VARIOUS

THE KNICKERBOCKER, OR NEW-YORK MONTHLY MAGAZINE, JUNE 1844

Various

The Knickerbocker, or New-York Monthly Magazine, June 1844

http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=35500291
The Knickerbocker, or New-York Monthly Magazine, June 1844 / Volume 23, Number 6:

Содержание

Various
The Knickerbocker, or New-York Monthly Magazine, June 1844 / Volume 23, Number 6

THE PLAGUE AT CONSTANTINOPLE

BY AN EYE-WITNESS

In 1837 I was a resident in Galata, one of the faubourgs of Constantinople, sufficiently near the scenes of death caused by the ravages of the plague to be thoroughly acquainted with them, and yet to be separated from the Turkish part of the population of that immense city. It is not material to the present sketch to dwell upon the subject of my previous life, or the causes which had induced me to visit the capital of the East at such a period of mortality; and I will therefore only add, that circumstances of a peculiarly painful nature obliged me to locate myself in Galata, where there were none to sympathize in my feelings, or

any one with whom I could even exchange more than a word of conversation. I saw none but the widowed owner of the house in which I had a chamber, her daughter Aleukâ, and Petraki, her little son.

While the epidemic raged, we four endeavored to keep up a rigid quarantine. Each recommended to the other the strictest observance of our mutual agreement not to receive any thing from without doors, except the necessaries of life; and whenever we left the house, which was to be as seldom as possible, not to come in contact with any one. Whenever I went out I invariably wore an oil-cloth cloak, and by the aid of my cane prevented the dogs of the streets, which are there so numerous, from rubbing against me. If I visited any one, which I seldom did, I always sat on a bench or chair to prevent conveying or receiving contagion; and before even entering the house, I always underwent the preparation of being smoked in a box, which during the prevalence of the plague is placed near its entrance for that purpose. These boxes were some eight feet high by three square, the platform on which the feet rested elevated about a foot above the earth, so as to admit under it a dish containing the ingredients of the prophylactic, and a hole in the door to let the face out during the smoking of the clothes and body. We procured our daily supply of provisions from a *Bak-kal*, a retail grocer, whose shop was directly under our front window; an itinerant *Ekmekjer*, or bread-man, brought our bread to the door; our vegetables were procured from a gardener close by, and our

water we drew from a cistern under the house: in fine, our food was either smoked or saturated before we touched it, and every possible precaution observed to cut our little family off from the dreadful scourge, 'the pestilence which walketh in darkness and the destruction which wasteth at noon day.' The mother and daughter throughout the day spun silk, knitted woolen suits, or embroidered kerchiefs for head dresses, called in Romaic *fakiolee*, and even to a late hour of the night they frequently continued the same employment, until the plague prevented the sale of their handiwork, and their materials were all used up. All day long they would sit upon the sofa of their little apartment, facing the street, and while their hands toiled for a subsistence, the widow's daughter hummed a plaintive air, or occasionally broke the silence by conversing with her mother. The son was yet too young to be of assistance to his desolate mother and sister, and except when he said his letters to them, spent the day in idleness. As to my own employment, the dull period of time passed with them was a blank in my existence; and yet, such is the influence of past penury and pain, that I now recall them with pleasure.

The weather was generally very warm, and south-west breezes over the sea of Marmora prevailed. From our highest windows we could observe sluggish seamen lounging on the decks of their vessels in the port, afraid to land amid the pestilence. Here and there a vessel strove against the current of the Bosphorus to gain an anchorage; or would slowly float down that stream into

the open sea, on its way to healthier and happier Europe. The starving dogs at nightfall would howl dismally, bewailing the loss of the benevolent hands from which they usually received their food; the gulls and cormorants floated languidly over our dwelling, overpowered by the heat; and the dead silence, which in the afternoon and evenings prevailed, made a most melancholy and affecting impression on my mind.

The plague that summer, (I may limit the period to three months,) carried off more than fifty thousand persons. For some time the mortality amounted to a thousand *per diem*. The number of corpses which passed the limited range of my window daily increased; and after witnessing the spectacle for some time, I always insensibly avoided the sight of the dead, and felt a cold shudder run over my frame whenever the voice of the priest accompanying the corpses struck my ear. So dreadful is the malady, so surely contagious, and so mortal, that so soon as attacked, the unfortunate being is deserted by relatives and friends, and when dead, two or four porters beside a priest were generally the only persons who attended the body to the grave. When the deceased is a Mussulman, he is more frequently attended during his illness, and after death to his tomb, than if a Christian. With the former, the plague is a visitation of Providence, from which it is both useless and a sin to escape, while with the latter not only is it deemed necessary to provide for one's own life, but even to do so at the sacrifice of the dearest friend. Often I noticed a dead body tied on a plank which a single

porter carried on his back; at other times the object would be concealed within a bag, and then the grave was a ditch common to all, into which the porter would shake off his load and return for another. No priest or Imam there presided over the funeral scene; few or none were the prayers that were said over the remains: he who but a short week before had been proud of his strength or condition, or she who in the same short space of time previous excelled in beauty and grace, there lay confounded in one neglected, unhonored, and putrefying mass. The air became impregnated with the effluvia; the houses around the Turkish cemeteries, which are mostly in the heart of the city, where the dead are interred, but some three feet beneath the surface, were soon deserted, their owners dead. The ever-green cypress trees under whose umbrageous quiet the beautiful children once played, now moaned over their little graves; and in fine, every one in the deserted city walked with measured steps, apprehensive of threatening death: awe and consternation filled the minds of all.

The Sultan's own household was not free from the scourge. By some means it found access to his servants and carried off about fifty of them. Their bodies were cast into the Bosphorus, and the Sultan fled to another palace. The ministers of the Sublime Porte suffered severely in their families; their wives and slaves died off in numbers; and even the minister of foreign affairs is said to have taken it and narrowly escaped. Few survived when once attacked, and the chances of recovery were scarcely worth calculating. And yet among the Mussulmans little or no

precaution was taken; for although by a government order all the principal offices were provided with fumigatory boxes, they were seldom used. The Mussulman Sheiks declared that the contagion came from Heaven, and could only be averted by Almighty power. Yet it was a well-known fact that cleanliness of habits went far toward preserving against the disease; and frequent change of apparel, with ordinary precautions, sufficed to preserve many who otherwise would doubtless have taken it.

But I think the reader will be able, from the preceding sketch, to form some idea of the nature and extent of the mortality of the plague in 1837. While it raged, every feeling approaching to a similarity with what is known to denote an attack, excites apprehension. A pimple, through the medium of the imagination, is transformed into a horrid *bubo*; a cold or a simple head-ache, however trifling, are attributed to the dreaded malady; and even the firmest mind at such times quails under trifling appearances. In some cases the scene of agony closes in a few hours—even minutes; they fall down and almost immediately expire. Others linger for twenty-four or forty-eight hours, or several days elapse before death puts an end to their sufferings. Some again bear it in their systems for several days, and attend to their usual occupations: at length it appears, they fall ill and expire, or recover. Few account for their being attacked; they do not remember having touched any one suspected or exposed; and again, the porters, whose duty it is to convey the attacked to the hospitals and the corpses to their graves, escape. The mother

attends upon her dying child, sacrifices every apprehension to her affection, and yet escapes, or the child brings it to its parent, who dies, while the innocent cause survives. No cure has yet been found for it; and Nature must be left to take her course. Extreme heat or cold have a favorable effect upon it; but the temperate climate of Constantinople, with the frequent dearth of water, the dust, and other impurities, tend greatly to its dissemination.

It was therefore during this painful period that I resided in Galata; free, as I had hoped, from the contagion; and yet it found its way into our little family, accompanied by all its horrors.

One morning in the latter part of the month of October, invited by the clearness of the air and a fresh breeze which had scarcely strength sufficient to ruffle the water of the harbor, I left my humble apartment and ascended the steep hill of Pera. The view—from the small tuft of graves near the Galata tower, some of which were fresh; of the surrounding villages and the great city itself, where, although devastation had been and still was being carried on with horror, there seemed to reign the most perfect tranquility, resembling the calm bosom of the treacherous sea, quiet over the lifeless bodies of its victims and the wreck of the noble vessels which had furrowed its surface—relieved the monotony of my existence. I gazed longingly upon the many ships lying before me at anchor in the stream, which could in a few days bear me far away from the scenes of death and desolation that surrounded me; or I exchanged a word with any passing acquaintance who ventured from Pera to his

counting-house in Galata. A longer walk gave rise to too many sad reflections. Farther on was the *Petit Champ des Morts*, a small Turkish cemetery, here and there spotted with new-made graves, over which more than one aged female mourned the loss of her life's companion, or perhaps it would be one of fewer years, who wept the fatal destiny of her young husband, brother, sister, or child.

After spending the best part of the day in walking about, I returned to the house of my residence. As usual, I found the door fastened; I knocked, but no one answered me. Again I knocked, and called repeatedly before my voice was heard. At length a low moan, and then a scream, issued from within. Petraki, the widow's son, opened the door, and with a pale and frightened countenance told me his mother had suddenly been taken very ill. There was no alternative. I entered her sitting-room, where in the company of the family I had spent many quiet hours. Now how changed! The mother lay upon the sofa, pale; and breathing with difficulty. Aleukâ, the daughter, knelt by her side on the floor, though greatly agitated herself, and endeavoring to calm her mother's apprehensions. Without once reflecting on the possible consequences, I sat down on a chair beside the sufferer, felt her pulse, and as well as I could, made inquiries after her health. Her pulse was quick, her tongue white and thickly furred, and extreme lassitude was shown by her dejected countenance. Uncertain as to the nature of her disease, and unable to offer any alleviation of her sufferings, I retired to my apartment. There I

did reflect on the danger which I had incurred, and the possibility of the widow having caught the plague.

Every hour she became worse; her sufferings were intensely painful; and to shorten the recital of the sad scene of that night, I will only add, that the horrid disease showed itself on her person before midnight, and at break of day her spirit fled. Of course my mind now prepared for death. I felt confident that I also should soon be a victim to the plague. Early in the morning I called a passing priest and had the widow's remains conveyed to their last abode—I knew not where. I had no place to fly to; every door would be closed against me; and I retired to my apartment, feeling that I was stepping into my tomb while yet alive. There I was not long kept in suspense, for soon the plague attacked first Petraki then myself. When giddiness, the first symptom of the plague, seized me, and I could no longer stand, but fell despairingly on my bed, what were my feelings! But let me not recall them *now*; the mental agony which I suffered it is impossible to describe, and I shudder at the recollection. Aleukâ attended upon me and her brother with all the tenderness and care and forgetfulness of self which is so characteristic of the female character. I begged her to leave me to die alone, to place water by my side and depart, but she would not hear of it.

The first night after his attack Petraki expired, and on the following morning was borne away; and I have an indistinct recollection of being visited on the evening of the same day by the priest and porters. They endeavored to prevail upon Aleukâ

to desert me, saying that in a few hours I would cease to exist. But she constantly refused, determined she replied, to remain by my side until my sufferings were ended.

.....

For several days I was delirious. I remember I knew of nothing; nothing but water passed my lips. Sores broke out over my body, and those on my groins and arm-pits were not closed for some months. My neck however was free, and this no doubt saved my life. On the seventh day I regained my senses, and found myself in my apartment, the wasted figure of my guardian angel still watching over me. I remember, on perceiving in me a favorable change, how her countenance was lit up with joy! Oh, Friendship! how seldom are you found with the sincerity which I then beheld in an humble and uneducated girl! Just when I thought all my prospects in life were blighted; when I had keenly felt the unkindness of mankind, and despaired of ever again finding any thing in this world worth living for; when I had already bidden it farewell, and the other world was full in view; I found what alone can make life delightful even in poverty and misfortune—friendship and love. Soon the violence of the disease abated, and I was saved.

I must hastily pass over my long and painful convalescence. A month elapsed before I could venture to go beyond doors. Aleukâ attended upon me, and through her economy my purse yet held

out. The plague had greatly subsided; the month of December set in with uncommon severity of cold, and checked its progress. Oh! the exquisite delight with which I left my hard and burning bed and close apartment, the scenes of all my sufferings, for the first time! With a prayer of thankfulness on my lips, I crossed the threshold of the humble dwelling, and once more slowly mounted the steep hill of Pera.

It was a bright, sunny, clear morning; the fresh, cool breeze from the Black Sea blew over me, infusing new strength and life into my shattered frame. The streets were again re-peopled, and business renewed. No one recognized me in my pale, haggard and swollen countenance; and when I presented myself at the door of a countryman in Pera, he drew back with an exclamation of surprise, as if he had beheld a spirit.

My short story is told. I have comprised in a few words the tale of many long days of agony and suffering, both mental and corporeal. I fast regained my strength and vigor; the hollow furrows of my forehead and cheeks soon gave way to the effects of a generous diet; and I once more stood forth in health and full powers.

But you will ask, 'And where is she who watched over you during your moments of suffering?—whom you called your guardian angel, and of whose friendship and love you spoke in such feeling terms?' I reply, that she sits even now at my side; her handsome and intelligent countenance reading in my face the varied emotions to which the tracing of these lines give rise.

Devoted Aleukâ is my loving and much-loved wife.

J. P. B.

A SONG

BY JOHN WATERS

Time was I thought that precious name
Less meet for Court than Alley;
But now, no thrilling sound hath Fame,
No clarion note, like Sally!

There seems at first, within the word,
Some cause to smile, or rally;
But once by her sweet glance preferr'd,
Ev'n Heaven itself loves Sally!

The world moves round when move her Eyes,
Grace o'er each step doth dally,
The breath is lost in glad surprize;
There is no belle, like Sally!

Old hearts grow young, off flies the gout,
Time stops, his Glass to rally;
I hardly know what I'm about—
When lost in thought on Sally!

Sometimes she's small, sometimes she's tall,

I can't tell how, vocally;
For there's a spirit over all,
That beams abroad from Sally!

A spirit bright, a beam of light,
Ah! fear not that I rally—
No man can Evil think in sight
Of this pure-hearted Sally!

And yet Time was, I thought the name
For Court less fit, than Alley;
While now, no herald sound hath Fame,
No clarion note, but Sally!

REMINISCENCES OF A DARTMOOR PRISONER

NUMBER THREE

Under the circumstances related in my last number, it will readily be inferred that sleep was out of the question. The only alternative was to sit or lie down and meditate upon the next change which might befal us. There was but little disposition for merriment at such a time and place; yet there was one man, named John Young, but called by his companions 'Old John Young,' who in despite of empty stomach and aching limbs, amused himself and annoyed all others by singing a line of one and a verse of another, of all the old songs he could recollect from his earliest boyhood; dispensing his croaking melody with such untiring zeal as to keep the most weary awake had they been inclined to sleep.

At break of day we began to try to move about, and gradually straighten ourselves, which was something of an effort, stiffened and benumbed as we were with remaining in our wet clothing so many hours. We had now an opportunity of examining our habitation. It was a building of about four hundred feet long, by seventy-five or eighty wide, three stories high, and built

of stone, with massive doors and strongly-grated windows, the floors being of stone or cement, and perfectly fire-proof. Each floor formed one entire room, except being divided by five rows of posts running the whole length of the building, by which the prisoners slung their hammocks. The prisoners were divided off in 'messes' or families of six or eight, each occupying room sufficient to sit around one of their chests, which usually served as a mess-table. One row or tier of these messes were ranged next to the walls on each side, and two rows down the centre, back to back, as it were, leaving two avenues, or thoroughfares, the whole length of the building. The entire arrangement resembled the stalls in a stable, more than any thing else I can compare it to.

There were seven of these prisons, all of about the same size and construction, one of which was not occupied. The whole was enclosed in a circular wall of about twenty feet high, and covering a space of from eight to ten acres of ground. This was divided in three parts by a wall similar to the outside one. The centre yard was occupied by No. 7, allotted to the colored prisoners, and the other two yards had three prisons in each. On the outside wall were platforms and sentry-boxes at short distances, for the guards. About fifteen feet within that wall was a high iron railing. In front of the main entrance was a large square, used for drilling soldiers and other purposes, and twice a week as a market for the country people; and on each side of this were the barracks and hospital, and in front of these were the officers' quarters. This dépôt was situated upon a hill, surrounded by a vast common of

many miles in extent, without a bush or tree to relieve the dreary waste; and from its elevated position it was generally shrouded by clouds, rendering it chilly and uncomfortable the greater part of the year.

The daily allowance of food consisted of a pound of beef, a pint of soup, and a pound of bread to each man; that is to say, at the rate of one hundred pounds of raw beef to an hundred men. The meat was cut up and put into large boilers, with sufficient barley to thicken it for soup. This was boiled until the meat would leave the bone, and the barley was well cooked; and when ready, was served up to the different messes. By the time each person got his beef it was almost too small to be seen, being shrunk up by long boiling; and the bone being taken out, it was no larger than a small-sized tea-cup. The pound of bread was not much larger: it was made of barley, slack-baked, and very dark, though sweet. Indeed it was good enough, what there was of it. On Fridays the fare was varied by the same amount in fish and potatoes.

As some require more nutriment than others, the same quantity of fare did not satisfy all the prisoners alike. I frequently saw many of them devour their day's allowance at one meal without appeasing their hunger; and before the next day's rations were served out, they would be almost frantic from starvation. Some became so exhausted that they were compelled to go to the hospital until they recovered strength. Those who possessed a little money fared somewhat better, as they could indulge in the luxury of bullock's liver, fried in water for the want of fat,

or a hot pumgudgeon fried in the same material. This exquisite dish is not appreciated according to its merits. It commonly bears the undignified title of 'codfish-balls;' and is well known at the present day among our eastern brethren, though not held in the same veneration by them as clam-chowder. 'Dartmoor pippins,' or potatoes, were also held in high estimation with us.

Dartmoor prison was a world in miniature, with all its jealousies, envyings and strife. How shall I describe the scenes enacted within its walls? how portray the character of its inhabitants? If I but held the pen of Dickens or the pencil of Mount, I might hope so to bring the objects before the mind's eye of the reader, that they would stand forth in full relief, inducing him almost to imagine that he stood in their midst. Though many years have rolled by since those events occurred, they still linger in my memory like the vivid scenes of a high-wrought drama; and often in the 'dead waste and middle of the night' do I revisit in my dreams scenes which I should be sorry to survey when awake.

I think it one of the greatest blessings granted by an all-wise and benevolent Creator, that He has bestowed upon man an intellectual and physical capacity, which enables him to pass in comparative happiness many a lonely hour. Many were the aërial maps and charts laid down for our future journeyings through life, and plans formed, which were never to be realized. And perhaps all was for the best; for we are all creatures of circumstance. Not one in a thousand follows out his plans through life. Half of our existence is imaginary; and wise-acres may

scoff as much as they please at what they term 'castle-building,' I believe all mankind indulge in it more or less; and it is an innocent, harmless pastime, which injures no one. I consider it the 'unwritten poetry,' the romance of life, which all feel; but many, like the dumb, strive in vain to give utterance to their thoughts.

Many of the prisoners busied themselves in making some trifling article, which, while it afforded amusement, aided in obtaining for them a little money, and thereby added to their comfort. Many of the most ingenious specimens of art I ever saw were made there; some of which were models of vessels, of various classes, from the clipper-built brig to the line-of-battle ship; made too of beef bones, obtained from the cook. They were built up precisely like a large vessel; human hair twisted into ropes of suitable sizes being employed for rigging. When completed, they made a beautiful toy. Desks, work-boxes, etc., were also made here; violins, some of which were of excellent tone, were likewise constructed. But it would be useless to enumerate the endless variety of queer things made at this multifarious manufactory. Some organized a music-society, with various instruments, and used occasionally to give concerts; others got up a theatre, screening it off with bed covering. I recollect some pretty good performances among them. In short, all were employed in some way, to divert their minds from the contemplation of their miserable condition. Some would read while others listened; some practice fencing; some

sing, some dance. Others would relate their adventures, many of which savored rather too strongly of the marvellous to be readily believed, while others partook in an equal degree of the ludicrous. One of these latter was related by 'Old John Young'—a tale of his early courtship. In his youthful days he lived somewhere in Pennsylvania, where also resided an old farmer, with his wife and two daughters, one of whom, contrary to the old gentleman's wishes, he used to visit. One night while there, unknown to the old people, they having retired, a huge pot of mush was left boiling over the fire, getting ready for the next day. Late in the evening the old gentleman called out for the girls to go to bed; and as they did not retire in time to suit him, he began to stir round, to see why his orders were not obeyed. Young, hearing him coming, took off his shoes to prevent a noise, and glided silently up a ladder into the loft above. The old farmer, having sent the girls to bed, lifted off the boiling pot, which by accident he placed at the foot of the ladder; then putting out the light, and covering the fire, he retired again to bed. When all was still and quiet, Young, with shoes in hand, stole down the ladder, and landed in the pot! Although badly burned, he escaped in some degree by having his stockings on. He left his tracks on the floor, but got out of the house unobserved. He had 'put his foot in it' in good earnest; and mounting his horse, he bade a final adieu to the old farmer and his family.

Winter was now pretty well advanced, and many suffered for the want of clothing. After considerable delay, however, a small

portion was sparingly dealt out, but was accepted by those only who stood in the utmost need. The cause was, that the agent or contractor, having a quantity of garments on hand, over what had been a sufficient supply for some English convicts, who had been confined here at some former period, they were now offered to us, but were rejected by all who could do without them. Those who did receive them, cut a curious figure! I can almost imagine one standing before me now, dressed in a jacket and trowsers of bright yellow cloth; and as they were served out indiscriminately, the consequence was, that large stalwart men were crammed into trowsers which looked more like breeches, and jackets with sleeves terminating at the elbows; and small men with jackets, the sleeves of which dangled far below the hands, and an extra length of pantaloons turned up to the knees; the whole figure surmounted by a knit-woollen cap, resembling an inverted wash-basin; coarse brogans completed the costume. Just pause a moment, reader, and contemplate the figure!

What with starving and freezing, many became ill, and had to be removed to the hospital. This was what all dreaded; and the consequence was, they were so far gone before they went, that they survived but a short time after getting there, although it was understood that the physician was a skilful and humane man, and did all in his power to alleviate their distress. I was taken very ill with the dysentery. I know of no disease which brings a man down more rapidly. Two or three days weakened me so much that I could scarcely move; and with it came a despondency

of mind that was almost insupportable. I had been for years a wayfarer in strange lands, but never, during the whole time, did I so forcibly feel the want of a home, and the solace and care of friends, as now. How did I long to be once more under my father's roof, with an affectionate mother and kind sister! I had a sad forboding that I should soon be numbered among the multitude whose spirits had ascended from their prison-house, and whose bodies were deposited outside the walls, in the ground assigned for that purpose.

The small-pox had also appeared in our midst, spreading havoc on all sides; and despair seemed to rule triumphant. Of those who left for the hospital, but few returned to their comrades. Among those taken ill, was a young man who had been brought up on a farm. Like many others, he had left home to 'go a-privateering,' and was taken prisoner. He never saw home again. He messed just opposite to me, and was I think one of the most exquisite amateur performers on the violin that I ever heard. For hours have I listened with rapture to his delightful music. He was absent a day, and his instrument was silent. The next day I enquired for him; he had been taken suddenly ill, was removed to the hospital, and the second evening brought me tidings of his death. There was another one, who had been for weeks sullen and gloomy. Despair seemed to have thrown its pall over him. He conversed with none, but shunning his companions, spent the day muttering to himself. Early one morning he was discovered in a secluded part of the prison, cold and stiff. He had hung himself.

And was there no one to look after the spiritual or temporal welfare of this mass of isolated beings? Was there none to soothe the troubled mind, to cheer the drooping spirit, nor to whisper hope in the ear of the desponding? Was there none of God's 'messengers of glad tidings' to offer consolation to the dying, and a prayer for mercy on the departing spirit of his suffering fellow-being? No; not one minister of the gospel, of any denomination, did I see while I was there; nor did I hear of any having been there, at any time; nor was there any person to see that the prisoners had suitable beds and clothing, or that their food was wholesome, during the many months that I was there. I was told that Reuben G. Beasly, who was appointed by our government, and who received its pay to see to American interests, had been there some months before, but had done nothing for them; and to the letters of remonstrance written to him, stating their wants, their insufficiency of food and clothing, etc., he turned a deaf ear. He did not deign a reply to them; and what more could be expected of a man who could be so base as to do what I will here state?

About three years ago I met an old ship-mate. We went to India in the same ship. He held a midshipman's warrant in the United States' navy, and went out on this voyage for practice in seamanship. He was made prisoner at the same time I was. In the shiftings and changes which took place, we were separated; and when I saw him, several years after, he stated that after parting with me he remained in London, endeavoring in vain to

get employment on board some ship; that becoming destitute, he went to Mr. Beasly, (*Beastly* it should be,) to get advice and assistance, stating who and what he was; and that, in consequence of the unsettled mode of life in which he had been living, he had unfortunately lost his warrant; and urged him, as an act of humanity, to point out some method whereby he might help himself. He turned away from him with indifference, saying he could do nothing for him. After a lapse of several days, finding no hope of extricating himself from his embarrassed situation, as a last resource he went once more to Mr. Beasly, and asked assistance. The reply was: 'Be off! and if you trouble me again I will put you on board of an English man-of-war!' This gentleman[1] is now Lieutenant Commandant in our navy. He told me he had seen Mr. Beasly not long before, in his official capacity as consul at Havre, but did not make himself known to him. Is it not strange, that one who was so regardless of the duties of his office and the feelings of humanity should hold so lucrative and responsible a situation as the one which he enjoys to this day? There have been serious complaints made against him, within a year or two, by several respectable captains of vessels.

The number of prisoners on my arrival at the dépôt I understood to amount to about three thousand; notwithstanding the deaths had gradually increased, the number was kept good by detachments sent in from time to time, many of them from English ships of war, who had been impressed into the service;

[1] Stephen B. Wilson, Esq.

and although they had frequently asked for a discharge, they could not get it until the European war had ended, and there was but little farther use for them. But they obtained their dismissal, and with it the pay and prize-money due to them at the time.

Such occasions afforded a kind of jubilee, as the money they brought was soon put in circulation through the prisons, from whence it speedily evaporated, being spent in provisions, vegetables, and fruits, brought there by the country-people for sale, and for which an enormous price was paid. Many of the men thus delivered up, had spent several years of the prime of life in fighting the battles of a foreign nation, and were then dismissed with the most brutal treatment. As an instance: a man by the name of Slater, a tall, robust man, just such an one as they like to get hold of, in the service where he had been several years, had made frequent but unavailing applications for a discharge. At length when the war broke out, he made more urgent solicitations for a release. The answer was, 'Yes, you shall have it; but we will first give you something to remember us by.' And tying him up, they gave him three dozen lashes, and sent him to Dartmoor. Such was the reward of his services!

THE SONG OF DEATH

I

Silent and swift as the flight of Time,
I've come from a far and shadowy clime;
With brow serene and a cloudless eye,
Like the star that shines in the midnight sky;
I check the sigh, and I dry the tear;
Mortals! why turn from my path in fear?

II

The fair flower smiled on my tireless way,
I paused to kiss it in summer's day,
That when the storm in its strength swept by
It might not be torn from its covert nigh;
I bear its hues on my shining wing,
Its fragrance and light around me cling.

III

I passed the brow that had learned to wear
The crown of sorrow—the silver hair;
Weary and faint with the woes of life,
The tempest-breath and fever-strife,
The old man welcomed the gentle friend
Who bade the storm and the conflict end.

IV

I looked where the fountains of gladness start,
On the love of the pure and trusting heart;
On the cheek like summer roses fair,
And the changeful light of the waving hair;
Earth had no cloud for her joyous eye,
But I saw the shade in the future's sky.

V

I saw the depths of her spirit wrung,

The music fled, and the harp unstrung;
The love intense she had treasured there,
Like fragrance shed on the desert air:
I bore her to deathless love away;
Oh! why do ye mourn for the young to-day?

VI

I paused by the couch where the poet lay,
Mid fancies bright on their sparing way;
The tide of song in his heaving breast
Flowed strong and free in its deep unrest;
His soul was thirsting for things divine—
I led him far to the sacred shrine.

VII

The sage looked forth on the starry sky,
With aspiring thoughts and visions high,
He sought a gift and a lore sublime
To raise the veil from the shores of Time,
To pierce the clouds o'er the soul that lie;
I bade him soar with a cherub's eye.

VIII

And now, neath my folded wing I bear
A spotless soul like the lily fair;
The babe on its mother's bosom slept;
Ere I bore it far, I paused and wept;
'Twas an angel strayed from its fairer home:
Peace to the mourner!—I come! I come!

Shelter-Island. Mary Gardiner.

MARY MAY: THE NEWFOUNDLAND INDIAN

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR

The tribe of aborigines to which Mary May, the heroine of our little sketch, belonged, has been named by the Newfoundlanders, 'Red Indians;' for what reason, I could never learn. This tribe, or probably the miserable remnant of it, since the English have settled the island has been regarded as altogether remarkable and undefinable. They have never, in a single instance, been induced to visit the white settler since British subjects have resided there. Little is known of their numbers, habits, or general spirit, although the most sedulous exertions have been made to bring about an amicable understanding and a reciprocal intercourse. They have chosen to remain isolated and insolated; keeping their history, their wisdom, and their deeds to themselves. They will hold no communion with others of their own race. There are the Esquimaux, very near their northern boundary; a people disposed to extend the rites of hospitality in peace, and a trading tribe; but these have no more knowledge of the 'Red Indian' than the white man; and they remain wrapt up in a historical mantle as dark as the shades of their own impenetrable complexion.

Much, of a marvellous character, has been said about the Red Indians. The fishermen of the island, as a mass, believe that these poor creatures are semi-human. They will tell you of their having been seen one moment cooking their venison, and composedly regaling themselves, and the next, upon learning the contiguity of the white man, they would vanish from sight, and not a trace could be found of their departure; that they descend far under ground in winter, and lead a kind of fairy life; that they have power to change themselves into birds and fishes, and to sustain life for hours together under water. But all this is of course unnatural and absurd. The Indians of Newfoundland are flesh and blood, and partake, in common with other races of rational beings, of properties holding them within 'delegated limits of power.' And in my opinion, they are as much entitled to a character of consistency as the generality of tribes on our continent. The secret of their shyness, and their unsocial and vindictive disposition, may better be accounted for, from the probable fact that they were inhumanly treated by the early discoverers of the island, the Portuguese and Spaniards. These monsters without doubt butchered and made havock of these poor natives as they did the South American Indians, and indeed wherever their lawless adventures led them, in this new world.

Various governors have been appointed to the Newfoundland station since Great-Britain has possessed the island, and all have used more than ordinary means to reach the Red Indians, and reconcile them to the pale-faces, who have taken possession

of the bays and harbors of their bold and rugged coast. The last, of any magnitude, that was made, was during the summer of 1830, and immediately preceding the administration of Sir Thomas Cochran. It consisted of a regular exploring expedition, numbering about fifty persons, a part of whom were regular soldiers, and a part volunteer citizens, which left St. John's, the capital of the island, with instructions to explore the interior, and traverse every portion of it in quest of the Indians, and to bring some back with them; but to use no cruelty, unless absolutely necessary. After traversing the internal wilds for some ten days, the expedition discovered smoke in the distance, and in a few hours came upon a party of Indians in their wigwams. The red men were greatly surprised, and appeared much alarmed. But upon being presented with some showy ornaments, accompanied by smiles, and other friendly indications, their fears somewhat subsided, and two of them became apparently willing to accompany the expedition into St. John's, on learning by signs that two of the white men would remain as guarantees of their good treatment and return. The white men left were supplied with a large quantity of ornaments and trinkets to distribute among other Indians whom they might find during the absence of their party, a period which was not to be prolonged beyond a month. The good-bye was given, and the expedition started on their return home. It had not travelled many hours before an uncontrollable disposition seized them to go back again to the spot of separation to see if all was well,

for some declared that they had a presentiment that there had already been foul play. Back they went, and when they reached the spot where good wishes had just been interchanged, the first spectacle which met their eyes was the mutilated dead bodies of their faithful hostages! Without any consultation, or a moment's delay, the commander of the expedition ordered the two Indians in their keeping to be shot, and their bodies left exposed, as they had found those of their comrades. This order was promptly executed.

Soon after Sir Thomas Cochran was appointed governor of Newfoundland, he offered a reward of one hundred pounds for the harmless capture of a Red Indian, the person to be brought him at the capital. This reward was advertised in the summer of 1832; and the next spring a fisherman, at a distant, unfrequented part of the island, saw on a pleasant afternoon a young female Indian, laving at the edge of the water. She was alone, and unconscious of danger, and went through the offices of the bath with singular grace and activity. After watching her for some time, he took his measures for her capture. He first cut off her retreat, then approached her carefully, and at the instant of surprise, obtained possession of her person. She made no resistance, but acted as one paralyzed by fear or wonder. He brought her to Sir Thomas, and received his reward. It being the month of May when she was captured, she was given the name of Mary May. She was apparently about eighteen years of age; an angelic creature, tall, with perfect symetry of proportion,

agreeable features, good complexion, and as agile and graceful as a fawn. The governor and the officers of the garrison, and the élite of St. Johns, vied with each other in plans and devices for her gratification. She was taken to parties, to the theatre, to military reviews; in short, she was flattered, caressed, and made the reigning belle. But the poor Indian showed an almost blank indifference to the various schemes devised for her pleasure. She was not *at home*. Every face, every habit, every object was new, and appeared strange to her. She undoubtedly pined to go back again into the dark wilds among her own people. Perhaps her heart, that wonderful controller of human destiny, was in the keeping of some extolled brave: at all events, it was not in the scenes that were passing before her; and the efforts so generously put forth for her amusement and happiness were like the crystal droppings upon the hard insensible stone, falling in full profusion, but leaving no impress.

Mary was detained about a year, and was then given in charge of the fisherman who captured her, with express directions that she should be taken to the spot where he found her, and there be left to her own guidance. She was richly clad and profusely decorated before she was given her liberty, and was furnished with a large quantity of finery for distribution among the members of her tribe. It was hoped that this treatment, when communicated by one of their own blood, would cause a change of feeling among the Red Indians, and that gradually a reciprocity of confidence and intercourse would be established.

But this experiment and this hope proved futile and delusive. In 1836 I left the island of Newfoundland, and up to that time not a glimpse of the red race had flitted across the vision of civilization since the dark captive was permitted again to bound over hill and dale without let or hindrance. Many idle reports and tales were circulated about Mary May, after meeting with her tribe; but little reliance is placed upon them, as they are for the most part contradictory, and strongly savor of the marvellous. But I will give the reader one, which is as well authenticated as any, and quite as probable.

On the second day after Mary was liberated, she found a portion of her people; and when they first saw her, they were much alarmed, judging from her fanciful, brilliant habiliments that she was some celestial visiter. But hearing their own language addressed to them, the parentage of the girl, and the cause of her absence, they became gradually calm, and curiosity took the place of fear, and this gave place to admiration, until the lost one was fairly constituted by acclamation a goddess, and to her surprise and grief, worshiped as such! The daughter's return had been communicated to the father, with such exaggerations and extravagances as pertain to the grossly superstitious; and he, instead of falling upon his child's neck, and receiving her as the lost found, came bowing and doing reverence and worship. Mary was bewildered, and almost wished herself back again with the pale-faces.

But there was one link in the chain of her destiny yet to be

proved; if *that* should be found true, she had not returned in vain. About a year previous to her capture, on a sunny afternoon, she had strayed a mile or two from her father's camp, invited partly by the romance of her own nature, and partly by the novelty of new scenery, opened up by a change of camping-ground. While hesitating concerning her return, and gracefully leaning against a young sapling, she heard a rustling of leaves near her; and quickly directing her eyes to the spot whence the alarm came, she saw with terror a full-grown panther steadily and cautiously approaching her. She had no weapon of defence, and Indian though she was, had never participated in blood and strife. She knew that flight would be vain, for what human being could outrun a hungry panther? She raised one alarm-whoop, and awaited her fate. At the loud, piercing cry, the fierce animal seemed alarmed in his turn, and paused in his progress. But after some five minutes, he recovered his courage, and was making ready for the fatal spring, when an arrow pierced his heart; and the next moment a young, athletic brave sprang from the thicket, and clasped the dark damsel to his breast. She remained an instant, passive and bewildered; the next, she sprang from the embrace of the stranger, and with Indian dignity thanked him for his kind and timely aid. She then turned her face toward her father's camp, and with the fleetness of an antelope passed the intervening space, and soon found herself safe in her changing habitation.

But notwithstanding the assumed dignity and apparent

coldness with which she addressed the young stranger, Mary in that moment of rescue was awakened to a new and impassioned existence. The image of the stranger was before her by day and in her dreams by night. Six or eight months passed, when the chiefs of the tribe celebrated a great festival, to which all the members were invited. The ceremonies were to last a week; many did not arrive until after the first day, and the father of Mary, and his camp, were of this number. But toward the evening of the first day of the festivities, a tall, graceful young brave stalked into the assembly, and with cool solicitude scanned the faces of the female visiters; and not appearing satisfied, he folded his arms upon his breast, and leaning against a rude post, listlessly observed the sports. But a close observer would have seen his eye lit up with unwonted interest when any new arrival was announced. No one knew him; his dress was peculiar; still he spoke their language, and the old chiefs passed him by for a future examination.

On the second day of the gathering, toward noon, Mary May arrived, and with her father, mother and sisters, entered that enclosure of merry hearts. She hoped to see at the festival the youth who had so strongly impressed her; and the moment she entered the rude structure, her eyes eagerly ranged round the assembly until they rested upon the person of her rescuer, who as eagerly returned her significant glance. During the continuance of the feast and frolic, the lovers had many interviews; and before it closed, their faith and vows were exchanged. They were to

have been married the month after her capture; and now, since her return and deification, she had not learned a word about her 'brave,' and had come to the determination if he proved false to destroy herself. Day after day passed without the presence of the only one who could drive the dark cloud from her mind, and it was becoming every day more dense and oppressive, until she gave way to utter despondency, and bitterly bewailed her fate. One afternoon, about two months after her return, while some of her kindred were bowing before her in heathenish worship, hasty steps were heard approaching; the next moment the young brave appeared and clasped his lost treasure to his heart; and taking advantage of the bewilderment of the worshippers, occasioned by his sudden appearance, the happy pair escaped to the sea-coast, and passing over a portion of the bay, found a secure retreat among the Mickmacs, to which tribe the young brave belonged.

And there may they rest. I sometimes, though quite infrequently, meet with some one from Newfoundland; and among the first questions I ask is one touching the 'Red Indians;' and although I have not heard any thing which went to confirm the hope that they may yet be brought to place confidence in the white man, yet I still trust that I shall; and when this result is brought about, or any other thing of interest shall be learned of these strange mortals, I shall take much pleasure in communicating the information, for the benefit of the readers of the Knickerbocker.

BIRTH-DAY MEDITATIONS

I stand upon the wave that marks the round
Of Life's dark-heaving and revolving years;
Still sweeping onward from Youth's sunny ground,
Still changed and chequered with my joys and fears,
And colored from the past, where Thought careers,
Shadowing the ashes in pale Memory's urn;
Where perished buds were laid, with frequent tears,
That on the cheek of Disappointment burn,
As blessed hours roll on, that never may return.

What have they seen, those changed and vanish'd years?
Uplifted, soaring thoughts, all quelled by fate;
Affection, mournful in its gushing tears;
And midst the crowd that at the funeral wait,
A widowed mother's heart made desolate
O'er a war-honor'd Sire's low place of rest;
These are the tales that Memory may relate:
They have a moral for the aspiring breast,
A lesson of Decay on earthliness impress'd.

Yet Hope still chaunts unto the listening ear
The witching music of her treacherous song;
Still paints the Future eloquent and clear,
And sees the tide of Life roll calm along,

Where glittering phantoms rise, a luring throng;
And voiceful Fame holds out the laurel bough:
Where rapturous applause is loud and long,
Frail guerdon for the heart!—which lights the brow
With the ephemeral smile of Mind's triumphant glow.

C.

THE HOUSEHOLDER

BY JOHN WATERS

'For the kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing in the market-place, and said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you; and they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them. Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right that shall ye receive.'—St. Matthew: XX, 1-7.

O thou blest Householder! the starry dawn,
The light crepuscular, the roseate morn,
Long since had melted into day!
Long since the glow of Youth's THIRD hour,
And the bird's song, and Fancy's magic power,
Long since have, traceless, pass'd away!

Ent'reth the sun into its zenith height!
Ent'reth the mortal into manhood's might!
Op'neth again the vineyard Gate
And Labourers are call'd! but Honour's dream
Entranc'd my soul, and made Religion seem
As nought, Glory was man's Estate!

The NINTH hour found me in the market place;
Fierce passion ruled my heart, care mark'd my face;
In vain, in vain, Thy blessed call!
To glitter, to achieve, to lose or gain,
Form'd every hope, or thought, delight, or pain:
The world, the world, was still my All!

The TENTH hour sounded in my startled ear!
Thy gracious Spirit touched my heart with fear!
The harvest ended with the day;
That thought imbued my mind—'not saved? too late?'
I left the throng; I sought the Vineyard Gate;
'Twas shut— Death-struck, I turn'd away!

Low sank the Sun adown the Western Sky!
Each cherish'd hope had prov'd its vanity!
Now neither Earth, nor Heaven was mine.
Rejected, sad, abandon'd, and forlorn;
Of God it seem'd not lov'd; of Hell, the scorn!
No hope, or human or Divine,

Brighten'd my dark, cold, doubting, wretched mind;
The world, a wilderness; Heaven's self, unkind!
'Blackness of darkness' seem'd my way:
Slow struck the ELEVENTH! Thy light around me broke!
And deep, unto my soul, these words were spoke:
'Why stand ye idle all the day?'

'Enter and work through the waning hour!'—
Lord of the Vineyard! grant Thy servant power
To labour, love Thee, and obey.
Let every thought, plan, word, deed, wish, be Thine!
Thine be all honour, glory, praise divine,
And let thy pardon close my day!

THE QUOD CORRESPONDENCE.
Harry Harson

CHAPTER XXVIII

On the day but one after Rust's death, Mr. Kornicker was very busy in his office. His coat was off; his hat was on a chair, and in it was his snuff-box, a black silk neckcloth, and a white handkerchief, not a little discolored by the presence of snuff and the absence of water. In one corner of the room lay a confused heap, consisting of bed, bedding, and various odds and ends of wearing apparel; and from these Mr. Kornicker, after due reflection and calculation as to the order in which to make his choice, selected article after article. First, he spread upon the floor his counterpane, then his blanket, then a sheet not a little akin in appearance to his handkerchief, and then his bed: upon these he piled his apparel, in a confused heap, and proceeded to roll the whole into a large ball, which he secured with a piece of rope. 'Now then, the moving's begun,' said he, opening the door and rolling the bundle into the entry. 'The premises are ready for the next tenant.'

Having brushed his knees with the palm of his hands, and then dusted his hands by knocking them together, he put

on his neckcloth, coat, and hat; pocketed his snuff-box and handkerchief, walked into the entry, locked the door, put the key over it, as he had always been in the habit of doing; seated himself upon his bundle, with his back leaning against the wall; and immediately lapsed into a fit of deep abstraction, which he occasionally relieved by kicking his heels against the floor, shaking his head, in a sudden and emphatic manner, or inhaling his breath rapidly and violently, producing a sound blending the harmonious qualities of a snort and a whistle.

'So,' said he, after indulging in one of the last mentioned performances with so much energy as to arouse him from his abstraction, at the same time nodding his head at Rust's office, '*his* cake being dough, our bargain's up; and here am I, Edward Kornicker, Esquire, attorney and counsellor at law, a man of profound experience, severe knowledge of the world, of great capacity in various ways, though of small means—I think I may say of d–d small means—once more in the market; for sale to the highest bidder. Such a valuable commodity is not met with every day. If any gentleman,' continued he, raising his hand and looking round at an imaginary audience, 'is extremely desirous of securing the eminent talents of one of the most prominent young men of the day—not exactly new,' added he, running his eye over his rusty coat, 'but wonderfully serviceable; no cracks, nor flaws, no pieces broken off—here is an opportunity which will not occur again. This is only a scratch on the surface,' said he, as he thrust his finger into a small hole in his coat-sleeve; 'the article

itself is warranted to be perfectly sound, and of the best quality. How much is bid?—how much for the promising young man aforesaid? How much? One thousand dollars? Five hundred? Two fifty?—one?—fifty? It wont do,' said he, in a melancholy tone; 'strike him down to me. The gentleman's bought himself in; there being no demand for the article in this market, he thinks of disposing of himself to some respectable widow lady with a small family and a large purse. He may alter his mind, but that's his present intention.'

Here Mr. Kornicker concluded his rather extraordinary soliloquy by plunging his hands in his pockets, and dropping into a subdued whistle; in the course of which his thoughts seemed to have taken altogether a different channel; for it was not long before he said, as if in continuance of some unuttered train of thought:

'Well, old fellow, I promised you to look after your girl, although you didn't seem much struck with the offer. But I'll stick to my promise; although, to tell the truth, I don't exactly know how to commence. But nothing will be done by sitting on this bundle. So I'll to my work at once.'

He rose up hastily, and was descending the stairs when he abruptly turned back, went up to his luggage, and after eyeing it for a minute, said:

'It's a hazardous business to leave you here. You can't be distrained on, nor levied on, because you're exempt by law. So you are safe from landlords and creditors; the law makes you

exempt from being stolen too; but thieves consider themselves like members of parliament, out of the reach of law. There's the rub. You might be stolen; and I very much regret to say, that the gentleman who should lay violent hands on you would walk off with all my goods, chattels, lands, tenements, and hereditaments; but I've no where to take you, and as I expect to sleep in this entry, you must take your chance. So, good bye, old acquaintance, in case you and I should never meet again.'

Having in a very grave manner shaken one corner of the counterpane, as if it were the hand of an old friend, he gave his head a sudden jerk, to settle his hat in the right place, and descended the stairs.

The task which Kornicker had imposed upon himself was by no means easy; but firm in his purpose of fulfilling his promise, he shut his eyes to all difficulties, and commenced his pursuit.

The first place to which he went was the prison, for he hoped that the keeper of it might know something about her, or that she might have left her address there, in case her father wished to see her when he was imprisoned. But he was disappointed. They could tell him nothing, except that Rust neither asked for her, nor mentioned her, and had always refused to see her. She had never succeeded in gaining admittance to him, except on the night of his death, when the jailer, a fellow unfit for his office, for he had some human feeling left, unable to resist her tears and entreaties, had let her in unannounced, as mentioned in the last chapter. She had left the cell abruptly, had hurried off, and had

never returned. 'God help the poor child!' exclaimed the man, as he told the story. 'Such hearts as hers were made for heaven, not for this world. I have a daughter of her age; and even if she had robbed a church, I couldn't have treated her as that man treated his child.'

The man looked at Kornicker, as if to observe the effect of his last remark; but probably that gentleman viewed the robbing of a church in a less heinous light than the jailer, for he made no comment on it, but after a pause said:

'So that's all you know?'

The man nodded.

'Good morning to you, Sir,' said Kornicker; and he walked straight out of the building, and had crossed several streets before he had made up his mind what to do next. This however was soon settled, and he buttoned his coat tightly, pulled his hat firmly on his head, drew on a pair of shabby gloves, and performed a number of those little acts which in ancient times were known under the head of 'girding up the loins,' preparatory to setting out to his next point of destination, which was the girl's former home, the place where Rust had committed the murder. It was many miles off; and the distance which Rust, under the whip and spur of fierce passions, had traversed without trace of fatigue, drew from his clerk many a sigh, and many an expression of weariness.

When he got there he found the house deserted. He entered it, for there was no one there to hinder it, but the rooms were empty and dismantled. The house had been hired by Rust, and no

sooner was he in the gripe of the law, than creditors innumerable, who like birds of prey were biding their time, kept in check by the unbending character of their debtor, came flitting in from every quarter; seized and sold the furniture, and left the house desolate. A single dark stain upon the library floor, where the murdered man had fallen, was all that was left to tell a tale of the past. The dust had gathered thickly on the walls, as if preparing to commence a slumber of years; and as Kornicker went out, the rats raced through the hall, startled at the tread of a stranger.

With a heart as heavy as his limbs, as he thought of the past life of the girl who had once tenanted this house, and then fancied what her present fate must be, Kornicker set out on his return. 'If it had been me,' said he, pausing to take a last look at the lonely house, 'if it had only been Edward Kornicker who was thus cast adrift, to kick his way through the world with empty pockets, and without a soul to say to him God speed, or 'I'm sorry for you,' it would have been right and proper, and no one would have any cause to grumble or find fault; but this being a girl, with no money, and consequently with no friends, no experience, as *I* have, it's a very hard case—a very hard case, indeed.'

Having arrived at this conclusion, Kornicker took off his hat, wiped his forehead, snuffed, and set out on his return.

Day after day for several weeks he prosecuted his inquiries without success; and just when he was in despair, chance led him to success. In the course of his rambles, he encountered a person who had been at Rust's trial, and happened to speak about him;

for now that the criminal was dead and in his grave, when public opinion could be of no service to him, many who had hunted him down began to view less harshly the crime which had led to his death; and this man was one of the number. He said that, although he deserved punishment for his previous evil deeds, yet the best and purest act of his life had been that by which he had struck down the destroyer of his child.

'Poor thing!' said he, 'she must have led a miserable life since her father's death. I have met her several times since then in the street, but that was several weeks ago; and then she was very feeble, scarcely able to walk: perhaps she's dead now.'

Kornicker waited only long enough to ascertain that she lived in a certain out-of-the-way part of the town, which the man designated, and thither he directed his steps, and resumed his search; and after several days spent in fruitless inquiries, he discovered her.

The house in which he found her was a small ruinous building, sagged and jutting forward, as if struggling to sustain itself against time and dilapidation. The windows were broken; the doors and shutters unhung, except a solitary one of the latter, which creaked as it flapped to and fro in the wind; and this was the home of Rust's child.

Kornicker ascended the ricketty stairs and paused at the door of a room, which a slipshod woman had pointed out as that of the 'murderer's daughter.' He knocked, but there was no reply; he knocked again, but all was silent. Then he opened the door

and looked in.

It was a small dingy room, unfurnished, with the exception of a bed on the floor, and a single chair, on which stood a candle whose flaring light served only to add to the gloom of the room by revealing its wretchedness. The girl was in bed; her hair lying in tangled masses about the pillow. Her cheeks were sunken and colorless, and her eyes deep-set and glowing, as if all that was left of life was concentrated in them.

Kornicker hesitated for a moment, and then pushed the door open and walked in. The girl looked listlessly up, but did not notice him; for she turned her head away with a weary, restless motion, and did not speak. Kornicker went to the bed, got on his knees beside it, and took her hand in his. As he did so he observed that it was very thin and shrunken, and that the large veins stood out like cords. It was hot as fire. 'You're very ill,' said he, in a low tone. 'I'm afraid you're very ill.'

'I'm dying of thirst,' said the girl, pointing to an empty pitcher, which stood on the floor. 'Give me water; the want of it is driving me mad. No one has been near me to-day. I tried to get it myself, but could not stand.'

Kornicker waited to hear no more, but seizing the pitcher, darted out to a pump, and in a very few minutes came back again with it filled to the brim. The girl's eye grew even more lustrous than before, as she saw it, and she attempted to rise, but was unable.

'You must excuse ceremony,' said Kornicker, as he placed his

arm under her back and supported her while he held the pitcher to her lips. 'Nursing isn't in my line.'

The girl swallowed the water greedily, and then sank back on the pillow exhausted.

'Have you a doctor?' inquired Kornicker, placing the pitcher on the floor.

'No,' answered she feebly; 'I have no money: the last went yesterday. I'm deserted by all now.'

'Not quite,' exclaimed Kornicker, slapping his hand earnestly on his knee, while he experienced a choking sensation about the throat; 'not while I'm left. I'm sorry I a'nt a woman, for your sake; but as I don't happen to be, I hope you'll make no objections on that score; I'll look after you as if you were my own sister.'

It was the first word of kindness that the girl had heard for a long time, and the tears came in her eyes.

'There, there, don't cry,' said Kornicker. 'It bothers me; I don't know what to do when women cry. But you haven't a doctor; that will never do. Keep up your heart,' said he, rising; 'I'll return presently.' Saying this, and without waiting for a reply, he left the room.

Arriving in the street, his first impulse was not only to feel in his pockets, but with the utmost care to turn them inside out, and to examine them narrowly.

'Not a copper—pockets to let!' said he, restoring them to their former condition, after a long and unsuccessful search. 'But this girl must be looked after; that's settled. Now then,' said he, in a

very meditative mood, 'who's able to do it and *will*?'

This seemed a question not easily answered, for he stood for more than a minute in profound thought, in endeavoring to solve it; but apparently making up his mind, he hurried along the street. The direction which he took was toward the upper part of the city, and he was some time in reaching his destination, which was no other than Harry Harson's house. He crossed the court-yard and knocked at the door, which was opened by Harson.

'I want a word with you,' said Kornicker, abruptly.

Harson told him to come in; led the way to his sitting-room, and pointing to a chair, told him to be seated.

'I haven't time,' said Kornicker, shaking his head. 'Do you know me?'

'I've seen you, but I can't recollect where.'

'*Here*,' said Kornicker, 'here, in this room. I breakfasted here. I'm Michael Rust's clerk.'

'Then you can scarcely expect a cordial reception from *me*,' said Harson, coldly.

'I don't care what sort of a reception you give *me*,' replied Kornicker; 'you may kick me if it will be any comfort to you, provided you only do what I ask. Michael Rust is dead, and his daughter is now dying, with scarcely clothes to cover her, or a bed to lie in; without a cent to buy her food or medicine; without a soul to say a single word of comfort to her. I wouldn't have troubled you, old fellow,' continued he, with some warmth, at the same time turning out his pockets, 'if I had a cent to give

her. The last I had I spent in getting a breakfast this morning; and although it's the only meal I've eaten to day, damme if I would have touched it if I had thought to have found her in such circumstances. But since you won't help her, you may let it alone; I'm not so hard run but that I can do something for her yet.'

Kornicker had worked himself up into such an excitement, owing to Harson's cold reception of him, that he took it for granted his request was to be refused; and having thus vented his feelings he turned on his heel to go, when the old man laid his hand on his shoulder.

'Nature puts noble hearts in very rough cases,' said Harson, his eyes glistening as he spoke. 'You're a good fellow, but rather hasty. I didn't say I would not assist the poor girl; on the contrary, you shall see that I will. She has no doctor?'

'No.'

'No nurse?'

'No.'

Harson rang the bell. The house-keeper answered it.

'Martha, put on your things,' said Harson; 'I want you to sit up with a sick person to-night. Bring a basket, and lights, and cups, and every thing that's necessary for one who has nothing. I'll return in five minutes; you must be ready by that time. Now then, Sir, come along; you shall see what I'll do next.'

He went into the street, and walked rapidly on, turning one or two corners, but without going far, and at last knocked at the door of a small house.

'A very excellent fellow lives here,' said he to Kornicker; 'he's a doctor; and if this girl can be saved he'll do it. Hark! there he comes. I hear his step.'

The door was opened by the doctor himself, and a few words sufficed to explain matters to him.

'I'll be ready in a minute,' said he, darting in the room and as suddenly returning, struggling his way into the arms of a great-coat. 'Now then,' exclaimed he, buttoning a single button, and dashing into the street, 'which way?'

'Where does she live?' asked Harson. 'I'll go back and bring the nurse.'

Kornicker told him, and was hurrying off, when Harson touched his arm, and leading him a few steps aside, said in a low voice: 'You seem somewhat straitened for money, Mr. Kornicker; I wish you would accept a loan from me.' He extended a bank-note to him.

Kornicker buttoned his pockets up very closely, not omitting a single button, and then replied coldly: 'I ask charity for others, not for myself.'

'Come, come,' said Harson, kindly, 'you mustn't bear malice. I did not act well toward you at first; you must forget it; and to show that you do so, you must take this loan from me.'

'I don't wish to borrow,' replied Kornicker.

'Well, I'm sorry for it,' said Harson, taking his hand; 'but you're not angry?'

'No no, old fellow; it's not an easy matter to keep angry with

you; you're a trump!'

'Perhaps you'll sup with me when we return?' said the old man, earnestly.

'I'll see how the girl is,' replied Kornicker; 'good bye. We're losing time.'

Saying this, he shook hands with Harson, and joining the doctor, they set out at a rapid pace for the girl's abode.

They reached it without interruption, other than a short delay on the part of the doctor, who being of a belligerent disposition, was desirous of stopping to flog a man who had intentionally jostled him off the sidewalk. Kornicker, however, by urging upon him the situation of the girl, had induced him to postpone his purpose, not a little to the relief of the offender, who in insulting him had only intended to insult an inoffensive elderly person, who could not resent the affront.

'Can it be possible that any thing human tenants such a den as this?' said the doctor, looking at the half-hung door of the girl's abode, and listening to the wind as it sighed through broken window-panes and along the entry.

'Come on, and you'll see,' replied Kornicker; and seizing him by the arm, he led him half stumbling up the stairs, and finally paused at the girl's room.

'Look in there, if you want to see comfort,' said he, with an irony that seemed almost savage, from the laugh which accompanied it. 'Isn't that a sweet death-chamber for one who all her life has had every thing that money could buy?'

The doctor glanced in the room, then at the fierce, excited face of his companion. 'Come, come,' said he, in a kind tone, taking Kornicker's hand; 'don't give way to these feelings. She'll be well taken care of now. Harry Harson never does a good action by halves. Come in.'

He pushed the door open very gently, and went to the bed. The girl seemed sleeping, for she did not move. He took the candle, and held it so that the light fell on her face. He then placed his hand gently upon her wrist. He kept it there for some moments, then held up the light again, and looked at her face; after which he placed it on the floor, rose up, and took a long survey of the room.

'It's a wretched place,' said he, speaking in a whisper. 'She must have suffered terribly here.'

'This is the way the poor live,' said Kornicker, in a low, bitter tone; 'this is the way *she* has lived; but we'll save her from dying so.'

The doctor looked at him, and then turned away and bit his lip:

'What are you going to do for her?' demanded Kornicker, after a pause: 'have you medicine with you?'

'She requires nothing now,' said the doctor, in a tone scarcely above a whisper. 'She's dead!'

Kornicker hastily took the light, and bent over her. He remained thus for a long time; and when he rose, his eyes were filled with tears.

'I'm sorry I left her,' said he, in a vain effort to speak in his

usual tones. 'It was very hard that she should die alone. I acted for the best; but d—n it, I'm always wrong!'

He dashed his fist across his face, walked to the window and looked out.

At that moment the door opened, and Harson entered, his face somewhat attempered in its joyous expression; and close behind followed the house-keeper with a large basket.

'How is she?' asked he, in a subdued tone.

Kornicker made no reply, but looked resolutely out of the window, and snuffed profusely. It would not have been manly to show that the large tears were coursing down his cheeks. Harson threw an inquiring glance at the doctor, who answered by a shake of the head: 'She was dead when we got here.'

Harson went to the bed, and put back the long tresses from her face. There was much in that face to sadden the old man's heart. Had it been that of an old person, of one who had lived out her time, and had been gathered in, in due season, he would have thought less of it; but it was sad indeed to see one in the first blush of youth, scarcely more than a child, stricken down and dying in such a place, and so desolate.

'Was there no one with her—not a soul?' inquired Harson, earnestly, as he rose; 'not one human being, to breathe a word of comfort in her ear, or to whisper a kind word to cheer her on her long journey?'

The doctor shook his head: 'No one.' Harson's lips quivered, but he pressed them tightly together, and turning to Kornicker

said:

'Come, my good fellow, you must struggle against your feelings; you must not be downcast about it. She's better off than if she had lived—much better off.'

'I'm not in the least downcast,' replied Kornicker, in a very resolute manner; 'I don't care a straw about it. She was nothing to me; only it's a little disagreeable to be living in this world without a soul to care for, or a soul that cares for you; and then there was some satisfaction in being of use to some one, and in feeling it was your duty to see that no one imposed on her, or ill treated her; but no matter; it's all over now. I suppose it's all right; and I feel quite cheerful, I assure you. But you'll look to her, will you? I can be of no farther use here, and I'd rather go.'

'I will,' said Harson.

'You won't let her be buried as a pauper, I hope?'

'No, upon my honor she shall not,' replied Harry.

'Very well—good night.'

Harson followed him down the stairs, and again endeavored to force a sum of money upon him; but Kornicker was resolute in his refusal, nor could he be induced to go home with Harson that evening. He said that he was not hungry.

After several ineffectual efforts, the old man permitted him to depart, with the internal resolution of keeping his eye on him, and of giving him a helping hand in the world; a resolution which we may as well mention that he carried out; so that in a few years Mr. Kornicker became a very vivacious gentleman,

of independent property, who frequented a small ale-house in a retired corner of the city, where he snuffed prodigally, and became a perfect oracle, and of much reputed knowledge, from the sagacious manner in which he shook his head and winked on all subjects.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

It was a clear, cloudless night without, and the stars twinkled and glistened as if the sky were full of bright eyes, looking gladly down upon the world, and taking a share in all its gayety and happiness. There was no moon, or rather the moon was a reveller, and kept late hours, and might be detected sneaking through the sky at about one or two in the morning, when she should have been a-bed; and in consequence of her neglect of duty the streets were dark, except where here and there the shop windows threw out bright streams of light, revealing now a wrinkled brow, now a fat, jolly face, and now a pair of bright sparkling eyes, glowing cheeks, and lips like a rose-bud, as the throng of people flitted past them; for an instant clear, distinct, with face, feature, and form plainly visible, and then lost in the darkness. Some paused to look in the windows, some to chat; and it might have been observed, that those who lingered longest in the light, were young, and such whose faces could bear both the test of light and scrutiny. But amid that crowd was a single man, who followed the same course as the rest; skulking in the dark corners, darting rapidly across the streams of light, with his head bent down and his hat slouched, as if he desired to avoid notice. When he reached those places which were comparatively less thronged, he paused and leaned against the iron railings of the houses, and more than once turned and retraced his steps, as if he had

changed or mistaken his route. He was, as far as could be judged from the sudden and uncertain glimpses afforded of his person, tall and gaunt, with sunken eyes, long unshorn beard, and a face disfigured by a deep gash. He had the appearance of one broken down by ill health or suffering, and his panting breath, as he stopped, showed that he was taxing his strength by the pace at which he went. Although he paused often, and often turned back, yet in the end he resumed his journey, and finally reached the upper part of the city. There he struck into a dark cross-street. Once free from the crowd, and where few could observe him, his smothered feelings broke out; and muttering to himself, grating his teeth, blaspheming, now striking his clenched fists as if aiming a blow, he darted on. He did not pause until he came to the house of no less a person than Harry Harson. He crossed the door-yard hastily, as if he feared his resolution might give way; opened the front door, for Harry had no enemies, and his door was unbolted, and entered the outer room. The door communicating with the inner room was open, so that he could see within; and perhaps never was there a greater contrast than between the occupants of those two rooms. In one was a man eaten up by fierce passions, desperate and hardened, with all that is noble in the human soul burnt out as with a hot iron; in the other sat an old man whose benevolent features beamed with good will to all mankind. There was scarcely a wrinkle in the broad full brow; the hair was sprinkled with gray; but what of that? His eye was bright; his mouth teemed with good nature;

and his heart—God bless thee, old Harry Harson! what need to speak of thy heart?

The intruder had come in so noiselessly, although his motions were rapid and bold, that Harson had not heard him, but sat reading a newspaper, and was not a little startled in looking over it to see a man seated within a few feet of him, and gazing at him with eyes as wild and bright as those of a maniac.

'Who are you, in the name of heaven?' ejaculated he, too surprised even to rise, and looking at the stranger as if he still doubted the reality of his being in that spot.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.