friends in town were of that set whose members are above ton, whenever they do not grasp at its possession, but who, whenever they do, lose at once their aim and their equilibrium, and fall immeasurably below it. I mean that set which I call "the respectable," consisting of old peers of an old school; country gentlemen, who still disdain not to love their wine and to hate the French; generals who have served in the army; elder brothers who succeed to something besides a mortgage; and younger brothers who do not mistake their capital for their income. To this set you may add the whole of the baronetage—for I have remarked that baronets hang together like bees or Scotchmen; and if I go to a baronet's house, and speak to some one whom I have not the happiness to know, I always say "Sir John—."

It was no wonder, then, that to this set belonged Sir Lionel Garrett—no more the youth in a green coat and lank hair, but pinched in, and curled out—abounding in horses and whiskers—dancing all night—lounging all day—the favourite of the old ladies, the Philander of the young.

One unfortunate evening Sir Lionel Garrett was introduced to the celebrated Duchess of D. From that moment his head was turned. Before then, he had always imagined that he was somebody—that he was Sir Lionel Garrett, with a good-looking person and eight thousand a-year; he now knew that he was nobody unless he went to Lady G.'s and unless he bowed to Lady S. Disdaining all importance derived from himself, it became absolutely necessary to his happiness, that all his importance should be derived solely from his acquaintance with others. He cared not a straw that he was a man of fortune, of family, of consequence; he must be a man of ton; or he was an atom, a nonentity, a very worm, and no man. No lawyer at Gray's Inn, no galley slave at the oar, ever worked so hard at his task as Sir Lionel Garrett at his. Ton, to a single man, is a thing attainable enough. Sir Lionel was just gaining the envied distinction, when he saw, courted, and married Lady Harriett Woodstock.

His new wife was of a modern and not very rich family, and striving like Sir Lionel for the notoriety of fashion; but of this struggle he was ignorant. He saw her admitted into good society—he imagined she commanded it; she was a hanger on—he believed she was a leader. Lady Harriett was crafty and twenty-four—had no objection to be married, nor to change the name of Woodstock for Garrett. She kept up the baronet's mistake till it was too late to repair it.

Marriage did not bring Sir Lionel wisdom. His wife was of the same turn of mind as himself: they might have been great people in the country—they preferred being little people in town. They might have chosen friends among persons of respectability and rank—they preferred being chosen as acquaintance by persons of ton. Society was their being's end and aim, and the only thing which brought them pleasure was the pain of attaining it. Did I not say truly that I would describe individuals of a common species? Is there one who reads this, who does not recognize that overflowing class of the English population, whose members would conceive it an insult to be thought of sufficient rank to be respectable for what they are?—who take it as an honour that they are made by their acquaintance?—who renounce the ease of living for themselves, for the trouble of living for persons who care not a pin for their existence—who are wretched if they are not dictated to by others—and who toil, groan, travail, through the whole course of life, in order to forfeit their independence?

I arrived at Garrett Park just time enough to dress for dinner. As I was descending the stairs after having performed that ceremony, I heard my own name pronounced by a very soft, lisping voice, “Henry Pelham! dear, what a pretty name. Is he handsome?”

“Rather distingue than handsome,” was the unsatisfactory reply, couched in a slow, pompous accent, which I immediately recognized to belong to Lady Harriett Garrett.

“Can we make something of him?” resumed the first voice.

“Something!” said Lady Harriett, indignantly; “he will be Lord Glenmorris! and he is son to Lady Frances Pelham.”

“Ah,” said the lisper, carelessly; “but can he write poetry, and play proverbes?”

“No, Lady Harriett,” said I, advancing; “but permit me, through you, to assure Lady Nelthorpe that he can admire those who do.”

“So you know me then?” said the lisper: “I see we shall be excellent friends;” and disengaging herself from Lady Harriett, she took my arm, and began discussing persons and things, poetry and china, French plays and music, till I found myself beside her at dinner, and most assiduously endeavouring to silence her by the superior engrossments of a bechamelle de poisson.

I took the opportunity of the pause, to survey the little circle of which Lady Harriett was the centre. In the first place, there was Mr. Davison, a great political economist, a short, dark, corpulent gentleman, with a quiet, serene, sleepy countenance, which put me exceedingly in mind of my grandmother's arm-chair; beside him was a quick, sharp little woman, all sparkle and bustle, glancing a small, grey, prying eye round the table, with a most restless activity: this, as Lady Nelthorpe afterwards informed me, was a Miss Trafford, an excellent person for a Christmas in the country, whom every body was dying to have: she was an admirable mimic, an admirable actress, and an admirable reciter; made poetry and shoes, and told fortunes by the cards, which came actually true.

There was also Mr. Wormwood, the noli-me-tangere of literary lions—an author who sowed his conversation not with flowers but thorns. Nobody could accuse him of the flattery generally imputed to his species; through the course of a long and varied life, he had never once been known to say a civil thing. He was too much disliked not to be recherche; whatever is once notorious, even for being disagreeable, is sure to be courted in England. Opposite to him sat the really clever, and affectedly pedantic Lord Vincent, one of those persons who have been “promising young men” all their lives; who are found till four o'clock in the afternoon in a dressing-gown, with a quarto before them; who go down into the country for six weeks every session, to cram an impromptu reply; and who always have a work in the press which is never to be published.

Lady Nelthorpe herself I had frequently seen. She had some reputation for talent, was exceedingly affected, wrote poetry in albums, ridiculed her husband, who was a fox hunter, and had a great penchant pour les beaux arts et les beaux hommes.

There were four or five others of the unknown vulgar, younger brothers, who were good shots and bad matches; elderly ladies, who lived in Baker-street, and liked long whist; and young ones, who never took wine, and said “Sir.”

I must, however, among this number, except the beautiful Lady Roseville, the most fascinating woman, perhaps, of the day. She was evidently the great person there, and, indeed, among all people who paid due deference to ton, was always sure to be so every where. I have never seen but one person more beautiful. Her eyes were of the deepest blue; her complexion of the most delicate carnation; her hair of the richest auburn: nor could even Mr. Wormwood detect the smallest fault in the rounded yet slender symmetry of her figure.

Although not above twenty-five, she was in that state in which alone a woman ceases to be a dependant—widowhood. Lord Roseville, who had been dead about two years, had not survived their marriage many months; that period was, however, sufficiently long to allow him to appreciate her excellence, and to testify his sense of it: the whole of his unentailed property, which was very large, he bequeathed to her.

She was very fond of the society of literati, though without the pretence of belonging to their order. But her manners constituted her chief attraction: while they were utterly different from those of every one else, you could not, in the least minutiae, discover in what the difference consisted: this is, in my opinion, the real test of perfect breeding. While you are enchanted with the effect, it should possess so little prominence and peculiarity, that you should never be able to guess the cause.

“Pray,” said Lord Vincent to Mr. Wormwood, “have you been to P—this year?”

“No,” was the answer.

“I have, my lord,” said Miss Trafford, who never lost an opportunity of slipping in a word.

“Well, and did they make you sleep, as usual, at the Crown, with the same eternal excuse, after having brought you fifty miles from town, of small house—no beds—all engaged—inn close by? Ah, never shall I forget that inn, with its royal name, and its hard beds—

“Uneasy sleeps a head beneath the Crown!”

“Ha, ha! Excellent!” cried Miss Trafford, who was always the first in at the death of a pun. “Yes, indeed they did: poor old Lord Belton, with his rheumatism; and that immense General Grant, with his asthma; together with three ‘single men,’ and myself, were safely conveyed to that asylum for the destitute.”

“Ah! Grant, Grant!” said Lord Vincent, eagerly, who saw another opportunity of whipping in a pun. “He slept there also the same night I did; and when I saw his unwieldy person waddling out of the door the next morning, I said to Temple, ‘Well, that’s the largest Grant I ever saw from the Crown.’” [Note: It was from Mr. J. Smith that Lord Vincent purloined this pun.]

“Very good,” said Wormwood, gravely. “I declare, Vincent, you are growing quite witty. Do you remember Jekyl? Poor fellow, what a really good punster he was—not agreeable though—particularly at dinner—no punsters are. Mr. Davison, what is that dish next to you?”

Mr. Davison was a great gourmand: “*Salmi de perdreaux aux truffes*,” replied the political economist.

“Truffles!” said Wormwood, “have you been eating any?”

“Yes,” said Davison, with unusual energy, “and they are the best I have tasted for a long time.”

“Very likely,” said Wormwood, with a dejected air. “I am particularly fond of them, but I dare not touch one—truffles are so very apoplectic—you, I make no doubt, may eat them in safety.”

Wormwood was a tall, meagre man, with a neck a yard long. Davison was, as I have said, short and fat, and made without any apparent neck at all—only head and shoulders, like a cod-fish.

Poor Mr. Davison turned perfectly white; he fidgeted about in his chair; cast a look of the most deadly fear and aversion at the fatal dish he had been so attentive to before; and, muttering “apoplectic,” closed his lips, and did not open them again all dinner-time.

Mr. Wormwood’s object was effected. Two people were silenced and uncomfortable, and a sort of mist hung over the spirits of the whole party. The dinner went on and off, like all other dinners; the ladies retired, and the men drank, and talked indecorums. Mr. Davison left the room first, in order to look out the word “truffle,” in the Encyclopaedia; and Lord Vincent and I went next, “lest

(as my companion characteristically observed) that d—d Wormwood should, if we stayed a moment longer, ‘send us weeping to our beds.’”

CHAPTER IV

Oh! la belle chose que la Poste!

—Lettres de Sevigne.

Ay—but who is it?

—As you Like it.

I had mentioned to my mother my intended visit to Garrett Park, and the second day after my arrival there came the following letter:—

“My dear Henry,

“I was very glad to hear you were rather better than you had been. I trust you will take great care of yourself. I think flannel waistcoats might be advisable; and, by-the-by, they are very good for the complexion. Apropos of the complexion: I did not like that green coat you wore when I last saw you—you look best in black—which is a great compliment, for people must be very distingue in appearance, in order to do so.

“You know, my dear, that those Garretts are in themselves any thing but unexceptionable; you will, therefore, take care not to be too intimate; it is, however, a very good house: all you meet there are worth knowing, for one thing or the other. Remember, Henry, that the acquaintance (not the friends) of second or third-rate people are always sure to be good: they are not independent enough to receive whom they like—their whole rank is in their guests: you may be also sure that the menage will, in outward appearance at least, be quite *comme il faut*, and for the same reason. Gain as much knowledge de l’art culinaire as you can: it is an accomplishment absolutely necessary. You may also pick up a little acquaintance with metaphysics, if you have any opportunity; that sort of thing is a good deal talked about just at present.

“I hear Lady Roseville is at Garrett Park. You must be particularly attentive to her; you will probably now have an opportunity de faire votre cour that may never again happen. In London, she is so much surrounded by all, that she is quite inaccessible to one; besides, there you will have so many rivals. Without flattery to you, I take it for granted, that you are the best looking and most agreeable person at Garrett Park, and it will, therefore, be a most unpardonable fault if you do not make Lady Roseville of the same opinion. Nothing, my dear son, is like a *liaison* (quite innocent of course) with a woman of celebrity in the world. In marriage a man lowers a woman to his own rank; in an *affaire du coeur* he raises himself to her’s. I need not, I am sure, after what I have said, press this point any further.

“Write to me and inform me of all your proceedings. If you mention the people who are at Garrett Park, I can tell you the proper line of conduct to pursue with each.

“I am sure that I need not add that I have nothing but your real good at heart, and that I am your very affectionate mother,

“Frances Pelham.

“P.S. Never talk much to young men—remember that it is the women who make a reputation in society.”

“Well,” said I, when I had read this letter, and adjusted my best curl, “my mother is very right, and so now for Lady Roseville.”

I went down stairs to breakfast. Miss Trafford and Lady Nelthorpe were in the room talking with great interest, and, on Miss Trafford’s part, with still greater vehemence.

“So handsome,” said Lady Nelthorpe, as I approached.

“Are you talking of me?” said I.

“Oh, you vanity of vanities!” was the answer. “No, we were speaking of a very romantic adventure which has happened to Miss Trafford and myself, and disputing about the hero of it. Miss Trafford declares he is frightful; I say that he is beautiful. Now, you know, Mr. Pelham, as to you—” “There can,” interrupted I, “be but one opinion—but the adventure?”

“Is this!” cried Miss Trafford, in a great fright, lest Lady Nelthorpe should, by speaking first, have the pleasure of the narration.—“We were walking, two or three days ago, by the sea-side, picking up shells and talking about the ‘Corsair,’ when a large fierce—”

“Man!” interrupted I.

“No, dog, (renewed Miss Trafford) flew suddenly out of a cave, under a rock, and began growling at dear Lady Nelthorpe and me, in the most savage manner imaginable. He would certainly have torn us to pieces if a very tall—” “Not so very tall either,” said Lady Nelthorpe.

“Dear, how you interrupt one,” said Miss Trafford, pettishly; “well, a very short man, then, wrapped up in a cloak—”

“In a great coat,” drawled Lady Nelthorpe. Miss Trafford went on without noticing the emendation,—“had not with incredible rapidity sprung down the rock and—”

“Called him off,” said Lady Nelthorpe.

“Yes, called him off,” pursued Miss Trafford, looking round for the necessary symptoms of our wonder at this very extraordinary incident.

“What is the most remarkable,” said Lady Nelthorpe, “is, that though he seemed from his dress and appearance to be really a gentleman, he never stayed to ask if we were alarmed or hurt—scarcely even looked at us—” (“I don’t wonder at that!” said Mr. Wormwood, who, with Lord Vincent, had just entered the room;—“and vanished among the rocks as suddenly as he had appeared.”

“Oh, you’ve seen that fellow, have you?” said Lord Vincent: “so have I, and a devilish queer looking person he is,—”

“The balls of his broad eyes roll’d in his head, And glar’d betwixt a yellow and a red; He looked a lion with a gloomy stare, And o’er his eyebrows hung his matted hair.”

“Well remembered, and better applied—eh, Mr. Pelham!”

“Really,” said I, “I am not able to judge of the application, since I have not seen the hero.”

“Oh! it’s admirable,” said Miss Trafford, “just the description I should have given of him in prose. But pray, where, when, and how did you see him?”

“Your question is religiously mysterious, tria juncta in uno,” replied Vincent; “but I will answer it with the simplicity of a Quaker. The other evening I was coming home from one of Sir Lionel’s preserves, and had sent the keeper on before in order more undisturbedly to—”

“Con witticisms for dinner,” said Wormwood.

“To make out the meaning of Mr. Wormwood’s last work,” continued Lord Vincent. “My shortest way lay through that churchyard about a mile hence, which is such a lion in this ugly part of the country, because it has three thistles and a tree. Just as I got there, I saw a man suddenly rise from the earth, where he appeared to have been lying; he stood still for a moment, and then (evidently not perceiving me) raised his clasped hands to Heaven, and muttered some words I was not able distinctly to hear. As I approached nearer to him which I did with no very pleasant sensations, a large black dog, which, till then, had remained couchant, sprung towards me with a loud growl,

“‘Sonat hic de nare canina Litera,’

as Persius has it. I was too terrified to move—

“‘Obstupui—steteruntque comae—’

and I should most infallibly have been converted into dog’s meat, if our mutual acquaintance had not started from his reverie, called his dog by the very appropriate name of Terror, and then slouching his hat over his face, passed rapidly by me, dog and all. I did not recover the fright for an

hour and a quarter. I walked—ye gods, how I did walk—no wonder, by the by, that I mended my pace, for as Pliny says truly: ‘Timor est emendator asperrimus.’”

Mr. Wormwood had been very impatient during this recital, preparing an attack upon Lord Vincent, when Mr. Davison entering suddenly, diverted the assault.

“Good God!” said Wormwood, dropping his roll, “how very ill you look to-day, Mr. Davison; face flushed—veins swelled—oh, those horrid truffles! Miss Trafford, I’ll trouble you for the salt.”

CHAPTER V

*Be she fairer than the day,
Or the flowery meads in May;
If she be not so to me,
What care I how fair she be?*

—George Withers.

It was a great pity, so it was, That villainous saltpetre should be digged Out of the bowels of the harmless earth, Which many a good tall fellow had destroyed.—First Part of King Henry IV.

Several days passed. I had taken particular pains to ingratiate myself with Lady Roseville, and so far as common acquaintance went, I had no reason to be dissatisfied with my success. Any thing else, I soon discovered, notwithstanding my vanity, (which made no inconsiderable part in the composition of Henry Pelham) was quite out of the question. Her mind was wholly of a different mould from my own. She was like a being, not perhaps of a better, but of another world than myself; we had not one thought or opinion in common; we looked upon things with a totally different vision; I was soon convinced that she was of a nature exactly contrary to what was generally believed—she was any thing but the mere mechanical woman of the world. She possessed great sensibility, and even romance of temper, strong passions, and still stronger imagination; but over all these deeper recesses of her character, the extreme softness and languor of her manners, threw a veil which no superficial observer could penetrate. There were times when I could believe that she was inwardly restless and unhappy; but she was too well versed in the arts of concealment, to suffer such an appearance to be more than momentary.

I must own that I consoled myself very easily for my want, in this particular instance, of that usual good fortune which attends me aupres des dames; the fact was, that I had another object in pursuit. All the men at Sir Lionel Garrett's were keen sportsmen. Now, shooting is an amusement I was never particularly partial to. I was first disgusted with that species of rational recreation at a battue, where, instead of bagging anything, I was nearly bagged, having been inserted, like wine in an ice pail, in a wet ditch for three hours, during which time my hat had been twice shot at for a pheasant, and my leather gaiters once for a hare; and to crown all, when these several mistakes were discovered, my intended exterminators, instead of apologizing for having shot at me, were quite disappointed at having missed.

Seriously, that same shooting is a most barbarous amusement, only fit for majors in the army, and royal dukes, and that sort of people; the mere walking is bad enough, but embarrassing one's arms moreover, with a gun, and one's legs with turnip tops, exposing oneself to the mercy of bad shots and the atrocity of good, seems to me only a state of painful fatigue, enlivened by the probability of being killed.

This digression is meant to signify, that I never joined the single men and double Mantons that went in and off among Sir Lionel Garrett's preserves. I used, instead, to take long walks by myself, and found, like virtue, my own reward, in the additional health and strength these diurnal exertions produced me.

One morning, chance threw into my way une bonne fortune, which I took care to improve. From that time the family of a farmer Sinclair, (one of Sir Lionel's tenants) was alarmed by strange and supernatural noises: one apartment in especial, occupied by a female member of the household, was allowed, even by the clerk of the parish, a very bold man, and a bit of a sceptic, to be haunted; the windows of that chamber were wont to open and shut, thin airy voices confabulate therein, and dark shapes hover thereout, long after the fair occupant had, with the rest of the family, retired to repose.

But the most unaccountable thing was the fatality which attended me, and seemed to mark me out, nolens volens, for an untimely death. I, who had so carefully kept out of the way of gunpowder as a sportsman, very narrowly escaped being twice shot as a ghost. This was but a poor reward for a walk more than a mile long, in nights by no means of cloudless climes and starry skies; accordingly I resolved to “give up the ghost” in earnest rather than in metaphor, and to pay my last visit and adieus to the mansion of Farmer Sinclair. The night on which I executed this resolve was rather memorable in my future history.

The rain had fallen so heavily during the day, as to render the road to the house almost impassable, and when it was time to leave, I inquired with very considerable emotion, whether there was not an easier way to return. The answer was satisfactory, and my last nocturnal visit at Farmer Sinclair’s concluded.

CHAPTER VI

Why sleeps he not, when others are at rest?

—*Byron.*

According to the explanation I had received, the road I was now to pursue was somewhat longer, but much better, than that which I generally took. It was to lead me home through the churchyard of—, the same, by the by, which Lord Vincent had particularized in his anecdote of the mysterious stranger. The night was clear, but windy: there were a few light clouds passing rapidly over the moon, which was at her full, and shone through the frosty air, with all that cold and transparent brightness so peculiar to our northern winters. I walked briskly on till I came to the churchyard; I could not then help pausing (notwithstanding my total deficiency in all romance) to look for a few moments at the exceeding beauty of the scene around me. The church itself was extremely old, and stood alone and grey, in the rude simplicity of the earliest form of gothic architecture: two large dark yew-trees drooped on each side over tombs, which from their size and decorations, appeared to be the last possession of some quondam lords of the soil. To the left, the ground was skirted by a thick and luxuriant copse of evergreens, in the front of which stood one tall, naked oak, stern and leafless, a very token of desolation and decay; there were but few grave stones scattered about, and these were, for the most part, hidden by the long wild grass which wreathed and climbed round them. Over all, the blue skies and still moon shed that solemn light, the effect of which, either on the scene or the feelings, it is so impossible to describe.

I was just about to renew my walk, when a tall, dark figure, wrapped up, like myself, in a large French cloak, passed slowly along from the other side of the church, and paused by the copse I have before mentioned. I was shrouded at that moment from his sight by one of the yew trees; he stood still only for a few moments; he then flung himself upon the earth, and sobbed, audibly even at the spot where I was standing. I was in doubt whether to wait longer or to proceed; my way lay just by him, and it might be dangerous to interrupt so substantial an apparition. However, my curiosity was excited, and my feet were half frozen, two cogent reasons for proceeding; and, to say truth, I was never very much frightened by any thing dead or alive.

Accordingly I left my obscurity, and walked slowly onwards. I had not got above three paces before the figure rose, and stood erect and motionless before me. His hat had fallen off, and the moon shone full upon his countenance; it was not the wild expression of intense anguish which dwelt on those hueless and sunken features; nor their quick change to ferocity and defiance, as his eyes fell upon me, which made me start back and feel my heart stand still! Notwithstanding the fearful ravages graven in that countenance, then so brilliant with the graces of boyhood, I recognized, at one glance, those still noble and chiselled features. It was Reginald Glanville who stood before me! I recovered myself instantly; I threw myself towards him, and called him by his name. He turned hastily; but I would not suffer him to escape; I put my hand upon his arm, and drew him towards me. “Glanville!” I exclaimed, “it is I! it is your old—old friend, Henry Pelham. Good God! have I met you at last, and in such a scene?”

Glanville shook me from him in an instant, covered his face with his hands, and sunk down with one wild cry, which went fearfully through that still place, upon the spot from which he had but just risen. I knelt beside him; I took his hand; I spoke to him in every endearing term that I could think of; and roused and excited as my feelings were, by so strange and sudden a meeting, I felt my tears involuntarily falling over the hand which I held in my own. Glanville turned; he looked at me for one moment, as if fully to recognize me: and then throwing himself in my arms, wept like a child.

It was but for a few minutes that this weakness lasted; he rose suddenly—the whole expression of his countenance was changed—the tears still rolled in large drops down his cheeks, but the proud,

stern character which the features had assumed, seemed to deny the feelings which that feminine weakness had betrayed.

“Pelham,” he said, “you have seen me thus; I had hoped that no living eye would—this is the last time in which I shall indulge this folly. God bless you—we shall meet again—and this night shall then seem to you like a dream.”

I would have answered, but he turned swiftly, passed in one moment through the copse, and in the next had utterly disappeared.

CHAPTER VII

*You reach a chilling chamber, where you dread
Damps.*

—Crabbe's Borough.

I could not sleep the whole of that night, and the next morning, I set off early, with the resolution of discovering where Glanville had taken up his abode; it was evident from his having been so frequently seen, that it must be in the immediate neighbourhood.

I went first to Farmer Sinclair's; they had often remarked him, but could give me no other information. I then proceeded towards the coast; there was a small public house belonging to Sir Lionel close by the sea shore; never had I seen a more bleak and dreary prospect than that which stretched for miles around this miserable cabaret. How an innkeeper could live there is a mystery to me at this day—I should have imagined it a spot upon which anything but a sea-gull or a Scotchman would have starved.

"Just the sort of place, however," thought I, "to hear something of Glanville." I went into the house; I inquired, and heard that a strange gentleman had been lodging for the last two or three weeks at a cottage about a mile further up the coast. Thither I bent my steps; and after having met two crows, and one officer on the preventive service, I arrived safely at my new destination.

It was a house very little better, in outward appearance, than the wretched hut I had just left, for I observe in all situations, and in all houses, that "the public" is not too well served. The situation was equally lonely and desolate; the house, which belonged to an individual, half fisherman and half smuggler, stood in a sort of bay, between two tall, rugged, black cliffs. Before the door hung various nets, to dry beneath the genial warmth of a winter's sun; and a broken boat, with its keel uppermost, furnished an admirable habitation for a hen and her family, who appeared to receive en pension, an old clerico-bachelor-looking raven. I cast a suspicious glance at the last-mentioned personage, which hopped towards me with a very hostile appearance, and entered the threshold with a more rapid step, in consequence of sundry apprehensions of a premeditated assault.

"I understand," said I, to an old, dried, brown female, who looked like a resuscitated red-herring, "that a gentleman is lodging here."

"No, Sir," was the answer: "he left us this morning."

The reply came upon me like a shower bath; I was both chilled and stunned by so unexpected a shock. The old woman, on my renewing my inquiries, took me up stairs, to a small, wretched room, to which the damps literally clung. In one corner was a flock-bed, still unmade, and opposite to it, a three-legged stool, a chair, and an antique carved oak table, a donation perhaps from some squire in the neighbourhood; on this last were scattered fragments of writing paper, a cracked cup half full of ink, a pen, and a broken ramrod. As I mechanically took up the latter, the woman said, in a charming patois, which I shall translate, since I cannot do justice to the original: "The gentleman, Sir, said he came here for a few weeks to shoot; he brought a gun, a large dog, and a small portmanteau. He used to spend all the mornings in the fens, though he must have been but a poor shot, for he seldom brought home anything; and we fear, Sir, that he was rather out of his mind, for he used to go out alone at night, and stay sometimes till morning. However, he was quite quiet, and behaved to us like a gentleman; so it was no business of ours, only my husband does think—"

"Pray," interrupted I, "why did he leave you so suddenly?"

“Lord, Sir, I don’t know! but he told us for several days past that he should not stay over the week, and so we were not surprised when he left us this morning at seven o’clock. Poor gentleman, my heart bled for him when I saw him look so pale and ill.”

And here I did see the good woman’s eyes fill with tears: but she wiped them away, and took advantage of the additional persuasion they gave to her natural whine to say, “If, Sir, you know of any young gentleman who likes fen-shooting, and wants a nice, pretty, quiet apartment—”

“I will certainly recommend this,” said I.

“You see it at present,” rejoined the landlady, “quite in a litter like: but it is really a sweet place in summer.”

“Charming,” said I, with a cold shiver, hurrying down the stairs, with a pain in my ear, and the rheumatism in my shoulder.

“And this,” thought I, “was Glanville’s residence for nearly a month! I wonder he did not exhale into a vapour, or moisten into a green damp.”

I went home by the churchyard. I paused on the spot where I had last seen him. A small gravestone rose over the mound of earth on which he had thrown himself; it was perfectly simple. The date of the year and month (which showed that many weeks had not elapsed since the death of the deceased) and the initials G. D. were all that was engraved upon the stone. Beside this tomb was one of a more pompous description, to the memory of a Mrs. Douglas, which had with the simple tumulus nothing in common, unless the initial letter of the surname corresponding with the latter initial on the neighbouring gravestone, might authorize any connection between them, not supported by that similitude of style usually found in the cenotaphs of the same family: the one, indeed, might have covered the grave of a humble villager—the other, the resting-place of the lady of the manor.

I found, therefore, no clue for the labyrinth of surmise: and I went home, more vexed and disappointed with my day’s expedition than I liked to acknowledge to myself.

Lord Vincent met me in the hall. “Delighted to see you,” said he, “I have just been to—, (the nearest town) in order to discover what sort of savages abide there. Great preparations for a ball—all the tallow candles in the town are bespoken—and I heard a most uncivilized fiddle,

“Twang short and sharp, like the shrill swallow’s cry.”

The one milliner’s shop was full of fat squiresses, buying muslin ammunition, to make the ball go off; and the attics, even at four o’clock, were thronged with rubicund damsels, who were already, as Shakspeare says of waves in a storm,

“Curling their monstrous heads.”

CHAPTER VIII

Jusqu'au revoir le ciel vous tienne tous en joie.
—*Moliere.*

I was now pretty well tried of Garrett Park. Lady Roseville was going to H—t—d, where I also had an invitation. Lord Vincent meditated an excursion to Paris. Mr. Davison had already departed. Miss Trafford had been gone, God knows how long, and I was not at all disposed to be left, like “the last rose of summer,” in single blessedness at Garrett Park. Vincent, Wormwood, and myself, all agreed to leave on the same day.

The morning of our departure arrived. We sat down to breakfast as usual. Lord Vincent’s carriage was at the door; his groom was walking about his favourite saddle horse.

“A beautiful mare that is of your’s,” said I, carelessly looking at it, and reaching across the table to help myself to the *pate de foie gras*.

“Mare!” exclaimed the incorrigible punster, delighted with my mistake: “I thought that you would have been better acquainted with your *propria quoe maribus*.”

“Humph!” said Wormwood, “when I look at you I am always at least reminded of the *as in praoesenti*!”

Lord Vincent drew up and looked unutterable anger. Wormwood went on with his dry toast, and Lady Roseville, who that morning had, for a wonder, come down to breakfast, good naturedly took off the bear. Whether or not his ascetic nature was somewhat mollified by the soft smiles and softer voice of the beautiful countess, I cannot pretend to say; but he certainly entered into a conversation with her, not much rougher than that of a less gifted individual might have been. They talked of literature, Lord Byron, *converzaciones*, and Lydia White. [Note: Written before the death of that lady.]

“Miss White,” said Lady Roseville, “has not only the best command of language herself, but she gives language to other people. Dinner parties, usually so stupid, are, at her house, quite delightful. I have actually seen English people look happy, and one or two even almost natural.”

“Ah!” said Wormwood, “that is indeed rare. With us every thing is assumption. We are still exactly like the English suitor to Portia, in the Merchant of Venice. We take our doublet from one country, our hose from another, and our behaviour every where. Fashion with us is like the man in one of Le Sage’s novels, who was constantly changing his servants, and yet had but one suit of livery, which every new comer, whether he was tall or short, fat or thin, was obliged to wear. We adopt manners, however incongruous and ill suited to our nature, and thus we always seem awkward and constrained. But Lydia White’s soirees are indeed agreeable. I remember the last time I dined there we were six in number, and though we were not blessed with the company of Lord Vincent, the conversation was without ‘let or flaw.’ Every one, even S——, said good things.”

“Indeed!” cried Lord Vincent; “and pray, Mr. Wormwood, what did you say!”

“Why,” answered the poet, glancing with a significant sneer over Vincent’s somewhat inelegant person, “I thought of your lordship’s figure, and said—grace!”

“Hem—hem!—‘*Gratia malorum tam infida est quam ipsi*,’ as Pliny says,” muttered Lord Vincent, getting up hastily, and buttoning his coat.

I took the opportunity of the ensuing pause to approach Lady Roseville, and whisper my adieus. She was kind and even warm to me in returning them; and pressed me, with something marvellously like sincerity, to be sure to come and see her directly she returned to London. I soon discharged the duties of my remaining farewells, and in less than half an hour, was more than a mile distant from Garrett Park and its inhabitants. I can’t say that for one, who, like me, is fond of being made a great deal of, that there is any thing very delightful in those visits into the country. It may be all well enough for married people, who, from the mere fact of being married, are always entitled to

certain consideration, put—par exemple—into a bed-room, a little larger than a dog kennel, and accommodated with a looking-glass, that does not distort one's features like a paralytic stroke. But we single men suffer a plurality of evils and hard-ships, in entrusting ourselves to the casualties of rural hospitality. We are thrust up into any attic repository—exposed to the mercy of rats, and the incursions of swallows. Our lavations are performed in a cracked basin, and we are so far removed from human assistance, that our very bells sink into silence before they reach half way down the stairs. But two days before I left Garrett Park, I myself saw an enormous mouse run away with my almond paste, without any possible means of resisting the aggression. Oh! the hardships of a single man are beyond conception; and what is worse, the very misfortune of being single deprives one of all sympathy. “A single man can do this, and a single man ought to do that, and a single man may be put here, and a single man may be sent there,” are maxims that I have been in the habit of hearing constantly inculcated and never disputed during my whole life; and so, from our fare and treatment being coarse in all matters, they have at last grown to be all matters in course.

CHAPTER IX

Therefore to France.
—*Henry IV.*

I was rejoiced to find myself again in London. I went to my father's house in Grosvenor-square. All the family, viz. he and my mother, were down at H—t—d; and, malgre my aversion to the country, I thought I might venture as far as Lady S—'s for a couple of days. Accordingly, to H—t—d I went. That is really a noble house—such a hall—such a gallery. I found my mother in the drawing-room, admiring the picture of his late Majesty. She was leaning on the arm of a tall, fair young man. "Henry," said she, (introducing me to him) "do you remember your old schoolfellow, Lord George Clinton?"

"Perfectly," said I, (though I remembered nothing about him) and we shook hands in the most cordial manner imaginable. By the way, there is no greater bore than being called upon to recollect men, with whom one had been at school some ten years back. In the first place, if they were not in one's own set, one most likely scarcely knew them to speak to; and, in the second place, if they were in one's own set, they are sure to be entirely opposite to the nature we have since acquired: for I scarcely ever knew an instance of the companions of one's boyhood being agreeable to the tastes of one's manhood: a strong proof of the folly of common people, who send their sons to Eton and Harrow to form connections.

Clinton was on the eve of setting out upon his travels. His intention was to stay a year at Paris, and he was full of the blissful expectations the idea of that city had conjured up. We remained together all the evening, and took a prodigious fancy to one another. Long before I went to bed, he had perfectly inoculated me with his own ardour for continental adventures; and, indeed, I had half promised to accompany him. My mother, when I first told her of my travelling intentions, was in despair, but by degrees she grew reconciled to the idea.

"Your health will improve by a purer air," said she, "and your pronunciation of French is, at present, any thing but correct. Take care of yourself, therefore, my dear son, and pray lose no time in engaging Coulon as your maitre de danse."

My father gave me his blessing, and a check on his banker. Within three days I had arranged every thing with Clinton, and on the fourth, I returned with him to London. From thence we set off to Dover—embarked—dined, for the first time in our lives, on French ground—were astonished to find so little difference between the two countries, and still more so at hearing even the little children talk French so well [Note: See Addison's Travels for this idea.]—proceeded to Abbeville—there poor Clinton fell ill: for several days we were delayed in that abominable town, and then Clinton, by the advice of the doctors, returned to England. I went back with him as far as Dover, and then, impatient at my loss of time, took no rest, night or day, till I found myself at Paris.

Young, well-born, tolerably good-looking, and never utterly destitute of money, nor grudging whatever enjoyment it could produce, I entered Paris with the ability and the resolution to make the best of those beaux jours which so rapidly glide from our possession.

CHAPTER X

Seest thou how gayly my young maister goes?

—*Bishop Hall's Satires.*

Qui vit sans folie, n'est pas si sage qu'il croit.

—*La Rochefoucault.*

I lost no time in presenting my letters of introduction, and they were as quickly acknowledged by invitations to balls and dinners. Paris was full to excess, and of a better description of English than those who usually overflow that reservoir of the world. My first engagement was to dine with Lord and Lady Bennington, who were among the very few English intimate in the best French houses.

On entering Paris I had resolved to set up “a character;” for I was always of an ambitious nature, and desirous of being distinguished from the ordinary herd. After various cogitations as to the particular one I should assume, I thought nothing appeared more likely to be remarkable among men, and therefore pleasing to women, than an egregious coxcomb: accordingly I arranged my hair into ringlets, dressed myself with singular plainness and simplicity (a low person, by the by, would have done just the contrary), and putting on an air of exceeding languor, made my maiden appearance at Lord Bennington's. The party was small, and equally divided between French and English: the former had been all emigrants, and the conversation was chiefly in our own tongue.

I was placed, at dinner, next to Miss Paulding, an elderly young lady, of some notoriety at Paris, very clever, very talkative, and very conceited. A young, pale, ill-natured looking man, sat on her left hand; this was Mr. Aberton, one of the attaches.

“Dear me!” said Miss Paulding, “what a pretty chain that is of your's, Mr. Aberton.”

“Yes,” said the attache, “I know it must be pretty, for I got it at Brequet's, with the watch.” (How common people always buy their opinions with their goods, and regulate the height of the former by the mere price or fashion of the latter.)

“Pray, Mr. Pelham,” said Miss Paulding, turning to me, “have you got one of Brequet's watches yet?”

“Watch!” said I: “do you think I could ever wear a watch? I know nothing so plebeian. What can any one, but a man of business, who has nine hours for his counting-house and one for his dinner, ever possibly want to know the time for? An assignation, you will say: true, but (here I played with my best ringlet) if a man is worth having, he is surely worth waiting for!”

Miss Paulding opened her eyes, and Mr. Aberton his mouth. A pretty lively French woman opposite (Madame D'Anville) laughed, and immediately joined in our conversation, which, on my part, was, during the whole dinner, kept up exactly in the same strain.

“What do you think of our streets?” said the old, yet still animated Madame de G—s. “You will not find them, I fear, so agreeable for walking as the trottoirs in London.”

“Really,” I answered, “I have only been once out in your streets, at least a pied, since my arrival, and then I was nearly perishing for want of help.”

“What do you mean?” said Madame D'Anville.

“Why, I fell into that intersecting stream which you call a kennel, and I a river. Pray, Mr. Aberton, what do you think I did in that dangerous dilemma?”

“Why, got out again as fast as you could,” said the literal attache.

“No such thing, I was too frightened: I stood still and screamed for assistance.”

Madame D'Anville was delighted, and Miss Paulding astonished. Mr. Aberton muttered to a fat, foolish Lord Luscombe, "What a damnation puppy,"—and every one, even to the old Madame de G—s, looked at me six times as attentively as they had done before.

As for me, I was perfectly satisfied with the effect I had produced, and I went away the first, in order to give the men an opportunity of abusing me; for whenever the men abuse, the women, to support alike their coquetry and the conversation, think themselves called upon to defend.

The next day I rode into the Champs Elysees. I always valued myself particularly upon my riding, and my horse was both the most fiery and the most beautiful in Paris. The first person I saw was Madame D'Anville. At that moment I was reining in my horse, and conscious, as the wind waved my long curls, that I was looking to the very best advantage, I made my horse bound towards her carriage, which she immediately stopped, and speaking in my natural tone of voice, and without the smallest affectation, I made at once my salutations and my court.

"I am going," said she, "to the Duchesse D—g's this evening—it is her night—do come."

"I don't know her," said I.

"Tell me your hotel, and I'll send you an invitation before dinner," rejoined Madame D'Anville.

"I lodge," said I, "at the Hotel de—, Rue de Rivoli, au second at present; next year, I suppose, according to the usual gradations in the life of a garçon, I shall be au troisieme: for here the purse and the person seem to be playing at see-saw—the latter rises as the former descends."

We went on conversing for about a quarter of an hour, in which I endeavoured to make the pretty Frenchwoman believe that all the good opinion I possessed of myself the day before, I had that morning entirely transferred to her account.

As I rode home I met Mr. Aberton, with three or four other men; with that glaring good-breeding, so peculiar to the English, he instantly directed their eyes towards me in one mingled and concentrated stare. "N'importe," thought I, "they must be devilish clever fellows if they can find a single fault either in my horse or myself."

CHAPTER XI

*Lud! what a group the motley scene discloses,
False wits, false wives, false virgins, and false spouses.*

—Goldsmith's Epilogue to the Comedy of the Sisters.

Madame D'Anville kept her promise—the invitation was duly sent, and accordingly at half past ten to the Rue D'Anjou I drove.

The rooms were already full. Lord Bennington was standing by the door, and close by him, looking exceedingly distraught, was my old friend Lord Vincent. They both came towards me at the same moment. "Strive not," thought I, looking at the stately demeanour of the one, and the humorous expression of countenance in the other—"strive not, Tragedy nor Comedy, to engross a Garrick." I spoke first to Lord Bennington, for I knew he would be the sooner dispatched, and then for the next quarter of an hour found myself overflowed with all the witticisms poor Lord Vincent had for days been obliged to retain. I made an engagement to dine with him at Very's the next day, and then glided off towards Madame D'Anville.

She was surrounded with men, and talking to each with that vivacity which, in a Frenchwoman, is so graceful, and in an Englishwoman would be so vulgar. Though her eyes were not directed towards me, she saw me approach by that instinctive perception which all coquets possess, and suddenly altering her seat, made way for me beside her. I did not lose so favourable an opportunity of gaining her good graces, and losing those of all the male animals around her. I sunk down on the vacant chair, and contrived, with the most unabashed effrontery, and yet with the most consummate dexterity, to make every thing that I said pleasing to her, revolting to some one of her attendants. Wormwood himself could not have succeeded better. One by one they dropped off, and we were left alone among the crowd. Then, indeed, I changed the whole tone of my conversation. Sentiment succeeded to satire, and the pretence of feeling to that of affectation. In short, I was so resolved to please that I could scarcely fail to succeed.

In this main object of the evening I was not however solely employed. I should have been very undeserving of that character for observation which I flatter myself I peculiarly deserve, if I had not during the three hours I stayed at Madame D—g's, conned over every person remarkable for any thing, from rank to a ribbon. The duchesse herself was a fair, pretty, clever woman, with manners rather English than French. She was leaning, at the time I paid my respects to her, on the arm of an Italian count, tolerably well known at Paris. Poor O—i! I hear he is just married. He did not deserve so heavy a calamity!

Sir Henry Millington was close by her, carefully packed up in his coat and waistcoat. Certainly that man is the best padder in Europe.

"Come and sit by me, Millington," cried old Lady Oldtown; "I have a good story to tell you of the Duc de G—e."

Sir Henry, with difficulty, turned round his magnificent head, and muttered out some unintelligible excuse. The fact was, that poor Sir Henry was not that evening made to sit down—he had only his standing up coat on. Lady Oldtown—heaven knows—is easily consoled. She supplied the place of the dilapidated baronet with a most superbly mustachioed German.

"Who," said I, to Madame D'Anville, "are those pretty girls in white, talking with such eagerness to Mr. Aberton and Lord Luscombe?"

“What!” said the Frenchwoman, “have you been ten days at Paris and not been introduced to the Miss Carltons? Let me tell you that your reputation among your countrymen at Paris depends solely upon their verdict.”

“And upon your favour,” added I.

“Ah!” said she, “you must have had your origin in France; you have something about you *presque Parisien*.”

“Pray,” said I, (after having duly acknowledged this compliment, the very highest that a Frenchwoman can bestow) “what did you really and candidly think of our countrymen during your residence in England?”

“I will tell you,” answered Madame D’Anville; “they are brave, honest, generous, *mais ils sont demi-barbares*.”

CHAPTER XII

*Pia mater,
Plus quam se sapere, et virtutibus esse priorem
Vult, et ait prope vera.*

—*Horace.*

*Vere mihi festus atras
Eximet curas.*

—*Horace.*

The next morning I received a letter from my mother.

“My dear Henry,” began my affectionate and incomparable parent—

“My dear Henry,

“You have now fairly entered the world, and though at your age my advice may be but little followed, my experience cannot altogether be useless. I shall, therefore, make no apology for a few precepts, which I hope may tend to make you a wiser and better man.

“I hope, in the first place, that you have left your letter at the ambassador’s, and that you will not fail to go there as often as possible. Pay your court in particular to Lady—. She is a charming person, universally popular, and one of the very few English people to whom one may safely be civil. Apropos, of English civility, you have, I hope, by this time discovered, that you have to assume a very different manner with French people than with our own countrymen: with us, the least appearance of feeling or enthusiasm is certain to be ridiculed every where; but in France, you may venture to seem not quite devoid of all natural sentiments: indeed, if you affect enthusiasm, they will give you credit for genius, and they will place all the qualities of the heart to the account of the head. You know that in England, if you seem desirous of a person’s acquaintance you are sure to lose it; they imagine you have some design upon their wives or their dinners; but in France you can never lose by politeness: nobody will call your civility forwardness and pushing. If the Princess De T—, and the Duchesse de D—, ask you to their houses (which indeed they will, directly you have left your letters), go there two or three times a week, if only for a few minutes in the evening. It is very hard to be acquainted with great French people, but when you are, it is your own fault if you are not intimate with them.

“Most English people have a kind of diffidence and scruple at calling in the evening—this is perfectly misplaced: the French are never ashamed of themselves, like us, whose persons, families, and houses are never fit to be seen, unless they are dressed out for a party.

“Don’t imagine that the ease of French manners is at all like what we call ease: you must not lounge on your chair—nor put your feet upon a stool—nor forget yourself for one single moment when you are talking with women.

“You have heard a great deal about the gallantries of the French ladies; but remember that they demand infinitely greater attention than English women do; and that after a month’s incessant devotion, you may lose every thing by a moment’s impolitesse.

“You will not, my dear son, misinterpret these hints. I suppose, of course, that all your liaisons are platonic.

“Your father is laid up with the gout, and dreadfully ill-tempered and peevish; however, I keep out of the way as much as possible. I dined yesterday at Lady Roseville’s: she praised you very much, said your manners were particularly good, and that you had already quite the usage du monde. Lord

Vincent is, I understand, at Paris: though very tiresome with his learning and Latin, he is exceedingly clever and repandu; be sure to cultivate his acquaintance.

“If you are ever at a loss as to the individual character of a person you wish to gain, the general knowledge of human nature will teach you one infallible specific,—flattery! The quantity and quality may vary according to the exact niceties of art; but, in any quantity and in any quality, it is more or less acceptable, and therefore certain to please. Only never (or at least very rarely) flatter when other people, besides the one to be flattered, are by; in that case you offend the rest, and you make even your intended dupe ashamed to be pleased.

“In general, weak minds think only of others, and yet seem only occupied with themselves; you, on the contrary, must appear wholly engrossed with those about you, and yet never have a single idea which does not terminate in yourself: a fool, my dear Henry, flatters himself—a wise man flatters the fool.

“God bless you, my dear child, take care of your health—don’t forget Coulon; and believe me your most affectionate mother,

“F. P.”

By the time I had read this letter and dressed myself for the evening, Vincent’s carriage was at the porte cochere. I hate the affection of keeping people waiting, and went down so quickly, that I met his facetious lordship upon the stairs. “Devilish windy,” said I, as we were getting into the carriage.

“Yes,” said Vincent; “but the moral Horace reminds us of our remedies as well as our misfortune

—
“*Jam galeam Pallas, et aegida, Currusque parat,*’—

that is, ‘Providence that prepares the gale, gives us also a great coat and a carriage.’”

We were not long driving to the Palais Royal. Very’s was crowded to excess—“A very low set!” said Lord Vincent, (who, being half a liberal, is of course a thorough aristocrat) looking round at the various English who occupied the apartment.

There was, indeed, a motley congregation; country esquires; extracts from the Universities; half-pay officers; city clerks in frogged coats and mustachios; two or three of a better looking description, but in reality half swindlers, half gentlemen. All, in short, fit specimens of that wandering tribe, which spread over the continent the renown and the ridicule of good old England. I know not why it is that we should look and act so very disgracefully abroad; but I never meet in any spot out of this happy island, a single Englishman, without instinctively blushing for my native country.

“*Garçon, garçon,*” cried a stout gentleman, who made one of three at the table next to us. “*Donnez-nous une sole frite pour un, et des pommes de terre pour trois!*”

“Humph!” said Lord Vincent; “fine ideas of English taste these garçons must entertain; men who prefer fried soles and potatoes to the various delicacies they can command here, might, by the same perversion of taste, prefer Bloomfield’s poems to Byron’s. Delicate taste depends solely upon the physical construction; and a man who has it not in cookery, must want it in literature. Fried sole and potatoes!! If I had written a volume, whose merit was in elegance, I would not show it to such a man!—but he might be an admirable critic upon ‘Cobbett’s Register,’ or ‘Every Man his own Brewer.’”

“Excessively true,” said I; “what shall we order?”

“*D’abord des huitres d’Ostende,*” said Vincent; “as to the rest,” taking hold of the carte, “*deliberare utilia mora utilissima est.*”

We were soon engaged in all the pleasures and pains of a dinner.

“*Petimus,*” said Lord Vincent, helping himself to some poulet à l’Austerlitz, “*petimus bene vivere—quod petis, hic est?*”

We were not, however, assured of that fact at the termination of dinner. If half the dishes were well conceived and better executed, the other half were proportionably bad. Very is, indeed, no longer the prince of Restaurateurs. The low English who have flocked there, have entirely ruined the place.

What waiter—what cook can possibly respect men who take no soup, and begin with a roti; who know neither what is good nor what is bad; who eat rognons at dinner instead of at breakfast, and fall into raptures over sauce Robert and pieds de cochon; who cannot tell, at the first taste, whether the beaune is premiere qualite, or the fricassee made of yesterday's chicken; who suffer in the stomach after champignon, and die with indigestion of a truffle? O! English people, English people! why can you not stay and perish of apoplexy and Yorkshire pudding at home?

By the time we had drank our coffee it was considerably past nine o'clock, and Vincent had business at the ambassador's before ten; we therefore parted for the night.

"What do you think of Very's?" said I, as we were at the door.

"Why," replied Vincent, "when I recal the astonishing heat of the place, which has almost sent me to sleep; the exceeding number of times in which that becasse had been re-roasted, and the extortionate length of our bills, I say of Very's, what Hamlet said of the world, 'Weary, stale, and unprofitable!'"

CHAPTER XIII

*I would fight with broad swords, and sink point on the first blood drawn
like a gentleman's.*

—The Chronicles of the Canongate.

I strolled idly along the Palais Royal (which English people, in some silly proverb, call the capital of Paris, whereas no French man of any rank, nor French woman of any respectability, are ever seen in its promenades) till, being somewhat curious to enter some of the smaller cafes, I went into one of the meanest of them; took up a Journal des Spectacles, and called for some lemonade. At the next table to me sat two or three Frenchmen, evidently of inferior rank, and talking very loudly over L'Angleterre et les Anglois. Their attention was soon fixed upon me.

Have you ever observed that if people are disposed to think ill of you, nothing so soon determines them to do so as any act of yours, which, however innocent and inoffensive, differs from their ordinary habits and customs? No sooner had my lemonade made its appearance, than I perceived an increased sensation among my neighbours of the next table. In the first place, lemonade is not much drank, as you may suppose, among the French in winter; and, in the second, my beverage had an appearance of ostentation, from being one of the dearest articles I could have called for. Unhappily, I dropped my newspaper—it fell under the Frenchmen's table; instead of calling the garcon, I was foolish enough to stoop for it myself. It was exactly under the feet of one of the Frenchmen; I asked him with the greatest civility, to move: he made no reply. I could not, for the life of me, refrain from giving him a slight, very slight push; the next moment he moved in good earnest; the whole party sprung up as he set the example. The offended leg gave three terrific stamps upon the ground, and I was immediately assailed by a whole volley of unintelligible abuse. At that time I was very little accustomed to French vehemence, and perfectly unable to reply to the vituperations I received.

Instead of answering them, I therefore deliberated what was best to be done. If, thought I, I walk away, they will think me a coward, and insult me in the streets; if I challenge them, I shall have to fight with men probably no better than shopkeepers; if I strike this most noisy amongst them, he may be silenced, or he may demand satisfaction: if the former, well and good; if the latter, why I shall have a better excuse for fighting him than I should have now.

My resolution was therefore taken. I was never more free from passion in my life, and it was, therefore, with the utmost calmness and composure that, in the midst of my antagonist's harangue, I raised my hand and—quietly knocked him down.

He rose in a moment. "Sortons," said he, in a low tone, "a Frenchman never forgives a blow!"

At that moment, an Englishman, who had been sitting unnoticed in an obscure corner of the cafe, came up and took me aside.

"Sir," said he, "don't think of fighting the man; he is a tradesman in the Rue St. Honore. I myself have seen him behind the counter; remember that 'a ram may kill a butcher.'"

"Sir," I replied, "I thank you a thousand times for your information. Fight, however, I must, and I'll give you, like the Irishman, my reasons afterwards: perhaps you will be my second."

"With pleasure," said the Englishman, (a Frenchman would have said, "with pain!")

We left the cafe together. My countryman asked them if he should go the gunsmith's for the pistols.

"Pistols!" said the Frenchman's second: "we will only fight with swords."

"No, no," said my new friend. "'On ne prend le lievre au tabourin.' We are the challenged, and therefore have the choice of weapons."

Luckily I overheard this dispute, and called to my second—"Swords or pistols," said I; "it is quite the same to me. I am not bad at either, only do make haste."

Swords, then, were chosen and soon procured. Frenchmen never grow cool upon their quarrels: and as it was a fine, clear, starlight night, we went forthwith to the Bois de Boulogne. We fixed our ground on a spot tolerably retired, and, I should think, pretty often frequented for the same purpose. I was exceedingly confident, for I knew myself to have few equals in the art of fencing; and I had all the advantage of coolness, which my hero was a great deal too much in earnest to possess. We joined swords, and in a very few moments I discovered that my opponent's life was at my disposal.

"C'est bien," thought I; "for once I'll behave handsomely."

The Frenchman made a desperate lunge. I struck his sword from his hand, caught it instantly, and, presenting it to him again, said,

"I think myself peculiarly fortunate that I may now apologize for the affront I have put upon you. Will you permit my sincerest apologies to suffice? A man who can so well resent an injury, can forgive one."

Was there ever a Frenchman not taken by a fine phrase? My hero received the sword with a low bow—the tears came into his eyes.

"Sir," said he, "you have twice conquered."

We left the spot with the greatest amity and affection, and re-entered, with a profusion of bows, our several fiacres.

"Let me," I said, when I found myself alone with my second, "let me thank you most cordially for your assistance; and allow me to cultivate an acquaintance so singularly begun. I lodge at the Hotel de—, Rue de Rivoli; my name is Pelham. Your's is—"

"Thornton," replied my countryman. "I will lose no time in profiting by an offer of acquaintance which does me so much honour."

With these and various other fine speeches, we employed the time till I was set down at my hotel; and my companion, drawing his cloak round him, departed on foot, to fulfil (he said, with a mysterious air) a certain assignation in the Faubourg St. Germain.

I said to Mr. Thornton, that I would give him many reasons for fighting after I had fought. As I do not remember that I ever did, and as I am very unwilling that they should be lost, I am now going to bestow them on the reader. It is true that I fought a tradesman. His rank in life made such an action perfectly gratuitous on my part, and to many people perhaps perfectly unpardonable. The following was, however, my view of the question: In striking him I had placed myself on his level; if I did so in order to insult him, I had a right also to do it in order to give him the only atonement in my power: had the insult come solely from him, I might then, with some justice, have intrenched myself in my superiority of rank—contempt would have been as optional as revenge: but I had left myself no alternative in being the aggressor, for if my birth was to preserve me from redressing an injury, it was also to preserve me from committing one. I confess, that the thing would have been wholly different had it been an English, instead of a French, man; and this, because of the different view of the nature and importance of the affront, which the Englishman would take. No English tradesman has an idea of *les lois d'armes*—a blow can be returned, or it can be paid for.

But in France, neither a set-to, nor an action for assault, would repay the generality of any class removed from the poverty of the *bas peuple*, for so great and inexcusable an affront. In all countries it is the feelings of the generality of people, that courtesy, which is the essence of honour, obliges one to consult. As in England I should, therefore, have paid, so in France I fought.

If it be said that a French gentleman would not have been equally condescending to a French tradesman, I answer that the former would never have perpetrated the only insult for which the latter might think there could be only one atonement. Besides, even if this objection held good, there is a difference between the duties of a native and a stranger. In receiving the advantages of a foreign country, one ought to be doubly careful not to give offence, and it is therefore doubly incumbent upon us to redress it when given. To the feelings of the person I had offended, there was but one redress. Who can blame me if I granted it?

CHAPTER XIV

Erat homo ingeniosus, acutus, acer, et qui plurimum et salis haberet et fellis, nec candoris minus.

—*Pliny.*

I do not know a more difficult character to describe than Lord Vincent's. Did I imitate certain writers, who think that the whole art of portraying individual character is to seize hold of some prominent peculiarity, and to introduce this distinguishing trait, in all times and in all scenes, the difficulty would be removed. I should only have to present to the reader a man, whose conversation was nothing but alternate jest and quotation—a due union of Yorick and Partridge. This would, however, be rendering great injustice to the character I wish to delineate. There were times when Vincent was earnestly engrossed in discussion in which a jest rarely escaped him, and quotation was introduced only as a serious illustration, not as a humorous peculiarity. He possessed great miscellaneous erudition, and a memory perfectly surprising for its fidelity and extent. He was a severe critic, and had a peculiar art of quoting from each author he reviewed, some part that particularly told against him. Like most men, in the theory of philosophy he was tolerably rigid; in its practice, more than tolerably loose. By his tenets you would have considered him a very Cato for stubbornness and sternness: yet was he a very child in his concession to the whim of the moment. Fond of meditation and research, he was still fonder of mirth and amusement; and while he was among the most instructive, he was also the boonest of companions. When alone with me, or with men whom he imagined like me, his pedantry (for more or less, he always was pedantic) took only a jocular tone; with the savan or the bel esprit, it became grave, searching, and sarcastic. He was rather a contradicter than a favourer of ordinary opinions: and this, perhaps, led him not unoften into paradox: yet was there much soundness, even in his most vehement notions, and the strength of mind which made him think only for himself, was visible in all the productions it created. I have hitherto only given his conversation in one of its moods; henceforth I shall be just enough occasionally to be dull, and to present it sometimes to the reader in a graver tone.

Buried deep beneath the surface of his character, was a hidden, yet a restless ambition: but this was perhaps, at present, a secret even to himself. We know not our own characters till time teaches us self-knowledge: if we are wise, we may thank ourselves; if we are great, we must thank fortune.

It was this insight into Vincent's nature which drew us closer together. I recognized in the man, who as yet was only playing a part, a resemblance to myself, while he, perhaps, saw at times that I was somewhat better than the voluptuary, and somewhat wiser than the coxcomb, which were all that at present it suited me to appear.

In person, Vincent was short, and though not ill—yet ungracefully made—but his countenance was singularly fine. His eyes were dark, bright and penetrating, and his forehead (high and thoughtful) corrected the playful smile of his mouth, which might otherwise have given to his features too great an expression of levity. He was not positively ill dressed, yet he paid no attention to any external art, except cleanliness. His usual garb was a brown coat, much too large for him, a coloured neckcloth, a spotted waistcoat, grey trowsers, and short gaiters: add to these gloves of most unsullied doeskin, and a curiously thick cane, and the portrait is complete.

In manners, he was civil, or rude, familiar, or distant, just as the whim seized him; never was there any address less common, and less artificial. What a rare gift, by the by, is that of manners! how difficult to define—how much more difficult to impart! Better for a man to possess them, than wealth, beauty, or talent; they will more than supply all. No attention is too minute, no labour too exaggerated, which tends to perfect them. He who enjoys their advantages in the highest degree, viz.,

he who can please, penetrate, persuade, as the object may require, possesses the subtlest secret of the diplomatist and the statesman, and wants nothing but opportunity to become “great.”

CHAPTER XV

Le plaisir de la societe entre les amis se cultive par une ressemblance de gout sur ce qui regarde les moeurs, et par quelque difference d'opinions sur les sciences; par la ou l'on s'affermit dans ses sentiments, ou l'on s'exerce et l'on s'instruit par la dispute.

—*La Bruyere.*

There was a party at Monsieur de V—e's, to which Vincent and myself were the only Englishmen invited: accordingly as the Hotel de V. was in the same street as my hotel, we dined together at my rooms, and walked from thence to the minister's house.

The party was as stiff and formal as such assemblies invariably are, and we were both delighted when we espied Monsieur d'A—, a man of much conversational talent, and some celebrity as an ultra writer, forming a little group in one corner of the room.

We took advantage of our acquaintance with the urbane Frenchman to join his party; the conversation turned almost entirely on literary subjects. Allusion being made to Schlegel's History of Literature, and the severity with which he speaks of Helvetius, and the philosophers of his school, we began to discuss what harm the free-thinkers in philosophy had effected.

"For my part," said Vincent, "I am not able to divine why we are supposed, in works where there is much truth, and little falsehood, much good, and a little evil, to see only the evil and the falsehood, to the utter exclusion of the truth and the good. All men whose minds are sufficiently laborious or acute to love the reading of metaphysical inquiries, will by the same labour and acuteness separate the chaff from the corn—the false from the true. It is the young, the light, the superficial, who are easily misled by error, and incapable of discerning its fallacy; but tell me, if it is the light, the young, the superficial, who are in the habit of reading the abstruse and subtle speculations of the philosopher. No, no! believe me that it is the very studies Monsieur Schlegel recommends, which do harm to morality and virtue; it is the study of literature itself, the play, the poem, the novel, which all minds, however frivolous, can enjoy and understand, that constitute the real foes to religion and moral improvement."

"Ma foi," cried Monsieur de G., (who was a little writer, and a great reader of romances) "why, you would not deprive us of the politer literature, you would not bid us shut up our novels, and burn our theatres."

"Certainly not!" replied Vincent; "and it is in this particular that I differ from certain modern philosophers of our own country, for whom, for the most part, I entertain the highest veneration. I would not deprive life of a single grace, or a single enjoyment, but I would counteract whatever is pernicious in whatever is elegant; if among my flowers there is a snake, I would not root up my flowers, I would kill the snake. Thus, who are they that derive from fiction and literature a prejudicial effect? We have seen already—the light and superficial;—but who are they that derive profit from them?—they who enjoy well regulated and discerning minds. Who pleasure?—all mankind! Would it not therefore be better, instead of depriving some of profit, and all of pleasure, by banishing poetry and fiction from our Utopia, to correct the minds which find evil, where, if they were properly instructed, they would find good? Whether we agree with Helvetius, that all men are born with an equal capacity of improvement, or merely go the length with all other metaphysicians, that education can improve the human mind to an extent yet incalculable, it must be quite clear, that we can give sound views instead of fallacies, and make common truths as easy to discern and adopt as common errors. But if we effect this, which we all allow is so easy, with our children; if we strengthen their minds, instead of weakening them, and clear their vision, rather than confuse it, from that moment, we remove the prejudicial effects of fiction, and just as we have taught them to use a knife, without cutting

their fingers, we teach them to make use of fiction without perverting it to their prejudice. What philosopher was ever hurt by reading the novels of Crebillon, or seeing the comedies of Moliere? You understand me, then, Monsieur de G., I do, it is true, think that polite literature (as it is termed,) is prejudicial to the superficial, but for that reason, I would not do away with the literature, I would do away with the superficial.”

“I deny,” said M. D’A—, “that this is so easy a task—you cannot make all men wise.”

“No,” replied Vincent; “but you can all children, at least to a certain extent. Since you cannot deny the prodigious effects of education, you must allow that they will, at least, give common sense; for it they cannot do this, they can do nothing. Now common sense is all that is necessary to distinguish what is good and evil, whether it be in life or in books: but then your education must not be that of public teaching and private fooling; you must not counteract the effects of common sense by instilling prejudice, or encouraging weakness; your education may not be carried to the utmost goal: but as far as it does go you must see that the road is clear. Now, for instance, with regard to fiction, you must not first, as is done in all modern education, admit the disease, and then dose with warm water to expel it; you must not put fiction into your child’s hands, and not give him a single principle to guide his judgment respecting it, till his mind has got wedded to the poison, and too weak, by its long use, to digest the antidote. No; first fortify his intellect by reason, and you may then please his fancy by fiction. Do not excite his imagination with love and glory, till you can instruct his judgment as to what love and glory are. Teach him, in short, to reflect, before you permit him full indulgence to imagine.”

Here there was a pause. Monsieur D’A—looked very ill-pleased, and poor Monsieur de G—thought that somehow or other his romance writing was called into question. In order to soothe them, I introduced some subject which permitted a little national flattery; the conversation then turned insensibly on the character of the French people.

“Never,” said Vincent, “has there been a character more often described—never one less understood. You have been termed superficial. I think, of all people, that you least deserve the accusation. With regard to the few, your philosophers, your mathematicians, your men of science, are consulted by those of other nations, as some of their profoundest authorities. With regard to the many, the charge is still more unfounded. Compare your mob, whether of gentlemen or plebeians, to those of Germany, Italy—even England—and I own, in spite of my national prepossessions, that the comparison is infinitely in your favour. The country gentlemen, the lawyer, the petit maitre of England, are proverbially inane and ill-informed. With you, the classes of society that answer to those respective grades, have much information in literature, and often not a little in science. In like manner, your tradesmen, your mechanics, your servants, are, beyond all measure, of larger, better cultivated, and less prejudiced minds than those ranks in England. The fact is, that all with you pretend to be savans, and this is the chief reason why you have been censured as shallow. We see your fine gentleman, or your petit bourgeois, give himself the airs of a critic or a philosopher; and because he is neither a Scaliger nor a Newton, we forget that he is only the bourgeois or the petit maitre, and set down all your philosophers and critics with the censure of superficiality, which this shallow individual of a shallow order may justly have deserved. We, the English, it is true, do not expose ourselves thus: our dandies, our tradesmen, do not vent second rate philosophy on the human mind, nor on les beaux arts: but why is this? Not because they are better informed than their correspondent ciphers in France, but because they are much worse; not because they can say a great deal more on the subject, but because they can say nothing at all.”

“You do us more than justice,” said Monsieur D’A—, “in this instance: are you disposed to do us justice also in another? It is a favourite propensity of your countrymen to accuse us of heartlessness and want of feeling. Think you that this accusation is deserved?”

“By no means,” replied Vincent. “The same cause that brought on the erroneous censure we have before mentioned, appears to me also to have created this; viz. a sort of Palais Royal vanity, common to all your nation, which induces you to make as much display at the shop window as possible.

You show great cordiality, and even enthusiasm, to strangers; you turn your back on them—you forget them. ‘How heartless!’ cry we. Not at all! The English show no cordiality, no enthusiasm to strangers, it is true: but they equally turn their backs on them, and equally forget them! The only respect, therefore, in which they differ from you, is the previous kindness: now if we are to receive strangers, I can really see no reason why we are not to be as civil to them as possible; and so far from imputing the desire to please them to a bad heart, I think it a thousand times more amiable and benevolent than telling them, a l’Anglaise, by your morosity and reserve, that you do not care a pin what becomes of them. If I am only to walk a mile with a man, why should I not make that mile as pleasant to him as I can; or why, above all, if I choose to be sulky, and tell him to go and be d—d, am I to swell out my chest, colour with conscious virtue, and cry, see what a good heart I have?

“Ah, Monsieur D’A——, since benevolence is inseparable from all morality, it must be clear that there is a benevolence in little things as well as in great; and that he who strives to make his fellow creatures happy, though only for an instant, is a much better man than he who is indifferent to, or, (what is worse) despises, it. Nor do I, to say truth, see that kindness to an acquaintance is at all destructive to sincerity to a friend: on the contrary, I have yet to learn, that you are (according to the customs of your country) worse friends, worse husbands, or worse fathers than we are!”

“What!” cried I, “you forget yourself, Vincent. How can the private virtues be cultivated without a coal fire? Is not domestic affection a synonymous term with domestic hearth? and where do you find either, except in honest old England?”

“True,” replied Vincent; “and it is certainly impossible for a father and his family to be as fond of each other on a bright day in the Tuilleries, or at Versailles, with music and dancing, and fresh air, as they would be in a back parlour, by a smoky hearth, occupied entirely by le bon pere, et la bonne mere; while the poor little children sit at the other end of the table, whispering and shivering, debarred the vent of all natural spirits, for fear of making a noise; and strangely uniting the idea of the domestic hearth with that of a hobgoblin, and the association of dear papa with that of a birch rod.”

We all laughed at this reply, and Monsieur D’A——, rising to depart, said, “Well, well, milord, your countrymen are great generalizers in philosophy; they reduce human actions to two grand touchstones. All hilarity, they consider the sign of a shallow mind; and all kindness, the token of a false heart.”

CHAPTER XVI

*Quis sapiens bono
Confidat fragili.*

—*Seneca.*

Grammatici certant et adhuc sub judice lis est.

—*Horace.*

When I first went to Paris, I took a French master, to perfect me in the Parisian pronunciation. This “Haberdasher of Pronouns” was a person of the name of Margot. He was a tall, solemn man, with a face of the most imperturbable gravity. He would have been inestimable as an undertaker. His hair was of a pale yellow; you would have thought it had caught a bilious complaint from his complexion; the latter was, indeed, of so sombre a saffron, that it looked as if ten livers had been forced into a jaundice, in order to supply its colour. His forehead was high, bald, and very narrow. His cheekbones were extremely prominent, and his cheeks so thin, that they seemed happier than Pyramus and Thisbe, and kissed each other inside without any separation or division. His face was as sharp and almost as long as an inverted pyramid, and was garnished on either side by a miserable half starved whisker, which seemed scarcely able to maintain itself, amid the general symptoms of atrophy and decay. This charming countenance was supported by a figure so long, so straight, so shadowy, that you might have taken it for the monument in a consumption.

But the chief characteristic of the man was the utter and wonderful gravity I have before spoken of. You could no more have coaxed a smile out of his countenance, than you could out of the poker, and yet Monsieur Margot was by no means a melancholy man. He loved his joke, and his wine, and his dinner, just as much as if he had been of a fatter frame; and it was a fine specimen of the practical antithesis, to hear a good story, or a jovial expression, leap friskily out of that long, curved mouth; it was at once a paradox and a bathos—it was the mouse coming out of its hole in Ely Cathedral.

I said that this gravity was M. Margot’s most especial characteristic. I forgot—he had two others equally remarkable; the one was an ardent admiration for the chivalrous, the other an ardent admiration for himself. Both of these are traits common enough in a Frenchman, but in Mons. Margot their excesses rendered them uncommon. He was a most ultra specimen of le chevalier amoureux—a mixture of Don Quixote and the Duc de Lauzun. Whenever he spoke of the present tense, even en professeur, he always gave a sigh to the preterite, and an anecdote of Bayard; whenever he conjugated a verb, he paused to tell me that the favourite one of his female pupils was je t’aime.

In short, he had tales of his own good fortune, and of other people’s brave exploits, which, without much exaggeration, were almost as long, and had perhaps as little substance as himself; but the former was his favourite topic: to hear him, one would have imagined that his face, in borrowing the sharpness of the needle, had borrowed also its attraction;—and then the prettiness of Mons. Margot’s modesty!

“It is very extraordinary,” said he, “very extraordinary, for I have no time to give myself up to those affairs; it is not, Monsieur, as if I had your leisure to employ all the little preliminary arts of creating la belle passion. Non, Monsieur, I go to church, to the play, to the Tuilleries, for a brief relaxation—and me voila partout accable with my good fortune. I am not handsome, Monsieur, at least, not very; it is true, that I have expression, a certain air noble, (my first cousin, Monsieur, is the

Chevalier de Margot) and above all, de l'a me in my physiognomy; the women love soul, Monsieur—something intellectual and spiritual always attracts them; yet my success certainly is singular.”

“Bah! Monsieur,” replied I: “with dignity, expression, and soul! how could the heart of any French woman resist you? No, you do yourself injustice. It was said of Caesar, that he was great without an effort; much more, then, may Monsieur Margot be happy without an exertion.”

“Ah, Monsieur!” rejoined the Frenchman, still looking

“As weak, as earnest, and as gravely out As sober Lanesbro’ dancing with the gout.”

“Ah, Monsieur, there is a depth and truth in your remarks, worthy of Montaigne. As it is impossible to account for the caprices of women, so it is impossible for ourselves to analyze the merit they discover in us; but, Monsieur, hear me—at the house where I lodge, there is an English lady en pension. Eh bien, Monsieur, you guess the rest: she has taken a caprice for me, and this very night she will admit me to her apartment. She is very handsome,—Ah qu’elle est belle, une jolie petite bouche, une denture eblouissante, un nez tout afait grec, in fine, quite a bouton de rose.”

I expressed my envy at Monsieur Margot’s good fortune, and when he had sufficiently dilated upon it, he withdrew. Shortly afterwards Vincent entered—“I have a dinner invitation for both of us to-day,” said he; “you will come?”

“Most certainly,” replied I; “but who is the person we are to honour?”

“A Madame Laurent,” replied Vincent; “one of those ladies only found at Paris, who live upon anything rather than their income. She keeps a tolerable table, haunted with Poles, Russians, Austrians, and idle Frenchmen, peregrinae gentis amaenum hospitium. As yet, she has not the happiness to be acquainted with any Englishmen, (though she boards one of our countrywomen) and (as she is desirous of making her fortune as soon as possible) she is very anxious of having that honour. She has heard vast reports of our wealth and wisdom, and flatters herself that we are so many ambulatory Indies: in good truth, a Frenchwoman thinks she is never in want of a fortune as long as there is a rich fool in the world.

“‘Stultitiam patiuntur, opes,’

is her hope; and

“‘Ut tu fortunam, sic nos te, Celse, feremus,’

is her motto.”

“Madame Laurent!” repeated I, “why, surely that is the name of Mons. Margot’s landlady.”

“I hope not,” cried Vincent, “for the sake of our dinner; he reflects no credit on her good cheer

—
“Who eats fat dinners, should himself be fat.”

“At all events,” said I, “we can try the good lady for once. I am very anxious to see a countrywoman of ours, probably the very one you speak of, whom Mons. Margot eulogizes in glowing colours, and who has, moreover, taken a violent fancy for my solemn preceptor. What think you of that, Vincent?”

“Nothing extraordinary,” replied Vincent; “the lady only exclaims with the moralist—

“‘Love, virtue, valour, yea, all human charms, Are shrunk and centred in that heap of bones. Oh! there are wondrous beauties in the grave!’”

I made some punning rejoinder, and we sallied out to earn an appetite in the Tuilleries for Madame Laurent’s dinner.

At the hour of half-past five we repaired to our engagement. Madame Laurent received us with the most evident satisfaction, and introduced us forthwith to our countrywoman. She was a pretty, fair, shrewd looking person, with an eye and lip which, unless it greatly belied her, showed her much more inclined, as an amante, to be merry and wise, than honest and true.

Presently Monsieur Margot made his appearance. Though very much surprised at seeing me, he did not appear the least jealous of my attentions to his inamorata. Indeed, the good gentleman

was far too much pleased with himself to be susceptible of the suspicions common to less fortunate lovers. At dinner I sat next to the pretty Englishwoman, whose name was Green.

“Monsieur Margot,” said I, “has often spoken to me of you before I had the happiness of being personally convinced how true and unexaggerated were his sentiments.”

“Oh!” cried Mrs. Green, with an arch laugh, “you are acquainted with Monsieur Margot, then?”

“I have that honour,” said I. “I receive from him every morning lessons both in love and languages. He is perfect master of both.”

Mrs. Green burst out into one of those peals so peculiarly British.

“Ah, le pauvre Professeur!” cried she. “He is too absurd!”

“He tells me,” said I, gravely, “that he is quite accable with his *bonnes fortunes*—possibly he flatters himself that even you are not perfectly inaccessible to his addresses.”

“Tell me, Mr. Pelham,” said the fair Mrs. Green, “can you pass by this street about half past twelve to-night?”

“I will make a point of doing so,” replied I, not a little surprised by the remark.

“Do,” said she, “and now let us talk of old England.”

When we went away I told Vincent of my appointment. “What!” said he, “eclipse Monsieur Margot! Impossible!”

“You are right,” replied I, “nor is it my hope; there is some trick afloat of which we may as well be spectators.”

“De tout mon coeur!” answered Vincent; “let us go till then to the Duchesse de G——.”

I assented, and we drove to the Rue de—.

The Duchesse de G—was a fine relict of the ancien regime—tall and stately, with her own grey hair crepe, and surmounted by a high cap of the most dazzling blonde. She had been one of the earliest emigrants, and had stayed for many months with my mother, whom she professed to rank amongst her dearest friends. The duchesse possessed to perfection that singular melange of ostentation and ignorance which was so peculiar to the ante-revolutionists. She would talk of the last tragedy with the emphatic tone of a connoisseur, in the same breath that she would ask, with Marie Antoinette, why the poor people were so clamorous for bread when they might buy such nice cakes for two-pence a-piece? “To give you an idea of the Irish,” said she one day to an inquisitive marquess, “know that they prefer potatoes to mutton!”

Her soirees were among the most agreeable at Paris—she united all the rank and talent to be found in the ultra party, for she professed to be quite a female Maecenas; and whether it was a mathematician or a romance-writer, a naturalist or a poet, she held open house for all, and conversed with each with equal fluency and self-satisfaction.

A new play had just been acted, and the conversation, after a few preliminary hoverings, settled upon it.

“You see,” said the duchesse, “that we have actors, you authors; of what avail is it that you boast of a Shakspeare, since your Liseton, great as he is, cannot be compared with our Talma?”

“And yet,” said I, preserving my gravity with a pertinacity, which nearly made Vincent and the rest of our compatriots assembled lose their’s “Madame must allow, that there is a striking resemblance in their persons, and the sublimity of their acting?”

“Pour ca, j’en conviens,” replied this ‘critique de l’Ecole des Femmes.’ “Mais cependant Liseton n’a pas la Nature! l’ame! la grandeur de Talma!”

“And will you then allow us no actors of merit?” asked Vincent.

“Mais oui!—dans le genre comique, par exemple, votre buffo Kean met dix fois plus d’esprit et de drollerie dans ses roles que La Porte.”

“The impartial and profound judgment of Madame admits of no further discussion on this point,” said I. “What does she think of the present state of our dramatic literature?”

“Why,” replied Madame, “you have many great poets, but when they write for the stage they lose themselves entirely; your Valter Scote’s play of Robe Roi is very inferior to his novel of the same name.”

“It is a great pity,” said I, “that Byron did not turn his Childe Harold into a tragedy—it has so much energy—action—variety!”

“Very true,” said Madame, with a sigh; “but the tragedy is, after all, only suited to our nation—we alone carry it to perfection.”

“Yet,” said I, “Goldoni wrote a few fine tragedies.”

“Eh bien!” said Madame, “one rose does not constitute a garden!”

And satisfied with this remark, la femme savante turned to a celebrated traveller to discuss with him the chance of discovering the North Pole.

There were one or two clever Englishmen present; Vincent and I joined them.

“Have you met the Persian prince yet?” said Sir George Lynton to me; “he is a man of much talent, and great desire of knowledge. He intends to publish his observations on Paris, and I suppose we shall have an admirable supplement to Montesquieu’s *Lettres Persannes*!”

“I wish we had,” said Vincent: “there are few better satires on a civilized country than the observations of visitors less polished; while on the contrary the civilized traveller, in describing the manners of the American barbarian, instead of conveying ridicule upon the visited, points the sarcasm on the visitor; and Tacitus could not have thought of a finer or nobler satire on the Roman luxuries than that insinuated by his treatise on the German simplicity.”

“What,” said Monsieur D’E—(an intelligent ci-devant emigre), “what political writer is generally esteemed as your best?”

“It is difficult to say,” replied Vincent, “since with so many parties we have many idols; but I think I might venture to name Bolingbroke as among the most popular. Perhaps, indeed, it would be difficult to select a name more frequently quoted and discussed than his; and yet his political works are the least valuable part of his remains; and though they contain many lofty sentiments, and many beautiful yet scattered truths, they were written when legislation, most debated, was least understood, and ought to be admired rather as excellent for the day than estimable in themselves. The life of Bolingbroke would convey a juster moral than all his writings: and the author who gives us a full and impartial memoir of that extraordinary man, will have afforded both to the philosophical and political literature of England one of its greatest desideratums.”

“It seems to me,” said Monsieur D’E—, “that your national literature is peculiarly deficient in biography—am I right in my opinion?”

“Indubitably!” said Vincent; “we have not a single work that can be considered a model in biography, (excepting, perhaps, Middleton’s *Life of Cicero*.) This brings on a remark I have often made in distinguishing your philosophy from ours. It seems to me that you who excel so admirably in biography, memoirs, comedy, satirical observation on peculiar classes, and pointed aphorisms, are fonder of considering man in his relation to society and the active commerce of the world, than in the more abstracted and metaphysical operations of the mind. Our writers, on the contrary, love to indulge rather in abstruse speculations on their species—to regard man in an abstract and isolated point of view, and to see him think alone in his chamber, while you prefer beholding him act with the multitude in the world.”

“It must be allowed,” said Monsieur D’E—t, “that if this be true, our philosophy is the most useful, though yours may be the most profound.”

Vincent did not reply.

“Yet,” said Sir George Lynton, “there will be a disadvantage attending your writings of this description, which, by diminishing their general applicability, diminish their general utility. Works which treat upon man in his relation to society, can only be strictly applicable so long as that relation to society treated upon continues. For instance, the play which satirizes a particular class, however deep

its reflections and accurate its knowledge upon the subject satirized, must necessarily be obsolete when the class itself has become so. The political pamphlet, admirable for one state, may be absurd in another; the novel which exactly delineates the present age may seem strange and unfamiliar to the next; and thus works which treat of men relatively, and not man in se, must often confine their popularity to the age and even the country in which they were written. While on the other hand, the work which treats of man himself, which seizes, discovers, analyzes the human mind, as it is, whether in the ancient or the modern, the savage or the European, must evidently be applicable, and consequently useful, to all times and all nations. He who discovers the circulation of the blood, or the origin of ideas, must be a philosopher to every people who have veins or ideas; but he who even most successfully delineates the manners of one country, or the actions of one individual, is only the philosopher of a single country, or a single age. If, Monsieur D'E—t, you will condescend to consider this, you will see perhaps that the philosophy which treats of man in his relations is not so useful, because neither so permanent nor so invariable, as that which treats of man in himself.” [Note: Yet Hume holds the contrary opinion to this, and considers a good comedy more durable than a system of philosophy. Hume is right, if by a system of philosophy is understood—a pile of guesses, false but plausible, set up by one age to be destroyed by the next. Ingenuity cannot rescue error from oblivion; but the moment Wisdom has discovered Truth, she has obtained immortality.]

I was now somewhat weary of this conversation, and though it was not yet twelve, I seized upon my appointment as an excuse to depart—accordingly I rose for that purpose. “I suppose,” said I to Vincent, “that you will not leave your discussion.”

“Pardon me,” said he, “amusement is quite as profitable to a man of sense as metaphysics. Allons.”

CHAPTER XVII

I was in this terrible situation when the basket stopt.
—*Oriental Tales—History of the Basket.*

We took our way to the street in which Madame Laurent resided. Meanwhile suffer me to get rid of myself, and to introduce you, dear Reader, to my friend, Monsieur Margot, the whole of whose adventures were subsequently detailed to me by the garrulous Mrs. Green.

At the hour appointed he knocked at the door of my fair countrywoman, and was carefully admitted. He was attired in a dressing-gown of sea-green silk, in which his long, lean, hungry body, looked more like a river pike than any thing human.

“Madame,” said he, with a solemn air, “I return you my best thanks for the honour you have done me—behold me at your feet!” and so saying the lean lover gravely knelt down on one knee.

“Rise, Sir,” said Mrs. Green, “I confess that you have won my heart; but that is not all—you have yet to show that you are worthy of the opinion I have formed of you. It is not, Monsieur Margot, your person that has won me—no! it is your chivalrous and noble sentiments—prove that these are genuine, and you may command all from my admiration.”

“In what manner shall I prove it, Madame,” said Monsieur Margot, rising, and gracefully drawing his sea-green gown more closely round him.

“By your courage, your devotion, and your gallantry! I ask but one proof—you can give it me on the spot. You remember, Monsieur, that in the days of romance, a lady threw her glove upon the stage on which a lion was exhibited, and told her lover to pick it up. Monsieur Margot, the trial to which I shall put you is less severe. Look, (and Mrs. Green threw open the window)—look, I throw my glove out into the street—descend for it.”

“Your commands are my law,” said the romantic Margot. “I will go forthwith,” and so saying, he went to the door.

“Hold, Sir!” said the lady, “it is not by that simple manner that you are to descend—you must go the same way as my glove, out of the window.”

“Out of the window, Madame!” said Monsieur Margot, with astonished solemnity; “that is impossible, because this apartment is three stories high, and consequently I shall be dashed to pieces.”

“By no means,” answered the dame; “in that corner of the room there is a basket, to which (already foreseeing your determination) I have affixed a rope; by that basket you shall descend. See, Monsieur, what expedients a provident love can suggest.”

“H—e—m!” said, very slowly, Monsieur Margot, by no means liking the airy voyage imposed upon him; “but the rope may break, or your hand may suffer it to slip.”

“Feel the rope,” cried the lady, “to satisfy you as to your first doubt; and, as to the second, can you—can you imagine that my affections would not make me twice as careful of your person as of my own. Fie! ungrateful Monsieur Margot! fie!”

The melancholy chevalier cast a rueful look at the basket. “Madame,” said he, “I own that I am very averse to the plan you propose: suffer me to go down stairs in the ordinary way; your glove can be as easily picked up whether your adorer goes out of the door or the window. It is only, Madame, when ordinary means fail that we should have recourse to the extraordinary.”

“Begone, Sir!” exclaimed Mrs. Green; “begone! I now perceive that your chivalry was only a pretence. Fool that I was to love you as I have done—fool that I was to imagine a hero where I now find a—”

“Pause, Madame, I will obey you—my heart is firm—see that the rope is—”

“Gallant Monsieur Margot!” cried the lady: and going to her dressing-room, she called her woman to her assistance. The rope was of the most unquestionable thickness, the basket of the most capacious dimensions. The former was fastened to a strong hook—and the latter lowered.

“I go, Madame,” said Monsieur Margot, feeling the rope; “but it really is a most dangerous exploit.”

“Go, Monsieur! and the God of St. Louis befriend you!”

“Stop!” said Monsieur Margot, “let me fetch my coat: the night is cold, and my dressing-gown thin.”

“Nay, nay, my Chevalier,” returned the dame, “I love you in that gown: it gives you an air of grace and dignity, quite enchanting.”

“It will give me my death of cold, Madame,” said Monsieur Margot, earnestly.

“Bah!” said the Englishwoman: “what knight ever feared cold? Besides, you mistake; the night is warm, and you look so handsome in your gown.”

“Do I!” said the vain Monsieur Margot, with an iron expression of satisfaction; “if that is the case, I will mind it less; but may I return by the door?”

“Yes,” replied the lady; “you see that I do not require too much from your devotion—enter.”

“Behold me!” said the French master, inserting his body into the basket, which immediately began to descend.

The hour and the police of course made the street empty; the lady’s handkerchief waved in token of encouragement and triumph. When the basket was within five yards of the ground, Mrs. Green cried to her lover, who had hitherto been elevating his serious countenance towards her, in sober, yet gallant sadness—“Look, look, Monsieur—straight before you.”

The lover turned round, as rapidly as his habits would allow him, and at that instant the window was shut, the light extinguished, and the basket arrested. There stood Monsieur Margot, upright in the basket, and there stopped the basket, motionless in the air.

What were the exact reflections of Monsieur Margot, in that position, I cannot pretend to determine, because he never favoured me with them; but about an hour afterwards, Vincent and I (who had been delayed on the road), strolling up the street, according to our appointment, perceived, by the dim lamps, some opaque body leaning against the wall of Madame Laurent’s house, at about the distance of fifteen feet from the ground.

We hastened our steps towards it; a measured and serious voice, which I well knew, accosted us—“For God’s sake, gentlemen, procure me assistance; I am the victim of a perfidious woman, and expect every moment to be precipitated to the earth.”

“Good Heavens!” said I, “surely it is Monsieur Margot, whom I hear. What are you doing there?”

“Shivering with cold,” answered Monsieur Margot, in a tone tremulously slow.

“But what are you in? for I can see nothing but a dark substance.”

“I am in a basket,” replied Monsieur Margot, “and I should be very much obliged to you to let me out of it.”

“Well—indeed,” said Vincent, (for I was too much engaged in laughing to give a ready reply,) “your Chateau-Margot has but a cool cellar. But there are some things in the world easier said than done. How are we to remove you to a more desirable place?”

“Ah,” returned Monsieur Margot, “how indeed! There is to be sure a ladder in the porter’s lodge long enough to deliver me; but then, think of the gibes and jeers of the porter—it will get wind—I shall be ridiculed, gentlemen—I shall be ridiculed—and what is worse, I shall lose my pupils.”

“My good friend,” said I, “you had better lose your pupils than your life; and the day-light will soon come, and then, instead of being ridiculed by the porter, you will be ridiculed by the whole street!”

Monsieur Margot groaned. “Go, then, my friend,” said he, “procure the ladder! Oh, those she devils!—what could make me such a fool!”

Whilst Monsieur Margot was venting his spleen in a scarcely articulate mutter, we repaired to the lodge, knocked up the porter, communicated the accident, and procured the ladder. However, an observant eye had been kept upon our proceedings, and the window above was re-opened, though so silently that I only perceived the action. The porter, a jolly, bluff, hearty-looking fellow, stood grinning below with a lantern, while we set the ladder (which only just reached the basket) against the wall.

The chevalier looked wistfully forth, and then, by the light of the lantern, we had a fair view of his ridiculous figure—his teeth chattered woefully, and the united cold without and anxiety within, threw a double sadness and solemnity upon his withered countenance; the night was very windy, and every instant a rapid current seized the unhappy sea-green vesture, whirled it in the air, and threw it, as if in scorn, over the very face of the miserable professor. The constant recurrence of this sportive irreverence of the gales—the high sides of the basket, and the trembling agitation of the inmate, never too agile, rendered it a work of some time for Monsieur Margot to transfer himself from the basket to the ladder; at length, he had fairly got out one thin, shivering leg.

“Thank God!” said the pious professor—when at that instant the thanksgiving was checked, and, to Monsieur Margot’s inexpressible astonishment and dismay, the basket rose five feet from the ladder, leaving its tenant with one leg dangling out, like a flag from a balloon.

The ascent was too rapid to allow Monsieur Margot even time for an exclamation, and it was not till he had had sufficient leisure in his present elevation to perceive all its consequences, that he found words to say, with the most earnest tone of thoughtful lamentation, “One could not have foreseen this!—it is really extremely distressing—would to God that I could get my leg in, or my body out!”

While we were yet too convulsed with laughter to make any comment upon the unlooked-for ascent of the luminous Monsieur Margot, the basket descended with such force as to dash the lantern out of the hand of the porter, and to bring the professor so precipitously to the ground, that all the bones in his skin rattled audibly!

“My God!” said he, “I am done for!—be witness how inhumanly I have been murdered.”

We pulled him out of the basket, and carried him between us into the porter’s lodge; but the woes of Monsieur Margot were not yet at their termination. The room was crowded. There was Madame Laurent,—there was the German count, whom the professor was teaching French;—there was the French viscount, whom he was teaching German;—there were all his fellow-lodgers—the ladies whom he had boasted of—the men he had boasted to—Don Juan, in the infernal regions, could not have met with a more unwelcome set of old acquaintance than Monsieur Margot had the happiness of opening his bewildered eyes upon in the porter’s lodge.

“What!” cried they all, “Monsieur Margot, is that you who have been frightening us so? We thought the house was attacked; the Russian general is at this very moment loading his pistols; lucky for you that you did not choose to stay longer in that situation. Pray, Monsieur, what could induce you to exhibit yourself so, in your dressing-gown too, and the night so cold? Ar’n’t you ashamed of yourself?”

All this, and infinitely more, was levelled against the miserable professor, who stood shivering with cold and fright; and turning his eyes first upon one, and then on another, as the exclamations circulated round the room,

“I do assure you,” at length he began.

“No, no,” cried one, “it is of no use explaining now!”

“Mais, Messieurs,” querulously recommenced the unhappy Margot.

“Hold your tongue,” exclaimed Madame Laurent, “you have been disgracing my house.”

“Mais, Madame, écoutez-moi—”

“No, no,” cried the German, “we saw you—we saw you.”

“Mais, Monsieur Le Comte—” “Fie, fie!” cried the Frenchman.

“Mais, Monsisur Le Vicomte—” At this every mouth was opened, and the patience of Monsieur Margot being by this time exhausted, he flew into a violent rage; his tormentors pretended an equal indignation, and at length he fought his way out of the room, as fast as his shattered bones would allow him, followed by the whole body, screaming, and shouting, and scolding, and laughing after him.

The next morning passed without my usual lesson from Monsieur Margot; that was natural enough: but when the next day, and the next, rolled on, and brought neither Monsieur Margot nor his excuse, I began to be uneasy for the poor man. Accordingly I sent to Madame Laurent’s to inquire after him: judge of my surprise at hearing that he had, early the day after his adventure, left his lodgings with his small possession of books and clothes, leaving only a note to Madame Laurent, enclosing the amount of his debt to her, and that none had since seen or heard of him.

From that day to this I have never once beheld him. The poor professor lost even the little money due to him for his lessons—so true is it, that in a man of Monsieur Margot’s temper, even interest is a subordinate passion to vanity.

CHAPTER XVIII

*It is good to be merry and wise,
It's good to be honest and true;
It is good to be off with the old love
Before you be on with the new.*

—Song.

One morning, when I was riding to the Bois de Boulogne (the celebrated place of assignation), in order to meet Madame d'Anville, I saw a lady on horseback, in the most imminent danger of being thrown. Her horse had taken fright at an English tandem, or its driver, and was plunging violently; the lady was evidently much frightened, and lost her presence of mind more and more every moment. A man who was with her, and who could scarcely manage his own horse, appeared to be exceedingly desirous, but perfectly unable, to assist her; and a great number of people were looking on, doing nothing, and saying "Good God, how dangerous!"

I have always had a great horror of being a hero in scenes, and a still greater antipathy to "females in distress." However, so great is the effect of sympathy upon the most hardened of us, that I stopped for a few moments, first to look on, and secondly to assist. Just when a moment's delay might have been dangerous, I threw myself off my horse, seized her's with one hand, by the rein which she no longer had the strength to hold, and assisted her with the other to dismount. When all the peril was over, Monsieur, her companion, managed also to find his legs; and I did not, I confess, wonder at his previous delay, when I discovered that the lady in danger had been his wife. He gave me a profusion of thanks, and she made them more than complimentary by the glance which accompanied them. Their carriage was in attendance at a short distance behind. The husband went for it—I remained with the lady.

"Mr. Pelham," she said, "I have heard much of you from my friend Madame D'Anville, and have long been anxious for your acquaintance. I did not think I should commence it with so great an obligation."

Flattered by being already known by name, and a subject of previous interest, you may be sure that I tried every method to improve the opportunity I had gained; and when I handed my new acquaintance into her carriage, my pressure of her hand was somewhat more than slightly returned.

"Shall you be at the English ambassador's to-night?" said the lady, as they were about to shut the door of the carriage.

"Certainly, if you are to be there," was my answer.

"We shall meet then," said Madame, and her look said more.

I rode into the Bois; and giving my horse to my servant, as I came near Passy, where I was to meet Madame D'Anville, I proceeded thither on foot. I was just in sight of the spot, and indeed of my inamorata, when two men passed, talking very earnestly; they did not remark me, but what individual could ever escape my notice? The one was Thornton; the other—who could he be? Where had I seen that pale, but more than beautiful countenance before? I looked again. I was satisfied that I was mistaken in my first thought; the hair was of a completely different colour. "No, no," said I, "it is not he: yet how like."

I was distraught and absent during the whole time I was with Madame D'Anville. The face of Thornton's companion haunted me like a dream; and, to say the truth, there were also moments when the recollection of my new engagement for the evening made me tired with that which I was enjoying the troublesome honour of keeping.

Madame D'Anville was not slow in perceiving the coldness of my behaviour. Though a Frenchwoman, she was rather grieved than resentful.

"You are growing tired of me, my friend," she said: "and when I consider your youth and temptations, I cannot be surprised at it—yet, I own, that this thought gives me much greater pain than I could have supposed."

"Bah! ma belle amie," cried I, "you deceive yourself—I adore you—I shall always adore you; but it's getting very late."

Madame D'Anville sighed, and we parted. "She is not half so pretty or agreeable as she was," thought I, as I mounted my horse, and remembered my appointment at the ambassador's.

I took unusual pains with my appearance that evening, and drove to the ambassador's hotel in the Rue Faubourg St. Honore, full half an hour earlier than I had ever done before. I had been some time in the rooms without discovering my heroine of the morning. The Duchess of H—n passed by.

"What a wonderfully beautiful woman," said Mr. Howard de Howard (the spectral secretary of the embassy) to Mr. Aberton.

"Ay," answered Aberton, "but to my taste, the Duchesse de Perpignan is quite equal to her—do you know her?"

"No—yes!" said Mr. Howard de Howard; "that is, not exactly—not well;" an Englishman never owns that he does not know a duchess.

"Hem!" said Mr. Aberton, thrusting his large hand through his lank light hair. "Hem—could one do anything, do you think, in that quarter?"

"I should think one might, with a tolerable person!" answered the spectral secretary, looking down at a pair of most shadowy supporters.

"Pray," said Aberton, "what do you think of Miss—? they say she is an heiress."

"Think of her!" said the secretary, who was as poor as he was thin, "why, I have thought of her!"

"They say, that fool Pelham makes up to her." (Little did Mr. Aberton imagine, when he made this remark, that I was close behind him.)

"I should not imagine that was true," said the secretary; "he is so occupied with Madame D'Anville."

"Pooh!" said Aberton, dictatorially, "she never had any thing to say to him."

"Why are you so sure?" said Mr. Howard de Howard.

"Why? because he never showed any notes from her, or ever even said he had a liaison with her himself!"

"Ah! that is quite enough!" said the secretary. "But, is not that the Duchesse de Perpignan?"

Mr. Aberton turned, and so did I—our eyes met—his fell—well they might, after his courteous epithet to my name; however, I had far too good an opinion of myself to care one straw about his; besides, at that moment, I was wholly lost in my surprise and pleasure, in finding that this Duchesse de Perpignan was no other than my acquaintance of the morning. She caught my gaze and smiled as she bowed. "Now," thought I, as I approached her, "let us see if we cannot eclipse Mr. Aberton."

All love-making is just the same, and, therefore, I shall spare the reader my conversation that evening. When he recollects that it was Henry Pelham who was the gallant, I am persuaded that he will be pretty certain as to the success.

VOLUME II

CHAPTER XIX

*Alea sequa vorax species certissima furti
Non contenta bonis, animum quoque perfida mergit;—
Furca, furax—infamis, iners, furiosa, ruina.*

Petrarch: Dial.

I dined the next day at the Freres Provencaux; an excellent restaurateur's, by-the-by, where one gets irreproachable gibier, and meets no English. After dinner, I strolled into the various gambling houses, with which the Palais Royal abounds.

In one of these, the crowd and heat were so great, that I should immediately have retired if I had not been struck with the extreme and intense expression of interest in the countenance of one of the spectators at the rouge et noir table. He was a man about forty years of age; his complexion was dark and sallow; the features prominent, and what are generally called handsome; but there was a certain sinister expression in his eyes and mouth, which rendered the effect of his physiognomy rather disagreeable than prepossessing. At a small distance from him, and playing, with an air which, in its carelessness and nonchalance, formed a remarkable contrast to the painful anxiety of the man I have just described, sat Mr. Thornton.

At first sight, these two appeared to be the only Englishmen present besides myself; I was more struck by seeing the former in that scene, than I was at meeting Thornton there; for there was something distingue in the mien of the stranger, which suited far worse with the appearance of the place, than the bourgeois air and dress of my ci-devant second.

"What! another Englishman?" thought I, as I turned round and perceived a thick, rough great coat, which could possibly belong to no continental shoulders. The wearer was standing directly opposite the seat of the swarthy stranger; his hat was slouched over his face; I moved in order to get a clearer view of his countenance. It was the same person I had seen with Thornton that morning. Never to this moment have I forgotten the stern and ferocious expression with which he was gazing upon the keen and agitated features of the gambler opposite. In the eye and lip there was neither pleasure, hatred, nor scorn, in their simple and unalloyed elements; but each seemed blent and mingled into one deadly concentration of evil passions.

This man neither played, nor spoke, nor moved. He appeared utterly insensible of every feeling in common with those around. There he stood, wrapt in his own dark and inscrutable thoughts, never, for one instant, taking his looks from the varying countenance which did not observe their gaze, nor altering the withering character of their almost demoniacal expression. I could not tear myself from the spot. I felt chained by some mysterious and undefinable interest; my attention was first diverted into a new channel, by a loud exclamation from the dark visaged gambler at the table; it was the first he had uttered, notwithstanding his anxiety; and, from the deep, thrilling tone in which it was expressed, it conveyed a keen sympathy with the overcharged feelings which it burst from.

With a trembling hand, he took from an old purse the few Napoleons that were still left there. He set them all at one hazard, on the rouge. He hung over the table with a dropping lip; his hands were tightly clasped in each other; his nerves seemed strained into the last agony of excitation. I ventured to raise my eyes upon the gaze, which I felt must still be upon the gambler—there it was fixed, and stern as before; but it now conveyed a deeper expression of joy than of the other passions which were

there met. Yet a joy so malignant and fiendish, that no look of mere anger or hatred could have so chilled my heart. I dropped my eyes. I redoubled my attention to the cards—the last two were to be turned up. A moment more!—the fortune was to the noir. The stranger had lost! He did not utter a single word. He looked with a vacant eye on the long mace, with which the marker had swept away his last hopes, with his last coin, and then, rising, left the room, and disappeared.

The other Englishman was not long in following him. He uttered a short, low, laugh, unobserved, perhaps, by any one but myself; and, pushing through the atmosphere of sacres and mille tonnerres, which filled that pandaemonium, strode quickly to the door. I felt as if a load had been taken from my bosom, when he was gone.

CHAPTER XX

Reddere personae scit convenientia cuique.
—*Horace: Ars Poetica.*

I was loitering over my breakfast the next morning, and thinking of the last night's scene, when Lord Vincent was announced.

"How fares the gallant Pelham?" said he, as he entered the room.

"Why, to say the truth," I replied, "I am rather under the influence of blue devils this morning, and your visit is like a sun-beam in November."

"A bright thought," said Vincent, "and I shall make you a very pretty little poet soon; publish you in a neat octavo, and dedicate you to Lady D—e. Pray, by the by, have you ever read her plays? You know they were only privately printed?"

"No," said I, (for in good truth, had his lordship interrogated me touching any other literary production, I should have esteemed it a part of my present character to return the same answer.)

"No!" repeated Vincent; "permit me to tell you, that you must never seem ignorant of any work not published. To be recherche, one must always know what other people don't—and then one has full liberty to sneer at the value of what other people do know. Renounce the threshold of knowledge. There every new proselyte can meet you. Boast of your acquaintance with the sanctum, and not one in ten thousand can dispute it with you. Have you read Monsieur de C—'s pamphlet?"

"Really," said I, "I have been so busy."

"Ah, mon ami!" cried Vincent, "the greatest sign of an idle man is to complain of being busy. But you have had a loss: the pamphlet is good. C—, by the way, has an extraordinary, though not an expanded mind; it is like a citizen's garden near London: a pretty parterre here, and a Chinese pagoda there; an oak tree in one corner, and a mushroom bed in the other. You may traverse the whole in a stride; it is the four quarters of the globe in a mole-hill. Yet every thing is good in its kind; and is neither without elegance nor design in its arrangement."

"What do you think," said I, "of the Baron de—, the minister of—?"

"Of him!" replied Vincent—

"His soul Still sits at squat, and peeps not from its hole."

"It is dark and bewildered—full of dim visions of the ancient regime;—it is a bat hovering about the chambers of an old ruin. Poor, antique little soul! but I will say nothing more about it,—

"For who would be satirical Upon a thing so very small' as the soul of the Baron de ———?"

Finding Lord Vincent so disposed to the biting mood, I immediately directed his rambles towards Mr. Aberton, for whom I had a most inexpressible contempt.

"Aberton," said Vincent, in answer to my question, if he knew that aimable attache—"Yes! a sort of man who, speaking of the English embassy, says we—who sticks his best cards on his chimney-piece, and writes himself billets-doux from duchesses. A duodecimo of 'precious conceits,' bound in calf-skin—I know the man well; does he not dress decently, Pelham?"

"His clothes are well made," said I; "but no man can dress well with those hands and feet!"

"Ah!" said Vincent, "I should think he went to the best tailor, and said, 'give me a collar like Lord So and So's'; one who would not dare to have a new waistcoat till it had been authoritatively patronized, and who took his fashions, like his follies, from the best proficients. Such fellows are always too ashamed of themselves not to be proud of their clothes—like the Chinese mariners, they burn incense before the needle!"

"And Mr. Howard de Howard," said I, laughing, "what do you think of him?"

"What! the thin secretary?" cried Vincent.

“He is the mathematical definition of a straight line—length without breadth. His inseparable friend, Mr. Aberton, was running up the Rue St. Honore yesterday in order to catch him.”

“Running!” cried I, “just like common people—when were you or I ever seen running?”

“True,” continued Vincent; “but when I saw him chasing that meagre apparition, I said to Bennington, ‘I have found out the real Peter Schlemil!’ ‘Who?’ (asked his grave lordship, with serious naivete) ‘Mr. Aberton,’ said I; ‘don’t you see him running after his shadow?’ But the pride of the lean thing is so amusing! He is fifteenth cousin to the duke, and so his favourite exordium is, ‘Whenever I succeed to the titles of my ancestors.’ It was but the other day, that he heard two or three silly young men discussing church and state, and they began by talking irreligion—(Mr. Howard de Howard is too unsubstantial not to be spiritually inclined)—however he only fidgeted in his chair. They then proceeded to be exceedingly disloyal. Mr. Howard de Howard fidgeted again;—they then passed to vituperations on the aristocracy—this the attenuated pomposity (*magni nominis umbra*) could brook no longer. He rose up, cast a severe look on the abashed youths, and thus addressed them—‘Gentlemen, I have sate by in silence, and heard my King derided, and my God blasphemed; but now in attacking the aristocracy, I can no longer refrain from noticing so obviously intentional an insult. You have become personal.’ But did you know, Pelham, that he is going to be married?”

“No,” said I. “I can’t say that I thought such an event likely. Who is the intended?”

“A Miss—, a girl with some fortune. ‘I can bring her none,’ said he to the father, ‘but I can make her Mrs. Howard de Howard.’”

“Alas, poor girl!” said I, “I fear that her happiness will hang upon a slender thread. But suppose we change the conversation: first, because the subject is so meagre, that we might easily wear it out, and secondly, because such jests may come home. I am not very corpulent myself.”

“Bah!” said Vincent, “but at least you have bones and muscles. If you were to pound the poor secretary in a mortar, you might take him all up in a pinch of snuff.”

“Pray, Vincent,” said I, after a short pause, “did you ever meet with a Mr. Thornton, at Paris?”

“Thornton, Thornton,” said Vincent, musingly; “what, Tom Thornton?”

“I should think, very likely,” I replied; “just the sort of man who would be Tom Thornton—has a broad face, with a colour, and wears a spotted neckcloth; Tom—what could his name be but Tom?”

“Is he about five-and-thirty?” asked Vincent, “rather short, and with reddish coloured hair and whiskers?”

“Precisely,” said I; “are not all Toms alike?”

“Ah,” said Vincent, “I know him well: he is a clever, shrewd fellow, but a most unmitigated rascal. He is the son of a steward in Lancashire, and received an attorney’s education; but being a humorous, noisy fellow, he became a great favourite with his father’s employer, who was a sort of Mecaenas to cudgel players, boxers, and horse jockies. At his house, Thornton met many persons of rank, but of a taste similar to their host’s: and they, mistaking his vulgar coarseness for honesty, and his quaint proverbs for wit, admitted him into their society. It was with one of them that I have seen him. I believe of late, that his character has been of a very indifferent odour: and whatever has brought him among the English at Paris—those white-washed abominations—those ‘innocent blacknesses,’ as Charles Lamb calls chimney sweepers, it does not argue well for his professional occupations. I should think, however, that he manages to live here; for wherever there are English fools, there are fine pickings for an English rogue.”

“Ay,” said I, “but are there enough fools here, to feed the rogues?”

“Yes, because rogues are like spiders, and eat each other, when there is nothing else to catch; and Tom Thornton is safe, as long as the ordinary law of nature lasts, that the greater knave preys on the lesser, for there cannot possibly be a greater knave than he is. If you have made his acquaintance, my dear Pelham, I advise you most soberly to look to yourself, for if he doth not steal, beg, or borrow of you, Mr. Howard de Howard will grow fat, and even Mr. Aberton cease to be a fool. And now, most noble Pelham, farewell. *Il est plus aise d’etre sage pour les autres que de l’etre pour soi-meme.*”

CHAPTER XXI

*This is a notable couple—and have met
But for some secret knavery.*

—The Tanner of Tyburn.

I had now been several weeks in Paris, and I was not altogether dissatisfied with the manner in which they had been spent. I had enjoyed myself to the utmost, while I had, as much as possible, combined profit with pleasure; viz. if I went to the Opera in the evening, I learned to dance in the morning; if I drove to a soiree at the Duchesse de Perpignan's, it was not till I had fenced an hour at the Salon des Assauts d'Armes; and if I made love to the duchess herself it was sure to be in a position I had been a whole week in acquiring from my master of the graces; in short, I took the greatest pains to complete my education. I wish all young men who frequented the Continent for that purpose, could say the same.

One day (about a week after the conversation with Vincent, recorded in my last CHAPTER) I was walking slowly along one of the paths in the Jardin des Plantes, meditating upon the various excellencies of the Rocher de Cancale and the Duchesse de Perpignan, when I perceived a tall man, with a thick, rough coat, of a dark colour (which I recognized long before I did the face of the wearer) emerging from an intersecting path. He stopped for a few moments, and looked round as if expecting some one. Presently a woman, apparently about thirty, and meanly dressed, appeared in an opposite direction. She approached him; they exchanged a few words, and then, the woman taking his arm, they struck into another path, and were soon out of sight. I suppose that the reader has already discovered that this man was Thornton's companion in the Bois de Boulogne, and the hero of the Salon de Jeu, in the Palais Royal. I could not have supposed that so noble a countenance, even in its frowns, could ever have wasted its smiles upon a mistress of that low station to which the woman who had met him evidently belonged. However, we all have our little foibles, as the Frenchman said, when he boiled his grandmother's head in a pipkin.

I myself was, at that time, the sort of person that is always taken by a pretty face, however coarse may be the garments which set it off; and although I cannot say that I ever stooped so far as to become amorous of a chambermaid, yet I could be tolerably lenient to any man under thirty who did. As a proof of this gentleness of disposition, ten minutes after I had witnessed so unsuitable a rencontre, I found myself following a pretty little bourgeoisie into a small sort of cabaret, which was, at the time I speak of (and most probably still is), in the midst of the gardens. I sat down, and called for my favourite drink of lemonade; the little grisette, who was with an old woman, possibly her mother, and un beau gros garcon, probably her lover, sat opposite, and began, with all the ineffable coquetries of her country, to divide her attention between the said garcon and myself. Poor fellow, he seemed to be very little pleased by the significant glances exchanged over his right shoulder, and, at last, under pretence of screening her from the draught of the open window, placed himself exactly between us. This, however ingenious, did not at all answer his expectations; for he had not sufficiently taken into consideration, that I also was endowed with the power of locomotion; accordingly I shifted my chair about three feet, and entirely defeated the countermarch of the enemy.

But this flirtation did not last long; the youth and the old woman appeared very much of the same opinion as to its impropriety; and accordingly, like experienced generals, resolved to conquer by a retreat; they drank up their orgeat—paid for it—placed the wavering regiment in the middle, and left me master of the field. I was not, however, of a disposition to break my heart at such an

occurrence, and I remained by the window, drinking my lemonade, and muttering to myself, "After all, women are a great bore."

On the outside of the cabaret, and just under my window, was a bench, which for a certain number of sous, one might appropriate to the entire and unparticipated use of one's self and party. An old woman (so at least I suppose by her voice, for I did not give myself the trouble of looking, though, indeed as to that matter, it might have been the shrill treble of Mr. Howard de Howard) had been hitherto engrossing this settlement with some gallant or other. In Paris, no women are too old to get an amant, either by love or money. In a moment of tenderness, this couple paired off, and were immediately succeeded by another. The first tones of the man's voice, low as they were, made me start from my seat. I cast one quick glance before I resumed it. The new pair were the Englishman I had before noted in the garden, and the female companion who had joined him.

"Two hundred pounds, you say?" muttered the man; "we must have it all."

"But," said the woman, in the same whispered voice, "he says, that he will never touch another card."

The man laughed. "Fool," said he, "the passions are not so easily quelled—how many days is it since he had this remittance from England?"

"About three," replied the woman.

"And it is absolutely the very last remnant of his property?"

"The last."

"I am then to understand, that when this is spent there is nothing between him and beggary?"

"Nothing," said the woman, with a half sigh.

The man laughed again, and then rejoined in an altered tone, "Then, then will this parching thirst be quenched at last. I tell you, woman, that it is many months since I have known a day—night—hour, in which my life has been as the life of other men. My whole soul has been melted down into one burning, burning thought. Feel this hand—ay, you may well start—but what is the fever of the frame to that within?"

Here the voice sunk so low as to be inaudible. The woman seemed as if endeavouring to sooth him; at length she said—"But poor Tyrrell—you will not, surely, suffer him to die of actual starvation?"

The man paused for a few moments, and then replied—"Night and day, I pray to God, upon my bended knees, only one unvarying, unceasing prayer, and that is—'When the last agonies shall be upon that man—when, sick with weariness, pain, disease, hunger, he lies down to die—when the death-gurgle is in the throat, and the eye swims beneath the last dull film—when remembrance peoples the chamber with Hell, and his cowardice would falter forth its dastard recantation to Heaven—then—may I be there?'"

There was a long pause, only broken by the woman's sobs, which she appeared endeavouring to stifle. At last the man rose, and in a tone so soft that it seemed literally like music, addressed her in the most endearing terms. She soon yielded to their persuasion, and replied to them with interest. "Spite of the stings of my remorse," she said, "as long as I lose not you, I will lose life, honour, hope, even soul itself!"

They both quitted the spot as she said this.

O, that woman's love! how strong is it in its weakness! how beautiful in its guilt!

CHAPTER XXII

*At length the treacherous snare was laid,
Poor pug was caught—to town convey'd;
There sold. How envied was his doom,
Made captive in a lady's room!*

—*Gay's Fables.*

I was sitting alone a morning or two after this adventure, when Bedos entering, announced une dame. This dame was a fine tall thing, dressed out like a print in the Magasin des Modes. She sate herself down, threw up her veil, and, after a momentary pause, asked me if I liked my apartment?

"Very much," said I, somewhat surprised at the nature of the interrogatory.

"Perhaps you would wish it altered in some way?" rejoined the lady.

"Non—mille remerciemens!" said I—"you are very good to be so interested in my accommodation."

"Those curtains might be better arranged—that sofa replaced with a more elegant one," continued my new superintendant.

"Really," said I, "I am too, too much flattered. Perhaps you would like to have my rooms altogether; if so, make at least no scruple of saying it."

"Oh, no," replied the lady, "I have no objection to your staying here."

"You are too kind," said I, with a low bow.

There was a pause of some moments—I took advantage of it.

"I think, Madame, I have the honour of speaking to—to—to—"

"The mistress of the hotel," said the lady, quietly. "I merely called to ask you how you did, and hope you were well accommodated."

"Rather late, considering I have been six weeks in the house," thought I, revolving in my mind various reports I had heard of my present visitor's disposition to gallantry. However, seeing it was all over with me, I resigned myself, with the patience of a martyr, to the fate that I foresaw. I rose, approached her chair, took her hand (very hard and thin it was too), and thanked her with a most affectionate squeeze.

"I have seen much English!" said the lady, for the first time speaking in our language.

"Ah!" said I, giving another squeeze.

"You are handsome, garcon," renewed the lady.

"I am so," I replied.

At that moment Bedos entered, and whispered that Madame D'Anville was in the anti-room.

"Good heavens!" said I, knowing her jealousy of disposition, "what is to be done? Oblige me, Madame," seizing the unfortunate mistress of the hotel, and opening the door to the back entrance—"There," said I, "you can easily escape. Bon jour."

Hardly had I closed the door, and put the key in my pocket, before Madame D'Anville entered.

"Do you generally order your servants to keep me waiting in your anti-room?" said she haughtily.

"Not generally," I replied, endeavouring to make my peace; but all my complaisance was in vain—she was jealous of my intimacy with the Duchesse de Perpignan, and glad of any excuse to vent her pique. I am just the sort of man to bear, but never to forgive a woman's ill temper, viz.—it makes no impression on me at the time, but leaves a sore recollection of something disagreeable, which I internally resolve never again to experience. Madame D'Anville was going to the Luxembourg; and my only chance of soothing her anger was to accompany her.

Down stairs, therefore, we went, and drove to the Luxembourg; I gave Bedos, before my departure, various little commissions, and told him he need not be at home till the evening. Long before the expiration of an hour, Madame D'Anville's ill humour had given me an excuse for affecting it myself. Tired to death of her, and panting for release, I took a high tone—complained of her ill temper, and her want of love—spoke rapidly—waited for no reply, and leaving her at the Luxembourg, proceeded forthwith to Galignani's, like a man just delivered from a strait waistcoat.

Leave me now, for a few minutes, in the reading-room at Galignani's, and return to the mistress of the hotel, whom I had so unceremoniously thrust out of my salon. The passage into which she had been put communicated by one door with my rooms, and by another with the staircase. Now, it had so happened, that Bedos was in the habit of locking the latter door, and keeping the key; the other egress, it will be remembered, I myself had secured; so that the unfortunate mistress of the hotel was no sooner turned into this passage than she found herself in a sort of dungeon, ten feet by five, and surrounded, like Eve in Paradise, by a whole creation—not of birds, beasts, and fishes, but of brooms, brushes, unclean linen, and a wood-basket. What she was to do in this dilemma was utterly inconceivable; scream, indeed, she might, but then the shame and ridicule of being discovered in so equivocal a situation, were somewhat more than our discreet landlady could endure. Besides, such an expose might be attended with a loss the good woman valued more than reputation, viz. lodgers; for the possessors of the two best floors were both Englishwomen of a certain rank; and my landlady had heard such accounts of our national virtue, that she feared an instantaneous emigration of such inveterate prudes, if her screams and situation reached their ears.

Quietly then, and soberly, did the good lady sit, eyeing the brooms and brushes as they grew darker and darker with the approach of the evening, and consoling herself with the certainty that her release must eventually take place.

Meanwhile, to return to myself—from which dear little person, I very seldom, even in imagination, digress—I found Lord Vincent at Galignani's, carefully looking over “Choice Extracts from the best English Authors.”

“Ah, my good fellow!” said he, “I am delighted to see you; I made such a capital quotation just now: the young Benningtons were drowning a poor devil of a puppy; the youngest (to whom the mother belonged) looked on with a grave earnest face, till the last kick was over, and then burst into tears. ‘Why do you cry so?’ said I. ‘Because it was so cruel in us to drown the poor puppy!’ replied the juvenile Philocunos. ‘Pooh,’ said I, ‘Quid juvat errores mersa jam puppe fateri.’” Was it not good?—you remember it in Claudian, eh, Pelham? Think of its being thrown away on those Latinless young lubbers! Have you seen any thing of Mr. Thornton lately?”

“No,” said I, “I’ve not, but I am determined to have that pleasure soon.”

“You will do as you please,” said Vincent, “but you will be like the child playing with edged tools.”

“I am not a child,” said I, “so the simile is not good. He must be the devil himself, or a Scotchman at least, to take me in.”

Vincent shook his head. “Come and dine with me at the Rocher,” said he; “we are a party of six—choice spirits all.”

“Volontiers; but we can stroll in the Tuileries first, if you have no other engagement.”

“None,” said Vincent, putting his arm in mine.

As we passed up the Rue de la Paix, we met Sir Henry Millington, mounted on a bay horse, as stiff as himself, and cantering down the street as if he and his steed had been cut out of pasteboard together.

“I wish,” said Vincent, (to borrow Luttrell's quotation,) “that that master of arts would ‘cleanse his bosom of that perilous stuff.’ I should like to know in what recess of that immense mass now cantering round the corner is the real body of Sir Henry Millington. I could fancy the poor snug little thing shrinking within, like a guilty conscience. Ah, well says Juvenal,

“Mors sola fatetur Quantula sint hominum corpuscula.”

“He has a superb head, though,” I replied. “I like to allow that other people are handsome now and then—it looks generous.”

“Yes,” said Vincent, “for a barber’s block: but here comes Mrs. C—me, and her beautiful daughter—those are people you ought to know, if you wish to see human nature a little relieved from the frivolities which make it in society so like a man milliner. Mrs. C—has considerable genius, combined with great common sense.”

“A rare union,” said I.

“By no means,” replied Vincent. “It is a cant antithesis in opinion to oppose them to one another; but, so far as mere theoretical common sense is concerned, I would much sooner apply to a great poet or a great orator for advice on matter of business, than any dull plodder who has passed his whole life in a counting-house. Common sense is only a modification of talent—genius is an exaltation of it: the difference is, therefore, in the degree, not nature. But to return to Mrs. C—; she writes beautiful poetry—almost impromptu; draws excellent caricatures; possesses a laugh for whatever is ridiculous, but never loses a smile for whatever is good. Placed in very peculiar situations, she has passed through each with a grace and credit which make her best eulogium. If she possesses one quality higher than intellect, it is her kindness of heart: no wonder indeed, that she is so really clever—those trees which are the soundest at the core produce the finest fruits, and the most beautiful blossoms.”

“Lord Vincent grows poetical,” thought I—“how very different he really is to that which he affects to be in the world; but so it is with every one—we are all like the ancient actors: let our faces be ever so beautiful, we must still wear a mask.”

After an hour’s walk, Vincent suddenly recollected that he had a commission of a very important nature in the Rue J. J. Rousseau. This was—to buy a monkey. “It is for Wormwood,” said he, “who has written me a long letter, describing its’ qualities and qualifications. I suppose he wants it for some practical joke—some embodied bitterness—God forbid I should thwart him in so charitable a design!”

“Amen,” said I; and we proceeded together to the monkey-fancier. After much deliberation we at last decided upon the most hideous animal I ever beheld—it was of a—no, I will not attempt to describe it—it would be quite impossible! Vincent was so delighted with our choice that he insisted upon carrying it away immediately.

“Is it quite quiet?” I asked.

“Comme un oiseau,” said the man.

We called a fiacre—paid for monsieur Jocko, and drove to Vincent’s apartments; there we found, however, that his valet had gone out and taken the key.

“Hang it,” said Vincent, “it does not signify! We’ll carry le petit monsieur with us to the Rocher.”

Accordingly we all three once more entered the fiacre, and drove to the celebrated restaurateur’s of the Rue Mont Orgueil. O, blissful recollections of that dinner! how at this moment you crowd upon my delighted remembrance! Lonely and sorrowful as I now sit, digesting with many a throe the iron thews of a British beef-steak—more anglico—immeasurably tough—I see the grateful apparitions of Escallopes de Saumon and Laitances de Carps rise in a gentle vapour before my eyes! breathing a sweet and pleasant odour, and contrasting the dream-like delicacies of their hue and aspect, with the dire and dure realities which now weigh so heavily on the region below my heart! And thou, most beautiful of all—thou evening star of entremets—thou that delightest in truffles, and gloriest in a dark cloud of sauces—exquisite foie-gras!—Have I forgotten thee? Do I not, on the contrary, see thee—smell thee—taste thee—and almost die with rapture of thy possession? What, though the goose, of which thou art a part, has, indeed, been roasted alive by a slow fire, in order to increase thy divine proportions—yet has not our Almanach—the Almanach des Gourmands—truly declared that the goose rejoiced amid all her tortures—because of the glory that awaited her? Did she not, in prophetic vision, behold her enlarged and ennobled foie dilate into pates and steam into sautees—the

companion of truffles—the glory of dishes—the delight—the treasure—the transport of gourmands! O, exalted among birds—apotheosised goose, did not thy heart exult even when thy liver parched and swelled within thee, from that most agonizing death; and didst thou not, like the Indian at the stake, triumph in the very torments which alone could render thee illustrious?

After dinner we grew exceedingly merry. Vincent punned and quoted; we laughed and applauded; and our Burgundy went round with an alacrity, to which every new joke gave an additional impetus. Monsieur Jocko was by no means the dullest in the party; he cracked his nuts with as much grace as we did our jests, and grinned and chatted as facetiously as the best of us. After coffee we were all so pleased with one another, that we resolved not to separate, and accordingly we adjourned to my rooms, Jocko and all, to find new revelries and grow brilliant over Curacoa punch.

We entered my salon with a roar, and set Bedos to work at the punch forthwith. Bedos, that Ganymede of a valet, had himself but just arrived, and was unlocking the door as we entered. We soon blew up a glorious fire, and our spirits brightened in proportion. Monsieur Jocko sate on Vincent's knee—*Ne monstrum*, as he classically termed it. One of our *compotatores* was playing with it. Jocko grew suddenly in earnest—a grin—a scratch and a bite, were the work of a moment.

“*Ne quid nimis*—now,” said Vincent, gravely, instead of endeavouring to soothe the afflicted party, who grew into a towering passion. Nothing but Jocko's absolute disgrace could indeed have saved his life from the vengeance of the sufferer.

“Where shall we banish him?” said Vincent.

“Oh,” I replied, “put him out in that back passage; the outer door is shut; he'll be quite safe;” and to the passage he was therefore immediately consigned.

It was in this place, the reader will remember, that the hapless Dame du Chateau was at that very instant in “*durance vile*.” Bedos, who took the condemned monkey, opened the door, thrust Jocko in, and closed it again. Meanwhile we resumed our merriment.

“*Nunc est bibendum*,” said Vincent, as Bedos placed the punch on the table. “Give us a toast, Dartmore.”

Lord Dartmore was a young man, with tremendous spirits, which made up for wit. He was just about to reply, when a loud shriek was heard from Jocko's place of banishment: a sort of scramble ensued, and the next moment the door was thrown violently open, and in rushed the terrified landlady, screaming like a sea-gull, and bearing Jocko aloft upon her shoulders, from which “bad eminence” he was grinning and chattering with the fury of fifty devils. She ran twice round the room, and then sunk on the floor in hysterics. We lost no time in hastening to her assistance; but the warlike Jocko, still sitting upon her, refused to permit one of us to approach. There he sat, turning from side to side, showing his sharp, white teeth, and uttering from time to time the most menacing and diabolical sounds.

“What the deuce shall we do?” cried Dartmore.

“Do?” said Vincent, who was convulsed with laughter, and yet endeavouring to speak gravely; “why, watch like L. Opimius, ‘*ne quid respublica detrimenti caperet*.’”

“By Jove, Pelham, he will scratch out the lady's beaux yeux,” cried the good-natured Dartmore, endeavouring to seize the monkey by the tail, for which he very narrowly escaped with an un mutilated visage. But the man who had before suffered by Jocko's ferocity, and whose breast was still swelling with revenge, was glad of so favourable an opportunity and excuse for wreaking it. He seized the poker, made three strides to Jocko, who set up an ineffable cry of defiance, and with a single blow split the skull of the unhappy monkey in twain. It fell with one convulsion on the ground, and gave up the ghost.

We then raised the unfortunate landlady, placed her on the sofa, and Dartmore administered a plentiful potation of the Curacoa punch. By slow degrees she revived, gave three most doleful suspirations, and then, starting up, gazed wildly around her. Half of us were still laughing—my unfortunate self among the number; this the enraged landlady no sooner perceived than she imagined

herself the victim of some preconcerted villainy. Her lips trembled with passion—she uttered the most dreadful imprecations; and had I not retired into a corner, and armed myself with the dead body of Jocko, which I wielded with exceeding valour, she might, with the simple weapons with which nature had provided her hands, have for ever demolished the loves and graces that abide in the face of Henry Pelham.

When at last she saw that nothing hostile was at present to be effected, she drew herself up, and giving Bedos a tremendous box on the ear, as he stood grinning beside her, marched out of the room.

We then again rallied around the table, more than ever disposed to be brilliant, and kept up till day break a continued fire of jests upon the heroine of the passage. “Cum qua (as Vincent observed) clauditur adversis innoxia simia fatis!”

CHAPTER XXIII

*Show me not thy painted beauties,
These impostures I defy.*

—George Withers.

The cave of Falri smelt not more delicately—on every side appeared the marks of drunkenness and gluttony. At the upper end of the cave the sorcerer lay extended, etc.

—*Mirglip the Persian, in the "Tales of the Genii."*

I woke the next morning with an aching head and feverish frame. Ah, those midnight carousals, how glorious they would be if there was no next morning! I took my sauterne and sodawater in my dressing-room; and, as indisposition always makes me meditative, I thought over all I had done since my arrival at Paris. I had become (that, God knows, I soon manage to do) rather a talked of and noted character. It is true that I was every where abused—one found fault with my neckcloth—another with my mind—the lank Mr. Aberton declared that I put my hair in papers, and the stuffed Sir Henry Millington said I was a thread-paper myself. One blamed my riding—a second my dancing—a third wondered how any woman could like me, and a fourth said that no woman ever could.

On one point, however, all—friends and foes—were alike agreed; viz. that I was a consummate puppy, and excessively well satisfied with myself. A la verite, they were not much mistaken there. Why is it, by the by, that to be pleased with one's-self is the surest way of offending every body else? If any one, male or female, an evident admirer of his or her own perfections, enter a room, how perturbed, restless, and unhappy every individual of the offender's sex instantly becomes: for them not only enjoyment but tranquillity is over, and if they could annihilate the unconscious victim of their spleen, I fully believe no Christian toleration would come in the way of that last extreme of animosity. For a coxcomb there is no mercy—for a coquet no pardon. They are, as it were, the dissenters of society—no crime is too bad to be imputed to them; they do not believe the religion of others—they set up a deity of their own vanity—all the orthodox vanities of others are offended. Then comes the bigotry—the stake—the auto-da-fe of scandal. What, alas! is so implacable as the rage of vanity? What so restless as its persecution? Take from a man his fortune, his house, his reputation, but flatter his vanity in each, and he will forgive you. Heap upon him benefits, fill him with blessings: but irritate his self-love, and you have made the very best man an ingrat. He will sting you if he can: you cannot blame him; you yourself have instilled the venom. This is one reason why you must not always reckon upon gratitude in conferring an obligation. It is a very high mind to which gratitude is not a painful sensation. If you wish to please, you will find it wiser to receive—solicit even—favours, than accord them; for the vanity of the obliger is always flattered—that of the obligee rarely.

Well, this is an unforeseen digression: let me return! I had mixed, of late, very little with the English. My mother's introductions had procured me the entree of the best French houses; and to them, therefore, my evenings were usually devoted. Alas! that was a happy time, when my carriage used to await me at the door of the Rocher de Cancalle, and then whirl me to a succession of visits, varying in their degree and nature as the whim prompted: now to the brilliant soirees of Madame De —, or to the appartemens au troisieme of some less celebrated daughter of dissipation and ecarte;—now to the literary conversaciones of the Duchesse de D—s, or the Vicomte d'A—, and then to the feverish excitement of the gambling house. Passing from each with the appetite for amusement kept alive by variety; finding in none a disappointment, and in every one a welcome; full of the health

which supports, and the youth which colours all excess or excitation, I drained, with an unsparing lip, whatever that enchanting metropolis could afford.

I have hitherto said but little of the Duchesse de Perpignan; I think it necessary now to give some account of that personage. Ever since the evening I had met her at the ambassador's, I had paid her the most unceasing attentions. I soon discovered that she had a curious sort of liaison with one of the attaches—a short, ill-made gentleman, with high shoulders, and a pale face, who wore a blue coat and buff waistcoat, wrote bad verses, and thought himself handsome. All Paris said she was excessively enamoured of this youth. As for me, I had not known her four days before I discovered that she could not be excessively enamoured of any thing but an oyster pete and Lord Byron's Corsair. Her mind was the most marvellous melange of sentiment and its opposite. In her amours she was Lucretia herself; in her epicurism, Apicius would have yielded to her. She was pleased with sighs, but she adored suppers. She would leave every thing for her lover, except her dinner. The attache soon quarrelled with her, and I was installed into the platonic honours of his office.

At first, I own that I was flattered by her choice, and though she was terribly exigeante of my petits soins, I managed to keep up her affection, and, what is still more wonderful, my own, for the better part of a month. What then cooled me was the following occurrence:

I was in her boudoir one evening, when her femme de chambre came to tell us that the duc was in the passage. Notwithstanding the innocence of our attachment, the duchesse was in a violent fright; a small door was at the left of the ottoman, on which we were sitting. "Oh, no, no, not there," cried the lady; but I, who saw no other refuge, entered it forthwith, and before she could ferret me out, the duc was in the room.

In the meanwhile, I amused myself by examining the wonders of the new world into which I had so abruptly immersed: on a small table before me, was deposited a remarkably constructed night-cap; I examined it as a curiosity: on each side was placed une petite cotelette de veau cru, sewed on with green-coloured silk (I remember even the smallest minutiae), a beautiful golden wig (the duchesse never liked me to play with her hair) was on a block close by, and on another table was a set of teeth, d'une blancheur eblouissante. In this manufactory of a beauty I remained for a quarter of an hour; at the end of that time, the abigail (the duchesse had the grace to disappear) released me, and I flew down stairs like a spirit from purgatory.

From that moment the duchesse honoured me with her most deadly abhorrence. Equally silly and wicked, her schemes of revenge were as ludicrous in their execution as remorseless in their design: at one time I narrowly escaped poison in a cup of coffee—at another, she endeavoured to stab me to the heart with a paper cutter.

Notwithstanding my preservation from these attacks, this new Messalina had resolved on my destruction, and another means of attempting it still remained, which the reader will yet have the pleasure of learning.

Mr. Thornton had called upon me twice, and twice I had returned the visit, but neither of us had been at home to benefit by these reciprocities of politesse. His acquaintance with my mysterious hero of the gambling house and the Jardin des Plantes, and the keen interest I took, in spite of myself, in that unaccountable person, whom I was persuaded I had seen before in some very different scene, and under very different circumstances, made me desirous to increase a connoissance, which, from Vincent's detail, I should otherwise have been anxious to avoid. I therefore resolved to make another attempt to find him at home; and my headache being somewhat better, I took my way to his apartments in the Faubourg St. Germain.

I love that quartier—if ever I went to Paris again I should reside there. It is quite a different world from the streets usually known to, and tenanted by the English—there, indeed, you are among the French, the fossilized remains of the old regime—the very houses have an air of desolate, yet venerable grandeur—you never pass by the white and modern mansion of a nouveau riche; all, even to the ruggedness of the pave, breathes a haughty disdain of innovation—you cross one of

the numerous bridges, and you enter into another time—you are inhaling the atmosphere of a past century; no flaunting boutique, French in its trumpery, English in its prices, stares you in the face; no stiff coats and unnatural gaits are seen anglicising up the melancholy streets. Vast hotels, with their gloomy frontals, and magnificent contempt of comfort; shops, such as shops might have been in the aristocratic days of Louis Quatorze, ere British vulgarities made them insolent and dear; public edifices, still redolent of the superb charities of le grand monarque—carriages with their huge bodies and ample decorations; horses, with their Norman dimensions and undocked honours; men, on whose more high though not less courteous demeanour, the revolution seems to have wrought no democratic plebeianism—all strike on the mind with a vague and nameless impression of antiquity; a something solemn even in gaiety, and faded in pomp, appear to linger over all you behold; there are the Great French people unadulterated by change, unsullied with the commerce of the vagrant and various tribes that throng their mighty mart of enjoyments.

The strangers who fill the quarters on this side the Seine pass not there; between them and the Faubourg there is a gulf; the very skies seem different—your own feelings, thoughts—nature itself—alter, when you have passed that Styx which divides the wanderers from the habitants; your spirits are not so much damped, as tinged, refined, ennobled by a certain inexpressible awe—you are girt with the stateliness of Eld, and you tread the gloomy streets with the dignity of a man, who is recalling the splendours of an ancient court where he once did homage.

I arrived at Thornton's chambers in the Rue St. Dominique. "Monsieur, est-il chez lui?" said I to the ancient portress, who was reading one of Crebillon's novels.

"Oui, Monsieur, au quatrieme," was the answer. I turned to the dark and unclean staircase, and, after incredible exertion and fatigue, arrived, at last, at the elevated abode of Mr. Thornton.

"Entrez," cried a voice, in answer to my rap. I obeyed the signal, and found myself in a room of tolerable dimensions and multiplied utilities. A decayed silk curtain of a dingy blue, drawn across a recess, separated the chambre a coucher from the salon. It was at present only half drawn, and did not, therefore, conceal the mysteries of the den within; the bed was still unmade, and apparently of no very inviting cleanliness; a red handkerchief, that served as a nightcap, hung pendant from the foot of the bed; at a little distance from it, more towards the pillow, were a shawl, a parasol, and an old slipper. On a table, which stood between the two dull, filmy windows, were placed a cracked bowl, still reeking with the less of gin-punch, two bottles half full, a mouldy cheese, and a salad dish; on the ground beneath it lay two huge books, and a woman's bonnet.

Thornton himself sat by a small consumptive fire, in an easy chair; another table, still spread with the appliances of breakfast, viz. a coffee-pot, a milk-jug, two cups, a broken loaf, and an empty dish, mingled with a pack of cards, one dice, and an open book de mauvais gout, stood immediately before him.

Every thing around bore some testimony of the spirit of low debauchery; and the man himself, with his flushed and sensual countenance, his unwashed hands, and the slovenly rakishness of his whole appearance, made no unfitting representation of the Genius Loci.

All that I have described, together with a flitting shadow of feminine appearance, escaping through another door, my quick eye discovered in the same instant that I made my salutation.

Thornton rose, with an air half careless and half abashed, and expressed, in more appropriate terms than his appearance warranted, his pleasurable surprise at seeing me at last. There was, however, a singularity in his conversation, which gave it an air both of shrewdness and vulgarity. This was, as may before have been noted, a profuse intermixture of proverbs, some stale, some new, some sensible enough, and all savouring of a vocabulary carefully eschewed by every man of ordinary refinement in conversation.

"I have but a small tenement," said he, smiling; "but, thank Heaven, at Paris a man is not made by his lodgings. Small house, small care. Few garcons have indeed a more sumptuous apartment than myself."

“True,” said I; “and if I may judge by the bottles on the opposite table, and the bonnet beneath it, you find that no abode is too humble or too exalted for the solace of the senses.”

“Fore Gad, you are in the right, Mr. Pelham,” replied Thornton, with a loud, coarse, chuckling laugh, which, more than a year’s conversation could have done, let me into the secrets of his character. “I care not a rush for the decorations of the table, so that the cheer be good; nor for the gew-gaws of the head-dress, as long as the face is pretty—‘the taste of the kitchen is better than the smell.’ Do you go much to Madame B—’s ion the Rue Gretry—eh, Mr. Pelham?—ah, I’ll be bound you do.”

“No,” said I, with a loud laugh, but internal shiver; “but you know where to find le bon vin et les jolies filles. As for me, I am still a stranger in Paris, and amuse myself but very indifferently.”

Thornton’s face brightened. “I tell you what my good fell—I beg pardon—I mean Mr. Pelham—I can shew you the best sport in the world, if you can only spare me a little of your time—this very evening, perhaps?”

“I fear,” said I, “I am engaged all the present week; but I long for nothing more than to cultivate an acquaintance, seemingly so exactly to my own taste.”

Thornton’s grey eyes twinkled. “Will you breakfast with me on Sunday?” said he.

“I shall be too happy,” I replied

There was now a short pause. I took advantage of it. “I think,” said I, “I have seen you once or twice with a tall, handsome man, in a loose great coat of very singular colour. Pray, if not impertinent, who is he? I am sure I have seen him before in England.”

I looked full upon Thornton as I said this; he changed colour, and answered my gaze with a quick glance from his small, glittering eye, before he replied. “I scarcely know who you mean, my acquaintance is so large and miscellaneous at Paris. It might have been Johnson, or Smith, or Howard, or any body, in short.”

“It is a man nearly six feet high,” said I, “thin, and remarkably well made, of a pale complexion, light eyes, and very black hair, mustachios and whiskers. I saw him with you once in the Bois de Boulogne, and once in a hell in the Palais Royal. Surely, now you will recollect who he is?”

Thornton was evidently disconcerted. “Oh!” said he, after a short pause, and another of his peculiarly quick, sly glances—“Oh, that man; I have known him a very short time. What is his name? let me see!” and Mr. Thornton affected to look down in a complete reverie of dim remembrances.

I saw, however, that, from time to time, his eye glanced up to me, with a restless, inquisitive expression, and as instantly retired.

“Ah,” said I, carelessly, “I think I know who he is!”

“Who!” cried Thornton, eagerly, and utterly off his guard.

“And yet,” I pursued, without noticing the interruption, “it scarcely can be—the colour of the hair is so very different.”

Thornton again appeared to relapse into his recollections. “War—Warbur—ah, I have it now!” cried he, “Warburton—that’s it—that’s the name—is it the one you supposed, Mr. Pelham?”

“No,” said I, apparently perfectly satisfied. “I was quite mistaken. Good morning, I did not think it was so late. On Sunday, then, Mr. Thornton—au plaisir!”

“A d—d cunning dog!” said I to myself, as I left the apartments. “However, on peut-etre trop fin. I shall have him yet.”

The surest way to make a dupe is to let you victim suppose you are his

CHAPTER XXIV

Voila de l'erudition.
—*Les Femmes Savantes.*

I found, on my return, covered with blood, and foaming with passion, my inestimable valet —Bedos!

“What’s the matter?” said I.

“Matter!” repeated Bedos, in a tone almost inarticulate with rage; and then, rejoicing at the opportunity of unbosoming his wrath, he poured out a vast volley of ivrognes and carognes, against our Dame du Chateau, of monkey reminiscence. With great difficulty, I gathered, at last, from his vituperations, that the enraged landlady, determined to wreak her vengeance on some one, had sent for him into her apartment, accosted him with a smile, bade him sit down, regaled him with cold vol-au-vent, and a glass of Curacoa, and, while he was felicitating himself on his good fortune, slipped out of the room: presently, three tall fellows entered with sticks.

“We’ll teach you,” said the biggest of them—“we’ll teach you to lock up ladies, for the indulgence of your vulgar amusement;” and, without one other word, they fell upon Bedos, with incredible zeal and vigour. The valiant valet defended himself, tooth and nail, for some time, for which he only got the more soundly belaboured. In the meanwhile the landlady entered, and, with the same gentle smile as before, begged him to make no ceremony, to proceed with his present amusement, and when he was tired with the exercise, hoped he would refresh himself with another glass of Curacoa.

“It was this,” said Bedos, with a whimper, “which hurt me the most, to think she should serve me so cruelly, after I had eaten so plentifully of the vol-au-vent; envy and injustice I can bear, but treachery stabs me to the heart.”

When these threshers of men were tired, the lady satisfied, and Bedos half dead, they suffered the unhappy valet to withdraw; the mistress of the hotel giving him a note, which she desired, with great civility, that he would transmit to me on my return. This, I found, inclosed my bill, and informed me that my month being out on the morrow, she was unwilling to continue me any longer, and begged I would, therefore, have the bonte to choose another apartment.

“Carry my luggage forthwith,” said I, “to the Hotel de Mirabeau:” and that very evening I changed my abode.

I am happy in the opportunity this incident affords me of especially recommending the Hotel de Mirabeau, Rue de la Paix, to any of my countrymen who are really gentlemen, and will not disgrace my recommendation. It is certainly the best caravansera in the English quartier.

I was engaged that day to a literary dinner at the Marquis D’Al—; and as I knew I should meet Vincent, I felt some pleasure in repairing to my entertainer’s hotel. They were just going to dinner as I entered. A good many English were of the party. The good natured (in all senses of the word) Lady—, who always affected to pet me, cried aloud, “Pelham, mon joli petit mignon, I have not seen you for an age—do give me your arm.”

Madame D’Anville was just before me, and, as I looked at her, I saw that her eyes were full of tears; my heart smote me for my late inattention, and going up to her, I only nodded to Lady—, and said, in reply to her invitation, “Non, perfide, it is my turn to be cruel now. Remember your flirtation with Mr. Howard de Howard.”

“Pooh!” said Lady—, taking Lord Vincent’s arm, “your jealousy does indeed rest upon ‘a trifle light as air.’”

“Do you forgive me?” whispered I to Madame D’Anville, as I handed her to the salle a manger. “Does not love forgive every thing?” was her answer.

“At least,” thought I, “it never talks in those pretty phrases.”

The conversation soon turned upon books. As for me, I never at that time took a share in those discussions; indeed, I have long laid it down as a rule, that a man never gains by talking to more than one person at a time. If you don't shine, you are a fool—if you do, you are a bore. You must become either ridiculous or unpopular—either hurt your own self-love by stupidity, or that of others by wit. I therefore sat in silence, looking exceedingly edified, and now and then muttering “good!” “true!” Thank heaven, however, the suspension of one faculty only increases the vivacity of the others; my eyes and ears always watch like sentinels over the repose of my lips. Careless and indifferent as I seem to all things, nothing ever escapes me: the minutest erreur in a dish or a domestic, the most trifling peculiarity in a criticism or a coat, my glance detects in an instant, and transmits for ever to my recollection.

“You have seen Jouy's ‘Hermite de la Chaussee D'Antin?’” said our host to Lord Vincent.

“I have, and think meanly of it. There is a perpetual aim at something pointed, which as perpetually merges into something dull. He is like a bad swimmer, strikes out with great force, makes a confounded splash, and never gets a yard the further for it. It is a great effort not to sink. Indeed, Monsieur D'A—, your literature is at a very reduced ebb; bombastic in the drama—shallow in philosophy—mawkish in poetry, your writers of the present day seem to think, with Boileau—

“Souvent de tous nos maux la raison est le pire.”

“Surely,” cried Madame D'Anville, “you will allow De la Martine's poetry to be beautiful?”

“I allow it,” said he, “to be among the best you have; and I know very few lines in your language equal to the two first stanzas in his ‘Meditation on Napoleon,’ or to those exquisite verses called ‘Le Lac;’ but you will allow also that he wants originality and nerve. His thoughts are pathetic, but not deep; he whines, but sheds no tears. He has, in his imitation of Lord Byron, reversed the great miracle; instead of turning water into wine, he has turned wine into water. Besides, he is so unpardonably obscure. He thinks, with Bacchus—(you remember, D'A—, the line in Euripides, which I will not quote), that ‘there is something august in the shades;’ but he has applied this thought wrongly—in his obscurity there is nothing sublime—it is the back ground of a Dutch picture. It is only a red herring, or an old hat, which he has invested with such pomposity of shadow and darkness.”

“But his verses are so smooth,” said Lady—.

“Ah!” answered Vincent.

“Quand la rime enfin se trouve au bout des vers, Qu'importe que le reste y soit mis des travers.”

“Helas” said the Viscount D'A—t, an author of no small celebrity himself; “I agree with you—we shall never again see a Voltaire or a Rousseau.”

“There is but little justice in those complaints, often as they are made,” replied Vincent. “You may not, it is true, see a Voltaire or a Rousseau, but you will see their equals. Genius can never be exhausted by one individual. In our country, the poets after Chaucer in the fifteenth century complained of the decay of their art—they did not anticipate Shakspeare. In Hayley's time, who ever dreamt of the ascension of Byron? Yet Shakspeare and Byron came like the bridegroom ‘in the dead of night;’ and you have the same probability of producing—not, indeed, another Rousseau, but a writer to do equal honour to your literature.”

“I think,” said Lady—, “that Rousseau's ‘Julie’ is over-rated. I had heard so much of ‘La Nouvelle Heloise’ when I was a girl, and been so often told that it was destruction to read it, that I bought the book the very day after I was married. I own to you that I could not get through it.”

“I am not surprised at it,” answered Vincent; “but Rousseau is not the less a genius for all that: there is no story to bear out the style, and he himself is right when he says ‘ce livre convient a tres peu de lecteurs.’ One letter would delight every one—four volumes of them are a surfeit—it is the toujours perdrix. But the chief beauty of that wonderful conception of an empassioned and meditative mind is to be found in the inimitable manner in which the thoughts are embodied, and in the tenderness, the truth, the profundity of the thoughts themselves: when Lord Edouard says, ‘c'est le chemin des passions qui m'a conduit a la philosophie,’ he inculcates, in one simple phrase, a profound

and unanswerable truth. It is in these remarks that nature is chiefly found in the writings of Rousseau: too much engrossed in himself to be deeply skilled in the characters of others, that very self-study had yet given him a knowledge of the more hidden recesses of the heart. He could perceive at once the motive and the cause of actions, but he wanted the patience to trace the elaborate and winding progress of their effects. He saw the passions in their home, but he could not follow them abroad. He knew mankind in the general, but not men in the detail. Thus, when he makes an aphorism or reflection, it comes home at once to you as true; but when he would analyze that reflection, when he argues, reasons, and attempts to prove, you reject him as unnatural, or you refute him as false. It is then that he partakes of that *manie commune* which he imputes to other philosophers, ‘*de nier ce qui est, et d’expliquer ce qui n’est pas.*’”

There was a short pause. “I think,” said Madame D’Anville, “that it is in those *pensees* which you admire so much in Rousseau, that our authors in general excel.”

“You are right,” said Vincent, “and for this reason—with you *les gens de lettres* are always *les gens du monde*. Hence their quick perceptions are devoted to men as well as to books. They make observations acutely, and embody them with grace; but it is worth remarking, that the same cause which produced the aphorism, frequently prevents its being profound. These literary *gens du monde* have the tact to observe, but not the patience, perhaps not the time, to investigate. They make the maxim, but they never explain to you the train of reasoning which led to it. Hence they are more brilliant than true. An English writer would not dare to make a maxim, involving, perhaps, in two lines, one of the most important of moral truths, without bringing pages to support his dictum. A French essayist leaves it wholly to itself. He tells you neither how he came by his reasons, nor their conclusion, ‘*le plus fou souvent est le plus satisfait.*’ Consequently, if less tedious than the English, your reasoners are more dangerous, and ought rather to be considered as models of terseness than of reflection. A man might learn to think sooner from your writers, but he will learn to think justly sooner from ours. Many observations of La Bruyere and Rochefoucault—the latter especially—have obtained credit for truth solely from their point. They possess exactly the same merit as the very sensible—permit me to add—very French line in Corneille:—

“*Ma plus douce esperance est de perdre l’espoir.*”

The Maquis took advantage of the silence which followed Vincent’s criticism to rise from table. We all (except Vincent, who took leave) adjourned to the salon. “*Qui est cet homme la?*” said one, “*comme il est epris de lui-meme.*” “How silly he is,” cried another—“how ugly,” said a third. What a taste in literature—such a talker—such shallowness, and such assurance—not worth the answering—could not slip in a word—disagreeable, revolting, awkward, slovenly, were the most complimentary opinions bestowed upon the unfortunate Vincent. The women called him *un horreur*, and the men *un bete*. The old railed at his *mauvais gout*, and the young at his *mauvais coeur*, for the former always attribute whatever does not correspond with their sentiments, to a perversion of taste, and the latter whatever does not come up to their enthusiasm, to a depravity of heart.

As for me, I went home, enriched with two new observations; first, that one may not speak of any thing relative to a foreign country, as one would if one was a native. National censures become particular affronts.

Secondly, that those who know mankind in theory, seldom know it in practice; the very wisdom that conceives a rule, is accompanied with the abstraction, or the vanity, which destroys it. I mean that the philosopher of the cabinet is often too diffident to put into action his observations, or too eager for display to conceal their design. Lord Vincent values himself upon his *science du monde*. He has read much upon men, he has reflected more; he lays down aphorisms to govern or to please them. He goes into society; he is cheated by the one half, and the other half he offends. The sage in the cabinet is but a fool in the salon; and the most consummate men of the world are those who have considered the least on it.

CHAPTER XXV

Falstaff. What money is in my purse?
Page. Seven groats and two-pence.

—*Second Part of Henry IV.*

En iterum Crispinus.

The next day a note was brought me, which had been sent to my former lodgings in the Hotel de Paris: it was from Thornton.

“My dear Sir,” (it began)

“I am very sorry that particular business will prevent me the pleasure of seeing you at my rooms on Sunday. I hope to be more fortunate some other day. I should like much to introduce you, the first opportunity, to my friends in the Rue Gretry, for I like obliging my countrymen. I am sure, if you were to go there, you would cut and come again—one shoulder of mutton drives down another.

“I beg you to accept my repeated excuses, and remain,

“Dear Sir,

“Your very obedient servant,

“Thomas Thornton.

“Rue St. Dominique,

“Friday Morning.”

This letter produced in me many and manifold cogitations. What could possibly have induced Mr. Tom Thornton, rogue as he was, to postpone thus of his own accord, the plucking of a pigeon, which he had such good reason to believe he had entrapped? There was evidently no longer the same avidity to cultivate my acquaintance as before; in putting off our appointment with so little ceremony, he did not even fix a day for another. What had altered his original designs towards me? for if Vincent’s account was true, it was natural to suppose that he wished to profit by any acquaintance he might form with me, and therefore such an acquaintance his own interests would induce him to continue and confirm.

Either, then, he no longer had the same necessity for a dupe, or he no longer imagined I should become one. Yet neither of these suppositions was probable. It was not likely that he should grow suddenly honest, or suddenly rich: nor had I, on the other hand, given him any reason to suppose I was a jot more wary than any other individual he might have imposed upon. On the contrary, I had appeared to seek his acquaintance with an eagerness which said but little for my knowledge of the world. The more I reflected, the more I should have been puzzled, had I not connected his present backwardness with his acquaintance with the stranger, whom he termed Warburton. It is true, that I had no reason to suppose so: it was a conjecture wholly unsupported, and, indeed, against my better sense; yet, from some unanalysed associations, I could not divest myself of the supposition.

“I will soon see,” thought I; and wrapping myself in my cloak, for the day was bitterly cold, I bent my way to Thornton’s lodgings. I could not explain to myself the deep interest I took in whatever was connected with (the so-called) Warburton, or whatever promised to discover more clearly any particulars respecting him. His behaviour in the gambling house; his conversation with the woman in the Jardin des Plantes; and the singular circumstance, that a man of so very aristocratic an appearance, should be connected with Thornton, and only seen in such low scenes, and with such low society, would not have been sufficient so strongly to occupy my mind, had it not been for certain dim recollections, and undefinable associations, that his appearance when present, and my thoughts of him when absent, perpetually recalled.

As, engrossed with meditations of this nature, I was passing over the Pont Neuf, I perceived the man Warburton had so earnestly watched in the gambling house, and whom I identified with the “Tyrrell,” who had formed the subject of conversation in the Jardin des Plantes, pass slowly before me. There was an appearance of great exhaustion in his swarthy and strongly marked countenance. He walked carelessly on, neither looking to the right nor the left, with that air of thought and abstraction which I have remarked as common to all men in the habit of indulging any engrossing and exciting passion.

We were just on the other side of the Seine, when I perceived the woman of the Jardin des Plantes approach. Tyrrell (for that, I afterwards discovered, was really his name) started as she came near, and asked her, in a tone of some asperity, where she had been? As I was but a few paces behind, I had a clear, full view of the woman’s countenance. She was about twenty-eight or thirty years of age. Her features were decidedly handsome, though somewhat too sharp and aquiline for my individual taste. Her eyes were light and rather sunken; and her complexion bespoke somewhat of the paleness and languor of ill-health. On the whole, the expression of her face, though decided, was not unpleasing, and when she returned Tyrrell’s rather rude salutation, it was with a smile, which made her, for the moment, absolutely beautiful.

“Where have I been to?” she said, in answer to his interrogatory. “Why, I went to look at the New Church, which they told me was so superbe.”

“Methinks,” replied the man, “that ours are not precisely the circumstances in which such spectacles are amusing.”

“Nay, Tyrrell,” said the woman, as taking his arm they walked on together a few paces before me, “nay, we are quite rich now to what we have been; and, if you do play again, our two hundred pounds may swell into a fortune. Your losses have brought you skill, and you may now turn them into actual advantages.”

Tyrrell did not reply exactly to these remarks, but appeared as if debating with himself. “Two hundred pounds—twenty already gone!—in a few months all will have melted away. What is it then now but a respite from starvation?—but with luck it may become a competence.”

“And why not have luck? many a fortune has been made with a worse beginning,” said the woman.

“True, Margaret,” pursued the gambler, “and even without luck, our fate can only commence a month or two sooner—better a short doom than a lingering torture.”

“What think you of trying some new game where you have more experience, or where the chances are greater than in that of rouge et noir?” asked the woman. “Could you not make something out of that tall, handsome man, who Thornton says is so rich?”

“Ah, if one could!” sighed Tyrrell, wistfully. “Thornton tells me, that he has won thousands from him, and that they are mere drops in his income. Thornton is a good, easy, careless fellow, and might let me into a share of the booty: but then, in what games can I engage him?”

Here I passed this well-suited pair, and lost the remainder of their conversation. “Well,” thought I, “if this precious personage does starve at last, he will most richly deserve it, partly for his designs on the stranger, principally for his opinion of Thornton. If he was a knave only, one might pity him; but a knave and fool both, are a combination of evil, for which there is no intermediate purgatory of opinion—nothing short of utter damnation.”

I soon arrived at Mr. Thornton’s abode. The same old woman, poring over the same novel of Crebillon, made me the same reply as before; and accordingly again I ascended the obscure and rugged stairs, which seemed to indicate, that the road to vice is not so easy as one generally supposes. I knocked at the door, and receiving no answering acknowledgment, opened it at once. The first thing I saw was the dark, rough coat of Warburton—that person’s back was turned to me, and he was talking with some energy to Thornton (who lounged idly in his chair, with one ungartered leg thrown over the elbow.)

“Ah, Mr. Pelham,” exclaimed the latter, starting from his not very graceful position, “it gives me great pleasure to see you—Mr. Warburton, Mr. Pelham—Mr. Pelham, Mr. Warburton.” My new-made and mysterious acquaintance drew himself up to his full height, and bowed very slightly to my own acknowledgment of the introduction. A low person would have thought him rude. I only supposed him ignorant of the world. No real gentleman is uncivil. He turned round after this stiff condescension *de sa part*, and sunk down on the sofa, with his back towards me.

“I was mistaken,” thought I, “when I believed him to be above such associates as Thornton—they are well matched.”

“My dear Sir,” said Thornton, “I am very sorry I could not see you to breakfast—a particular engagement prevented me—*verbum sap.* Mr. Pelham, you take me, I suppose—black eyes white skin, and such an angle;” and the fellow rubbed his great hands and chuckled.

“Well,” said I, “I cannot blame you, whatever may be my loss—a dark eye and a straight angle are powerful excuses. What says Mr. Warburton to them?” and I turned to the object of my interrogatory.

“Really,” he answered drily, and without moving from his uncourteous position, “Mr. Thornton only can judge of the niceties of his peculiar tastes, or the justice of his general excuses.”

Mr. Warburton said this in a sarcastic, bitter tone. Thornton bit his lip, more, I should think, at the manner than the words, and his small grey eyes sparkled with a malignant and stern expression, which suited the character of his face far better than the careless levity and enjouement which his glances usually denoted.

“They are no such great friends after all,” thought I; “and now let me change my attack. Pray,” I asked, “among all your numerous acquaintances at Paris, did you ever meet with a Mr. Tyrrell?”

Warburton started from his chair, and as instantly re-seated himself. Thornton eyed me with one of those peculiar looks which so strongly reminded me of a dog, in deliberation whether to bite or run away.

“I do know a Mr. Tyrrell!” he said, after a short pause.

“What sort of a person is he?” I asked with an indifferent air—“a great gamester, is he not?”

“He does slap it down on the colours now and then,” replied Thornton. “I hope you don’t know him, Mr. Pelham!”

“Why?” said I, evading the question. “His character is not affected by a propensity so common, unless, indeed, you suppose him to be more a gambler than a gamester, *viz.* more acute than unlucky.”

“God forbid that I should say any such thing,” replied Thornton; “you won’t catch an old lawyer in such imprudence.”

“The greater the truth, the greater the libel,” said Warburton, with a sneer.

“No,” resumed Thornton, “I know nothing against Mr. Tyrrell—nothing! He may be a very good man, and I believe he is; but as a friend, Mr. Pelham, (and Mr. Thornton grew quite affectionate), I advise you to have as little as possible to do with that sort of people.”

“Truly,” said I, “you have now excited my curiosity. Nothing, you know, is half so inviting as mystery.”

Thornton looked as if he had expected a very different reply; and Warburton said, in an abrupt tone—“Whoever enters an unknown road in a fog may easily lose himself.”

“True,” said I; “but that very chance is more agreeable than a road where one knows every tree! Danger and novelty are more to my taste than safety and sameness. Besides, as I never gamble myself, I can lose nothing by an acquaintance with those who do.”

Another pause ensued—and, finding I had got all from Mr. Thornton and his uncourteous guest that I was likely to do, I took my hat and my departure.

“I do not know,” thought I, “whether I have profited much by this visit. Let me consider. In the first place, I have not ascertained why I was put off by Mr. Thornton—for as to his excuse, it could only have availed one day, and had he been anxious for my acquaintance, he would have named

another. I have, however, discovered, first, that he does not wish me to form any connection with Tyrrell; secondly, from Warburton's sarcasm, and his glance of reply, that there is but little friendship between those two, whatever be the intimacy; and, thirdly, that Warburton, from his dorsal positions, so studiously preserved, either wished to be uncivil or unnoticed." The latter, after all, was the most probable; and, upon the whole, I felt more than ever convinced that he was the person I suspected him to be.

CHAPTER XXVI

*Tell how the fates my giddy course did guide,
The inconstant turns of every changing hour.*

—*Pierce Gaveston, by M. Drayton.*

Je me retire donc. —Adieu, Paris, adieu!

—*Boileau.*

When I returned home, I found on my table the following letter from my mother:

“My dear Henry,

“I am rejoiced to hear you are so well entertained at Paris—that you have been so often to the D—s and C—s; that Coulon says you are his best pupil—that your favourite horse is so much admired—and that you have only exceeded your allowance by a L1,000; with some difficulty I have persuaded your uncle to transmit you an order for L1,500, which will, I trust, make up all your deficiencies.

“You must not, my dear child, be so extravagant for the future, and for a very good reason, namely, I do not see how you can. Your uncle, I fear, will not again be so generous, and your father cannot assist you. You will therefore see more clearly than ever the necessity of marrying an heiress: there are only two in England (the daughters of gentlemen) worthy of you—the most deserving of these has L10,000 a year, the other has L150,000. The former is old, ugly, and very ill tempered; the latter tolerably pretty, and agreeable, and just of age; but you will perceive the impropriety of even thinking of her till we have tried the other. I am going to ask both to my Sunday soirees, where I never admit any single men, so that there, at least, you will have no rivals.

“And now, my dear son, before I enter into a subject of great importance to you, I wish to recal to your mind that pleasure is never an end, but a means—viz. that in your horses and amusements at Paris—your visits and your liaisons—you have always, I trust, remembered that these were only so far desirable as the methods of shining in society. I have now a new scene on which you are to enter, with very different objects in view, and where any pleasures you may find have nothing the least in common with those you at present enjoy.

“I know that this preface will not frighten you as it might many silly young men. Your education has been too carefully attended to, for you to imagine that any step can be rough or unpleasant which raises you in the world.

“To come at once to the point. One of the seats in your uncle’s borough of Buyemall is every day expected to be vacated; the present member, Mr. Toolington, cannot possibly live a week, and your uncle is very desirous that you should fill the vacancy which Mr. Toolington’s death will create. Though I called it Lord Glenmorris’s borough, yet it is not entirely at his disposal, which I think very strange, since my father, who was not half so rich as your uncle, could send two members to Parliament without the least trouble in the world—but I don’t understand these matters. Possibly your uncle (poor man) does not manage them well. However, he says no time is to be lost. You are to return immediately to England, and come down to his house in—shire. It is supposed you will have some contest, but be certain eventually to come in.

“You will also, in this visit to Lord Glenmorris, have an excellent opportunity of securing his affection; you know it is some time since he saw you, and the greater part of his property is unentailed. If you come into the House you must devote yourself wholly to it, and I have no fear of your succeeding; for I remember, when you were quite a child, how well you spoke, ‘My name is

Norval,' and 'Romans, countrymen, and lovers,' I heard Mr. Canning speak the other day, and I think his voice is quite like yours; in short, I make no doubt of seeing you in the ministry in a very few years.

"You see, my dear son, that it is absolutely necessary you should set out immediately. You will call on Lady—, and you will endeavour to make firm friends of the most desirable among your present acquaintance; so that you may be on the same footing you are now, should you return to Paris. This a little civility will easily do: nobody (as I before observed), except in England, ever loses by politeness; by the by, that last word is one you must never use, it is too Gloucester-place like.

"You will also be careful, in returning to England, to make very little use of French phrases; no vulgarity is more displeasing. I could not help being exceedingly amused by a book written the other day, which professes to give an accurate description of good society. Not knowing what to make us say in English, the author has made us talk nothing but French. I have often wondered what common people think of us, since in their novels they always affect to portray us so different from themselves. I am very much afraid we are in all things exactly like them, except in being more simple and unaffected. The higher the rank, indeed, the less pretence, because there is less to pretend to. This is the chief reason why our manners are better than low persons: ours are more natural, because they imitate no one else; theirs are affected, because they think to imitate ours; and whatever is evidently borrowed becomes vulgar. Original affection is sometimes too—imitated affectation, always bad.

"Well, my dear Henry, I must now conclude this letter, already too long to be interesting. I hope to see you about ten days after you receive this; and if you could bring me a Cachemire shawl, it would give me great pleasure to see your taste in its choice. God bless you, my dear son.

"Your very affectionate

"Frances Pelham."

"P.S. I hope you go to church sometimes: I am sorry to see the young men of the present day so irreligious. Perhaps you could get my old friend, Madame De—, to choose the Cachemire—take care of your health."

This letter, which I read carefully twice over, threw me into a most serious meditation. My first feeling was regret at leaving Paris; my second, was a certain exultation at the new prospects so unexpectedly opened to me. The great aim of a philosopher is, to reconcile every disadvantage by some counterbalance of good—where he cannot create this, he should imagine it. I began, therefore, to consider less what I should lose than what I should gain, by quitting Paris. In the first place, I was tolerably tired of its amusements: no business is half so fatiguing as pleasure. I longed for a change: behold, a change was at hand! Then, to say truth, I was heartily glad of a pretence of escaping from a numerous cohort of folles amours, with Madame D'Anville at the head; and the very circumstance which men who play the German flute and fall in love, would have considered the most vexatious, I regarded as the most consolatory.

There was yet another reason which reconciled me more than any other to my departure. I had, in my residence at Paris, among half wits and whole rouses, contracted a certain—not exactly grossierete—but want of refinement—a certain coarseness of expression and idea which, though slight, and easily thrown off, took in some degree from my approach to that character which I wished to become. I know nothing which would so polish the manners as continental intercourse, were it not for the English debauches with which that intercourse connects one. English profligacy is always coarse, and in profligacy nothing is more contagious than its tone. One never keeps a restraint on the manner when one unbridles the passions, and one takes from the associates with whom the latter are indulged, the air and the method of the indulgence.

I was, the reader well knows, too solicitous for improvement, not to be anxious to escape from such chances of deterioration, and I therefore consoled myself with considerable facility for the pleasures and the associates I was about to forego. My mind being thus relieved from all regret at my departure, I now suffered it to look forward to the advantages of my return to England. My love of

excitement and variety made an election, in which I was to have both the importance of the contest and the certainty of the success, a very agreeable object of anticipation.

I was also by this time wearied with my attendance upon women, and eager to exchange it for the ordinary objects of ambition to men; and my vanity whispered that my success in the one was no unfavourable omen of my prosperity in the other. On my return to England, with a new scene and a new motive for conduct, I resolved that I would commence a different character to that I had hitherto assumed. How far I kept this resolution the various events hereafter to be shown, will testify. For myself, I felt that I was now about to enter a more crowded scene upon a more elevated ascent; and my previous experience of human nature was sufficient to convince me that my safety required a more continual circumspection, and my success a more dignified bearing.

CHAPTER XXVII

Je noterai cela, Madame, dans mon livre.
—*Moliere.*

I am not one of those persons who are many days in deciding what may be effected in one. “On the third day from this,” said I to Bedos, “at half past nine in the morning, I shall leave Paris for England.”

“Oh, my poor wife!” said the valet, “she will break her heart if I leave her.”

“Then stay,” said I. Bedos shrugged his shoulders.

“I prefer being with Monsieur to all things.”

“What, even to your wife?” The courteous rascal placed his hand to his heart and bowed. “You shall not suffer by your fidelity—you shall take your wife with you.”

The conjugal valet’s countenance fell. “No,” he said, “no; he could not take advantage of Monsieur’s generosity.”

“I insist upon it—not another word.”

“I beg a thousand pardons of Monsieur; but—but my wife is very ill, and unable to travel.”

“Then, in that case, so excellent a husband cannot think of leaving a sick and destitute wife.”

“Poverty has no law; if I consulted my heart and stayed, I should starve, et il faut vivre.”

“Je n’en vois pas la necessite,” replied I, as I got into my carriage. That repartee, by the way, I cannot claim as my own; it is the very unanswerable answer of a judge to an expostulating thief.

I made the round of reciprocal regrets, according to the orthodox formula. The Duchesse de Perpignan was the last—(Madame D’Anville I reserved for another day)—that virtuous and wise personage was in the boudoir of reception. I glanced at the fatal door as I entered. I have a great aversion, after any thing has once happened and fairly subsided, to make any allusion to its former existence. I never, therefore, talked to the Duchess about our ancient egaremens. I spoke, this morning, of the marriage of one person, the death of another, and lastly, the departure of my individual self.

“When do you go?” she said, eagerly.

“In two days: my departure will be softened, if I can execute any commissions in England for Madame.”

“None,” said she; and then in a low tone (that none of the idlers, who were always found at her morning levees, should hear), she added, “you will receive a note from me this evening.”

I bowed, changed the conversation, and withdrew. I dined in my own rooms, and spent the evening in looking over the various billets-doux, received during my sejour at Paris.

“Where shall I put all these locks of hair?” asked Bedos, opening a drawer full.

“Into my scrap-book.”

“And all these letters?”

“Into the fire.”

I was just getting into bed when the Duchesse de Perpignan’s note arrived—it was as follows:—

“My dear Friend,

“For that word, so doubtful in our language, I may at least call you in your own. I am unwilling that you should leave this country with those sentiments you now entertain of me, unaltered, yet I cannot imagine any form of words of sufficient magic to change them. Oh! if you knew how much I am to be pitied; if you could look for one moment into this lonely and blighted heart; if you could trace, step by step, the progress I have made in folly and sin, you would see how much of what you now condemn and despise, I have owed to circumstances, rather than to the vice of my disposition. I was born a beauty, educated a beauty, owed fame, rank, power to beauty; and it is to the advantages

I have derived from person that I owe the ruin of my mind. You have seen how much I now derive from art I loathe myself as I write that sentence; but no matter: from that moment you loathed me too. You did not take into consideration, that I had been living on excitement all my youth, and that in my maturer years I could not relinquish it. I had reigned by my attractions, and I thought every art preferable to resigning my empire: but in feeding my vanity, I had not been able to stifle the dictates of my heart. Love is so natural to a woman, that she is scarcely a woman who resists it: but in me it has been a sentiment, not a passion.

“Sentiment, then, and vanity, have been my seducers. I said, that I owed my errors to circumstances, not to nature. You will say, that in confessing love and vanity to be my seducers, I contradict this assertion—you are mistaken. I mean, that though vanity and sentiment were in me, yet the scenes in which I have been placed, and the events which I have witnessed, gave to those latent currents of action a wrong and a dangerous direction. I was formed to love; for one whom I did love I could have made every sacrifice. I married a man I hated, and I only learnt the depths of my heart when it was too late.

“Enough of this; you will leave this country; we shall never meet again—never! You may return to Paris, but I shall then be no more; n’importe—I shall be unchanged to the last. Je mourrai en reine.

“As a latest pledge of what I have felt for you, I send you the enclosed chain and ring; as a latest favour, I request you to wear them for six months, and, above all, for two hours in the Tuileries tomorrow. You will laugh at this request: it seems idle and romantic—perhaps it is so. Love has many exaggerations in sentiment, which reason would despise. What wonder, then, that mine, above that of all others, should conceive them? You will not, I know, deny this request. Farewell!—in this world we shall never meet again, and I believe not in the existence of another. Farewell!

“E. P.”

“A most sensible effusion,” said I to myself, when I had read this billet; “and yet, after all, it shows more feeling and more character than I could have supposed she possessed.” I took up the chain: it was of Maltese workmanship; not very handsome, nor, indeed, in any way remarkable, except for a plain hair ring which was attached to it, and which I found myself unable to take off, without breaking. “It is a very singular request,” thought I, “but then it comes from a very singular person; and as it rather partakes of adventure and intrigue, I shall at all events appear in the Tuileries, tomorrow, chained and ringed.”

CHAPTER XXVIII

Thy incivility shall not make me fail to do what becomes me; and since thou hast more valour than courtesy, I for thee will hazard that life which thou wouldst take from me.

—Cassandra, "elegantly done into English by Sir Charles Cotterell."

About the usual hour for the promenade in the Tuileries, I conveyed myself thither. I set the chain and ring in full display, rendered still more conspicuous by the dark coloured dress which I always wore. I had not been in the gardens ten minutes, before I perceived a young Frenchman, scarcely twenty years of age, look with a very peculiar air at my new decorations. He passed and repassed me, much oftener than the alternations of the walk warranted; and at last, taking off his hat, said in a low tone, that he wished much for the honour of exchanging a few words with me in private. I saw, at the first glance, that he was a gentleman, and accordingly withdrew with him among the trees, in the more retired part of the garden.

"Permit me," said he, "to inquire how that ring and chain came into your possession?"

"Monsieur," I replied, "you will understand me, when I say, that the honour of another person is implicated in my concealment of that secret."

"Sir," said the Frenchman, colouring violently, "I have seen them before—in a word, they belong to me!"

I smiled—my young hero fired at this. "Oui, Monsieur," said he, speaking very loud, and very quick, "they belong to me, and I insist upon your immediately restoring them, or vindicating your claim to them by arms."

"You leave me but one answer, Monsieur," said I; "I will find a friend to wait upon you immediately. Allow me to inquire your address?" The Frenchman, who was greatly agitated, produced a card. We bowed and separated.

I was glancing over the address I held in my hand, which was—C. D'Azimart, Rue de Bourbon Numero—, when my ears were saluted with—

"Now do you know me?—thou shouldst be Alonzo."

I did not require the faculty of sight to recognize Lord Vincent. "My dear fellow," said I, "I am rejoiced to see you!" and thereupon I poured into his ear the particulars of my morning adventure. Lord Vincent listened to me with much apparent interest, and spoke very unaffectedly of his readiness to serve me, and his regret at the occasion.

"Pooh," said I, "a duel in France, is not like one in England; the former is a matter of course; a trifle of common occurrence; one makes an engagement to fight, in the same breath as an engagement to dine; but the latter is a thing of state and solemnity—long faces—early rising—and willmaking. But do get this business over as soon as you can, that we may dine at the Rocher afterwards."

"Well, my dear Pelham," said Vincent, "I cannot refuse you my services; and as I suppose Monsieur D'Azimart will choose swords, I venture to augur everything from your skill in that species of weapon. It is the first time I have ever interfered in affairs of this nature, but I hope to get well through the present,

"Nobilis ornatur lauro collega secundo,"

as Juvenal says: au revoir," and away went Lord Vincent, half forgetting all his late anxiety for my life, in his paternal pleasure for the delivery of his quotation.

Vincent is the only punster I ever knew with a good heart. No action to that race in general is so serious an occupation as the play upon words; and the remorseless habit of murdering a phrase, renders them perfectly obdurate to the simple death of a friend. I walked through every variety the straight paths of the Tuileries could afford, and was beginning to get exceedingly tired, when Lord

Vincent returned. He looked very grave, and I saw at once that he was come to particularize the circumstances of the last extreme. “The Bois de Boulogne—pistols—in one hour,” were the three leading features of his detail.

“Pistols!” said I; “well, be it so. I would rather have had swords, for the young man’s sake as much as my own: but thirteen paces and a steady aim will settle the business as soon. We will try a bottle of the chambertin to-day, Vincent.” The punster smiled faintly, and for once in his life made no reply. We walked gravely and soberly to my lodgings for the pistols, and then proceeded to the engagement as silently as Christians should do.

The Frenchman and his second were on the ground first. I saw that the former was pale and agitated, not, I think, from fear, but passion. When we took our ground, Vincent came to me, and said, in a low tone, “For God’s sake, suffer me to accommodate this, if possible?”

“It is not in our power,” said I, receiving the pistol. I looked steadily at D’Azimart, and took my aim. His pistol, owing, I suppose, to the trembling of his hand, went off a moment sooner than he had anticipated—the ball grazed my hat. My aim was more successful—I struck him in the shoulder—the exact place I had intended. He staggered a few paces, but did not fall.

We hastened towards him—his cheek assumed a still more livid hue as I approached; he muttered some half-formed curses between his teeth, and turned from me to his second.

“You will inquire whether Monsieur D’Azimart is satisfied,” said I to Vincent, and retired to a short distance.

“His second,” said Vincent, (after a brief conference with that person,) “replies to my question, that Monsieur D’Azimart’s wound has left him, for the present, no alternative.” Upon this answer I took Vincent’s arm, and we returned forthwith to my carriage.

“I congratulate you most sincerely on the event of this duel,” said Vincent. “Monsieur de M— (D’Azimart’s second) informed me, when I waited on him, that your antagonist was one of the most celebrated pistol shots in Paris, and that a lady with whom he had been long in love, made the death of the chain-bearer the price of her favours. Devilish lucky for you, my good fellow, that his hand trembled so; but I did not know you were so good a shot.”

“Why,” I answered, “I am not what is vulgarly termed ‘a crack shot’—I cannot split a bullet on a penknife; but I am sure of a target somewhat smaller than a man: and my hand is as certain in the field as it is in the practice-yard.”

“Le sentiment de nos forces les augmente,” replied Vincent. “Shall I tell the coachman to drive to the Rocher?”

CHAPTER XXIX

*Here's a kind host, that makes the invitation,
To your own cost to his fort bon collation.*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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