

ЭДВАРД БУЛЬВЕР-ЛИТТОН

**WHAT WILL HE DO
WITH IT? – VOLUME
02**

Эдвард Бульвер-Литтон

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with It? — Volume 02**

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Edward Bulwer-Lytton

What Will He Do with It? — Volume 02

BOOK II

CHAPTER I

Primitive character of the country in certain districts of Great Britain.— Connection between the features of surrounding scenery and the mental and moral inclinations of man, after the fashion of all sound ethnological historians.—A charioteer, to whom an experience of British laws suggests an ingenious mode of arresting the progress of Roman Papacy, carries Lionel Houghton and his fortunes to a place which allows of description and invites repose.

In safety, but with naught else rare enough, in a railway train, to deserve commemoration, Lionel reached the station to which he was bound. He there inquired the distance to Fawley Manor House; it was five miles. He ordered a fly, and was soon wheeled briskly along a rough parish road, through a country strongly contrasting the gay river scenery he had so lately quitted,—quite as English, but rather the England of a former race than that which spreads round our own generation like one vast suburb of garden-ground and villas. Here, nor village nor spire, nor porter's lodge came in sight. Rare even were the cornfields; wide spaces of unenclosed common opened, solitary and primitive, on the road, bordered by large woods, chiefly of beech, closing the horizon with ridges of undulating green. In such an England, Knights Templars might have wended their way to scattered monasteries, or fugitive partisans in the bloody Wars of the Roses have found shelter under leafy coverts.

The scene had its romance, its beauty-half savage, half gentle-leading perforce the mind of any cultivated and imaginative gazer far back from the present day, waking up long-forgotten passages from old poets. The stillness of such wastes of sward, such deeps of woodland, induced the nurture of revery, gravely soft and lulling. There, Ambition might give rest to the wheel of Ixion, Avarice to the sieve of the Danaids; there, disappointed Love might muse on the brevity of all human passions, and count over the tortured hearts that have found peace in holy meditation, or are now stilled under grassy knolls. See where, at the crossing of three roads upon the waste, the landscape suddenly unfolds, an upland in the distance, and on the upland a building, the first sign of social man. What is the building? only a silenced windmill, the sails dark and sharp against the dull leaden sky.

Lionel touched the driver,—“Are we yet on Mr. Darrell's property?” Of the extent of that property he had involuntarily conceived a vast idea.

“Lord, sir, no; we be two miles from Squire Darrell's. He han't much property to speak of hereabouts. But he bought a good bit o' land, too, some years ago, ten or twelve mile t' other side o' the county. First time you are going to Fawley, sir?”

“Yes.”

“Ah! I don't mind seeing you afore; and I should have known you if I had, for it is seldom indeed I have a fare to Fawley old Manor House. It must be, I take it, four or five years ago sin' I wor there with a gent, and he went away while I wor feeding the horse; did me out o' my back fare. What bisness had he to walk when he came in my fly? Shabby.”

“Mr. Darrell lives very retired, then? sees few persons?” “S'pose so. I never seed him as I knows on; see'd two o' his hosses though,—rare good uns;” and the driver whipped on his own horse, took to whistling, and Lionel asked no more.

At length the chaise stopped at a carriage gate, receding from the road, and deeply shadowed by venerable trees,—no lodge. The driver, dismounting, opened the gate.

"Is this the place?"

The driver nodded assent, remounted, and drove on rapidly through what night by courtesy he called a park. The enclosure was indeed little beyond that of a good-sized paddock; its boundaries were visible on every side: but swelling uplands covered with massy foliage sloped down to its wild, irregular turf soil,—soil poor for pasturage, but pleasant to the eye; with dell and dingle, bosks of fantastic pollards; dotted oaks of vast growth; here and there a weird hollow thorn-tree; patches of fern and gorse. Hoarse and loud cawed the rooks; and deep, deep as from the innermost core of the lovely woodlands came the mellow note of the cuckoo. A few moments more a wind of the road brought the house in sight. At its rear lay a piece of water, scarcely large enough to be styled a lake; too winding in its shaggy banks, its ends too concealed by tree and islet, to be called by the dull name of pond. Such as it was it arrested the eye before the gaze turned towards the house: it had an air of tranquillity so sequestered, so solemn. A lively man of the world would have been seized with spleen at the first glimpse of it; but he who had known some great grief, some anxious care, would have drunk the calm into his weary soul like an anodyne. The house,—small, low, ancient, about the date of Edward VI., before the statelier architecture of Elizabeth. Few houses in England so old, indeed, as Fawley Manor House. A vast weight of roof, with high gables; windows on the upper story projecting far over the lower part; a covered porch with a coat of half-obliterated arms deep panelled over the oak door. Nothing grand, yet all how venerable! But what is this? Close beside the old, quiet, unassuming Manor House rises the skeleton of a superb and costly pile, —a palace uncompleted, and the work evidently suspended,—perhaps long since, perhaps now forever. No busy workmen nor animated scaffolding. The perforated battlements roofed over with visible haste,—here with slate, there with tile; the Elizabethan mullion casements unglazed; some roughly boarded across,—some with staring forlorn apertures, that showed floorless chambers, for winds to whistle through and rats to tenant. Weeds and long grass were growing over blocks of stone that lay at hand. A wallflower had forced itself into root on the sill of a giant oriel. The effect was startling. A fabric which he who conceived it must have founded for posterity,—so solid its masonry, so thick its walls,—and thus abruptly left to moulder; a palace constructed for the reception of crowding guests, the pomp of stately revels, abandoned to owl and bat. And the homely old house beside it, which that lordly hall was doubtless designed to replace, looking so safe and tranquil at the baffled presumption of its spectral neighbour.

The driver had rung the bell, and now turning back to the chaise met Lionel's inquiring eye, and said, "Yes; Squire Darrell began to build that—many years ago—when I was a boy. I heard say it was to be the show-house of the whole county. Been stopped these ten or a dozen years."

"Why?—do you know?"

"No one knows. Squire was a laryer, I b'leve: perhaps he put it into Chancery. My wife's grandfather was put into Chancery jist as he was growing up, and never grew afterwards: never got out o' it; nout ever does. There's our churchwarden comes to me with a petition to sign agin the Pope. Says I, 'That old Pope is always in trouble: what's he bin doin' now?' Says he, 'Spreading! He's a-got into Parlyment, and he's now got a colledge, and we pays for it. I does n't know how to stop him.' Says I, 'Put the Pope into Chancery, along with wife's grandfather, and he'll never spread agin.'"

The driver had thus just disposed of the Papacy, when an elderly servant out of livery opened the door. Lionel sprang from the chaise, and paused in some confusion: for then, for the first time, there darted across him the idea that he had never written to announce his acceptance of Mr. Darrell's invitation; that he ought to have done so; that he might not be expected. Meanwhile the servant surveyed him with some surprise. "Mr. Darrell?" hesitated Lionel, inquiringly.

"Not at home, sir," replied the man, as if Lionel's business was over, and he had only to re-enter his chaise. The boy was naturally rather bold than shy, and he said, with a certain assured air, "My name is Haughton. I come here on Mr. Darrell's invitation."

The servant's face changed in a moment; he bowed respectfully. "I beg pardon, sir. I will look for my master; he is somewhere on the grounds." The servant then approached the fly, took out the knapsack, and, observing Lionel had his purse in his hand, said, "Allow me to save you that trouble, sir. Driver, round to the stable-yard." Stepping back into the house, the servant threw open a door to the left, on entrance, and advanced a chair. "If you will wait here a moment, sir, I will seek for my master."

CHAPTER II

Guy Darrell—and Stilled Life.

The room in which Lionel now found himself was singularly quaint. An antiquarian or architect would have discovered at a glance that at some period it had formed part of the entrance-hall; and when, in Elizabeth's or James the First's day, the refinement in manners began to penetrate from baronial mansions to the homes of the gentry, and the entrance-hall ceased to be the common refectory of the owner and his dependants, this apartment had been screened off by perforated panels, which for the sake of warmth and comfort had been filled up into solid wainscot by a succeeding generation. Thus one side of the room was richly carved with geometrical designs and arabesque pilasters, while the other three sides were in small simple panels, with a deep fantastic frieze in plaster, depicting a deer-chase in relief and running between woodwork and ceiling. The ceiling itself was relieved by long pendants without any apparent meaning, and by the crest of the Darrells,—a heron, wreathed round with the family motto, "Ardua petit Ardea." It was a dining-room, as was shown by the character of the furniture. But there was no attempt on the part of the present owner, and there had clearly been none on the part of his predecessor, to suit the furniture to the room. The furniture, indeed, was of the heavy, graceless taste of George the First,—cumbrous chairs in walnut-tree, with a worm-eaten mosaic of the heron on their homely backs, and a faded blue worsted on their seats; a marvellously ugly sideboard to match, and on it a couple of black shagreen cases, the lids of which were flung open, and discovered the pistol-shaped handles of silver knives. The mantelpiece reached to the ceiling, in panelled compartments, with heraldic shields, and supported by rude stone Caryatides. On the walls were several pictures,—family portraits, for the names were inscribed on the frames. They varied in date from the reign of Elizabeth to that of George I. A strong family likeness pervaded them all,—high features, dark hair, grave aspects,—save indeed one, a Sir Ralph Haughton Darrell, in a dress that spoke him of the holiday date of Charles II.,—all knots, lace, and ribbons; evidently the beau of the race; and he had blue eyes, a blonde peruke, a careless profligate smile, and looked altogether as devil-me-care, rakehelly, handsome, good-for-nought, as ever swore at a drawer, beat a watchman, charmed a lady, terrified a husband, and hummed a song as he pinked his man.

Lionel was still gazing upon the effigies of this airy cavalier when the door behind him opened very noiselessly, and a man of imposing presence stood on the threshold,—stood so still, and the carved mouldings of the doorway so shadowed, and as it were cased round his figure, that Lionel, on turning quickly, might have mistaken him for a portrait brought into bold relief from its frame by a sudden fall of light. We hear it, indeed, familiarly said that such a one is like an old picture. Never could it be more appositely said than of the face on which the young visitor gazed, much startled and somewhat awed. Not such as inferior limners had painted in the portraits there, though it had something in common with those family lineaments, but such as might have looked tranquil power out of the canvas of Titian.

The man stepped forward, and the illusion passed. "I thank you," he said, holding out his hand, "for taking me at my word, and answering me thus in person." He paused a moment, surveying Lionel's countenance with a keen but not unkindly eye, and added softly, "Very like your father."

At these words Lionel involuntarily pressed the hand which he had taken. That hand did not return the pressure. It lay an instant in Lionel's warm clasp—not repelling, not responding—and was then very gently withdrawn.

"Did you come from London?"

"No, sir; I found your letter yesterday at Hampton Court. I had been staying some days in that neighbourhood. I came on this morning: I was afraid too unceremoniously; your kind welcome reassures me there."

The words were well chosen and frankly said. Probably they pleased the host, for the expression of his countenance was, on the whole, propitious; but he merely inclined his head with a kind of lofty indifference, then, glancing at his watch, he rang the bell. The servant entered promptly. "Let dinner be served within an hour."

"Pray, sir," said Lionel, "do not change your hours on my account."

Mr. Darrell's brow slightly contracted. Lionel's tact was in fault there; but the great man answered quietly, "All hours are the same to me; and it were strange if a host could be deranged by consideration to his guest,—on the first day too. Are you tired? Would you like to go to your room, or look out for half an hour? The sky is clearing."

"I should so like to look out, sir."

"This way then."

Mr. Darrell, crossing the hall, threw open a door opposite to that by which Lionel entered, and the lake (we will so call it) lay before them, —separated from the house only by a shelving gradual declivity, on which were a few beds of flowers,—not the most in vogue nowadays, and disposed in rambling old-fashioned parterres. At one angle, a quaint and dilapidated sun-dial; at the other, a long bowling-alley, terminated by one of those summer-houses which the Dutch taste, following the Revolution of 1688, brought into fashion. Mr. Darrell passed down this alley (no bowls there now), and observing that Lionel looked curiously towards the summer-house, of which the doors stood open, entered it. A lofty room with coved ceiling, painted with Roman trophies of helmets and fasces, alternated with crossed fifes and fiddles, painted also.

"Amsterdam manners," said Mr. Darrell, slightly shrugging his shoulders. "Here a former race heard music, sang glees, and smoked from clay pipes. That age soon passed, unsuited to English energies, which are not to be united with Holland phlegm! But the view from the window—look out there. I wonder whether men in wigs and women in hoops enjoyed that. It is a mercy they did not clip those banks into a straight canal!"

The view was indeed lovely,—the water looked so blue and so large and so limpid, woods and curving banks reflected deep on its peaceful bosom.

"How Vance would enjoy this!" cried Lionel. "It would come into a picture even better than the Thames."

"Vance? who is Vance?"

"The artist,—a great friend of mine. Surely, sir, you have heard of him or seen his pictures!"

"Himself and his pictures are since my time. Days tread down days for the recluse, and he forgets that celebrities rise with their suns, to wane with their moons,

"Truditur dies die,
Novaeque pergunt interire lunae"

"All suns do not set; all moons do not wane!" cried Lionel, with blunt enthusiasm. "When Horace speaks elsewhere of the Julian star, he compares it to a moon—'inter ignes minores'—and surely Fame is not among the orbs which 'pergunt interire,'—hasten on to perish!"

"I am glad to see that you retain your recollections of Horace," said Mr. Darrell, frigidly, and without continuing the allusion to celebrities; "the most charming of all poets to a man of my years, and" (he very dryly added) "the most useful for popular quotation to men at any age."

Then sauntering forth carelessly, he descended the sloping turf, came to the water-side, and threw himself at length on the grass: the wild thyme which he crushed sent up its bruised fragrance. There, resting his face on his hand, Darrell gazed along the water in abstracted silence. Lionel felt that he was forgotten; but he was not hurt. By this time a strong and admiring interest for his cousin had sprung up within his breast: he would have found it difficult to explain why. But whosoever at that moment could have seen Guy Darrell's musing countenance, or whosoever, a few minutes before,

could have heard the very sound of his voice, sweetly, clearly full; each slow enunciation unaffectedly, mellowly distinct,—making musical the homeliest; roughest word, would have understood and shared the interest which Lionel could not explain. There are living human faces, which, independently of mere physical beauty, charm and enthrall us more than the most perfect lineaments which Greek sculptor ever lent to a marble face; there are key-notes in the thrilling human voice, simply uttered, which can haunt the heart, rouse the passions, lull rampant multitudes, shake into dust the thrones of guarded kings, and effect more wonders than ever yet have been wrought by the most artful chorus or the deftest quill.

In a few minutes the swans from the farther end of the water came sailing swiftly towards the bank on which Darrell reclined. He had evidently made friends with them, and they rested their white breasts close on the margin, seeking to claim his notice with a low hissing salutation, which, it is to be hoped, they changed for something less sibilant in that famous song with which they depart this life.

Darrell looked up. "They come to be fed," said he, "smooth emblems of the great social union. Affection is the offspring of utility. I am useful to them: they love me." He rose, uncovered, and bowed to the birds in mock courtesy: "Friends, I have no bread to give you."

LIONEL.—"Let me run in for some. I would be useful too."

MR. DARRELL.—"Rival!—useful to my swans?"

LIONEL (tenderly).—"Or to you, sir."

He felt as if he had said too much, and without waiting for permission, ran indoors to find some one whom he could ask for the bread.

"Sonless, childless, hopeless, objectless!" said Darrell, murmuringly to himself, and sank again into reverie.

By the time Lionel returned with the bread, another petted friend had joined the master. A tame doe had caught sight of him from her covert far away, came in light bounds to his side, and was pushing her delicate nostril into his drooping hand. At the sound of Lionel's hurried step, she took flight, trotted off a few paces, then turned, looking.

"I did not know you had deer here."

"Deer!—in this little paddock!—of course not; only that doe. Fairthorn introduced her here. By the by," continued Darrell, who was now throwing the bread to the swans, and had resumed his careless, unmeditative manner, "you were not aware that I have a brother hermit,—a companion beside the swans and the doe. Dick Fairthorn is a year or two younger than myself, the son of my father's bailiff. He was the cleverest boy at his grammar-school. Unluckily he took to the flute, and unfitted himself for the present century. He condescends, however, to act as my secretary,—a fair classical scholar, plays chess, is useful to me,—I am useful to him. We have an affection for each other. I never forgive any one who laughs at him. The half-hour bell, and you will meet him at dinner. Shall we come in and dress?"

They entered the house; the same man-servant was in attendance in the hall. "Show Mr. Houghton to his room." Darrell inclined his head—I use that phrase, for the gesture was neither bow nor nod—turned down a narrow passage and disappeared.

Led up an uneven staircase of oak, black as ebony, with huge balustrades, and newel-posts supporting clumsy balls, Lionel was conducted to a small chamber, modernized a century ago by a faded Chinese paper, and a mahogany bedstead, which took up three-fourths of the space, and was crested with dingy plumes, that gave it the cheerful look of a hearse; and there the attendant said, "Have you the key of your knapsack, sir? shall I put out your things to dress?" Dress! Then for the first time the boy remembered that he had brought with him no evening dress,—nay, evening dress, properly so called, he possessed not at all in any corner of the world. It had never yet entered into his modes of existence. Call to mind when you were a boy of seventeen, "betwixt two ages hovering like a star," and imagine Lionel's sensations. He felt his cheek burn as if he had been detected in a crime. "I have no dress things," he said piteously; "only a change of linen, and this," glancing at the summer

jacket. The servant was evidently a most gentleman-like man: his native sphere that of groom of the chambers. "I will mention it to Mr. Darrell; and if you will favour me with your address in London, I will send to telegraph for what you want against to-morrow."

"Many thanks," answered Lionel, recovering his presence of mind; "I will speak to Mr. Darrell myself."

"There is the hot water, sir; that is the bell. I have the honour to be placed at your commands." The door closed, and Lionel unlocked his knapsack; other trousers, other waistcoat had he,—those worn at the fair, and once white. Alas! they had not since then passed to the care of the laundress. Other shoes,—double-soled for walking. There was no help for it but to appear at dinner, attired as he had been before, in his light pedestrian jacket, morning waistcoat flowered with sprigs, and a fawn-coloured nether man. Could it signify much,—only two men? Could the grave Mr. Darrell regard such trifles?—Yes, if they intimated want of due respect.

"Durum! sed fit levius Patientia
Quicquid corrigere est nefas."

On descending the stairs, the same high-bred domestic was in waiting to show him into the library. Mr. Darrell was there already, in the simple but punctilious costume of a gentleman who retains in seclusion the habits customary in the world. At the first glance Lionel thought he saw a slight cloud of displeasure on his host's brow. He went up to Mr. Darrell ingenuously, and apologized for the deficiencies of his itinerant wardrobe. "Say the truth," said his host; "you thought you were coming to an old churl, with whom ceremony was misplaced."

"Indeed no!" exclaimed Lionel. "But—but I have so lately left school."

"Your mother might have thought for you."

"I did not stay to consult her, indeed, sir; I hope you are not offended."

"No, but let me not offend you if I take advantage of my years and our relationship to remark that a young man should be careful not to let himself down below the standard of his own rank. If a king could bear to hear that he was only a ceremonial, a private gentleman may remember that there is but a ceremonial between himself and—his hatter!"

Lionel felt the colour mount his brow; but Darrell pressing the distasteful theme no further, and seemingly forgetting its purport, turned his remarks carelessly towards the weather. "It will be fair to-morrow: there is no mist on the hill yonder. Since you have a painter for a friend, perhaps you yourself are a draughtsman. There are some landscape effects here which Fairthorn shall point out to you."

"I fear, Mr. Darrell," said Lionel, looking down, "that to-morrow I must leave you."

"So soon? Well, I suppose the place must be very dull."

"Not that—not that; but I have offended you, and I would not repeat the offence. I have not the 'ceremonial' necessary to mark me as a gentleman,—either here or at home."

"So! Bold frankness and ready wit command ceremonials," returned Darrell, and for the first time his lip wore a smile. "Let me present to you Mr. Fairthorn," as the door, opening, showed a shambling awkward figure, with loose black knee-breeches and buckled shoes. The figure made a strange sidelong bow; and hurrying in a lateral course, like a crab suddenly alarmed, towards a dim recess protected by a long table, sank behind a curtain fold, and seemed to vanish as a crab does amidst the shingles.

"Three minutes yet to dinner, and two before the lettercarrier goes," said the host, glancing at his watch. "Mr. Fairthorn, will you write a note for me?" There was a mutter from behind the curtain. Darrell walked to the place, and whispered a few words, returned to the hearth, rang the bell. "Another letter for the post, Mills: Mr. Fairthorn is sealing it. You are looking at my book-shelves, Lionel. As I understand that your master spoke highly of you, I presume that you are fond of reading."

"I think so, but I am not sure," answered Lionel, whom his cousin's conciliatory words had restored to ease and good-humour.

"You mean, perhaps, that you like reading, if you may choose your own books."

"Or rather, if I may choose my own time to read them, and that would not be on bright summer days."

"Without sacrificing bright summer days, one finds one has made little progress when the long winter nights come."

"Yes, sir. But must the sacrifice be paid in books? I fancy I learned as much in the play-ground as I did in the schoolroom, and for the last few months, in much my own master, reading hard in the forenoon, it is true, for many hours at a stretch, and yet again for a few hours at evening, but rambling also through the streets, or listening to a few friends whom I have contrived to make,—I think, if I can boast of any progress at all, the books have the smaller share in it."

"You would, then, prefer an active life to a studious one?"

"Oh, yes—yes."

"Dinner is served," said the decorous Mr. Mills, throwing open the door.

CHAPTER III

In our happy country every man's house is his castle. But however stoutly he fortify it, Care enters, as surely as she did in Horace's time, through the porticos of a Roman's villa. Nor, whether ceilings be fretted with gold and ivory, or whether only coloured with whitewash, does it matter to Care any more than it does to a house-fly. But every tree, be it cedar or blackthorn, can harbour its singing-bird; and few are the homes in which, from nooks least suspected, there starts not a music. Is it quite true that, "*non avium citharaeque cantus somnum reducent*"? Would not even Damocles himself have forgotten the sword, if the lute-player had chanced on the notes that lull?

The dinner was simple enough, but well dressed and well served. One footman, in plain livery, assisted Mr. Mills. Darrell ate sparingly, and drank only water, which was placed by his side iced, with a single glass of wine at the close of the repast, which he drank on bending his head to Lionel, with a certain knightly grace, and the prefatory words of "Welcome here to a Haughton." Mr. Fairthorn was less abstemious; tasted of every dish, after examining it long through a pair of tortoise-shell spectacles, and drank leisurely through a bottle of port, holding up every glass to the light. Darrell talked with his usual cold but not uncourteous indifference. A remark of Lionel on the portraits in the room turned the conversation chiefly upon pictures, and the host showed himself thoroughly accomplished in the attributes of the various schools and masters. Lionel, who was very fond of the art, and indeed painted well for a youthful amateur, listened with great delight.

"Surely, sir," said he, struck much with a very subtle observation upon the causes why the Italian masters admit of copyists with greater facility than the Flemish,— "surely, sir, you yourself must have practised the art of painting?"

"Not I; but I instructed myself as a judge of pictures, because at one time I was a collector."

Fairthorn, speaking for the first time: "The rarest collection,—such Albert Durers! such Holbeins! and that head by Leonardo da Vinci!" He stopped; looked extremely frightened; helped himself to the port, turning his back upon his host, to hold, as usual, the glass to the light.

"Are they here, sir?" asked Lionel.

Darrell's face darkened, and he made no answer; but his head sank on his breast, and he seemed suddenly absorbed in gloomy thought. Lionel felt that he had touched a wrong chord, and glanced timidly towards Fairthorn; but that gentleman cautiously held up his finger, and then rapidly put it to his lip, and as rapidly drew it away. After that signal the boy did not dare to break the silence, which now lasted uninterruptedly till Darrell rose, and with the formal and superfluous question, "Any more wine?" led the way back to the library. There he ensconced himself in an easy-chair, and saying, "Will you find a book for yourself, Lionel?" took a volume at random from the nearest shelf, and soon seemed absorbed in its contents. The room, made irregular by baywindows, and shelves that projected as in public libraries, abounded with nook and recess. To one of these Fairthorn sidled himself, and became invisible. Lionel looked round the shelves. No belles lettres of our immediate generation were found there; none of those authors most in request in circulating libraries and literary institutes. The shelves disclosed no poets, no essayists, no novelists, more recent than the Johnsonian age. Neither in the lawyer's library were to be found any law books; no, nor the pamphlets and parliamentary volumes that should have spoken of the once eager politician. But there were superb copies of the ancient classics. French and Italian authors were not wanting, nor such of the English as have withstood the test of time. The larger portions of the shelves seemed, however, devoted to philosophical works. Here alone was novelty admitted, the newest essays on science, or the best editions of old works

thereon. Lionel at length made his choice,—a volume of the "Faerie Queene." Coffee was served; at a later hour tea. The clock struck ten. Darrell laid down his book.

"Mr. Fairthorn, the flute!"

From the recess a mutter; and presently—the musician remaining still hidden—there came forth the sweetest note,—so dulcet, so plaintive! Lionel's ear was ravished. The music suited well with the enchanted page through which his fancy had been wandering dreamlike,—the flute with the "Faerie Queene." As the air flowed liquid on, Lionel's eyes filled with tears. He did not observe that Darrell was intently watching him. When the music stopped, he turned aside to wipe the tears from his eyes. Somehow or other, what with the poem, what with the flute, his thoughts had wandered far, far hence to the green banks and blue waves of the Thames,—to Sophy's charming face, to her parting childish gift! And where was she now? Whither passing away, after so brief a holiday, into the shadows of forlorn life? Darrell's bell-like voice smote his ear.

"Spenser; you love him! Do you write poetry?" "No, sir: I only feel it!"

"Do neither!" said the host, abruptly. Then, turning away, he lighted his candle, murmured a quick good-night, and disappeared through a side- door which led to his own rooms.

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