

The new and the old; or, California and India in romantic aspects. By J.W. Palmer ... With thirteen illustrations, engraved by A.V.S. Anthony. From original designs by John McLenan

“THE OLD ADOBE—San Francisco.”

THE NEW AND THE OLD;

OR,

CALIFORNIA AND INDIA

In Romantic Aspects.

BY J. W. PALMER, M.D.,

Author of “Up and Down the Errawaddi; or, The Golden Dagon.” “A Youth of Labor with an Age of Ease.” GOLDSMITH— *The Deserted Village*.

With Thirteen Illustrations,

ENGRAVED BY A. V. S. ANTHONY.

From Original Designs by JOHN McLENAN.

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TO MY GENEROUS FRIEND, "THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST TABLE,"

Whose praise is a kind of fame.

PREFACE.

AMONG all sorts of travellers there is one who has no method. He does not set out, he gets away "any how;" and the first you know of his intention to be off to the antipodes is, that you miss him some day from his accustomed places. Brief leave-taking is there in his case, small sewing-on of buttons, or putting of himself to rights; for, standing not upon the order of his going, he goes at once, and the wonder of it is over while he is yet scarcely out of sight.

No regular habits of traveller's diet hinder him; he has the promiscuous appetite of an ostrich, receiving and assimilating into his very flesh and blood each most foreign impression as it falls in his way, with a power of intellectual digestion that would vixen glorify the stomach of that ornithological gourmand. And in his own time, as the whim may take him, "In a year or two, or three it may be," like Lord Lovel in the ballad, when "He rode, and he rode, on his milk-white steed, Strange countries for to see," he is with you again—but that is not all, for there your interest in him just begins.

You find that he has brought back everything except his clothes, and that his mind and his trunk are alike crammed with the queerest curiosities. Suggestions of a various remoteness—the grotesque, the barbaric, the marvellous, the stirring, are exhaled from his mere presence, as the people of each nation are said to emit their own peculiar odor; and though he may be as empty of notes as a beggar, and has never once seen a pencil from first to last, you perceive that he has taken down the very Song the Syrens sang, and caught the Memnon's Morning Hymn, and fixed on the canvass of his fancy all the wonders of Mirage.

True, he did not import these to peddle among you, but you would buy them with the best coin of your understanding and your sympathy; and though he has no facts and figures—and as to the height of mountains or breadth of rivers, will tell you he ix "never thought of that"—and perhaps can render no better mathematical account of the Pyramids than that which Thackeray had given you before—"two big ones and a little one"—you are sure that his memory is wonderful and his powers of description remarkable.

The travel memories of such a man as this, when he has quietly subsided at home to his pipe and slippers and retrospections, are like all that is most dreamy and weird in story, song, or picture; like the grimness of German legend, or the fantastic profusion and confusion, in elaborate hurly-burly, of Gustave Dorè's designs for the "Wandering Jew;" like the sad twilight dimness and mysterious deadness of tombs and ruins in stereoscopic views.

In an odd English book I have been reading lately, called “Phantastes: a Fairy Romance for Men and Women,” I have found an observation, the curious truth of which quite startled me. It is this; that “all mirrors are magic mirrors,” that the commonest looking-glass is a witch, transforming familiar realities into strange illusions. Like “Dandy Jim ob Caroline,” “I looked in the glass and I found it so;” found that the other myself, whom I beheld there, was but a stranger who resembled me, one whom I would fain have shaken hands with and spoken to; for whom I entertained sympathies x in the nature of a longing, all the more intense because incommunicable—found that the very furniture, mocking my table, bureau, and arm-chair, invited me to step within and try the difference.

The youth in “Phantastes” well nigh broke his heart because he could not gain admittance to that mystic chamber. Even so is it with the memory—a magic mirror—of him who has laid his hand on the shoulder of the Boodh, who has called elephants by their pet names, who has listened, delighted, to the tinkling of golden bells, borne on the breeze in gusts of mellow music, down from the flashing pinnacles of Paghham pagodas—and has come away from them all, for ever.

In the magic mirror of his memory the Pyramids tower to a stature that dwarfs the true and everlasting Gyges; and the marvellous Taj Mahal, which “the Pathans designed like Titans and executed like jewellers,” presents a bewildering elaborateness to which its actual beauties are coarse. In the magic mirror of his memory a stony statuesqueness prevails, to produce an effect the weirdest of all; for there everything stands arrested, in the attitude or gesture it presented at the fine instant to which his thought returns to find it—seized in the midst, it may be, of the gayest, most spirited, or most passionate action—laughter, dance, rage, conflict, and so fixed, as unchangeable as the stone faces of the gods, for ever and for ever:

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“No sound is made, Not even of a gnat that sings; More like a picture seemeth all, Than those old portraits of old kings That watch the sleepers from the wall.”

Now, I have imagined that if such a man had chanced to be the first City Physician of San Francisco, in 1849, and a few years later a Surgeon in the East India Company's Service, he would have had experiences such as those that are here related; although, compared with his manner of relating, painting, singing them, mine may be poor indeed.

And in this connexion I take leave to remark, that he who, in the character of a romantic story-teller, would describe effectively the events and scenes of California in "Forty-Nine," or India in "Fifty-Seven," may not weakly mince his words; although in allowing himself that freedom which the subject seems to demand, it becomes him to use it with such discretion as not to offend "ears polite," unless they happen to be also long.

J. W. P.

New York, *April* 4, 1859.

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THE NEW.

[CALIFORNIA.] “***** What am I? An infant crying in the night, An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry.” TENNYSON— *In Memorium*.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

IN 1849, near the middle of the year, I landed at Clarke's Point, in San Francisco, with high hopes and low funds—the lowest of funds, for the three round dollars I had just paid to the gentleman's son, with the classical education and the blue flannel shirt, for pulling me and my chest ashore in his flat-bottomed dinghy, were all that were left of just ten times that many, with which I was ballasted when I launched at New York upon my El Doradoward venture.

“By all means do not encumber yourselves with luggage,” urged our prudential advices from the placers; and I had obeyed the injunction with exemplary literalness; for, as my sophomore wherryman tossed that imposing box ashore with a great clatter, he remembered his Virgil, whose
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Rari nantes in gurgite vasto

exactly described the shovel, pick, and bowie-knife contributed by my brothers, and the shaving-case, housewife, dust-pouch and bible, remembered by my sisters, and now all adrift within the capacious hold of that clumsy galliot of a sea-chest. To get my baggage to the Parker House, I engaged the marine reporter of the *Alta California*, who was timeously on the wharf prospecting for items. He was paid with the chest, which, considering the price of fire-wood—forty dollars

a cord—was as much hire as that journalistic laborer was worthy of. In less than a week, I was wholly disencumbered of luggage, the spade having gone for one dinner, and the pick for another. I had slept three nights on my shaving-case, and was shaved with my bowie-knife instead. All that remained was a pilot-cloth pea-jacket, a pair of corduroy trowsers, and the bible, which, of course, was of no use to anybody but the owner. At the rate of twenty-four dollars a dozen for washing, and in view of the tenderness of my knuckles, to say nothing of some hereditary prejudice against the laundry as an 21 occupation for a gentleman's son, I rejoiced when I had fairly got my last check shirt off my mind

All this time I had been looking about for something to do. My profession, medicine, was an impossibility. I had brought no dispensary with me, and the last lot of quinine—the panacea in those days for all the ills that California flesh was heir to—had sold for four ounces (sixty-four dollars) an ounce at auction. By reason of rents—one hundred dollars a month for a dog-house—an office was not less visionary to me than a palace. Besides, my appetite was growing fearfully, and my housewife was not good for soup. In those days, Old Californians never darned, or sewed buttons on; counting the worth of time, it was cheaper to buy new clothes, of which there was a great glut in the market. Then the free sand-hill, where I had slept at first, was fierce with fleas. My skin was scarified; between unsparing irritation and great loss of blood, my health was failing. My physician—“that's me”—strongly recommended a tent, a soft plank, and a Mackinaw blanket. So I must stop looking about for something to do, and set 22 about doing something at once. To be sure, Smith, Jones, or Brown, would have been driving mules by this time, or 'tending bar, or peddling jack-knives for another man, or working on a lighter; but the reader must remember that I was a gentleman's son.

How to begin, then? There were my letters of introduction, neglected until now for a much-cuddled idea of independence. There were six of them; I would try them all—and I did. Five gentlemen, friends of the family, were most happy to see me. Five gentlemen congratulated me on arriving out so early; I had fortune by the fore-lock. Five gentlemen considered this a splendid country—great openings for young men of enterprise and talent, especially doctors—half the population ill, and fees enormous—two ounces a visit—medicines in proportion—a dollar a grain for quinine,

a dollar a drop for laudanum—wonderful, sir, fabulous!—really envied me—wished they were doctors themselves—of course, would send all their friends to me; in a week I should be overrun with patients—would be happy to advise me as to investments—knew some lovely 23 water-lots—new towns at head of navigation, only ten miles from the richest mines—sweet ranchos in the valley of San José—that is, if I was of an agricultural turn of mind—could raise potatoes at a dollar apiece, squashes and beets according—must excuse them now—very busy—getting up lumber for the new hotel—under way next week—tip-top house—bridal chamber—all the delicacies of the season—come and see them—take care of myself, old fellow—by-the-by, as I was new to the place, liable to be bewildered, tempted—would just throw in a friendly hint—gambling in San Francisco universal and without bounds—all classes fling themselves madly into the giddy whirl of drink and play—doctors, lawyers, editors, judges, professors, divines—faro, roulette, rondo, keeno, monte, lansquenet, bluff—soul-absorbing, dreadful, *lasciate ogni speranza voi chi v'entrate*.—Dante, you know—Hell—splendid—all right—take care of myself. And that was all I got out of five of these friends of the family.

There still remained one letter, from a venerable fellow-citizen and friend of my father, to his son in 24 San Francisco—a spirited young fellow, who, having obtained a commission in one of the new regiments at the breaking out of the Mexican war, had subsequently distinguished himself in several engagements. At the close of the war, he was ordered to California, where, though still holding a military appointment, he engaged in some successful speculations on private account, and was said to have built up for himself a considerable “pile.” One evening, in the Parker House, I recognised this gentleman, as much by a marked family likeness as by a certain remarkable scar by which he had been described to me. Approaching him as he stood at the bar selecting a cigar, I introduced myself, at the same time presenting my letter, the contents of which were all unknown to me; for his father had asked permission to seal it. He received me with cordiality, and, on reading the missive, drew from his pocket three gold ounces (fifty dollars), which he offered to me, with thanks. But immediately, observing my unaffected surprise, he explained that the letter contained a request that he would pay to me these fifty dollars, due for several 25 years to my father, who for some unexplained reason, to be found in the private relations of the two old friends, could never

be induced to accept it. Nevertheless, the father wrote, the debt was a bona fide one, and its long-standing troubled him much; so he urged his son to press the money upon me, and that gentleman did so with unexceptionable delicacy.

At first I resolutely declined to accept the money, on the ground that I could not meddle with my father's affairs; he knew his own business best, and had, no doubt, good reasons for the stand he had taken in this amiable dispute. Perhaps his excellent friend was mistaken in supposing himself the debtor—in so long an account of friendly offices interchanged between two such ancient and honorable cronies, the result might easily be the other way. At all events, my father, on handing me this letter, had not named the matter: consequently I was not at liberty to run counter to his apparent intention.

But the captain treated the affair more seriously. On my side, he urged, was merely vague surmise. On his, there was the clear and positive expression of the paternal wish. His father, he said, had suffered much, and was going down hill fast. He even feared that the next mail would bring him news of the old man's death. He had been, he confessed, a wilful, almost a cruel son, with some crimes of perverse selfishness and ingratitude, of which to convict himself. There was no chance that he would again behold his father alive. He therefore desired sacredly to obey his commands, in the most apparently trifling matter, and rejoiced in every opportunity to console himself so—in fine, he pressed me, on the score of kindness, to permit him to pay this money.

Still undetermined, I leaned with my back against the bar, and looked through the noisy throng of old miners and new arrivals, into the gambling saloon beyond, where players of all countries, complexions, and temperaments were gathered, in earnest but quiet knots, around faro, roulette, and monte tables, with their dazzling banks. An idea, full of a pleasurable excitement, seized me. The cards, thought I, shall decide this amiable contest.

“Captain,” I said, “I have never bet a sixpence ²⁶ on a card in my life. Since I arrived here I have not once looked on at play, even as a merely curious spectator. I do not know this game of monte, I have never known any game of cards. Now monte shall dispose of these three rascally ounces for

us, more troublesome than the poet's *Giuli Tre*. I will stake them on a card; if they are lost, there will be an end of our dispute and you can tell your father you paid me. If they win, we will divide the spoils.”

“Agreed! and you will be sure to win—the Devil is always kind to the green gamester.”

We approached a table where already a competing throng was gathered, eagerly feeding the monster with dollars, ounces, greater or lesser pouches of dust. The table was covered with green baize, on which four equal squares were described, by means of a strip of gold braid. In the midst was a bank of perhaps twenty thousand dollars in coin and dust. Presently the used-up, listless, yawning dealer, who sat behind his bank, with a revolver at his back, some brandy and water at his elbow, and a long cigar held almost perpendicularly between his tight lips—and 28 managed too, with a sort of skill, so that the burning end came within half an inch of the corner of his right eye, which was closed, with that extraordinary, swaggering conceit, peculiar to the soap-lock orders of the Bowery—presently this very fancy personage tossed from the pack of small Mexican cards, which he had just shuffled elaborately, four “papes” as he called them, and which he more particularly described as “el ray, shayty, sinkwee and kervaiyo,” —that is king, seven, five, and horse: this last being, I believe, peculiar to the monte cards. Then, “gents” were invited to “make their game,” or more facetiously, to “size their piles,” or to “pungalee down,” which the Spanish scholar will discover to be a sort of fancy Castilian, proper to the latitude of San Francisco.

Gentlemen did “pungalee down,” according to their substance or their tempers, and I, with several others (for the card seemed a favorite one) staked all my three ounces on the seven. Then the dealer rapped with his knuckles on the table to call down the last bets; but no more appearing, he began to 29 draw, very slowly, one card at a time from the top of the pack he held in his hand, and to dispose them before him alternately, on a winning and a losing pile. As a card corresponding to one in a square fell on the right or the left hand pile, he called its name, and either paid the stake, or swept it into his bank. Thus the king, the five, and the “kervaiyo” lost; but the seven won, and my three ounces were six.

The cards being shuffled, four more are thrown out, and again the seven is among them. Once more “gents” are requested to “pungalee down,” and I, choosing to add a spice of vulgar diablerie to my adventure, select the seven again for all six of my ounces, and invoke the favor of witches.

Seven wins—I draw off twelve beautiful doubloons. Next deal, no seven; so I wait. And now I have it; a round dozen of ounces is my stake; I become an object of interest to the bystanders, some of whom evidently consider me, if not handsome, certainly a superior sort of fellow. Seven wins, of course. My three bothersome ounces have become twenty-four splendid doubloons—round, yellow, and heavy—fair 30 to see and pleasant to hear—their clink more soothing-musical than the jug of many nightingales— “Gold! gold! gold! gold! Bright and yellow, hard and cold, Molten, graven, hammered, roll'd; Heavy to get, and light to hold; Hoarded, bartered, bought and sold, Stolen, borrowed, squandered, doled; Spurned by the young, but hugg'd by the old To the very verge of the churchyard mould; Price of many a crime untold; Gold! gold! gold! gold!— Good or bad a thousand fold!”

Three hundred and eight-four dollars! and since my breakfast the day before, I had not eaten a morsel! I fairly blessed the Devil; and as for the number Seven, I set him up on a throne of philosopher's stone, with the crown of Midas on his head and a brimmer of vino d'oro in his hand. And the captain, princely fellow, worthy to be king of the diggings, waived his right to share with me. He had plenty, he said, displaying a pocketful of doubloons, 31 and a nugget as big as a doughnut. New-comers were not usually suffering with a surplus, and he dared say I had not more than a few hundred dollars. I should need it all to start with; when his pile should tumble, he would be happy in holding me his debtor to the extent of a dozen ounces or so.

I condescended to accept his terms, and the same hour next day saw me flourishing a professional shingle on the broad side of an adobe house in Sacramento street, and a professional card in the most imposing and attractive style in the *Alta California*. I had soon a lucrative private practice; from seventy-five to a hundred dollars was not too much to earn in a day, when an exclusive pen in Howe's circus cost fifty-five dollars, when ten dollars was demanded for the plainest of dinners at Wheeler's, when stout boots cost forty dollars a pair, and potatoes a dollar a pound—to say nothing

of spurious champagne at ten dollars a bottle, and five dollars for the honor of Professor Lewis Thompson's tonsorial fingers in your hair. Very soon I added to my private duties a certain official appointment, by which, between the day 32 when I first entered San Francisco without a dime, and the day when I left it, also without a dime, I was introduced to more of the pathos and tragedy of that city in 1849-50, than any other person on the spot. I have, therefore, some stories to relate, which, if not as well told as Samuel Warren's, shall be at least as true.

CHAPTER II.

THE FATE OF THE FARLEIGHS.

OLD Californians—I mean San Franciscans of 1849—will not soon forget the building known as Washington Hall, which stood in the rear of the old *Alta California* office, about midway on the Washington street side of the Plaza, and adjoining the Bella Union, that worst of Californian hells, where the Winters murder was done, and a score of crimes beside, any one of them enough to startle even the steady nerves of San Francisco. This Washington Hall, opened by a circus clown, was consecrated to the high holidays of unchecked licentiousness. Bacchus reigned below and divided his realm with the Blind Goddess. On the upper floor Terpsichore had a ball-room to herself, where sometimes a party of Ethiopian serenaders were met in the name of 34 Momus; and in the rear the *Venus de Oro* had her easy penetralia.

Hither I was called one night to attend a Creole girl from New Orleans, who had just been stabbed, at a masked ball in the saloon, by a jealous Chilena.

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I found the beautiful fury—Camille La Reine, they called her—blaspheming over a gashed shoulder, and devoting the quick-striking vixen of Valparaiso to a hundred fates, any one of which vied in novelty of horror with the most esteemed inventions of Mr. G. W. Reynolds or Mr. Geo. Lippard. Her round, white, dimpled, dangerous shoulder lay, along with the black drift of her hair, in a slab pool of her own bad blood.

The handsome wretch cursed, between the sharp stitches of my suture needle, at the Adams' revolver that had hung fire, and the blood that had got in her eyes. And La Reine Camille was in earnest; for six weeks after that, the *Pacific News* announced that the notorious Mariquita, the beautiful Chilian spitfire, had had her throat cut with a bowie-knife, in the hands of the splendid Creole Camille, in a “difficulty” at one of those mad masked balls at La Señorita saloon.

It was many days before Camille's wound was sufficiently healed to be trusted to her own nursing, and during that time I usually made my visits to her 36 early in the evening, as I returned from my professional walks about Clarke's Point, and among the Chilian tents on Pacific street; so that I found the fair frailties of Washington Hall gathered in the ballroom, and the dance proceeding to the music of much catgut, and the popping of multitudinous corks. This was well-nigh the most convenient, if not the chastest, of reunions. If you desired to consult Judge Brown in reference to your Colton titles, here was the place to meet that learned jurist; if you wished to compare opinions with Dr. Jones as to the nature of the wounds of the man found murdered on the Mission Road, you could seek in no more likely place for that eminent member of the faculty; or, in case you had an item of murder, suicide, or accidental death for the City man of the *Alta*, you would be sure to find him taking notes at Washington Hall on a ball-night.

Once, as I leaned against the orchestra railing, regarding, by turns, the deep drinking at the bar, the heavy betting at monte, and the wild license of the dance, my eye fell upon a woman who seemed out 37 of place in that sensuous scene, and hopefully wretched there: a tall and singularly graceful person—by no means spare, yet with the slenderest waist I ever saw—face not handsome, nor the reverse, but rather what detracting women call interesting—eyes quite lovely, dark and deeply fringed—mouth melting and pitifully weak—hands and feet especially delicate—truly a superb, and yet a most painful dancer. With what a graceful weariness she dragged her stately, rather than heavy, steps through the French quadrille! How like a corpse—grave, pale, abstracted, with cold lips and eyes unspeculative—she suffered herself to be whirled in the giddy circles of the German waltz, in the clutch of some tipsy satyr, too far gone to perceive the reproachful calmness of his partner's bosom, and the unseasonable temperature of her blood! How like the very ghost of a

bacchanal, with her motions merely, but not emotions, she flung herself desperately into the brave abandon of the Spanish dance, flashing her soft white shoulders, beautifully balancing her pensile arms, proudly careering her conquering neck!

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Presently an intermission, and the dancers move toward the bar and refreshment table. Only she, withdrawing her hand from her partner's arm, declines partaking of wine and viands, and retires wearily to a dim corner, away from all the rest, indifferently rebuffing, too, her cavalier, who has something sophisticated to grumble about the "old dodge" and "so like an Englishwoman." And now, I truly do see the Englishwoman in the nattily-turned angle, the generous expanse of back, the warm companionable shoulders, the complete bosom, and well inflated chest.

With head thrown back and eyes closed, or vacantly fixed on the ceiling, she sits for a time silent, still, or only moved by a profound sigh. Here may be a clever artiste, now, I thought—a person habile and well-trained to her part. Even in that view of her, she is interesting. How much more so if, for a marvel, she be no actress at all, playing no part but her heart's! Let us see. I watched her narrowly and unobserved. Presently—hurrah! yes, by Jove, tears—tears, as I am a 39 gentleman, with taste to enjoy them!—honest, too, I'll swear, they are so ill-timed and unprofitable! They stand for an instant, round and bright, on the verge of her long lashes, then topple over by their own weight, and roll down her cheeks, never stopping till they have fallen upon her hand. She brushes away the tracks of them impatiently—good!—rouses herself with an unmistakably genuine effort, and hurries with an air of concealment, and even awkwardly, across the room—I following her unperceived, through knots of drinkers and love-makers, never heeding their invitations or inquiries, to the door; then through the long passage to the rear of the building, where, with a key drawn from the pocket of her dress, she opens a door, which, on entering, she locks within. I take note of the room, and accost a black-eyed Yankee witch to ask who occupies it.

"Lucy Mason, the new English girl. Do you know her?"

"No."

“No more do any of us—queer case—pity, I do think—dreadful mopy, dreadful—never do here—better be dead. You dare say she wishes she was? Then why don't she go and die? But never mind her now. Come, treat, and I'll dance with you. “Oh, Susannah, don't you cry for me; I'm bound for Kaliforny with my baby on my knee.”

Next day—my head, and part of my heart I hope, full of Lucy Mason—I went early in the forenoon to see La Reine Camille; wound much better—temper, if possible, worse. Her majesty threatens to shoot me if I even so much as tickle her in changing the dressings, and swears she'll have my heart's blood if I leave a scar on the best shoulder in California—her favorite shoulder, the one she does her archness with. I assure the fair and royal fire-eater that I take no less interest in her wounded shoulder than if it were her throat, and am even more concerned for its recovery. Whereat I leave, just in time.

In the bar-room, to my astonishment—disappointment at first, and satisfaction afterward—I found Lucy Mason drinking, flushed already to noisy merriment, clinking champagne glasses with the barmaid, singing snatches of curious old English ballads, love-ditties mostly, and all new to me—loud, communicative, reckless. Could this be my interesting mockery and moral of last night's ball? No doubt; and never more the same than at this very moment of shocking self-abandonment.

Presently observing a flaunting portrait breast-pin in the bar-girl's bosom, she bade her stay and she would show her “a picture that was painted in heaven.” Then she ran to her room and I followed her. At the door I met her with a small cabinet portrait in her hand; her face wore a triumphant look, as she was hurrying back to her comrade with the wonder. Taking her tenderly but firmly by the wrist, she staring in my face in mute amazement, I led her to a seat on a large chest, then locked the door inside and took my place beside her. I bade her give me the picture in my hand. She thrust it into her bosom and held her hand upon it there, her eyes wild, and full of alarmed inquiry.

“Who are you?” she asked.

“A gentleman, a doctor, a friend of yours, if you'll allow me to prove it.”

“Camille's doctor?”

“Yes.”

“Why did you not let her die?”

“Because I was sent for to keep her from dying; that's my business.”

“And her business is to unfit herself to live.”

“Quite as much to unfit herself to die.”

“Very likely. What do you want with me?”

“To admire you—to make your acquaintance.”

“Not worth your while, and not agreeable to me.”

“What ails you?”

“Nothing; not even drunk—though that's not my fault.”

“Let me see your picture?”

“You swear you will not touch it.”

“Positively I will not.”

She laid one of her hands mistrustingly on mine, and with the other held up before me—but at a safe distance, and as if ready to snatch it away on she least suspicious movement on my part—a small 43 watercolor sketch of a beautiful child—a boy, with large blue eyes and fair curling hair,

remarkably like herself in every feature, especially the mouth—timid, credulous, helpless—poor little wretch!

“This is your child.”

The reader will perceive that the guess, though a bold one, was safe.

“How do you know?”

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“By the pity I feel for it. Is this its birthday? and are you keeping it by getting drunk before dinner?”

She turned on me a sharp, startled stare. Then suddenly covering her face with her hands, she sobbed violently, her whole frame agitated and convulsed.

“Oh, God! oh, God!” she groaned. “It is, indeed, his birthday. How did you know it? Who told you? Who knows it here? What do you know of me? Where have you seen him? You—you—you are not a friend of—?”

My random thrust had struck home. Hap-hazard, I had reached the mother's heart. Now, I was safe to know all, and perhaps—It was always the dearest wish of my heart to recover one lost woman. I was too sanguine that time; but I do not despair yet. The chance will come.

“It was the bursting heart and the burning brain. I drank to save my senses. I should have gone mad on his birthday. Why was it not his deathday? Oh no, sir; indeed, indeed, I swear I have not come to 45 that yet. I am neither sot nor thief, nor ever shall be. I have provided against that. I *shall not have time.*”

“Do you wish to leave this house?”

“No.”

“Why?”

“Because it's the best of its kind in this city: the treatment good and visitors plenty.”

“But for a house of another kind, a respectable shop, a gentleman's family? I believe there is more than one door in San Francisco—which, by that same token, thank heaven! is neither New York nor London—open to such as you.”

“And when you find one, such as I, who will accept the invitation to pass from this door to that, don't you trust her—I tell you, don't you trust her; she's a shameless liar and a hypocrite, and your friends will find her a mocker, and a brazen thief.”

“Where are you from—England or the colonies? And how did you get here, to this city and this house?”

“For what purpose do you wish to know?”

46

“To help you if I can, in this house or out of it—on my honor!”

“Come to-morrow morning, and perhaps I will tell you. You are either a great fool or a great—philanthropist.”

“Neither.”

“How did you know that this was my boy's birthday?”

“That is nothing. I know much more about you. But when you talk to me of your affairs, and I catch you lying, I shall not let you see that I am laughing at your stupidity and bungling. For all that, you will respect and obey me, more or less, from this time. To-morrow, then. Good-by.”

Next day, true to our appointment, I called on Lucy at her room. I found her strangely improved since our extraordinary conversation. She seemed to have been wholesomely chastened, even in that brief interval—was simple, unaffected, much softened, without that forced air of indifference or defiance—modest, grateful, candid, trusting, sad but earnest. She began by reminding me that she had promised only with a 47 “perhaps” to relate her story. She had informed herself, meantime, of my character and probable motive, and the “perhaps” was removed. She proceeded.

She was an Englishwoman, as I had perceived at first—married; her husband's name was Farleigh, an apothecary in good standing, skilful, and in the enjoyment of an honorable and profitable reputation in Australia, whither they had sailed but a few days after their marriage. In that land of promise he very soon built up for himself a lucrative business, and became the sole master of an extensive establishment with branches at all the principal ports. She herself had been a lady's companion in England; but in Australia, in spite of her youth, she entered into business and conducted a dress-making establishment, which also soon obtained character and profitable custom. Her husband, she said, was none of her choosing, but “a highly eligible,” unfairly foisted upon her by a mercenary mother: a little man—scarcely up to her shoulder; awkward, and every way insignificant; stupid, too, in all matters apart 48 from his business; in temper querulous, petulant, jealous, exacting—a fidgety person, with whom there was no rest; timid, besides, which was worst of all in the estimation of a vain, romantic girl, flattered, and fed on whims. Farleigh never meant to be, and rarely was, an unkind husband; he was only a very uncomfortable and disagreeable man. Before their child was born she had never loved, but easily endured him. After its birth, she learned to feel quite tenderly towards him; it was the strangest thing, she said, but somehow she found herself, without an effort, with scarcely the wish on her part, almost loving him—but then she could no longer tolerate him; that child made them fire and tow to each other, and they broke out in flames as often as they met over it.

At last, Farleigh made a new friend and brought him home—Harton, mate of an English packet—a handsome, bright, ardent, adventure-loving fellow, full of warm feelings and good stories, and very free with his neck when danger was to be run into. This Harton was her coming man, the very

man she 49 ought to have met long ago, and she was by no means slow to love him because he did not happen to arrive in legal time. Then she was notoriously turned into the street, her stock of goods sold under the hammer, Farleigh retaining the proceeds—and a sight of her child from that hour denied her. She took refuge with a fellow-sufferer. Harton lost caste to such a degree that the place became too hot to hold him; so he sailed for the land of gold, bidding her follow him in the next ship, and leaving her a sum of money sufficient to pay her passage. He would meet her, he promised, when her ship's anchor was let go in the harbor of San Francisco. She obediently followed his instructions and him; but from the day of his sailing she had never seen him, or heard from or of him. He might be gone to some new and remote placers whence correspondence was difficult or impossible; he might be dead; he might have deserted her; God only knew; with all her heart, she hoped the second fate for him.

Well, she landed without money or friends, quite at her wits' end—crazed with fear and 50 helplessness. In those days there were no milliners in San Francisco, no ladies' shops, no fashionable emporiums or bazaars—only bars, bars, bars, decanters and tumblers, lemon-squeezers, muddlers and straws, with here and there a bar-maid. There now! she would be a bar-maid. Harton, like many another sailor-man, was a veritable magician over a bowl. He had taught her how to do many delectable things with tumblers. And when he reappeared, he would be delighted to find that his merry instruction had served her in good stead, in such an awkward strait. Besides, in England a bar-maid was highly respectable. How precious must she be in this uni-sexed fair! Only to think, too, of a hundred and fifty dollars, £30 a month—and board, lodging, and washing, all free. And what was it to be a bar-maid? Oh, she knew all about that. It was to have a nice face and a trim waist, a quick saucy eye, sharp ears, nimble fingers, and plenty of presence of mind. Of course, she would be a San Francisco bar-maid (Heaven save the mark!), in Washington Hall too, for thirty pounds a month; and naturally—here she was.

51

“Well, and what did she propose to do?”

“To see her fate out” (her exact words), “and for the present to remain where she was. Gold was plenty and lovers generous. Six, twelve, twenty ounces at a time for the merest trifles. A smile was bait for a dozen minnows, and a triton was caught with a kiss. Ounces, ounces, nothing but ounces. She had a lap full, a trunk full, already—all safe at Burgoyne's.”

“Did she never look ahead?”

“Often, and easily saw to the end. It was not far, and the way was paved with gold.”

“Would she not accept the countenance and protection of worthy and kind people, a virtuous home, honest companionship—for her child's sake?”

“No, no, no! For her child's sake especially, no.”

“How did she expect the end to be?”

“As she would shape it. At present she would answer no more questions.”

Nor would she ever again. Though I often saw her, and she met me always with a cordial, beaming welcome, full of beautiful confidence and gratitude, 52 so that her fellow-lodgers declared she could tell my step on the stairs among a hundred, and, leaving any companion or occupation, would run joyfully to meet me—and though, in accordance with a promise I had exacted from her, she never drank again, nor was (at least not grossly) indecorous in language or manner—still she invariably parried my slightest, and merely experimental, passages of examination, sometimes with provoking jests, sometimes with adroit diversions, sometimes with undisguised anger.

At this time I was living at the Grason House, on the corner of Kearney and Pacific streets. To Washington Hall direct, along Kearney street, was but two blocks—Jackson street, exactly intermediate, dividing the ground. On the corner of Jackson street was Stolberger's market—Stolberger, king of speculators, terrible flour and beef monopolist—the great American smart man, who would have bought the Sandwich Islands for a watering-place, charming resort for invalids

—“spacious hotel, safe sea-bathing,” and all that sort of thing—if he could only have seen how not to pay for them.

53

One day I stopped at this market-house in company with Major Floyd, our hotel caterer, who was receiving proposals to have his table supplied with bear's meat, sturgeon, and Monterey muscles, when a man in his shirt-sleeves and with a pen behind his ear, evidently an employé of the establishment, accosted me by name, and, referring to my public appointment, inquired if I did not fill that office. On being answered in the affirmative, he stated that he was an English apothecary, licentiate of Apothecary's Hall; that at different times he had had large dispensaries under his control, both in England and the colonies; that he had been engaged in a large and profitable business; but a great domestic misfortune having befallen him, he had sold out his stock and invested the proceeds in a California venture which turned out a wretched failure—ship and cargo both sacrificed under the hammer, and the Captain off to the Atlantic states with the proceeds. He had turned his attention particularly, he said, to analytical chemistry, and had had much experience among ores and minerals. He thought he could be useful, and find his profit, in assaying specimens from the different diggings. At all events, he was most anxious to find his way back into his proper business. He had been hoping to meet with some chemist or druggist who would accept his experience and skill as a sufficient equivalent for a reasonable share in his business. His poverty was extreme, he said; he was indebted to charitable considerations merely, for the temporary place he then occupied—that of a sort of under book-keeper; and of course his pay barely sufficed to keep him alive. Would I do him the great kindness—he was sure he would justify me—to call attention to him as a competent assayer, at the foot of my professional card. Furthermore, he had a small stock of medicines, a few trifles that were left, worth in all, at the lowest estimate, perhaps forty-five dollars. Had I any use for them? Would I kindly take them off his hands? It would be a great satisfaction to him; for they would otherwise soon be destroyed. He did not require cash for them; decidedly he would prefer not. If I would have the goodness to give him my 55 note on demand, he could call on me for the money in case he should be ill.

What a painful, trembling, bewildered wretch!—a very small man, slender and brittle-looking, or what old colored nurses call “shackly.”

“You are Mr. David Farleigh.”

“Yes, sir, that is my name. No doubt Major Floyd (I have the pleasure of seeing Major Floyd daily, sir) has kindly mentioned me to you.”

“Yes, Major Floyd, perhaps—or some one else. I will comply with your requests, Mr. Farleigh.”

Not Major Floyd, nor any one but Lucy Mason. And this was David Farleigh—living, too, almost within sight of his wife's windows!

That afternoon I went to see Lucy.

“Lucy, do you know that your husband is in town, scarce a hundred yards off, almost within sight from this window now?”

No screaming, no gasping, no fainting; but such a storm of rage! Flushed with hot passion one moment; the next, ashen pale with a deep, dangerous hate, suddenly set up, but certain to endure.

56

I simply describe the phenomena; I do not attempt to explain them; those who think they know women better than I do, may employ their wits upon the case, for it is at least an interesting one. Whether Lucy knew already of the neighborhood of her husband, I could never guess. He had been in the country a fortnight; but so seldom had she appeared on the street, they might easily have passed each other in the bewildering throng without recognition on either side; besides, both must have been greatly changed in attire if not in looks. But why this fierce outburst of anger against me? Was it merely because I had become too intimate with their hidden history, and that chance seemed to be making me more and more master of their secrets and themselves? Or was it that she wished to frighten me into concealing from her husband, perhaps for his own sake, her presence

and identity? Either of these reasons sufficed, yet both might have been joined, to produce an excitement under which she fairly foamed, cursing fiercely and in a torrent—with flashing eyes and thin, tremulous, white lips, with unequivocal and 57 really alarming threats, forbidding me to name “either of them” again. She bade me follow my own plain road, and leave the blind path to her; she would find her way out of this alone.

Perhaps she was right. In those days I was an enthusiast, and enthusiasts are always bunglers and often bores.

I never met Lucy Mason alive but once after that, and then I pumped from her stomach, just in time, a quantity of arsenic, she wildly raving all the while on themes I did not recognise, and unconscious of the scene or me. Fearing the effect of the excitement into which she would undoubtedly be thrown on discovering me as the man who had thwarted her purpose in that desperate pass, and who, it might seem to her, was forever crossing her dark and dangerous path, I handed her over at once to other physicians, who, from time to time, reported the progress of her case. Her health and beauty departed at once, and together. Blood-stains were often on her lips or her handkerchief; her thoughts strayed much into dark places, and she had her seasons of appalling fierceness. But 58 she was marvellously close with her secret. Her most constant attendants, even in her wildest passages, never caught from her lips the name of Farleigh or of Harton. Indeed, I think she was at no time quite self-forgetful, but only black-thoughted, and impatient for the end. It came soon—the natural sequel, a mere matter of course.

59

One day I joined a knot of people, diverted for a moment from their business-paths by a new and more interesting shape of death—the black and swollen corpse of a woman lay on some boards at the foot of Clay street, waiting to be identified. It had been lifted to the surface of the water on the weighing anchor of an up-river craft at daybreak. It was bare-footed, bare-bosomed, with loose and flowing hair; about the neck hung a small blue satin bag, containing a child's ringlet, and prettily embroidered with the initials “P. F.” It was Lucy Mason. In her night-dress, and with naked feet, she had gone to one of the wharfs at midnight and taken that last dismal plunge. She *had* seen

her fate out. "Mad, from life's history, Glad to death's mystery Swift to be hurl'd— Anywhere, anywhere, Out of the world!"

We—no matter; she had simple but becoming obsequies. There were those—rough fellows, God 60 knows, whom a touch of nature brought together for that once, and who may hardly meet again in this world—who, "Ere her limbs frigidly Stiffened too rigidly, Decently—kindly— Smoothed and composed them, And her eyes closed them, Staring so blindly! "Dreadfully staring Through muddy impurity, As when with the daring Last look of despairing, Fixed on futurity."

Where was Farleigh? Reported dead. Nearly two months before Lucy's first attempt to destroy herself, by poison, he called to take leave of me. He was going, he said, to the Mariposa diggings with a company of gentlemen, who would defray his expenses in consideration of his medical services. His mind seemed healthy; indeed it was the first 61 time I had found him cheerful, even jocose. I would have paid him then for the medicines he had sold me, but he still decidedly declined receiving the money; it would do when he needed it more, or if this venture should turn out badly. He might die, I urged. "Why, then, let it go." He had no one to give it to. At present he had abundance. He had received an anonymous letter from "one whom he had once trusted," inclosing a check on Davidson, the banker, drawn by "John Chappell," for three thousand dollars. At the bank they knew nothing of this Mr. Chappell. A stranger, calling himself by that name, had deposited the money, stating at the time that it would be drawn out in a few days by a Mr. David Farleigh, on his check. The description of Chappell afforded him no clue. But it was all plain enough, he said; the money came, of course, from that villain, Captain —, who had ruined him, robbed him of every penny he possessed, all invested in the ship and cargo he had told me of. While he related this singular circumstance, I watched him searchingly. I am sure he did not suspect the true source from 62 which timely remittance came. I am sure he did not know of Lucy's whereabouts, or the life she was leading.

That same day he started for the mines, and even if I had had time to follow his fortunes, it was not possible to "keep the run" of him. He very soon drifted out of sight and mind, along with all the human flotsam of fortune that had given itself to that untried stream. When in that "one more

unfortunate gone to her death,” I recognised Lucy, I sought tidings of Farleigh at Stolberger's market. They believed he was dead. The party to which he belonged had been most unlucky. They had been attacked by Indians, and robbed of everything—their wagons and oxen, horses, guns, camp-traps, and provisions; had turned back, half-naked and starving; then cholera and fever overtook them, and two died—one, it was reported, being Farleigh.

A few months later I was seized with a typhoid fever, which well-nigh ended me. On recovering, I resolved to make a trip to the Sandwich Islands to recruit. I reached Honolulu, after a quick and 63 charming passage, much improved. On landing, and paying my respects to the Custom-house, I walked up into the town. Seeing an apothecary's shop on the corner, I took the occasion to procure some medicine I had required during the passage for a sick passenger, and at the same time to make an acquaintance, perhaps, and hear the news. Drawing a card from my pocket, I wrote a prescription. The person to whom I handed it, to be compounded, was David Farleigh—or, rather, the ghost of him. Gracious heaven! how the poor, sensitive, trembling, helpless creature must have suffered! He cried on recognising me, and fidgeted painfully among his spatulas and minim glasses—looked somewhat wild, and was desultory, almost to incoherence, in his talk. All the mind he had left, I thought, was not worth living for.

The story I had heard at Stolberger's, about the mishaps of his mining party, was all true, except the report of his death. He had had cholera to the last extremity. His recovery, he said, was but a part of his protracted ill-fortune. A kind friend, touched by his crippled case, had paid his passage hither, and he 64 had fled from California for safety and rest; a little longer, and his distraction would have become madness. Some English merchants in Honolulu had procured this place for him, where he found occupation for his mind, and a present bare subsistence. “Whenever, whatever the end may be,” he said, “I have no wish to postpone it.” He was as poor—poorer than ever; and now he would take the forty-five dollars, and give me back my note. In this interview I ventured, for the first time, and very guardedly, to ask:

“By-the-by, have you any family, Mr. Farleigh?”

“None, sir. Six months ago, a little child, my last human tie, was torn away from me.”

The naturalness, quite without alarm or any sort of agitation, with which the answer was given, satisfied me that my acquaintance with the blackest chapter in his history had never been suspected by the poor fellow.

About noon on the following day, having taken up my lodgings on shore, I called at Farleigh's place in the hope of taking him out for a cheerful walk, while at the same time he should be my cicerone to the 65 sights of Honolulu. He was not there, had not been down that morning, his employer said—he might be ill, he feared; his health and spirits were by no means good—he would send to see. But I would, myself, be going in that direction, I said, and would call. At his lodgings no one knew of his movements; they supposed he had gone to his business; he was very irregular in his meals, and often left in the morning without his breakfast. I went to his room; the door was locked, and there was no answer to my anxious knocking. They suggested that he might be walking—he often took lonely and very long walks, sometimes up the Nuuanu valley as far as the Pahari, sometimes by the plains down to the cocoa-nut groves at Waititi. I was for a stroll myself. I would take that direction; perhaps I should meet him.

In the evening, when I returned, nothing was yet known of Farleigh's whereabouts. But we agreed to let our fears rest for the night, in the hope that he might be on board some English vessel in the harbor—several having arrived during the week—or with some of his English friends in the town. All night I was sleepless, and full of dread. At noon next day, still no tidings of my poor friend. I became much excited, and urged the reasonableness of my fears from my intimate knowledge of the man's mental condition. It was resolved that the door should be broken open.

Good God! could that horrid, poisoned thing in the bed be Farleigh?—quite naked, swollen in every part of him to twice his living proportions, the face and breast black as ink, the eyes staring dreadfully, fairly bursting from their sockets, the nose and ears filled with blood. On a little table in the corner lay the money I had paid him; on the bed beside him, a letter envelope, “to David Farleigh, Honolulu, S. I., per barque Petrel,” the vessel which brought me over; on the floor, just as

they had fallen from his hand, which hung over the side of the bed, the halves of a torn check in the following strange form:

“WASHINGTON HALL, SAN FRANCISCO.

Sunday, February 8, 1850.

“Messrs. BURGOYNE & Co., Bankers:

“Pay to DAVID FARLEIGH, for and on account of PHILIP 67 FARLEIGH (his child and mine), eleven thousand dollars (\$11,000).

“LUCY MASON,

“The lost—in her last hour.”

This singular paper bore the endorsement of Burgoyne & Co. No line of explanation accompanied it, at least none was found; nor was it ever discovered who had forwarded the check.

You ask me what became of this money. You might as well ask what became of all the vigorous life, all the intellect and refined culture, all the ambition, courage, and virtue, that went to San Francisco in '49. “Upon the white sea-sand There sat a pilgrim band, Telling the losses that their lives had known; While evening waned away From breezy cliff and bay, And the strong tides went out with weary moan. “One spake, with quivering lip, Of a fair freighted ship, With all his household to the deep gone down; 68 But one had wilder woe— For a fair face, long ago Lost in the darker depths of a great town.”

I have a tiny volume—a child's book of bible stories, with many wood-cuts, and bound in morocco, with a flap like a pocket-book. On a blank leaf is written “Kate Farleigh to her darling, Hobart Town, Christmas, 1848.”

CHAPTER III.

THE OLD ADOBE.

A FEATURE in the San Francisco of Forty-Nine was the “Old Adobe” on the Plaza. Between Rincon and Clarke's Points were many more sightly edifices, but I doubt if any half so storied in stirring associations. With its sturdy brown walls, its low-descending roof, tiled after the true rancho model, its rickety porch with planks all adrift, its square-set windows with their deep sills, its dusty door for ever wide, hospitable by rust, and its much whittled railings and posts, —the “Old Adobe” seemed set in the midst of the Plaza, right over against the Parker House, as a sort of public shingle, contributed by lazy, good-natured, old Yerba Buena to the slashing but inventive jack-knives of young San Francisco.

Overlooking the Plaza from the verandah, you 70 had before you, across the midst of the open space, the Parker House, famous as the first of Californian hotels, fit to be so called; and next it, on the corner of Kearney and Washington streets, the El Dorado, phœnix of many fires. On your left, amid-ships in the north side of the square, was the original *Alta California* office; and adjoining it, the Bella Union and Washington Hall, infamous—the first as a cut-throats' gambling-house, resort of bowie-knife, revolver, and slung-shot bravos; the latter, as a stew of cheap prostitution. To your right, and farthest off, was the old City Hotel, where, as well as in “Tammany” opposite, Sam Roberts erst mustered his “Hounds,” parading them in a chow-chow of Mexican and Chinese costume, and filing them through the bar-room, on horseback, to drink. Higher up, on the south side, was Sam Brannan's office, where, later, that redoubtable Mormon million-aire arraigned those same Hounds at the bar of public justice, and, revolver in hand, from the roof of his saucy little castle, made his reckless appeal to popular indignation to bring out its halters. Quite 71 near you, directly on your right, and best seen from the south end of the porch, was the little white frame School-house, which, soon breaking its early promise, became first a concert hall for Steve Massett's entertainments, and afterward a police station for the entertainment of bad women and beasts. Still nearer to you, and interjacent as to the School-house and the Old Adobe, was the Alcalde's Office, where a rich and various assortment of Californian justice was kept constantly on hand, to be characteristically dispensed by a Leavenworth or a Geary. Right before you was the

original flag-staff—that Bunkumest of flag-staffs—whence floated Uncle Sam's title-deed to the land of Ophir.

But the most interesting object of all, that which stood for more that is purely San Franciscan than any other thing in town, was no farther off than the south end of the verandah; you had but to walk that far to lay your hand upon it. A rough, but substantial upright, glorified with many of the sonorous names of Forty-Nine, now, alas, lost to the Custom-House and to history, supported the spine of 72 the Old Adobe's roof, and a beam, as rough and stout, stretching from rib to rib, formed with it a cross that once was put to a just but savage purpose; for from an arm of that same cross, one dark and dangerous night, the Vigilance Committee, which had been but an idler's rumor before, hung up the body of Jenkins, for a sign and a token that they were an actuality and a deadly force.

How well I remember it all! The “Monumental's” bell tolled, till every second citizen in hearing of its accusing voice confessed, in whisper to his own soul, his Eugene-Aramness, and was seized with a fiend-instigated impulse to go and give himself up. “From its nailed coffin-prison The corpse had arisen, And in all its shroud vesture, With menacing gesture, And eye-balls that stared at them, Flared at them, glared at them, It pointed—it flouted Its slayers, and shouted, In accents that thrilled them, 73 ‘Those ruthless dissemblers, Those guilt-stricken tremblers, Are the villains who killed me!’”

I remember how Jenkins looked when he was led forth from the Committee room into the street, with the rope about his neck; he was smoking the cigar Sam Brannan gave him when he was asked if he had a last request to make, and he replied: “No—Yes—Sam, I'll take a cheroot, if you've got such a thing about you.” I remember how he looked under the Old Adobe beam, when Sam gave the word for “A long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull altogether—let every honest citizen be a hangman for once!”—Jenkins had let the cigar go out, for he was dead. And “we believe it is not generally known,” as the newspaper phrase is, that the first man hung by the San Francisco Vigilance Committee was dead before he was swung up, and the second, Stewart, was alive after he was cut down.

But the Plaza was not utterly without its cheerful aspects; and the glass eyes of the Old Adobe were 74 gladdened with a graceful and a hopeful sight, when first they looked upon the Lady of Forty-Nine.

There was not much of her. She was but a little one, and very quiet and harmless-looking in her precise raiment of saddest black; for on shipboard, coming out, the material part of a tiny passenger had gone down among the sea-shells, and a tiny sprite had flitted heavenward alone; like a strange, solitary butterfly, such as sometimes visits lonely ships in the Gulf Stream, to fill the big hearts of swarthy seamen with special wonder, and many a tender, half-sad, self-reproachful memory of white cottages, and hedge-rows neatly clipt, and fragrant clover-banks alive with bees—but which very soon, straining its tender wings in the sunshine, stretches seaward and skyward and is seen no more for ever.

They wore the ensign drooping, like a conscious thing, the day that baby died. Rude sailors sat for'ad, in the “watch below,” and read the burial service, laying their heads together in squads, and listening in more than instructed reverence to the “Resurrection and the Life,” from the school-taught 75 lips of a boatswain's mate, forgetful of his official blasphemies. The captain's clerk, a sturdy, handsome fellow, with a nor'-west hail, a hearty social quality, and no weaknesses, forgot his last rough joke, and was under the weather that day; but he hoped no one but he knew how blurred was the page, and how unsteady the line, when he drew his reluctant pen through the half of “Mrs. Blank and infant.” And after many days, when the weather was genial, and her nurse persuasive, and the little lady appeared on deck again, pale, and sad-eyed, and quiet, and in her simplicity of sorrow and demure raiment seeming unwittingly to rebuke the selfish cheerfulness of some who might have forgotten her once or twice—then uncouth “hands,” looking at her askance, would with a certain courtly awkwardness, and very modestly, perform gallant things in her service; and competing passengers, in phrases as rough as Esau's thigh, approached her with ingenious anticipations of her half-formed wishes, and abundance of timely tendernesses; until, at last, when the good ship sailed through the Golden Gate, she was won to exchange her 76 self-absorption for a graceful pensiveness, prettier, and even more commanding, than a disordered sorrow. “Full fathom

five her darling lies; Of his bones are corals made; Those are pearls that were his eyes; Nothing of him that can fade, But doth suffer a sea change Into something rich and strange!”

And this was she who crossed the Plaza, one bright morning in the year of our Lord, Eighteen Hundred and Forty-nine. She leaned on the stout arm of her husband, an intelligent, gallant, joyous-looking gentleman—though that was his baby that went down among the sea-shells, and he had no other for his sorrow. He had arrived a year before; his ventures had been lucky; he had become a merchant of note, a man of water-lots and steamboats, and shares in desirable sites at the head of navigation; and he had built a brave house to put his brave little wife in, and his baby-failure, in which he had invested such a sum of love. But he was not broken ⁷⁷ yet, nor dispirited, for he had not touched his original capital— *she* remained.

They crossed the Plaza diagonally, from Clay street to Dupont, and as they passed they made a jubilee. In the little white shantee on the rise of the hill, where the curt Alcalde held occasional court and administered expensive justice, a premature lawyer was outpouring Arkansas eloquence, and crushing the claim of some sacrilegious rancho to a fifty-vara lot in the middle of a paper cemetery. Presently a plain black bonnet, bordered with a white cap, came within range of the window. Forthwith that impetuous counsel forgot his client and his case, dropped the thread of his argument, which has never been picked up again to this day, and performed a wild vault through the window into the open space in front. That blessed rancho holds his own.

In the Old Adobe the collector of Customs was “In his counting-house A counting out his money;” and pert permit-clerks, with a variety of bad ⁷⁸ language, were explaining to bewildered foreigners the peculiar institutions of our country. “Here she comes!” was whispered in the verandah. The deputy-cashier caught up the word, and like the hill-beacons in the “Spanish Armada,” it flew from desk to desk. At once an informal recess was taken, and frenzied aliens, frantically gesticulating, were suffered to abide in blasphemous impatience till the phenomenon had passed.

At the El Dorado a free fight was adjourned for the occasion, and “drinks all round” substituted thereafter by mistake.

Across the open space, an agile, sun-browned, nervous-looking Mexican comes caracoling on his fretted steed. Resplendent is he in a holiday serape, of hues as multifarious as Joseph's coat; resplendent in a foppish sombrero, and famous for the precise cut of his rancho's jacket. A musical man is he—jingling as to his spurs, jingling as to his horse's bit and head-stall, jingling as to the high peak of his saddle, jingling as to his leggins. In a moment he is almost upon her. One sharp jerk at the savage bit ⁷⁹ throws his quivering horse upon his haunches; and pausing so, he sits the model of an equipped caballero, unscrupulous and gallant. —That night a solitary wayfarer, with a heavy pouch at his belt, makes his way over a desperate road to the Mission San Dolores, unscathed. An unerring knife had been whetted for him, but a beam from an angel's eye had sealed it in its sheath.

In front of the Bella Union, Sam Roberts and his Hounds are marching two-and-two, in carnival attire, mixed of Mexican, Chinese, and Indian garments, snatched with impunity from the nearest shop, without money and without price. But now they halt, and, forming in line, lift their hats even gracefully—surely with some hopeful show of respect—and salute the First Lady. No flames from Chilian tents affright the quarters of Clarke's Point that night; no shrieks of violated women make that night hideous. A minister of grace bestowed the talisman, though no grateful lips do homage to the saving hand.

In the “Aguila de Oro,” they are having a lively 80 game of monte. A miserable wretch, an invalided miner, attenuated and feeble, his joints all twisted in the rack of rheumatism, elbows his way to a table, and holds suspended over a card, in lucky indecision, a soiled and finger-worn bit of paper, a certificate of deposit with Wright & Co. for three thousand dollars in dust. Once more, and just in time, goes up that saving signal, “She's coming, boys, Hurrah!”—That man is fat and lazy and limber now. Under his fig tree, on the banks of the Susquehannah, he rejoices in pigs and chickens, a white cottage, and an “old woman;” and even rheumatism cannot make him afraid.

What was the spell that wrought these changes—that transmuted the toads and lizards, and all the loathsome things of a dissolute and lawless community, into the very pearls and diamonds of fairy tale—that by some wondrous cunning made, of a day of lust and rapine, and worse than Ishmael's rule, a lovely Age of Gold? The influence of a quiet eye, a graceful mien, a thousand pretty pleas for homage and protection—the power of woman, the potent restraint of her presence, the persuasive eloquence of her very silence, the flattery of her slightest approbation, the sufficing rebuke of her turned-away face—that dim religion of the heart which demands no costlier fane than the humblest roof-tree, no altar more formally consecrated than a cottage cradle, no deity more awful than that God of Love whose smile makes the wilderness blossom like the rose, and the little hills skip like lambs.

Under a green hillock, hard by an old Switzer's house, and sacredly remote from the savage holocaust of California victims, sleeps the First Lady of San Francisco— “Quiet consummation have, And renowned be thy grave!”

Let us see what the Old Adobe is within. Entering by the ever-open portal, we are in a wide hall, which divides the house in equal wings—there is but the one story. This first room on the left is the “Governor's” office. That is he—the dark-haired, thin-whiskered, dapper little man. Not forgetting that you are in San Francisco, in the early fall of 82 Forty-nine, you wonder at his well-fitting clothes, his freshly-shaven chin, his unchallengeable dicky, starched for the latitude of Broadway; above all, at his patent-leather shoes, and spotless, undarned stockings. These are miracles—not to mention the genuine aroma of his Havana—that bewilder you at first. But presently Coit there, the deputy, reds you your riddle. “The Governor,” he says, “is good, *one way or another* (and Coit has a way, peculiarly his own, of saying that “one way or another”), for three thousand dollars a month,” which at once makes the tailor and the laundress mere common-places and matters-of-fact. Coit himself reflects the Governor's outer man, after a crooked fashion, as a flawed looking-glass might do it: that is, his dicky is fresh, but it confesses to brown soap—and his stockings are clean, but they are also dirty—soiled in the washing; and the shoes that Coit wears are pumps—

therefore, simply ridiculous. But Coit thinks he's doing very well on eight hundred a month, one way or another.

There are some other small particulars in which the Deputy successfully reflects the Governor.

83

Once, when the green tables of the Parker House flourished exceedingly, and the game went merry as a marriage-bell, Coit approached a monte table, with a red silk handkerchief in his hand, and in his quiet way—such modesty as you would naturally expect from eight hundred dollars a month, one way or another—asked for a “lay out.” The bland dealer graciously accommodated him with “ray, ocho, sinkwee, and kerwaiyo.” Coit “believed he'd ride this time,” so he tenderly deposited his red bundle on kerwaiyo, the steed.

“Dust or coin, Mr. Coit?” inquired the dealer.

“Coin, old horse.”

“Gold or silver, if you please, Mr. Coit?”

“That's nothing to you, unless you should be so unhappy as to lose, my fancy friend, in which case you shall be gratified immediately with a minute inspection of my pile. Otherwise, do me the honor to take John Coit's unimpeachable word for it that the money is good money, and don't expose it to the vulgar gaze.”

“As you please, sir; your word is enough.”

84

And John Coit, receiving from the hand of the smooth professor the sybilline “papes,” in accordance with an established courtesy extended by well-bred dealers to “heavy” gentlemen, proceeded to decide his own fate. By a graceful, undulatory movement of his dainty, jeweled hand—another reflection on the Governor—he gradually, and without flutter, erected two symmetric piles of cards; until, suddenly satisfied, one way or another, he returned what remained of the

pictorial parallelograms to the dealer—with a suavity of gesture which was his own happy manner, merely requesting that equally æsthetic individual not to trouble himself with the arithmetic till the rabble had retired. In the morning, “the arithmetic” disclosed thirteen thousand dollars in the sweetest eaglets of Uncle Sam's golden eyrie.

One way or another John Coit was the best deputy his governor ever had. Though, indeed, the Governor was an easy governor to please—a most confiding governor. His room of office looked on the verandah by two windows; near one of these stood the subtreasury, being an iron chest not unlike a 85 Pennsylvania Dutch farmer, in respect of its being so much better acquainted with substantial bellyfuls than its very seedy exterior would lead you to suppose. More than once this sub-treasury—the only thing of steady habits west of the Rocky Mountains then—turned out its golden lining to the day, while the Governor and his deputy had both retired for a period to refresh themselves in one way or another—and ne'er a man afraid. There were three months of Arcadian simplicity in the 1849 of San Francisco.

Back of the Governor's room, on the same side of the hall, was a cheerless, barn-like apartment, with an earthen floor and no ceiling, nor any chimney or window—the kitchen of the Old Adobe in its days of aboriginal dignity. A straw mattress in one corner, and a Californian saddle and leggins in another—a very fancy serape hanging on a hook with a ranchero's bit and lariat, and a yard or two of fine Tahiti tappa-cloth at the door for a curtain—these indicated that the place had an occupant. A Kanaka good-for-nothing, who passed by the name of Jim, and was supposed to be somebody's body-servant, and 86 to get his board and lodging in consideration of certain stated duties which never appeared on the face of things, was the sleeper on the straw mattress and the occasional flourisher of the dandy serape. As for the saddle, and the leggins, and the bit, and the lariat, their respective uses were easily made to appear by a prosecution of even the most careless inquiries into the nature of Jim's financial resources, and the nation, occupation, and condition of his familiars. The mysteries of monte were known also unto Jim, for whose benighted Polynesian mind the philanthropic Coit had done what he could, by enlightening it at first as far as the pictorial alphabet of the High-Low-Jack language, and then leaving it to its ambition. Nor did it disappoint its gentle shepherd. Jim soon became master of the painted hieroglyphics, wherewith

he conjured into his pouch the scattered dust of his Kanaka acquaintance, and not rarely the wiry cavallo of some more speculative “Injin.” Thus Jim enjoyed enviable opportunities of ventilating his equestrianism, which is a Kanaka's strong point; and although his stud was not numerous 87 or choice, it may be said to have been well “broken.”

And yet Jim had his good qualities too, to which the Old Adobe was occasionally indebted for incidents of pathos. Outside of the sacred circle of monte, he was kind to his countrymen, and occasionally took them in, in the true scriptural sense. In the rough winter of Forty-nine and Fifty, the poor Kanakas of San Francisco, quite childlike in their helplessness—their sensitive lungs accustomed to the balm and pleasance of Oahu zephyrs, their cracking skins missing the bracing breaker-baths of Diamond Point and Waititi, their dismayed stomachs sickening for the wonted fish and poi, their matted black hair falling in sorrow for its cocoa-nut oil, their hearts sadly pining for florid fields of coral, for the mists of the Pahari, and the tropic fragrance of the vale of Nuuanu—these lost children of the surf, the waterfall, and the rainbow died, decimate by pulmonary complaints, under filthy sheds of hide, and in the bush.

It was Jim then who turned the earthen kitchen of the Old Adobe into a sick bay, and forsook his cards 88 for the tin water-cup, the saucepan, and the gruel-spoon. He impressed into his service of pity the influence and the zealous offices of the careless but kindly governor. He contracted with an amused physician to undertake his patients cheap—by the quantity, as it were. He dragged to his hospital His Hawaiian Majesty's Vice-Consul for San Francisco, bidding him see for himself, and report in accordance with the facts to the government at Honolulu—that that old King Cole, that jolly old Polynesian soul, Kamehameha III., might be diverted from his billiards and brandy-and-water to a solemn consideration of the sufferings of his amphibious subjects in San Francisco. And sure enough, the small island king did shortly afterward send over a vessel for what was left of Jim's clients, and took stringent measures to keep the rest of his tender-lunged people at home.

There was another simple but touching show of the peculiar pathos of the place and time, in the farewell of the Kanakas on their sailing-day. All together they trooped to the Doctor's office—some on litters, some on crutches, one actually on the back of his 89 brother—to offer their few poor

dollars, scrupulously saved, or bestowed by Jim for the purpose, and which now they unwound from their dingy red sashes, their head handkerchiefs, or their hair. The recompense which they could not get accepted then, they proffered, in a tenfold more acceptable shape, a few months later, on the beach at Honolulu, when, fairly frantic with grateful joy, shouting, “*Aloha, kouka! maitai kouka! aloha nuee-nuee!*” (Welcome, doctor, good doctor! a hearty welcome!), they made much of their Californian leech and friend, and would have borne him on their shoulders to his grass house, in the bosom of their Eden-home.

Famous for Chinamen, too, was the Old Adobe of '49,—grinning, graceless, good-for-nothings. For decidedly it is hard to imagine a grave, great, and glorious Chinaman; there is something essentially ridiculous in all the pertainings of the outlandish creature. His tail is the sample and style of him; it stands for him in all things. Inside and out, he is altogether just so droll as that; and that suffices to fill the measure of his funniness. Your sense of the 90 ridiculous can ask no more; even a caudal prolongation of his os coccygis were a superfluous contribution to the great absurdity of his getting up. For myself, I think I could with less embarrassment, with a more successful air of indifference to the grins of the crowd, stand shaking hands, on Broadway, with a veritably tailed gentleman from the interior of Africa, asking after the health of his family, and what he thought of Piccolomini, than I could do the very same, by any impulse of cosmopolitan affability, with Chu-Jin-Seng of the “Forest-of-Pencils Society,” whose respectable, portly and pompous uncle, the Mandarin of the yellow button and several peacock feathers, had sent him hither to induct us outside-barbarian Fifth-Avenoodles in the refinements and intricacies of celestial etiquette. His square front-face presented, gravity might be possible; but the least wag of his tail, ever so slight a glimpse of his eccentric occiput, just the faintest hint of the arc described by the national hairy pendulum, at the small of his back, upon the perpendicular of his spinal column—and a guffaw were irrepressible. And 91 I defy you wholly to lose sight and thought of it, even in your most philosophic contemplations of his mind. Though he display the profundity and sententiousness of a Bacon and a Johnson, equally in his axioms and his antitheses will you detect a trace of tail.

It is somewhere related by Leigh Hunt, I think, that once, in London, a chimney-sweeper came unawares upon a Chinaman. Both presently rolled on the ground in twisting convulsions of laughter, to the great alarm of bystanders; each saw, in the other, seven wonders of the funny.

My own earliest idea of a Chinaman was derived from the Siamese Twins. While yet an urchin, I had the rare honor to be admitted to personal intimacy with that famous *lusus naturæ*, which erst inspired Lytton Bulwer with bad poetry, and foreshadowed the best successes of Barnum's Museum, in the Joyce Heth, Feejee Mermaid, and Tom Thumb line. Wonder-eyed and thoughtful, sitting on my stool, suppressed in a corner by the fire, I have watched them by the hour, as they ate, or smoked, or laughed, or 92 talked, or even—heavensave the key!—sang. From all they said, or did, or were, I derived notions, droll or shocking, as the occasion was, of three hundred millions of pig-eyed people, whose souls are none the less immortal, because their God's name, as I understood it, was Josh—notions that have not altogether left me to this day. I was not yet so nice in my geographical and ethnological distinctions as to appreciate their points of difference from the Peter Parley type of Chinaman. True, I was at first puzzled by the apparent discovery that they had no tails on the backs of their heads in the place where the tails ought to grow, but when, graciously, to help along my researches, they untwisted the coronal that encircled their dingy brows, and showed me that the appendage, in all its genuineness, was there, I saw in the fact merely an individual peculiarity of coiffure, even more remarkable and personal than the link of gristle which united them like a pair of human sausages. At once their nationality ceased to perplex me. I overcame that doubt as easily as a fly crossed the hair line which divided Siam from China on my 93 Malte-Brun map. And therefore, deduced I, all Chinamen are born double; all Chinamen are Chang-Eng. [The reader will recollect that the twins were called Chang and Eng, but by a pretty amalgamation of their names, for the sentiment of it, they joined the two with a sort of gristle-hyphen, and called themselves Chang-Eng.] When Chang is hungry, thought I, Eng eats; when the nose of Eng is titillated, Chang sneezes; when Chang lifts up his voice in wiry song, Eng makes diabolical faces; if you cut off Eng's tail, the tail of Chang will bleed; should Chang have the colic, a mustard poultice to the pit of Eng's stomach would relieve him; the tea that Chang imbibes, cheers Eng; the rice which disappears down Eng, fattens Chang; Chang thinks Eng, and Eng thinks Chang

—therefore no occasion to speak to each other; Eng is Chang, and Chang is Eng—therefore neither is in the other's way. When Chang said to Eng once, “My brother, go up to our room, if you please, and bring down the fan I painted for Johnny,” I thought it an uncommon good joke, as though one should say, “Sit there, myself, while I go 94 for me.” In three years that I knew Chang-Eng, I never, saving that once, heard either speak to the other—I never once heard either of them say “We,” meaning themselves.

From the case of the Siamese Twins the inferences I drew, in regard to those three hundred millions of my fellow-creatures, were prodigious inferences for such a small boy to draw; I had my foregone conclusions as to the *duplicity* of the race, which a closer acquaintance with them, even on their native soil, has not proved to be utterly at fault—at least in one sly sense. Had the succession of events been more rapid, during the period of my intimacy with Chang-Eng, my ideas of Chinamen would, no doubt, have presented some refreshing points of resemblance to the views of American manners and habits afforded by those veracious, clear-sighted, fair and philosophic observers, Mons. Léon Beauvellet of the Rachel Corps Dramatique, and the in *London Times* the Arrowsmith case—and I should have made a note on't, that all Chinamen, being double, make their fortunes in Museums by twenty-five cents admittance, retire to 95 farms in North Carolina, marry eccentric sisters, and have nine children between them.

My next encounter with John Chinaman was on the porch of the Old Adobe, where I derived new ideas from purer types, marked by all the enforced characteristics of the Manchu dynasty. In these exotics from the Flowery Kingdom each specimen was *single*. Now my tails hung down as straight as a cow's and my eyes were less on a plane than ever. “All Chinamen,” I noted, *Times* wise and Beauvalletishly, “are either carpenters, cooks, washer-women, or gamblers; their names invariably begin with Ay, or Kin, or Fu, and end in Cow, or Fung, or Tien; with every Chinaman, in the matter of shooting-crackers, it is Fourth of July all the year round; any Chinese woman can procure plenary indulgence for her indiscretions by offering the cheap incense of joss-stick at the shrine of some cow-tailed Diana; and any Chinaman may perjure his soul without fear of fiends by burning some yellow paper before the Recorder; every Chinaman belongs to a secret society, whose peculiar object is to squeeze out 96 of him, extortionately, much cash, and to strangle him outright if he

tells; every bankrupt Chinaman disembowels himself for the satisfaction of his creditors, and every Chinese lady who cannot pay her dressmaker, poisons herself with opium for a receipt in full; then the defunct is interred in some Yerba Buena Cemetery to a salute of shooting-crackers, and they feed the grave for a whole moon with roast pig.

Then I sailed away to Honolulu, in the Sandwich Islands; and after a stay of three months in that amphibious Paradise, if one had asked me, What are the habits and customs of the Chinese? I should have answered: The Chinaman lives on Kamehameha street, or the King's Road, where he keeps a shop for the sale of Madras handkerchiefs, Turkey-red teapoys, rattan furniture, and chow-chow sweetmeats in blue jars; he buys a great many Manilla cheroots at auction, has his horse-race every Saturday afternoon, and snubs Kanakas continually.

A way I went, with this my latest ethnological fact, to Hong-Kong, where I was soon prepared to assert 97 that the pure Chinaman was either comprador—that is, a ship's agent—pawnbroker, opium-smuggler, beggar, retired pirate, or active assassin. He sold cash by the string, like onions, in front of smoky dens at the end of the Victoria Road; or he played Simon-says-wiggle-waggle for samshu, at midnight, in the loft of a cut-throat den, brazenly published with paper lanterns; or, he waylaid sentimental ensigns returning late at night, in a state of beer, from a visit to a “Kumpny's widow” who received a select party to loo and gin-and-water, every evening, on the heights above the Bishop's Palace.

Away again to Singapore and Penang, where I found the Chinaman making shoes, coining bad dollars, waiting on table at “British” hotels, nursing half-caste babies, cheating Malays, and getting himself devoured by an occasional enterprising and unceremonious tigress, with a large family in a famishing condition.

Next to Calcutta; and there I found the old familiar tail wagging with added vivacity and wide-awakeness, among the turbans and breech cloths of the 98 Black Town bazaars. At the periodical opium sales my pig-eyed friend was smartest in the bidding, and in the everlasting processions, from Doorga Pooja to a turn-out of Triads, his gong banged loudest.

Home again, in New York, at last—and there sat the scamp on the lowest step of the Astor House, in all the picturesqueness of woeful desolation and home-sickness, cunningly playing on that harp of a thousand strings, the sympathies of a Broadway crowd, with a trick of instrumentation which was, to me, a familiar and amusing reminiscence of San Francisco—“Please buy something from this poor Chinaman!”—he buried all the while in jacket sleeves and profound inconsolability: Begging Considered as one of the Fine Arts.

One day, certain Celestials of the better class, concerned for the national character, exposed this dodge in a morning paper. For several months after that I looked in vain for my artists. At last I found one, on the pavement of the St. Nicholas. There were the tribulation and the snuffling, the bowed-downness and the home-sickness, and there, too, was the placard, 99 “Please buy something”—but not even one poor lunka cheroot to sell. I had found a great master in his art, and he found his reward. Few passers-by were too busy to stop and bestow applause and coppers on so happy a trick.

Therefore, scapegrace and rogue as he is, I have entertained a sneaking regard for my celestial friend, and, ever ready to believe that I have met him under disadvantageous circumstances, permit myself only grateful memories of him, as he chattered and screamed around the porch of the Old Adobe.

Opposite the Governor's door in the Old Adobe was the Deputies' room—a spacious square apartment, occupying the whole of that side of the house. Entering, you had on your right, at the windows, the desks of the “understrappers.” In the farther corner were the two deputies—John Coit, whom we found just now, at the elbow of his great original, being one. Right opposite, you had Mr. Karl Joseph Krafft, the cashier—a character, decidedly, whose portrait shall appear hereafter—a sort of financial poet, the equanimously contemptuous expression of 100 whose handsome, devil-may-care countenance, as he leaned thoughtfully over a crude heap of dust and coin, denoted that he considered it very unsatisfying stuff to live for, very foolish stuff to die for, and very uncomfortable

stuff to handle. Next him sat, mute, pale and vacant-looking, Joachim Vallenilla, the Spanish permit-clerk—about whom a little story:

Joachim Vallenilla had been, less than a year since, a thriving young merchant in Valparaiso, where he had an ample credit, a young wife, pretty and warm, and a friend, handsome and accomplished. Joachim's good-looking Pythias was the closest of bosom friends; from early boyhood they had been inseparables. Joachim loved José, and Mariquita loved José, and José loved Mariquita; as to who loved Joachim does not appear—there seems to have been something left out there. José and Mariquita consumed many cigaritos together; José and Mariquita met often, over the guitar, in the dulcetest of Andalusian love-ditties; like two roses on one stem, José and Mariquita, by moonlight, peered through the vine-leaves from the verandah. Joachim was content with the 101 arrangements generally. “By way of a sandwich,” he occasionally took a little music and moonlight with his cigar; and in the abiding fondness of José and Mariquita he found a refreshing sentiment. Good fellow, Joachim! But you know the old song:— “Young folks, young folks, better go to bed; Else you'll put the devil in the old folks' head.”

José and Mariquita, although they went to bed, did put the devil in the heads of certain old folks, crusty counsellors of Joachim, who never smoked cigaritos, had no ear for music, and were asthmatic by moonlight. Thence, to the hot head of young Joachim, was an easy leap for the Devil—whence a scene.

One morning Joachim greets Mariquita with the tidings that, that day, he will make one of his usual business trips to Santiago, to be gone a week. In the afternoon, much kissing and good-by. At midnight, a stealthy step on the verandah, and a muffled tap at the door, which is opened by a confidential servant. Joachim enters, leaves his shoes in the hall, steals to his wife's chamber, draws aside the curtain— *two*, 102 asleep!—good. It is not Joachim's purpose to disturb the repose of people who are no doubt fatigued. He contents himself with leaving his hat and dirk on the table—retires, as quietly as he entered, to another chamber—goes to bed, and to sleep. In the morning, a lovely morning, Joachim rises at his usual hour, and, when breakfast is laid, commands the servant to say to his mistress that her husband waits, affectionate and hungry.

Mariquita has passed a wretched night—such a dreadful headache; will her “dear, kind love” excuse her? Her dear, kind love is inexorable; her presence is essential to his appetite; he cannot eat, he cannot live without her. The servant goes and returns: “Only this once, dear Joachim,” pleads Mariquita; “indeed she cannot yet; this evening, this afternoon, in an hour or so.” By no means; Joachim is anxious now, really alarmed—he will come to his darling, his Mariquita, his Mariquitita, his Mariquititita, his pet of the endless diminutives; he will bring to her bedside the plantains and chocolate. “Oh, no, no!”—Mariquita will not hear of that; her 103 Joachim shall not be at all that trouble for a foolish headache; besides, she is better now—she will come at once.

There is in Chili a quaint satirical rogue of a law, to this day worthily accepted, which requires that if a man detect his wife in the very article of wantonness, he shall not take her life, nor maim, nor bruise her; but he may dismiss her from his bed and board, drive her out into the highway, naked if he will; only, he shall first give her shoes to her feet, and a loaf of bread, or its equivalent, a *real*.

Now, when Mariquita came down, to breakfast with her good, easy husband, pale, hoarse, rigid, biting the lips of her heart, all was as usual—plantains, chocolate, buns, flowers, and Joachim; except that, at her place, beside her plate, were a pair of old slippers and a battered *real*.

At first she would have fainted, and then she would have fled; but her eyes met, just in time, the eyes of Joachim, and found something there which forbade either movement. So she sat still, very still, toying vacantly with the chocolate; while he, now 104 become the sublime genius of ruthless retribution, ran on carelessly about the mists on the vineyards, and the white nightcap of Monte Diabolo, and the glancing gulls seaward. Till, at the end of an accursed lifetime, so it seemed to her, he arose, and bowed; 105 whereupon, without a look or word, from first to last, she retired to her chamber.

And so it went on for a month, he meeting her only at breakfast—always the slippers and the *real*, the silence and the flippant mockery, the agony and the rack. Once she would have escaped; but the obedient doors laughed at her with all their bolts and bars, and paid servants, armed to the teeth, were deaf, and only bowed. Once, she flung herself, abject, at Joachim's feet, and would have

clasped his knees, imploring him to slay her, beat her to death with slow installments of stripes—only take away, take *those* away. But Joachim tapped on the bell, and forced her to gather herself up in awkward, foolish confusion.

Another month, and she was happy—playing idiotically with the real, maundering baby-songs over the slippers. Then Joachim converted all his worldly goods into a piece of paper and sent her home with it to her father. As for José, if he did not die a natural death, he is probably living now. “*Quien sabe?*” thought Joachim, who took a hundred dollars, and 106 sailed for San Francisco, where they made him Spanish permit-clerk in the Old Adobe.

If old historic houses, when they die, go to golden streets in the New Jerusalem, may the shade of the Old Adobe be kept in good repair.

CHAPTER IV.

PINTAL.

ON Dupont Street, near Washington, in 1849, a wretched tent, patched together from mildewed and weather-worn sails, was pitched on a hill-side lot, unsightly with sand and thorny bushes, filthy castaways of clothing, worn-out boots, and broken bottles. The forlorn loneliness of this poor abode, and the perfection of its Californianness, in all the circumstances of exposure, frailness, destitution, and dirt, were enough of themselves to make it an object of interest to the not-too-busy passer; yet to complete its pitiful picturesqueness, Pathos had bestowed a case of miniatures and a beautiful child. Beside the entrance of the tent a rough shingle was fastened to the canvas, and against this hung an unpainted picture frame of pine, in humble counterpart of those gilded 108 rosewood signs which, at the doors of Daguerreotype galleries, display fancy “specimens” to the goers-to-and-fro of Broadway. Attracted by an object so novel in San Francisco then, I paused one morning, in my walk officeward from the “Anglo-Saxon Dining-Saloon,” to examine it.

There were six of them—six dainty miniature portraits on ivory, elaborately finished, and full of the finest marks of talent. The whole were seemingly reproductions of but two heads, a lady's and a

child's—the lady well fitted to be the mother of the child, which might well have been divine. There were three studies of each; each was presented in three characters, chosen as by an artist possessed of a sentiment of sadness, some touching reminiscence.

In one picture, the lady—evidently English, a pensive blonde, with large and most sweet blue eyes, curtained by the longest lashes, regular and refined features suggestive of pure blood, budding lips full of sensibility, a chin and brow that showed intellect as well as lineage, and cheeks touched with the young rose's tint—was as a beautiful *débutante*, the flower of 109 rich drawing-rooms, in her first season: one white moss-rosebud in her smoothly-braided hair; her dimpled, round, white shoulders left to their own adornment; and for jewels, only one opal on her ripening bosom;—so much of her dress as was shown was the simple white bodice of pure maidenhood.

In the next, she had passed an interval of trial, for her courage, her patience, and her pride—a very few years, perhaps, but enough to bestow that haughty, defiant glance, and fix those matchless features in an almost sneer. No longer was her fair head bowed, her eyes downcast, in shrinking diffidence; but erect and commanding, she looked some tyranny, or insolence, or malice, in the face, to look it down. Jewels encircled her brow, and a bouquet of pearls was happy on her fuller bosom.

Still a few years further on—and how changed! “So have I seen a rose,” says that Shakspeare of the pulpit, old Jeremy Taylor, “when it has bowed the head and broke its stalk; and at night, having lost some of its leaves and all of its beauty, it has fallen into the portion of weeds and outworn faces.” Alas, 110 Farewell, and Nevermore sighed from those hollow cheeks, those woe-begone eyes, those pallid lips, that willow-like long hair, and the sad vesture of the forsaken Dido.

So with the child. At first, a rosy, careless, curlypate of three years or so—wonder-eyed and eager, all Spring and joyance, and beautiful as Love.

Then pale and pain-fretted, heavy-eyed and weary, feebly half-lying in a great chair, still—an unheeded locket scarce held by his thin fingers, his forehead wrinkled with cruel twinges, the

sweet bowed lines of his lips twisted in whimpering puckers, the curls upon his vein-traced temples unnaturally bright, as with clamminess—a painful picture for a mother's eyes!

But not tragic, like the last; for there the boy had grown. Nine years had deepened for his clustered curls their hue of golden brown, and set a seal of anxious thought upon the cold, pale surface of his intellectual brow, and traced his mouth about with lines of a martyr's resignation, and filled his profound eyes, dim as violets, with foreboding speculation, 111 making the lad seem a seer of his own sad fate. Here, thought I, if I mistake not, is another melancholy chapter in this San Franciscan romance. This painter learned his art of sorrow, and pitiless experience has bestowed his style; he shall be for my finding-out.

Home-sickness had marked me for its own one day. I sat alone in my rude little office, conning over again, for the hundredth time, strange chapters of a waif's experience; reproducing auld-lang-syne, with all its thronged streets and lonely forest-paths, its old familiar faces, talks, and songs—ingathering there, in the name of love or friendship, forms that were dim and voices that were echoes; and many an “alas,” and “too late,” and “it might have been,” they brought along with them: “Let this remembrance comfort me, —that when My heart seemed bursting—like a restless wave, That, swollen with fearful longing for the shore, Throws its strong life on the imagined bliss Of finding peace and undisturbed calm— It fell on rocks and broke in many tears. 112 “Else could I bear, on all days of the year— Not now alone, this gentle summer night, When seythes are busy in the headed grass, And the full moon warms me to thoughtfulness— This voice that haunts the desert of my soul: ‘It might have been!’ Alas! ‘It might have been!’”

I drew from my battered, weather-beaten sea-box sad store of old letters, bethumbed and soiled—an accusation in every one of them, and small hope of forgiveness, save what the gentle dead might render. There were pretty little portraits, too.—Ah, well! I put them back—a frown, or a shadow of reproachful sadness, on the picture of a once loving and approving face is the hardest bitterness to bide, the self-unsparing wanderer can know. Therefore, I would fain let these faces be turned from me—all save one, a merry minx of maidenhood, of careless heart and laughing lips, and somewhat naughty eyes. It was a steel engraving, not of the finest, torn from some Book of Beauty, or other

silly sentimental keepsake of the literary catch-penny class, brought all the way from home, and tenderly saved for the sake of its 113 strange, by-chance resemblance to a smart little *lionne* I had known in Virginia, in the days when smart little *lionnes* made me a sort of puppy Cumming. The picture, unframed, and exposed to all the chances of rough travel, had partaken of my share of foul weather and coarse handling, and been spotted and smutched, and creased and torn, and every way defaced. I had often wished that I might have a pretty painting made from it, before it should be spoiled past copying; and here, I thought, shall be my introduction to my fly-in-amber artist, of the seedy tent and the romantic miniatures. So, pocketing my picture, I forthwith hied me to Dupont Street.

The tent seemed quite deserted. At first I feared my rare bird had flitted; I shook the bit of flying jib that answered for a door, and called to any one within, more than once, before an inmate stirred. Then, so quietly that I had not heard his approach, a lad of ten, perhaps, came to the entrance, and, timidly peering up into my face, asked, “Is it my father you wish to see, sir?”

How beautiful!—how graceful! With what 114 touching sweetness of voice! How intellectual his expression, and how well-bred his air!—plainly a gentleman's son, and the son of no common gentleman! Instinctively I drew back a pace to compare him with the child of the “specimens.” Unquestionably the same; there were the superior brow, the richly clustered curls of golden brown, the painful lips and the foreboding eyes.

“If your father painted these pretty pictures, my boy—yes, I would be glad to see him, if he is within.”

“He is not here at present, sir; he went with my mother to the ship, to bring away our things. But it is quite a long while since they went; and I think they will return presently. Take a seat, sir, please.”

I accepted the stool he offered,—a canvas one, made to “unship,” and fold together—such a patent accommodation for tired “hurdies” as amateur sketchers, and promiscuous lovers of the picturesque in landscape, take with them on excursions. My accustomed eye took in at a glance the poor furniture of that very Californian make-shift of a shelter for 115 fortune-seeking heads. There were

chests, boxes, and trunks, the usual complement, bestowed in every corner, as they could best be got out of the way, —a small, rough table, on temporary legs, and made, like the seats, to unship and “stow,” —several other of the same canvas stools, —a battered chest of drawers, at present doing the duty of a cupboard, —some kitchen utensils, and a few articles of table furniture of the plainest delf. As for the kitchen, I had noticed, as I passed, a portable furnace for charcoal, without, and at the rear of the tent; it was clear they did their cooking in the open air. On one side of the entrance, and near the top of the tent, a small square had been cut from the canvas, and the sides framed with slats of wood, making a sort of Rembrandtish skylight, through which some scanty rays of barbaric glory fell on an easel, with its palette, brushes, and paints. A canvas, framed, on which the ground had been laid, and the outline of a head already traced, was mounted on the easel; other such frames, as if of finished portraits with their faces turned to the wall, stood on the earthen floor, supported by a strip of lath wood tacked to the tent-cloth near the bottom. On the floor, at the foot of the easel, lay an artist's sketch-book. A part of the tent behind was divided off from what, by way of melancholy jest, I may call the reception-room, or the studio, by a rope stretched across, from which were suspended a blanket, a travelling shawl, and a voluminous and evidently costly Spanish cloak. Protruding beyond the edge of this extemporaneous screen, I could see the footposts of an iron bedstead, and the end of a large *poncho*, which served for a counterpane.

“Will you amuse yourself with this sketch-book, please,” said the pretty lad, “till my father comes?”

“With pleasure, my boy—if you are sure your father will not object.”

“Oh, no, indeed, sir! My father has told me I must always entertain any gentlemen who may call when he is out—that is, if he is to return soon; and any one may look at this book; —it is only his portfolio, in which he sketches whatever new or pretty things we see on our travels; but there are some very nice pictures in it—landscapes, and houses, and people.”

117

“Have you travelled much, then?”

“Oh, yes! we have been travelling ever since I can remember; we have been far, and seen a great many strange sights, and some such queer people!—There! that is our shepherd in Australia; isn't he funny? his name was Dirk. I tied that blue ribbon round his straw hat, that seems big enough for an umbrella. He looks as if he were laughing, doesn't he? That's because I was there when my father sketched him; and he made such droll faces, with his brown skin and his great grizzly moustaches, when father told him he must make up a pleasant expression, that it set me laughing—for my father said he looked like a Cape lion making love; and then Dirk would laugh too, and spoil his pleasant expression; and father would scold; and it was so funny! I loved Dirk very much, he was so good to me; he gave me a tame kangaroo, and a black swan, and taught me to throw the boomerang; and once when he went to Sydney, he spent ever so much money to buy me a silver bell for Lipse, my yellow lamb. I wonder if Dirk is living yet? Do you think he is dead, sir? 118 I should be very much grieved, if he were; for I promised I would come back to see him when I am a man.

“*That* is Dolores—dear old Dolores! Isn't she fat?”

“Yes, and good too, I should think, from the pleasant face she has. Who was Dolores?”

“Ah! you never knew Dolores, did you? And you never heard her sing. She was my Chilena nurse in Valparaiso; and she had a mother—oh, so very old! —who lived in Santiago. We went once to see her. The other Santiago—that was Dolores's son—drove us there in the *veloche*. Wasn't it curious, his name should be the same as the city's? But he was a bad boy, Santiago—so mischievous! —such a scamp! Father had to whip him many times; and once the *vigilantes* took him up, and would have put him in the chain-gang, for cutting an American sailor with a knife, in the Calle de San Francisco, if father had not paid five ounces, and become security for his good behavior. But he ran away, after all, and went as a common sailor in a nasty guano ship. Dolores cried 119 very much, and it was long before she would sing for me again. Oh, she did know such agreeable songs!— *Mi Niña*, and *Yo tengo Ojos Negros*, and ‘No quiero, no quiero casarme; Es mejor, es mejor soltera!’”

And the delightful little fellow merrily piped the whole of that “song of pleasant glee,” one of the most melodious and sauciest bits of lyric coquetry to be found in Spanish.

“Ah,” said he, “but I cannot sing it half so well as Dolores. She had a beautiful guitar, with a blue ribbon, that her sweetheart gave her before I was born, when she was young and very pretty; —he brought it all the way from Acapulco.

“And *that* pretty girl is Juanita; she sold pine-apples and grapes in the Almendral, and every night she would go with her guitar—it was a very nice one, but did not cost near so much money as Dolores's—and sing to the American gentlemen in the Star Hotel. My mother said she was a naughty person, and that she did not dare tell where she got her gold 120 cross and those jet earrings. But I liked her very much, for all that; and I'm sure she would not steal, for she used to give me a fresh pine-apple every morning; and whenever her brother José came down from Casa Blanca with the mules and the *pisco*, she sent me a large melon and some lovely roses.

“That is the house we lived in at Baltimore. It was painted white, and there was a paling in front, and a door-yard with grass. We had some honeysuckles on the porch; —there they are, and there's the grape-vine. I had a dog-house, too, made to look like a church, and my father promised to buy me a Newfoundland dog—one of those great hairy fellows, with brass collars, you know, that you can ride on—when he had sold a great many pictures, and made his fortune. But we did not make our fortune in Baltimore, and I never got my dog; so we came here to Tom Tiddler's ground to pick up gold and silver. When we are fixed, and get a new tent, my father is going to give me a little spade and a cradle, to dig gold enough to buy a Newfoundland dog with, and then I shall borrow a saw and make a dog-house, like 121 the one I had in Baltimore, out of that green chest. Charley Saunders lived in the next house in the picture, and he had a martin-box, with a steeple to it; but his father gave fencing lessons, and was very rich.”

As the intelligent little fellow ran on with his pretty prattle, I was diligently pursuing the lady and child of the specimens through the sketches. On every leaf I encountered them—ever changing, yet always the same. Here was the child by my side, unquestionably the same; though now I looked in

vain for the anxious mouth and the foreboding eyes in his face of careless, hopeful urchinhood. But who was the other? —his mother, no doubt; and yet no trace of resemblance.

“And tell me, who is this beautiful lady, my lad, —here, and here, and here again? You see I recognise her always, —so lovely, and so gentle-looking. Your mother?”

“Oh, no, Sir!” and he laughed, —“my mother is very different from that. That is nobody—only a fancy sketch.”

122

“Only a fancy sketch!” So then, I thought, my pretty entertainer, confiding and communicative as you are, it is plain there are some things you do not know, or will not tell.

“She is not any one we ever saw; she never lived. My father made her out of his own head, as I make stories sometimes; or he dreamed her, or saw her in the fire. But he is very fond of her, I suppose because he made her himself—just as I think my own stories prettier than any true ones; and he's always drawing her, and drawing her, and drawing her. I love her, too, very much, —she looks so natural, and has such nice ways. Isn't it strange my father—but he's *so* lever with his pencil and brushes! —should be able to invent the Lady Angelica?—that's her name. But my mother does not like her at all, and gets out of patience with my father for painting so many of her. Mamma says she has a stuck-up expression, —such a funny word, ‘stuck-up!’—and does not look like a lady. Once I told mamma I was sure she was only jealous, and she grew very angry, and made me cry; so now I never speak of Lady Angelica 123 before her. What makes me think my father must have dreamed her is that I dreamed her once myself. I thought she came to me in such a splendid dress, and told me that she was not only a live lady, but my own mother, and that mamma was—Hush! This is my father, Sir.”

Wonderful! how the lad had changed!—like a phantom, the thoughtless prattler was gone in a moment, and in his place stood the seer-boy of the picture, the profound, foreboding eyes fixed anxiously, earnestly, on the singular man who at that moment entered: a singularly small man, cheaply but tidily attired in black; even his shoes polished—a rare and dandyish indulgence

in San Francisco, before the French bootblacks inaugurated the sumptuary vanity of Day and Martin's lustre on the stoop of the California Exchange, and made it a necessity no less than diurnal ablutions; a well-preserved English hat on his head, which, when he with a somewhat formal air removed it, discovered thin black locks, beginning to part company with the crown of his head. In his large, brown eyes an expression of melancholy¹²⁴ was established; a nervous tremulousness almost twitched his refined lips, which, to my surprise, were not concealed by the universal moustache—indeed, the smooth chin and symmetrically trimmed muttonchop whiskers, in the orthodox English mode, showed that the man shaved. His nose, slightly aquiline, was delicately cut, and his nostrils fine; and he had small feet and hands, the latter remarkably white and tender. As he stood before me, he was never at rest for an instant, but changed his support from one leg to the other—they were slight as a young boy's—and fumbled, as it were, with his feet; as I have seen a distinguished medical lecturer, of Boston, gesticulate with his toes. He played much with his whiskers, too, and his fingers were often in his hair—as a fidgety and vulgar man would bite his nails. From all of which I gathered that my new acquaintance was an intensely nervous person—very sensitive, of course, and no doubt irritable.

He was accompanied by a—female, much taller than he, and as stalwart as dear woman can be; an¹²⁵ especially common-looking person, bungled as to her dress, which was tawdry-fine, unseasonable for the place as well as time, inappropriate to herself, inharmonious in its composition, and every way most vilely put on; a clumsy and, as I presently perceived, a loud person, whose face, still showing traces of the coarse but decided beauty it must once have possessed, fell far short of compensating for the complete gracelessness of her presence. Her eyes had a bibulous quality, and the bright redness of her nose vied vulgarly with the rusty redness of her cheeks. I suspected her complexion of potatoes, but charitably let it off with—beer; for she was, at first glance, English. As she jerked off her flaunting bonnet, and dragged off her loud shawl, saluting me, as she did so, with an overdone obeisance, she said, “This San Fanfrisko”—why would she, how could she, always twist the decent name of the metropolis of the Pacific into such an absurd shape?—“was a norrid 'ole; she happealed to the gentleman,”—meaning me,—“didn't 'e find

it a norrid 'ole, habsolutely lawful?" And then she went clattering among 126 tinware and crockery, and snubbed the gentlemanly boy in a sort of tender Billingsgate.

While she was thus gracefully employed, the agonized artist, his face suffused with blushes, and fairly ghastly with an enforced smile, was painfully struggling to abstract himself, by changing the places of things, shifting the position of his easel, prying in a lost way into lumbered corners, and pretending to be in search of something—ingenious, but unable to disguise his chagrin. He pranced with his legs, and tumbled his hair, and twitched at his whiskers more than ever, as he said, —

“My dear” (and the boy had called her Mamma; so then, it must be a fancy sketch, after all), “my dear, no doubt the gentleman is a better cosmopolite than yourself, and blessed with more facility in adapting himself to circumstances.”

“You know, Madam,” I came to his assistance, “we Americans have a famous trick of living and enjoying a little in advance, of ‘going ahead’ of the hour, as it were. We find in San Francisco rather what it promises to be than what it is, and we take it at its word.’

127

“Oh, pray, don't mention Americans! I positively 'ate the hodieous people. I confess I 'ave a hinsurmoutable prejudice hagainst the race; you are not haware that I am Hinglish. I think I might endure heven San Fanfrisko, if it were not for the Americans. Are you an American?”

Alternating between the pallor of rage and the flush of mortification, her husband now turned, with a calmness that had something of desperation in it, and saved me the trouble and the pain of replying, by asking, in the frigid tone of one who resented my presence as the cause of his shame, —

“Did you wish to see me on business, Sir? and have you been waiting long?”

“The success with which your charming little boy has entertained me has made the time seem very short. I could willingly have waited longer.”

That last remark was a mere *contre-temps*. I did not mean to be as severe as he evidently thought me, for he bowed haughtily and resentfully.

I came at once to business—drew from my pocket 128 the engraving I had brought—“Could he copy that for me?”

“How?—in miniature or life-size?—ivory or canvas?”

“You are, then, a portrait-painter, also?—Ah! to be sure!” and I glanced at the canvas on the easel.

“Certainly,—I prefer to make portraits.”

“And in this case I should prefer to have one. Extravagant as the vanity may seem, I am willing to indulge in it, for the sake of being the first, in this land of primitive wants and fierce unrefinements, to take a step in the direction of the Fine Arts—unless you have had calls upon your pencil already.”

“None, Sir.”

“Then to-morrow, if you please—for I cannot remain longer at present—we will discuss my whim in detail.”

“I shall be at your service, Sir.”

“Good day, Madam! And you, my pretty lad, well met;—what is your name?”

“Ferdy, Sir, —Ferdinand Pintal.”

129

At that moment, his father, as if reminded of a neglected courtesy, or a business form, handed me his card, —“Camillo Alvarez y Pintal.”

“Thanks, then, Ferdy, for the pains you took to entertain me. You must let me improve an acquaintance so pleasantly begun.”

The boy's hand trembled as it lay in mine, and his eyes, fixed upon his father's, wore again the ominous expression of the picture. He did not speak, and his father took a step toward the door significantly.

But the doleful silence that might have attended my departure was broken by a demonstration, “as per sample,” from my country's fair and gentle 'ater. “She 'oped I would not be huffed by the freedom of 'er hobservations on my countrymen. I must hexcuse 'er Hinglish bluntness; she was haware that she 'ad a somewhat hoff-'and way of hexpressing 'er hemotions; but when she 'ated she 'ated, and it relieved 'er to hout with it at once. Certainly she would never—bless 'er 'eart, no!—'ave taken me for an American; I was so huncommon genteel.”

With my hand upon the region of my heart, as I 130 had seen “Stars,” when called before the curtain on the proudest evening of their lives, give anatomical expression to their overwhelming sense of the honor done them, I backed off, hat in hand.

“Camillo Alvarez y Pintal,” I read again, as I approached the Plaza. “Can this man be Spanish, then? Surely not; —how could he have acquired his excellent English, without a trace of foreign accent, or the least eccentricity of idiom? His child, too, said nothing of that. English, no doubt, of Spanish parentage; or—oh, patience! I shall know by-and-by, thanks to my merry Virginia jade, who shall be arrayed in resplendent hues, and throned in a golden frame, if she but feed my curiosity generously enough.”

Next day, in the afternoon, having bustled through my daily programme of business, I betook myself with curious pleasure to my appointment with Pintal. To my regret, at first, I found him alone; but I derived consolation from the assurance, that, wherever the engaging boy had gone, his mother had accompanied him. Even more than at my first visit, the artist was frigidly reserved, and

full of warning off 131 politeness. With but brief prelude of courteous commonplaces, he called me to the business of my visit.

My picture, as I have said, was a fairly executed steel engraving, taken from some one of the thousands of “Tokens,” or “Keepsakes,” or “Amulets,” or “Gems,” or such like harmless gift-books, with which youths of tender sentiment remind preoccupied damsels of their careful *penchants*. It represented an “airy, fairy Lilian” of eighteen, or thereabouts, lolling coquettishly, fan in hand, in an antique, high-backed chair, with “carven imageries,” and a tasselled cushion. She rejoiced in a profusion of brown ringlets, and her costume was pretty and quaint—a dainty chemisette, barred with narrow bands of velvet, as though she had gone to Switzerland, or the south of Italy, for the sentiment of her bodice—sleeves quaintly puffed and “slashed”—the ample skirt looped up with rosettes and natty little ends of ribbon; her feet beneath her petticoat, “like little mice,” stole out, “as if they feared the light.” Somewhere, among the many editions of Dickens's works, I have seen a Dolly Varden that resembled her.

132

It was agreed between us that she should be reproduced in a life-size portrait, with such a distribution of rich colors as the subject seemed to call for, as his fine taste might select, and his cunning hand lay on. I sought to break down his reserve, and make myself acceptable to him, by the display of a discreet geniality, and a certain frankness, not falling into familiarity, which should seem to proceed from sympathy, and a *bonhommie*, that, assured of its own kindly purpose, would take no account of his almost angry distance. The opportunity was auspicious, and I was on the alert to turn it to account. I made a little story of the picture, and touched it with romance. I told him of Virginia—especially of that part of the State in which this saucy little lady lived, —of its famous scenery, its historic places, and the peculiar features of its society. I strove to make the lady present to his mind's eye by dwelling on her certain eccentricities, and helping my somewhat particular description of her character with anecdotes, more or less pointed and amusing, especially to so grave a foreigner, of her singular ready-wittedness 133 and graceful audacity. Then I had much to say about her little “ways,” of attitude, gesture, and expression, and some hints to offer for slight changes in the finer lines of the face, and in the costume, which might make the likeness more real

to both of us, and, by getting up in him an interest for the picture, procure his favorable impression for myself.

I had the gratification, as my experiment proceeded, to find that it was by no means unsuccessful. His austerity appreciably relaxed, and the kindly tone into which his few, but intelligent observations gradually fell, was accompanied by an encouraging smile, when the drift of our talk was light. Then I spoke of his child, and eagerly praised the beauty, the intelligence, and sweet temper of the lad. 'twas strange how little pleasure he seemed to derive from my sincere expressions of admiration; indeed, the slight satisfaction he did permit himself to manifest appeared in his words only, not at all in his looks; for a shade of deep sadness fell at once upon his handsome face, and his expression, so full of sensibility, assumed the cast of anxiety and pain. “He thanked me for my eloquent praises of the boy, and—not too partially, he hoped—believed that he deserved them all. A prize of beauty and of love had fallen to him in his little Ferdy, for which he would be grieved to seem ungrateful. But yet—but yet—the responsibility, the anxiety, the ceaseless fretting care! This fierce, unbroken city;” —he spoke of it as though it were a newly-lassoed and untamed mustang—I liked the simile; “this lawless, blasphemous, obscene, and dangerous community; these sights of heartlessness and cruelty; these sounds of selfish, greedy contention; the absence of all taste and culture—no lines of beauty, no strains of music, no tones of kindness, no gestures of gentleness and grace, no delicate attentions, no ladies' presence, no social circle, no books, no home, no Church; —Good God! what a heathenish barbarism of coarse instincts, and irreverence, and insulting equalities, and all manner of gracelessness, to bring the dangerous impressionability of fine childhood to! The boy was nervous, sensitive, of a spirit quick to take alarms or hurts—physically unprepared to wrestle with arduous toil, privation, and exposure, —most apt for the teachings of gentleness and taste. It was cruel to think—he could wish him dead first—that his clean, white mind must become smeared and spotted here, his well-tuned ear reconciled to loud discords, and his fine eye at peace with deformity; but there was no help for it.” And then, as though he had suddenly detected in my face an expression of surprised discovery, he said, “But I am sure I do not know how I came to say so much, or let myself be tedious with sickly egotisms to a polite, but indifferent stranger. If you have gathered from them more than I meant should appear,

you will at least do me the justice to believe that I have not been boasting of what I regard as a calamity.”

I essayed to reassure him by urging upon his consideration the manifest advantages, of courage, self-reliance, ingenuity, quick and economical application of resources, independence, and perseverance, which his son, if well-trained, must derive from even those rude surroundings—at the same time granting the necessity of sleepless vigilance and severe restraints. But he only shook his head sadly, and said, “No 136 doubt, no doubt; and I hope, sir, the fault is in myself, that I do not appreciate the force and value of all that.”

The subject was so plainly full of a peculiar pain for him, he was so ill at mind on this point, that I could not find it in my heart to pursue it further at the cost of his feelings. So we talked of other things: of gold, and the placers, and their unimpaired productiveness—of the prospects of the country, and of the character the mineral element must stamp upon its politics, its commerce, and its social system—of San Francisco, and all the enchantments of its sudden upspringing—of Alcaldes and Town Councils—of Hounds and gamblers—of real estate and projected improvements—of canvas houses, and iron houses, and fires—of sudden fortunes, and as sudden failures—of speculations and markets, and the prices of clothing, provisions, and labor—of intemperance, disease, and hospitals—of brawls, murder, and suicide—till we had exhausted all the Californian budget; and then I bade him good day. He parted with me with flattering reluctance, cordially 137 shaking my hand, and urging me to repeat my visit in a few days, when he should be sufficiently forward with the picture to admit me to a sight of it. I confessed my impatience for the interval to pass; for my interest was now fully awakened and very lively;—so well-informed and so polished a gentleman, so accomplished and so fluent, so ill-starred and sad, so every way a man with a history!

I saw much of Pinal after this, and he sometimes visited me at my office. Impelled by increasing admiration and esteem, I succeeded, by the exercise of studious tact, in ingratiating myself in his friendship and confidence; he talked with freedom of his feelings and his affairs; and although he had not yet admitted me to the knowledge of his past, he evinced but little shyness in speaking of the present. At our interviews in his tent I seldom met his wife; indeed, I suspected him of

contriving to keep her out of the way; for I was always told she had just stepped out; —or if by chance I found her there, she was never again vulgarly loquacious, but on some pretext or other at once took herself off. On the other hand, 138 the child was rarely absent—from which I argued that I was in favor; nor was his pretty prattle, even his boldest communicativeness, harshly checked, save when, as I guessed, he was approaching too near some forbidden theme. Then a quick flash from his father's eye instantaneously imposed silence upon him: as if that eye were an evil one, and there were a malison in its glance, the whole demeanor of the child underwent at once a magical change; the foreboding look took possession of his own beautiful eyes, the anxious lines appeared around his mouth, his lips and chin became tremulous, his head drooped, he let fall my hand which he was fond of holding as he talked, and quietly, penitently slunk away; and though he might presently be recalled by his father's kindest tones, his brightness would not be restored that time.

This mysterious, severe understanding between the father and the child affected me painfully; I was at a loss to surmise its nature, whence it proceeded, or how it could be; for Ferdy evinced in his every word, look, movement, an undivided fondness for his father. And in his tender-proud allusions to the 139 boy, at times let fall to me—in the anxious watchfulness with which he followed him with his eye, when an interval of peace and comparative happiness had set childhood's spirit free, and lent a degree of graceful gayety to all its motions—I saw the brimming measure of the father's love. Could it be but his morbidly repellant pride, his jealous guarding of the domestic privacies, his vigilant pacing up and down for ever before the close-drawn curtain of the heart?—was there no Bluebeard's chamber there? No! Pride was all the matter—pride was the Spartan fox that tore the vitals of Pinal, while he but bit his lips, and bowed, and passed.

Among the pictures in Pinal's tent was one which had in an especial manner attracted my attention. It was a cabinet portrait, nearly full-length, of a venerable gentleman, of grave but benevolent aspect, and an air of imposing dignity. Care had evidently been taken to render faithfully the somewhat remarkable vigor of his frame; his iron-gray hair was cropped quite short, and he wore a heavy, grizzled moustache, but no other beard; the lines of his 140 mouth were not severe, and his eye was soft and gentle. But what made the portrait particularly noticeable was the broad red ribbon of a noble order crossing the breast, and a Maltese cross suspended from the neck by a short chain

of massive and curiously wrought links. I had many times been on the point of asking the name of this singularly handsome and distinguished-looking personage; but an instinctive feeling of delicacy always deterred me.

One day I found little Ferdy alone, and singing merrily some pretty Spanish song. I told him I was rejoiced to find him in such good spirits, and asked him if he had not been having a jolly romp with the American carpenter's son, who lived in the Chinese house close by. My question seemed to afflict him with puzzled surprise; —he half smiled, as if not quite sure but I might be jesting.

“Oh, no, indeed! I have never played with him; I do not know him; I never play with any boys here. Oh, no, indeed!”

“But why not, Ferdy? What! a whole month in this tiresome tent, and not make the acquaintance 141 of your nearest neighbor,—such a sturdy, hearty chunk of a fellow as that is?—I have no doubt he's good-natured, too, for he's fat and funny, tough and independent. Besides, he's a carpenter's son, you know; so there's a chance to borrow a saw to make the dog-house with. Who knows but his father will take a fancy to you—I'm sure he is very likely to—and make you a church dog-house, steeple and all, complete and painted, and much finer than Charley Saunders's martin-box?”

“Oh, I should like to, so much! And perhaps he has a Newfoundlander with a bushy tail and a brass collar—that would be nicer than a kangaroo. But—but”—looking comically bothered—“I never knew a carpenter's son in my life. I am sure my father would not give me permission—I am sure he would be very angry, if I asked him. Are they not very disagreeable, that sort of boys? Don't they swear, and tear their clothes, and fight, and sing vulgar songs, and tell lies, and sit down in the middle of the street?”

Merciful Heaven! thought I—here's a crying 142 shame! here's an interesting case for professors of moral hygiene! An apt, intelligent little man, with an empty mind, and a by-no-means-overloaded stomach, I'll engage, —with a pride-paralysed father, and a beer-bewitched slattern of a mother, —with his living to get, in San Francisco too, and the world to make friends with, —who has never enjoyed the peculiar advantages to be derived from the society of little dirty boys, never

been admitted to the felicity of popular songs, nor exercised his pluck in a rough-and-tumble, nor ventilated himself in wholesome “giddy, giddy, gout,” —to whom dirt-pies are a fable!

“Ferdy,” said I, “I’ll talk with your father myself. But tell me now, what makes you so happy to-day?”

“My father got a letter this morning,” —a mail had just arrived; it brought no smile or tear for me, —no parallelogram of comedy or tragedy in stationery, —“such a pleasant one, from my uncle Miguel, at Florence, in Italy, you know. He is well, and quite rich, my father says; they have restored 143 to him his property that he thought was all lost for ever, and they have made him a chevalier again. But I am sure my father will tell you all about it, for he said he did hope you would come to-day; and he is so happy and so kind!”

“They have made him a chevalier again,” I wondered. “Your uncle Miguel is your father's brother, then, Ferdy. And did you ever see him?”

Before he could reply, Pital entered, stepping smartly, his color heightened with happiness, his eyes full of an extraordinary elation.

“Ah! my dear Doctor, I am rejoiced to find you here; I have been wishing for you. See! your picture is finished. Tell me if you like it.”

“Indeed, a work of beauty, Pital.”

“To me, too, it never looked so well before; but I see things with glad eyes to-day. I have much to tell you. Ferdy, your mother is dining at the restaurant; go join her. And when you have finished your dinner, ask her to take you to walk. Say that I am engaged. Would you not like to walk, my boy, and see how fast the new streets spring up? 144 When you return, you can tell me of all you saw.”

The boy turned up his lovely face to be kissed, and for a moment hung fondly on his father's neck. The poor painter's lips quivered, and his eyes winked quickly. Then the lad took his cap, and without another word went forth.

“I am happy to-day, Doctor—Heaven save the mark! My happiness is so much more than my share, that I shall insist, will ye, nill ye, on your sharing it with me. I have a heart to open to somebody, and you are the very man. So, sit you down, and bear with my egotism, for I have a little tale to tell you, of who I am and how I came here. The story is not so commonplace but that your kindness will find, here and there, an interesting passage in it.

“I have seen that that picture,”—indicating the one I have last described,—“attracted your attention, and that you were prevented from questioning me about it only by delicacy. That is my father's likeness. He was of English birth, the younger son of a rich Liverpool merchant. An impulsive, 145 romantic, adventurous boy, seized early with a passion for seeing the world, his unimaginative, worldly-wise father, practical and severe, kept him within narrow, fretting bounds, and imposed harsh restraints upon him. When he was but sixteen years old, he ran away from home, shipped before the mast, and, after several long voyages, was discharged, at his own request, at Carthagena, where he entered a shipping-house as clerk, and, having excellent mercantile talents, was rapidly promoted.

“Meantime, through a sister, the only remaining child, except a half-witted brother, he heard at long intervals from home. His father remained strangely inexorable, fiercely forbade his return, and became violent at the slightest mention of his name by his sister, or any old and familiar servant; he died without bequeathing his forgiveness, or, of course, a single shilling. But the young man thrived with his employers, whose business growing rapidly more and more prosperous, and becoming widely extended, they transferred him to a branch house at Malaga. Here he formed the acquaintance of the Don Francisco 146 de Zea-Bermudez, whose rising fortunes made his own.

“Zea-Bermudez was at that time engaged in large commercial operations. Although, under the diligent and ambitious teaching of his famous relative, the profound, sagacious, patriotic, bold,

and gloriously abused Jovellanos, he had become accomplished in politics, law, and diplomacy, he seemed to be devoting himself for the present to large speculations and the sudden acquisition of wealth, and to let the state of the nation, the Cortes, and its schemes, go by.

“Only a young, beautiful, and accomplished sister shared his splendid establishment in Malaga; and for her my father formed an engrossing attachment, reciprocated in the fullest, almost simultaneously with his friendship for her brother. Zea favored the suit of the high-spirited and clever young Englishman, whose intelligence, independence, and perseverance, to say nothing of his good looks and his engaging manners, had quite won his heart. By policy, too, no less than by pleasure, the match recommended itself to him; —my father would make a famous 147 junior-partner. So they were married under the name of Pinal, bestowed upon his favorite English clerk by the adventurer's first patron at Carthagena, who had found the boy provided with only a ‘purser's name,’ as sailors term it.

“I will not be so disrespectful to the memory of my distinguished uncle, nor so rude towards your intelligence, my friend, as to presume that you are not familiar with the main points of his history, —the great strides he took, almost from that time, in a most influential diplomatic career: the embassy to St. Petersburg, and the Romanzoff-Bermudez treaty of amity and alliance in 1812, by which Alexander acknowledged the legality of the ordinary and extraordinary Cortes of Cadiz; the embassy to the Porte in 1821; his recall in 1823, and extraordinary mission to the Court of St. James; his appointment to lead the Ministry in 1824; my father's high place in the Treasury; their joint-efforts from this commanding position to counteract the violence of the Apostolical party, to meet the large requisitions of France, to cover the deficit of three hundred millions 148 of reals, and to restore the public credit; the insults of the Absolutists, and their machinations to thwart Zea's liberal and sagacious measures; his efforts to resign, opposed by the King; the suppression of a formidable Carlist conspiracy in 1825; the execution of Bessières, and the ‘ham-stringing’ of Absolutist leaders; his dismissal from the Ministry in October, 1825, Ferdinand yielding to the Apostolic storm; the embassy to Dresden; his appointment as Minister at London.

“And here my story begins, for I was his Secretary of Legation then; while my brother Miguel, younger than I, was *attaché* at Paris, where he had succeeded me, on my promotion—a promotion that procured for me congratulations for which I could with difficulty affect a decent show of gratitude, for I knew too well what it meant. It was not the enlightened, liberal Minister I had to deal with, but the hard, proud uncle, full of expediencies, and calculating schemes for family advancement, and the exaltation of a lately obscure name.

“In Paris I had been admitted, first to the flattering friendship, and then to the inmost heart of —of a most lovely young lady, as noble by her character as by her lineage,”—and he glanced at the open sketchbook.

“The Lady Angelica,” I quietly said.

“Sir!” he exclaimed, quickly changing color, and assuming his most frigid expression and manner. But as quickly, and before I could speak, his sad smile and friendly tone returned, and he said, —

“Ah! I see, —Ferdie has been babbling of his visions and his dreams. Yes, the Lady Angelica. ‘very charming,’ my uncle granted, ‘but very poor; less of the angel and more of the heiress was desirable,’ he said, —‘less heaven and more land. A decayed family was only a little worse than an obscure one—a poor knight not a whit more respectable than a rich merchant. I must relinquish my little romance—I had not time for it; I had occupation enough for the scant leisure my family duties’—and he laid stress on the words—‘left me, in the duties of my post. He would endeavor to find arguments for the lady and employment for me.’

150

“It was in vain for me to remonstrate, —I was too familiar with my uncle's temper to waste my time and breath so. I would be silent, I resolved, and pursue my honorable and gallant course without regard to his scandalous schemes. I wrote to the ‘Lady Angelica,’ —since Ferdie's name for her is so well chosen, —telling her all, giving her solemn assurances of my unchangeable purpose toward

her, and scorn of my uncle's mercenary ambition. She replied very quietly: 'She, also, was not without pride; she would come and see for herself;' —and she came at once.

“The family arrived in London in the evening. Within two hours I was sent—after the fashion of an old-time courier, ‘Ride! ride! ride!—for your life! for your life! for your life!’ —to Turin with despatches, and sealed instructions for my own conduct, not to be opened till I arrived; then I found my orders were, to remain at Turin until it should be my uncle's pleasure to recall me.

“I had not been in Turin a month when a letter came from—the Lady Angelica. ‘It was her wish 151 that all intercourse between us, by interview or correspondence, should cease at once, and for ever. She assumed this position of her own free will, and she was resolute to maintain it. She trusted that I would not inquire obtrusively into her motives—she had no fear that I would doubt that they were worthy of her. Her respect for me was unabated—her faith in me perfect. I had her blessing and her anxious prayers. I must go on my way in brave silence and patience; nor ever for one moment be so weak as to fool myself into a hope that she would change her purpose.’

“What should I do? I had no one to advise me; my mother, whose faith in her brother's wisdom was sure, was in Madrid, and my father had been dead some years. At first my heart was full of bitter curses, and my uncle had not at his heels a heartier hater than I. Then came the merely romantic thought, that this might be but a test she would put me to—that he might be innocent and ignorant of my misfortune. With the thought I flung my heart into writing, and madly plied her with one long, passionate letter after another. I got no answers; 152 but by his spies my uncle was apprised of all I did.

“About this time—it was in 1832—Zea-Bermudez was recalled to Madrid in a grave crisis, and appointed to the administration of Foreign Affairs. Ferdinand VII. was apparently approaching the end of his reign and his life. The Apostolical party, exulting in their strength, and confiding in those well-laid plans which, with mice and men, ‘gang aft agley,’ imprudently showed their hand, and suffered their favorite project to transpire; which was, to set aside the ordinance by which the King

had made null the Salic law in favor of his infant daughter, and to support the pretensions of the King's brother, Carlos, to the throne.

“By this stupid flourish the Apostolical party threw themselves bound at the feet of Zea. All of their persuasion who filled high places under government were without ceremony removed, and their seats filled by Liberals. Many of them did not escape without more crippling blows. As for me, I looked on with indifference, or at most some philosophic sneers. What had I to fear or care? In my uncle's 153 estimation, my politics had been always healthy, no doubt; and although he had on more than one occasion hinted, with sarcastic wit, that such a lady's-man must, of his devoir, be a ‘gallant champion of the Salic law,’ and dropped something rude and ill-natured about my English blood—still, that was only in his dyspeptic moods; his temper was sure to improve, I fancied, with his political and material digestion.

“But I deceived myself. When, in the name of the infant Queen, Isabella Segunda, and in honor of the re-establishment of order and public safety, the pleasant duty devolved upon Zea-Bermudez of awarding approbation and encouragement to all the officers, from an ambassador to the youngest *attaché*, of foreign legations, and presenting them with tokens of the nation's happiness in the shape of stars, and seals with heraldic devices, and curious chains of historic significance, not even a paltry ribbon fell to my share, but only a few curt lines of advice, ‘to look well to my opinions, and be modest—obediently to discharge the duties prescribed to me, and remember 154 that presumption was a fault most intolerable in a young gentleman so favored by chance as to be honored with the confidence of government.’

“That exhausted the little patience I had left. Savagely I tore the note into contemptible fragments, tossed into my travelling-boxes as much of my wardrobe as happened to be at hand, consigned to a sealed case my diplomatic instructions and all other documents pertaining to my office, placed them in the hands of a confidential friend, Mr. Ballard, the British Agent, and secretly took passage for England, where, without losing an hour, I made the best of my way to the abode of an ambitious cockney wine-merchant, to whose daughter I had not been disagreeable in other days, and within

a fortnight married her. You have seen the lady, Sir," he said, eyeing me searchingly as he spoke, with a sardonic smile, —the only ugly expression I ever saw him wear.

"Certain title-deeds and certificates of stock, part of my father's legacy, which, as if foreseeing the present emergency, I had brought away with me, were 155 easily converted into cash. I had then twenty thousand sterling pounds, to which my father-in-law generously added ten thousand more, by way of portion with his daughter.

"And now, to what should I betake myself? I had small time to cast about me, and was easy to please; any tolerably promising enterprise, so the field of it were remote, would serve my purpose. The papers were full of Australian speculations, the wonderful prosperity of the several colonies there, the great fortunes suddenly made in wool. Good! I would go to Australia, and be a gentle shepherd on an imposing scale. But first I sought out my father's old friends, My Lords Palmerston and Brougham, and the Bishop of Dublin, and besought the aid of their wisdom. With but slight prudential hesitation they with one accord approved my project. Observe: a first-rate Minister, especially if he be a very busy one, always likes the plan that pleases his young friend best—that is, if it be not an affair of State, and all the risks lie with his young friend. They would have spoken of Turin and Zea-Bermudez; but I had 156 been bred a diplomat and knew how to stick to my point, which, this time, was wool. In another fortnight I had sailed for Sydney with my shekels and my wife. But first, and for the first time, I caused the announcement of my marriage to appear in the principal papers of London, Paris, St. Petersburg, and Madrid.

"Arrived in Australia, I at once made myself the proprietor of a considerable farm, and stocked it abundantly with sheep. Speculation had not yet burst itself, like the frog in the fable; and large successes, as in water-lot and steam-boat operations here to-day, were the rule. On the third anniversary of my landing at Sydney, I was worth three hundred thousand pounds, and my commercial name was among the best in the colony. Six months after that, the rot, the infernal rot, had turned my thriving, populous pastures into horrors of carrion-mutton, and I had not sixpence of my own in the wide world. A few of the more generous of my creditors left me a hundred pounds, with which to make my miserable way to some South American port on the Pacific.

“So I chose Valparaiso, to paint miniatures, and teach English, French, Italian, and German in. But earthquakes shook my poor house, and the stormfiend shook my soul with fear; —for skies in lightning and thunder are to me as the panorama and hurly-burly of the Day of Wrath, in all the stupid rushing to and fro and dazed stumbling of Martin's great picture. I shall surely die by lightning; I have not had that live shadow of a sky-reaching fear hanging over me, with its black wings and awful mutterings, so long for nothing; in every flash my eyes are scathed by the full blaze of hell. If I had been deaf and blind, I might have lived in Valparaiso. As it was, I must go somewhere where I need not sit all day and night stopping my ears, and with my face covered, fearing the rocks would fall on me too soon.

“So, with my wife and the child, —we have had no other, thank God!—I got round Cape Horn —Heaven knows how! I dare not think of that time—to the United States. We were making for Boston; but the ship, strained by long stress of heavy weather, 158 sprung a leak, and we put in at Baltimore. I was pleased with the place; it is picturesque, and has a kindly look; and as all places were alike to me then, save by the choice of a whim, I let go my weary anchor there.

“But the Baltimoreans only admired my pictures—they did not buy them; they only wondered at my polyglot accomplishment, and were content with ringing silly-kind changes on an Encyclopædic compliment about the Admirable Crichton, and other well-educated personages, to be found alphabetically embalmed in Conversations-Lexicons—they did not inquire into my system of teaching, or have quarterly knowledge of my charges. So I fled from Baltimore, pretty speeches, and starvation, to San Francisco, plain talk, and pure gold. And now—see here, sir!—I carry these always about with me, lest the bright pickings of this Tom Tiddler's ground should make my experience forget.”

He drew from his pocket an “illuminated” card bearing a likeness of Queen Victoria, and a creased and soiled bit of yellow paper. The one was, by 159 royal favor, a complimentary pass to a reserved place in Westminster Abbey, on the occasion of the coronation of her Britannic Majesty, “For the Señor Camillo Alvarez y Pintal, Chevalier of the Noble Order of the Cid, Secretary to His Catholic

Majesty's Legation near the Court of St. James”—the other a Sidney pawnbroker's ticket for books pledged by “Mr. Camilla Allverris i Pintal.” He held these contrasted certificates of Fortune—her mocking visiting-cards, when she called on him in palace and in cabin—one in each hand for a moment; and bitterly smiling, and shaking his head, turned from one to the other. Then suddenly he let them fall to the ground, and, burying his face in his hands, was roughly shaken through all his frame by a great gust of anguish.

I laid my hand tenderly on his shoulder: “But, Pintal,” I said—“the Lady Angelica—tell me why she chose that course.”

In a moment the man was fiercely aroused. “Ah, true! I had forgotten that delectable passage in my story. Why, man, Bermudez went to her, told her 160 that my aspirations and my prospects were so and so—daring, brilliant—that she, only she, stood in the way, an impassable stumbling-block to my glorious advancement—told her (devil!) that, with all my fine passion for her, he was aware that I was not without embarrassment on this score—appealed to her disinterested love, to her pride—don't you see?—to her pride.

‘And where is she now, Pintal?’

No anger now, no flush of excitement;—the man, all softened as by an angel's touch, arose, and, with clasped hands, and eyes upturned devoutly, smiled through big tears, and without a word answered me.

I, too, was silent. Whittier had not yet written— “Of all sad words of tongue or pen, The saddest are these: ‘It might have been!’ “Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies Deeply buried from human eyes; “And, in the hereafter, angels may Roll the stone from its grave away!”

161

Then Pintal paced briskly to and fro a few turns, across the narrow floor of his tent, and presently stopping, said—his first cheerfulness, with its unwonted smile, returning—

“But I must tell you why I should be happy today. I have a letter from my brother Miguel, who is Secretary to the Legation at the Porte. He has leave of absence, and is happy with his dearest friends in Florence. He shared my disgrace until lately, but bore it patiently; and now is reinstated in his office and his honors, a large portion of his property being restored, which had been temporarily confiscated, while he was under suspicion as a Carlist. He is authorized to offer me pardon, and all these pretty things, if I will return and take a new oath of allegiance.

“And you will accept, Pital?”

“Why, in God's name, what do you take me for?—Pardon! I forgot myself, Sir. Your question is a natural one. But no, I shall surely not accept. Zea Bermudez is dead, but there is a part of me which can never die; and I am happy to-day because I feel that I am not so poor as I thought I was.”

162

Ferdy entered, alone. He went straight to his father and whispered something in his ear,—about the mother, I suspected, for both blushed, and Pital said, with a vexed look—“Ah, very well! never mind that, my boy.”

Then Ferdy threw off his cap and cloak, and, seating himself on a pile of books at his father's feet, quietly rested his head upon his knee. I observed that his face was vividly flushed, and his eyes looked weary. I felt his pulse—it indicated high fever; and to our anxious questions he answered, that his head ached terribly, and he was “every minute hot or cold.” I persuaded him to go to bed at once, and left anxious instructions for his treatment, for I saw that he was going to be seriously ill.

In three days little Ferdy was with the Lady Angelica in heaven. He died in my arms, of scarlet fever. In the delirium of his last moments he saw *her*, and he departed with strange words on his lips: “I am coming, Lady, I am coming!—my father will be ready presently!”

163

Some strangers from the neighborhood helped me to bury him; we laid him near the grave of the First Lady; but very soon his pretty bones were scattered, and there's a busy street there now.

Pintal, when I told him that the boy was dead, only bowed and smiled. He did not go to the grave, he never again named the child, nor by the least word or look confessed the change. But when, a little later, a fire swept down Dupont Street and laid the poor tent in ashes, spoiling the desolate house whose beautiful *lar* had flitted—when his wife went moaning maudlingly among the yet warm ashes, and groping, in mean misery, with a stick, for some charred nothing she would cheat the Spoiler of, there was a dangerous quality in Pintal's look, as, with folded arms and vacant eyes, he seemed to stare upon, yet not to see, the shocking scene. Presently the woman, poking with the stick, found something under the ashes. With her naked hands she greedily dug it out;—it was a tin shaving-case. Another moment, and Pintal had snatched it from her grasp, torn it open, and had a naked razor in his hand. I wrested it from him, as he fairly foamed, and dragged him from the place.

A few days after that, I took leave of them on board a merchant ship bound for England, and with a heavy-hearted prayer sped them on their way. On the voyage, as Pintal stood once, trembling in a storm, near the mainmast, a flash of lightning transfixed him.—That was well! He had been distinguished by his sorrows, and was worthy of that special messenger.

That picture—it was the first and last he painted in California. I kept it long, rejoicing in the admiration it excited, and only grieved that the poor comfort of the praises I daily heard lavished upon it could never reach him.

Once, when I was ill in Sacramento, my San Francisco house was burned; but not before its contents had been removed. In the hopeless scattering of furniture and trunks, this picture disappeared—no one knew whither. I sought it everywhere, and advertised for it, but in vain. About a year afterward, I sailed for Honolulu. I had letters of introduction to some young American merchants there, one of whom hospitably made me his guest for several weeks. On the second day of my stay with him, he was showing me over his house, where, hanging against the wall in a spare room, I found—not the Pintal picture, but a Chinese copy of it, faithful in its every detail. There were the several alterations I had suggested, and there the rich, warm colors that Pintal's taste had chosen. Of course, it was a copy. No doubt, my picture had been stolen at the fire, or found its way

by mistake among the “traps” of other people. Then it had been sold at auction—some Chinaman had bought it—it had been shipped to Canton or Hong Kong—some one of the thousand “artists” of China Street or the Victoria Road had copied it for the American market. A shipload of Chinese goods—Canton crape shawls, camphor-boxes, carved toys, curiosities, and pictures—had been sold in Honolulu—and here it was.

CHAPTER V.

THE GREEN CLOTH.

IT was a common saying among us, Old Californians of Forty-nine, that there was no such light for shining through a man as that of the first great fire. In its strong glare the philosophic spectator became clairvoyant, and his subject transparent. Morally, your scrutiny pierced the heart of the San Franciscan then, and in the same glance you took in the letter, full of his mother's pious admonitions, in his breast-pocket, and the revolver in its belt at his back—as in Harlequin Faust you see, through the sad-colored waistcoat of Mephistophiles, the three red-hot buttons on his coat behind. The shade was drawn back from the human dark-lantern, and flaming passions within, blazing through the bull's eye, lit up all around. Then you recognised any man by the light of his neighbor's 167 soul. Then the cardinal virtues, like certain common necessities of life, met with an appreciation naturally enhanced by their scarcity. Honesty was a high trump card. Indeed, to pursue the appropriate local figure, society was as the favorite game, wherein everybody pretended to play “on the square;” when your adversary, having seen your last “brag,” stopped “going better,” and called your hand, if you happened to hold a single sterling trait, it was sure to be received as the four aces, which can “rake down any kind of a pile.”

It was strange how soon, and how surely, the original Satan in every new arrival asserted himself. The enterprising publican who, regardless of expense, first brought a wagon-load of ice into Sacramento City, from the Sierra Nevada, and introduced his grateful fellow-citizens to a new pleasure in the shape of brandy-smashes at half a dollar a drink, had been two years before, president of a far-reaching society of Washingtonians in Philadelphia, and out-Goughed Gough in

wondrous apocalypses of cold water. The white-neckclothed and single-minded brother who, 168 when the Graham House was opened, undertook, for the highest bid, the bar and coffee-stand, two billiard tables, one rondo, three roulette, two faro, and six monte ditto, had, within the twelvemonth, ridden an apostolic circuit in Alabama, dispensing pious tracts from a green bag.

This same Gossage—that was the name of the retired tract-monger—afforded, in his own character and habits, an amusing example of how a man could get imbued with the peculiar vice of the time; and that was the game of Brag—Brag, and the hard old vices of its kindred, Bluff and Poker. Brag was in all the air, and you breathed it unwholesomely, to the tainting of your blood; its principles soaked through your very clothes, as it were, and percolated your pores. There were men, all around you, who believed in nothing but Brag, who swore by Brag, who lived on Brag, who, if needs must, would die for Brag. Of such was Gossage; and he shall serve for my representative bragger, of whom a characteristic anecdote, familiar to many Forty-Niners, may illustrate my meaning.

We Old Californians hold in respectful remembrance 169 “Moffat's Coin,” as they were called—pretty five-dollar gold pieces, fac-similes of the federal half-eagles, save in the substitution, on the reverse, of the words “Moffat & Co.” for “United States of America.” They were a god-send in the days when the great dearth of standard money among us subjected us to all manner of inconvenience, not to mention serious losses by the discount on gold-dust as a legal tender in trade. It was said that they even exceeded in value, by one per cent., their namesakes of the National Mint. At all events, we were very happy in them, and had no patience with the suspicious egotism of Wall Street, which ignored them altogether, bringing them into bad odor abroad, so that they were from the first, quite useless, except for the behests of our small local traffic. Very soon they were called in from their brief hour of circulation, to be melted into ingots for home shipments; and so, utterly disappeared from the pockets of our citizens, and even from the green boards of the gamblers. Six months from the date of their brilliant apparition, a specimen was “good for sore eyes,” and would command a premium as a curiosity.

One day, not many weeks before Col. Bonner and the proprietor emptied their revolvers at each other across the bar—and by the same token the City Fathers found the bullets sticking in the wall when they installed themselves in those premises, in the name of Law and Order—a crowd of miners, mechanics, clerks, “learned-professioners,” and other amateur gamesters, being met in the saloon of the Graham House, the conversation among a knot of thirsty souls, who waited for brandy-smashes, turned on California currency in general, and Moffat's coin in particular. Their sudden apparition and evanishment were remarked upon, and one or two had specimens to show, which they prized next to half-cents, or certain curious political coppers of the Jackson campaigns, inscribed “Not one cent for Tribute, Millions for Defense.” The bragging ear of Gossage caught its cue, as he was toying idly at a faro-table with a few red counters.

“Gave half an ounce apiece for them Moffat kins, did you? Dreadful green of you, I must say. Why I've got a thousand of them myself; and if any 171 gentleman with a turn for kine-fancying, would like to fill a cabinet or a cart with just such fellows as them, for a small deduction from the last price, I should be glad to accommodate him. Talk of half-cents, now; they are something like—should like to give a dollar for one myself. But eight dollars for Moffat's kine is a leetle enthusiastic, if not green.”

Mr. Gossage was no stranger to most of his audience; and this new, and somewhat bolder, exhibition of his ruling passion would have elicited no more than a quiet smile from the sophisticated circle, but for the presence of two or three new arrivals, who expressed their appreciation of what they considered “high old blowing,” in a burst of hilarity, wherein their astonishment was not unmixed with disrespectful incredulity. Such popular ejaculations, expressive of a good-natured doubt, as “G-a-s!” “Over the left!” “Hi, hi, hi!” etc., broke from these brusque new-comers.

Now Gossage was at home. “If any gentleman would back his disbelief to the extent of a few ounces, he would be happy to size his pile.”

“Hi, hi, hi! Oh yes; five thousand dollars, you know, lying—where did you say you kept them, Mr. Gossage?”

“In my trunk, sir!—in my room, sir!—in this house, sir!”

“Oh, yes—lying about loose, not even tied up, like Tom Carter's milk. Ready money worth twelve per cent. a month, too, and he with twelve banks in monte and faro—Hi, hi, hi!”

“All very fine, gentlemen,” Gossage said, “but hi, hi, hi, ain't nuther arguments nor manners. Facts is facts, and opinions as is opinions is worth backing. I'm ready to back my facts as high as any man's moderate pile, and if I'm deceived in 'em I'm willing to pay for the disapp'intment.”

“Pshaw, Gossage,” said some one, “what's the use of trying on that old dodge at your time of life? Why don't you take your brag in the natural way, especially when everybody knows your game?”

But Mr. Gossage began now to have a grievance; he felt hurt: “He had asserted a thing, and he thought he was good for all it would cost to prove it; 173 it was hard if he couldn't get the chance. If he was bluffing, here was an opportunity for gents of spirit to take the conceit out of him.”

A quiet young man who had remained from the first, in the background, seemingly only an amused spectator, here came forward, and said he quite agreed with Mr. Gossage. Mr. Gossage's veracity was at stake on an interesting question, and he was in favor of Mr. Gossage's having a fair show. Gentlemen should not be too hard on Mr. Gossage. True, he would have, occasionally, his little outside game of bluff, by way of joke merely. But this time he was evidently serious and sincere. Mr. Gossage's feelings ought not to be trifled with; gentlemen were wrong to twit him with his little peculiarities. For his own part, he did not believe a word Mr. Gossage had said about the Moffats. Not that he doubted Mr. Gossage's word—oh, by no means; he only thought he saw the bluff sticking out. He wished he had as many dollars as he did not believe in those Moffats. He was ready not to believe in them—say two hundred dollars worth, which was all he had about him.

Mr. Gossage “knew his young friend was a gentleman by the remark he made—a man of spirit and disposed to do things on the square. Them 'ere observations of his'n was worthy of his head and heart. He would meet his little pile.”

So the four hundred dollars were forthwith produced, and placed in the hands of a “mutual friend.” Then with sudden gravity—for a suicide, or a murder, or a hanging match was, in those days, a less grave affair than an extraordinary bet, even for so small a sum as two hundred dollars—all turned toward the stairs by which they were to make their way to the chamber of the treasure; but, first, all took another drink at Gossage's expense, and it was agreed that the winner should treat the crowd to champagne.

To the Gossage apartments were many stairs, with their corresponding landings. At the top of the first flight Gossage stopped, and turned to his company, as one who suddenly recollects an important something. There was a “pint” on which he would like to understand the gentleman. Did the gentleman intend to avail himself of the leading maxim to which 175 all fancy gentlemen subscribe—namely, that betting on a certainty goes for nothing—that a wager is made null and void by positive foreknowledge, with conclusive assurance of the result, on the part of either better? If yes, they need go no further, for he *was* betting on a certainty.

No, the gentleman unconditionally waived all that; he would take all the risks—somewhat facetiously adding that Mr. Gossage's certainties were an exception to the general rule.

Mr. Gossage, with a reproachful look, went on, only remarking that he was glad they understood each other; he presumed the gentleman knew his own business best.

Flight No. 2: Mr. Gossage stops again—stands for a moment suspended, as it were—all silent; Mr. Gossage appears to be about to make a speech; he does make a short one. “True, gambling was his trade and the cards was his tools; but there was a time for everything, and at such times as it suited him so to do, he hoped he could conduct himself as a gentleman, and a man whose heart is in the right place. He had not 176 the honor to be personally acquainted with his young friend,

whom he met on this occasion for the first time—and happy he was to find him a gent after his own heart. The brother might be a man of independent fortin, the tallest kind of a pile; and then agin he moughtn't. Howsever, he was willing to give the gentleman a fair shake, to treat him on the square. Far be it from him to poke his fingers into a gent's pocket, as never did him no harm, and clean him out like. Gents as knew Tom Gossage knew he was oncapable of sich. The brother was apperiently a person of feeling and refinery. He hoped Tom Gossage was the same in his 'umble style. Therefore, he wished, in a friendly way, to exposterlate with his young friend. Might not the brother be rushing at his puddles, rayther resky? He was agreeable to let the gentleman up.”

The “brother” returned thanks. He was touched by Mr. Gossage's kind consideration. Those who knew Mr. Gossage better than he did, would no doubt say that it was all quite natural, just like Tom Gossage; but he confessed he was touched. 177 Nevertheless, he preferred not to be let up. The bet was a good bet, and he thought it would keep—it was, indeed, a delightful bet, if only in having been the means of introducing him to his honorable friend. He would rather not part with it.

Mr. Gossage was touched, in his turn; there was a trace of sadness in his air, as he resumed the ascent.

Flight No. 3: Once for all, Mr. Gossage wished to know how far the gentleman meant to carry this joke, if it was a joke. If the gentleman was in earnest, the gentleman must excuse him, but he considered the gentleman a damned fool. The brother must recollect that his, the speaker's, character, as a man of honor, was at stake. If he took the gentleman's pile, other brethren, outsiders, would say he hadn't done the clean thing by the gentleman. He would like to hear any gent say that; any gent would oblige him by putting in that insinerwation: he would be happy to bet any brother fifty, or a hundred, or a hundred and fifty, or two hundred dollars, that no man in the crowd had the cheek to put in that insinerwation.

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The gentleman hoped not. Did Mr. Gossage live inside the house, or out on the roof?

Mr. Gossage walks straight to a door, and, with indignant resolution expressed in his countenance, lays his hand on the knob, takes from his pocket a key, applies it to the lock, turns it.

“You'd better not.”

“Oh, I think I will.”

“No, don't. Upon my soul, I don't like to. Say you think better of it, in time. Then I'll just show you the kine, to amuse you, stand the champagne myself, and say nothing about it.”

Omnes: “Hi, hi, hi!”

Mr. Gossage throws open the door violently; leaps to the side of a narrow iron bedstead; drags from underneath it a scurvy hair trunk, rather easy to handle; goes down on his knees and opens it with a small key, fished out from the profound of his breeches pocket.

“You will, will you?”

“Yes, sir-ee.”

Mr. Gossage tosses up the lid of the scurvy rattle-trap.

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Two stumps of cigars, a box of percussion caps, and a pack of cards!

“Boys,” says Mr. Gossage, out of the corner of his eye, “you've got me this time, where the hair's short.”

180

In truth, the Gossages were the “remarkable men” of the day. They constituted a controlling class, with whom was all the *moral*, physical, and financial force. Abounding in ready resources of no particular nature, and unscrupulous in the application of them—themselves well stocked with the adventurer's courage, and their courage imposingly backed up with six-shooters; numbering in their

society, whether as professionals or amateurs, many of the “first men of the city;” having the largest show of “smartness,” if not of a purer intellectuality and culture—of sophisticated observation, reckless enterprise, and, best of all, cash; paying the highest rents, monopolizing the most desirable business sites, prompt in applying every new and admirable improvement, commanding every comfort that invention or expensive labor could supply—every luxury that fine raiment, and pictures, and shows, and music, and wine, and a motley “world of ladies” could stand for—no wonder that they swayed the city, and carried the day with a high hand. No wonder, indeed, for they paid twelve per cent. a month for money, and were ready to take all they 181 could get at that price, offering securities in faro furniture, the good-will and fixtures of a hell of decanters and ivory counters, a lease, a house, a water-lot, a mine.

Moreover, the gambler of Forty-Nine was no vulgar rogue, or villain of the sordid stripe; he had his aspirations; it was fat and proud game he hunted, and he put his own life into the chase. He had his sentiments, more or less exalted, according to the location of his tables and the quality of his friends. The fifty-cent roulette-twirler or thimble-rigger, of Pacific Street or Little Sidney, might not be so sublime and imposing in his definitions of honor as the thousand-dollar faro-dealer of the Parker House or El Dorado; but he was sure to be twice as noisy and exacting. “Gentlemen,” he would say—no word half so often on his lips as that—“Gentlemen, we plays on the square; if we doesn't play on the square, difficulties, and onpleasantnesses, and six-shooters is liable. Gentlemen, I hope we are all honorable men; we'll have our little game, peaceable and on the square if we can, but we will have it any how, by thunder!”

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In the Bella Union, or the California Exchange, aristocratically pitched on the Plaza, the style of conversation across the green cloth, in cases of “difficulty,” was different, being more debonair, not so broad:

“A moment, if you please,” quietly remarks an almost beardless desperado, covering his pile with a firm hand, and fixing dangerous eyes on the burly dealer of monte whom he addresses—“You can stop there.”

“Well, sir?”

“Well—excuse me, but I think you drew *two* cards.”

“I believe not. I'll take your pile, if you please; the kerwaiyo takes it.”

“Two cards!”

“Your money!”

And in each case the words are accompanied by a quick but quiet movement which discloses a revolver. With the appearance of these two new disputants—polished, curt, of brief but sharp and downright speech—there is a quick but fussless stir among the spectators 183 around the table. In a moment a clear space is formed, in the midst of a still circle of flashing eyes, compressed lips, and clenched hands. You may count twenty, deliberately, ere you hear a breath drawn, or see the slightest movement.

“Well, sir?”

“Well!”

“Your money!”

“Your cards!”

Up steps a by-stander—some cool, steady veteran, expert in the game, and versed in the law of difficulties—a man of awful nerve, whose tympanum, accustomed to the crack, no pistol-shot alarms.

“Gentlemen,” says he, “try arbitration first.”

Another quick exchange of inquiring and responsive glances between the disputants. Not a word; but the eyes of each plainly say, “Agreed.” Both throw themselves back in their chairs, and

withdraw their hands from the table, with the air of men inviting examination, and resolute to abide the result. The veteran calls up two Brothers of the Green Cloth, competent to act as umpires; and three minutes, 184 fraught with mortal danger, are passed in deliberately counting the cards as they lie on the cloth, and naming them slowly—like the tolling of a bell, or the measured pronounciation of a death sentence. Except that, there has been no noise but the simultaneous clicking of two pistol locks. The dealer and his young vis-à-vis are seemingly strangely unconcerned for the event.

“You are wrong, my friend,” says Veteran; “no double card was drawn here. Mistakes will happen to the most careful gentlemen.”

From that decision there is no appeal. His finger on the trigger, after that, would have cost the young fellow his life. So pistols go back to their sleeping-places, hands are shaken across the table, drinks for the company, at the expense of the “bucker”—as he who plays against the bank is called; and the game proceeds with a better understanding.

Had the result of the examination been otherwise, a man or two would have been killed presently.

Thus, the law being to play fair or die, and the finest distinctions of the meum and tuum defined by 185 the pistol, it is easy to understand that there were honest gamblers in San Francisco in Forty-Nine. Indeed, I will go so far as to assert that, as a class, no others were so strict and punctual in all their dealings. The signature of a Gossage, in good standing, passed at par for the sum it was responsible for. No investment safer or more profitable than a loan to him—no claim easier of collection. I have seen our young friend of the “Old Adobe,” Mr. John Coit, when he had just been “cleaned out,” borrow a thousand dollars from the nearest table, giving no more formal bond than a quarter of a dollar with a few mysterious scratches on its face; yet, among his fraternity that curious I.O.U. would pass current for a month—the mystic coin good as the best paper on Wall Street for the thousand dollars it stood for, until it suited Mr. Coit to redeem it, perhaps from fourth or fifth hands.

Nor were these men, though most dangerous on certain professional points, by any means habitually quarrelsome. On the contrary, they were often the peace-makers of a fierce crowd

whose explosive passions were stirred—constituting themselves an 186 extemporaneous Vigilance Committee in the name of the Law and Order they had themselves set up for the occasion; and then woe to the refractory!

At one of the monte-tables in a saloon on Kearney street, the game was dealt by a slender, pale, young man, almost a stripling, and with seemingly the delicate organization of a girl—his lips soft, his eyes gentle, his hands small and fair, his hair fine, no beard save a slight moustache—his attire well fitting and scrupulously neat, his air pensive, his ways always quiet. One evening an ugly brute, of the Pike County breed, burly and blustering, his naturally vicious temper heated to hideous fierceness by rum, seated himself at this young man's table and called for a “lay out” of the cards. His manner, provoking from the first, soon became intolerably insulting, and he assailed the dealer with outrageous taunts and menaces, accusing him of cheating, and with abusive oaths refusing to pay over the stakes the bank had won.

The dealer, patient and long-suffering, and soft-spoken to the last, gently remonstrated with the 187 bully, as with one irresponsible, and whose ugly manners were his misfortune. At last the fellow, deceived by the gracious demeanor of his reluctant antagonist, demanded the refunding of his losses, which were of mean amount—for he had been playing rather for a quarrel than for money—and threatened to cut the dealer's heart out, if he did not instantly “fork over.” To this the young man replied by leaping nimbly across the table, and dragging him by the hair from his seat. Instantly the bully drew a formidable bowie-knife; but before he could make a lunge, a quick, sharp, shot-like blow from the lady-like fist, delivered with scientific precision and force, sent him down, his weapon flying from his hand. And again, and again, as he sprang, with remarkable agility, and much spunk, to his feet, he went down, and down. Till at last, half-stunned, blind with blood and quite bewildered and helpless, he sat on the floor and fairly cried: “Enough! enough! you are too much for me. Who the devil are you?”

The young man, whose face was scarcely flushed with the exercise, and whose eye at once resumed its 188 softness, and his air its quiet, said: “My friend, get up”—at the same time assisting him; “you are a great fool. My name is—” Well, never mind his name; there are but few Americans

to whom it is not familiar; even a transatlantic notoriety attaches to it. It is the name of a blood-stained hero of the ring, who killed his man, some years ago, in one of the most protracted and cruel gladiatorial encounters recorded in the shocking annals of pugilism. That man was one of the most exemplary of law-abiding San Franciscans in Forty-Nine. Those dreadful fists were never used save to restore order.

Poor Tom Cross! his was a queer, sad case. Tom was a gentleman's son from New Orleans—with fair mental parts, a superior education, winning address, and a most generous soul. His were that fatal unthrift which takes no care for the morrow, “that no man ever saw,” and that adventurer's passion for hazards, that go to make up the most tolerable type of gamester. Full of pitiful promptings, any hopeforsaken wretch—purse-broken, health-broken, heart-broken, who had dragged his racked joints, his 189 chills, and his despair, all the way from the mines, beckoned onward by the cruel angel of an unattainable home, an irrecoverable mother, and an impossible earthly rest—was a god-send to the Abraham's bosom of Tom Cross's prosperity. And when at last he struck a vein of bad luck, and typhoid fever broke the bank of his good spirits, he proposed, between the spoonfuls of his beef-tea, to deal for Jack with me, double or quits, for the bill he thought I was scoring against him. He won; and then we turned the cards again, double or quits, for the doctoring of the rheumatic Digger Indian in the next tent.

One evening I found Tom much worse; he had been sitting up in a draught of cold, damp air, all the afternoon, playing solitaire. I tucked his Mackinaw blanket warmly about him, and exacted his promise that he would keep under its shelter till I returned. Late that night, impelled by painful forebodings, I made my way to his tent in Happy Valley. It was empty—no Tom there. In an adjoining shanty, an old Texan Ranger, with the dysentery, said Tom had been there, much improved and 190 in high spirits, and had taken a hand for one turn at high-low-jack. He had left for his blankets again, about half an hour since. I had some trouble to find him. He lay in a thick clump of bushes, some yards off—dead. There was an old worn-out ace of hearts in his trowsers pocket, with two lines written on it with a lead-pencil—“Good-by, mother! Pardon and love poor Tom.” It had evidently been prepared some time before, and kept there in case of accident.

In the latter months of Forty-Nine, a number of professional gamblers, in large practice, were residing at the Graham House—among the rest, two who were especially remarkable for the boldness of their play, and the steadiness of their business nerves. These were a hunchback, named Briggs, and Joe Bassett, a better sort of graduate of the old Vicksburg school. Both had been signally successful in many sharp operations during the year, and had acquired a considerable property in lots, which, for their convenience in business, they had converted into cash, and banked, partly with Burgoyne or Wright, partly on various monte-tables.

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One day, in an after-dinner chat, they compared notes, and found that they stood equally fairly on the gamblers' 'change, each being good for just one hundred and twenty thousand dollars in immediately available dust. Being both more than usually enterprising under the inspiration of wine, Briggs offered a daring banter, which was recklessly accepted by Bassett—that they should at once adjourn to an upper faro room, fill up each a check for the entire sum he was worth in cash, divide equally between them two hundred and forty thousand dollars in red checks, and play brag for the whole—neither to leave the room, on any pretext, until all the red checks were lost and won. Accordingly, with not less equanimity and pleasant singleness of purpose, they retired, with a few choice spirits of their set, to the privacy of a reserved apartment, and having provided store of choice liquor, cigars, and viands for the company, executed the required documents, divided the rosy counters, took their seats at opposite sides of the table, and began their extraordinary and most interesting contest—a contest which called out such feats of memory, 192 sagacity, discrimination, self-possession, quick recognition of signs and detection of sly finesse, such fine feints, nimble thrusts and parries, hot assaults, and wellordered retreats, as would have made the fortune and the fame of a statesman, a general, or a fencingmaster.

The first deal was made at four o'clock in the afternoon, and the game went on with changing fortune all night. At the elbow of each stood a glass of water, moderately treated with brandy. Neither smoked—a cloud between them would have been as culpable a blunder as the sun in the eyes of a duellist. Ten o'clock next morning found them yet in their places—both looking somewhat

pale and fagged, but very quiet. Briggs had four thousand dollars left of all that he was worth in the world. The cards were dealt. The table at which they sat was near the door of the room, and just as Bassett, whose “say” it was, was making up his mind, some one entered and stood behind him. Briggs eyed his antagonist, over his hand, with a searching stare that held its very breath. Without noticing the entrance of the new-comer, 193 with no flutter of his cards, without any startled glance, or even the movement of a finger, Bassett “went six thousand dollars.” “Take the money,” said the hunchback—and he took it. Briggs had two jacks, Bassett three kings. As the two tossed off great bumpers of raw brandy, Briggs remarked, as he rose to go off to bed, “If you had noticed that man I might have borrowed the money and gone on a little longer; but when I saw that you did not turn to look over your shoulder, or drop the faces of your cards, I knew you had a sure hand.” A few days after that, the hunchback invested fifty dollars, borrowed from Bassett, in a miner's outfit, and started for the diggings, where he died in a month, a helpless pauper.

Again: there was “Old Paul,” as he was called. Who does not remember Old Paul? A well-to-do-New-England-farmer-looking man, with a kindly composition of features and expression, exemplary and patriarchal in his manners—a man to go to for advice, abounding in various and instructive experiences of life, but full of benevolent leanings toward the 194 world—a man to lounge, for three weeks in the month, about the passages and porticoes of his hotel, in dressing-gown and slippers, smoking a long meerschaum pipe, reading the “Alta,” or the latest home papers, projecting city improvements, discussing grand speculations, examining political aspects, taking the bearings of parties, weighing the claims of influential and representative men, severely looking into the business of the Town Council, considering at large the state of the country, defining the duties of Congress toward California, prophetically portraying the future of the State; and then—returning to the city and its daily life, fraught with momentous and exciting events, full of scenes wonder-moving and often most painful—commending humanitarian projects, exhorting his impressible audience to participate in benevolent enterprises—the founding of a City Hospital, contributions to a fund for the relief of indigent, disabled, and friendless strangers.

Such was Old Paul three weeks in the month. During the days that remained, he was apt to assume a different character, and appear in a *rôle* always 195 stirring, and sometimes tending toward the

tragic. That was when, casting the dressing-gown and slippers, pipe and newspaper, and the liberal projects of the public-spirited citizen, he started out, dust-pouch in hand, to make the round of the tables. On such occasions his habit was—having provided himself abundantly with coin and dust—to take any principal saloon for his field of action, and disdainingly set about breaking banks. For Old Paul was in the wholesale gambling line. He confided in the inexhaustibility of his resources, the impressiveness of his reputation; and, especially, in his nerve and the skill of his play, his intimate initiation in the mysteries of the various games, and his curious professional acquaintance with the idiosyncrasy of every considerable dealer, and the peculiar tricks of his manipulation. I have known him to take, in one evening, five out of seven monte banks, beside a faro bank or two, and seat his own dealers at them to keep the game going, on his proprietorial account. Having done this, he would quietly subside again into dressing-gown and 196 slippers, pipe and newspaper, political economy and visions of beneficence.

Toward the close of the year, a considerable body of the “first citizens” called out Old Paul to stand for them, a candidate for the Comptrollership. Being ambitious, and active citizenship his particular vanity, he accepted the invitation. His most formidable opponent was a famous Texan Ranger, who had come out of the Mexican war with a few scars and many honors—an avowed pet of the populace, especially of that part of it which rallied around the banner of the disbanded New York Regiment. Partisan passions ran high from the first; and, as election day drew nigh, bets flew fast and furious. The devoted adherents, and paid drummers of the rival leaders, were busy in Plaza and street, bar-room and gambling-saloon, stirring up the enthusiasm of the multitude, glorifying gambler and hero, coaxing, bribing, dragging the compliant and the foolish, the needy, the greedy, and the drunk, into their respective ranks.

On voting day, the polls presented an unresting scene of delirious excitement, boundless intemperance, 197 and angry struggle. Old Paul had chartered for the day the best-stocked hotel on the Plaza, and opened free larders and bars. So, up to four o'clock in the afternoon, the game seemed going exultingly for him. His people cheered his name uproariously at every poll, and the other side were growing dumb and tame. All at once the handsome ranger appeared in the centre of the Plaza, gallantly mounted on a richly caparisoned and beautiful black horse. He wore the

costume and arms of his famous corps, and bore himself like a man who needed only the apparition of a squadron of Mexican lancers, disputing his passage, to complete his satisfaction. Suddenly he plunged his ringing Mexican rowels into the shrinking sides of his steed, and dashing down the slope of the Plaza, taking some flying leaps by the way, sharply reined up the astonished and rearing animal in the midst of an admiring crowd gathered in front of the polls at the Parker House, whom he saluted with a gallant bow. Then he treated them to such feats of splendid horsemanship as would have satisfied Franconi or Ducrow—putting his steed to the headlong run, and 198 bringing him up short on a serape, flung on the ground before him—throwing himself over the neck of the foaming stallion, and firing his revolvers with unerring aim at small objects on the ground—leaping from the saddle with his bowie-knife in his mouth, and recovering his seat, the horse always at full speed, with the agility of the unequalled Cadwallader—hitting doubloons tossed in the air, again and again, and hurling his knife into posts with the precision of a Chinese juggler.—He was elected.

Three months later, the defeated candidate published in a Sacramento paper a schedule of the debts he had paid since he started for the mines “with just seventeen dollars in his pocket.” Nobody was so simple as to suppose that the public-spirited Paul meant that the money had been earned with pick and pan.

Of such was the fraternity which swayed the city in those days. The secret of their paramount influence lay, as I have said, partly in their harmonious combination of the pre-eminently American traits—versatility of self-adaptation, quick appreciation of striking circumstances, a faculty of taking accurately 199 and at once the bearings of new and strange situations, inexhaustibility of moral and material resources, fixity of purpose, persistence of endeavor, ready hazard of life, unflagging endurance, audacity of enterprise, ever fresh elasticity of sanguine temperament; but principally, in the imposing figures of an omnipotent cash capital, wherewith they knew how to feed the enormous cravings of the people, and mitigate their privations and their pains.

For instance: your stirring labors for the day drawing to a close, what should you do next, to maintain yourself at that point of excitement whence to fall into self-perusal and despondency was

dreadful and dangerous? You had no home, of course—that luxury had not yet been introduced. Reading was not to be thought of—you must have nerves of steel to be capable of the self-possession necessary to that tranquil recreation, even if you could find a place to read in. Visiting, too, was a lost art—friends, like homes, were as yet unattainable delights. Your bed was a horror, to be put off to the last; for you slept in a foul bunk—one of a stack of such, to which a stable, a kennel, 200 a sty, were sweet—in a loft over the bar-room; and atmosphere reeking with stale cigar-smoke, and the fumes of cheap rum, ascended to your outraged nostrils through great gaps in the floor. But from across the way your ears were saluted by sounds of maudlin hilarity and the incessant chink and tinkle of coin, blent with the sweetest strains of Bellini or Donizetti, and the ugly dissonance of lost women's laughter and loud wrangling. You are easily drawn thither—Mephistophiles your guide.

You plunge into a lake of dazing glare and devilish sorcery. Your eyes open on a flaring palace of Pandæmon, in whose festal chambers an insensate and debauched herd are gathering densely. Obscene pictures hang around the walls; a glittering array of decanters and glasses is reflected from tall mirrors; there is the multitudinous chink of doubloons, mixed with the chatter of timid or undecided idlers, and the frequent popping of corks; orchestral impertinences over-ride the rest; a few uncoated imperturbables knock billiard balls about; ten-pin balls rumble, roulette balls rattle, and the cards, the quiet, mocking 201 cards, are everywhere. At first you loiter innocently, a philosophic and observant looker-on; then you take your inevitable part in the wicked hurly-burly.

At last, you return to your abhorred den—now good enough for you, who have not the means left of paying even for that—and to the foul blankets, and a false sleep, full of brain tricks. You dream that you are the Midas of many monte and faro banks; that you have choice water-lots at Long Wharf, and fifty-vara building sites on Montgomery street; that you are the oracle of a superior circle of bankers, judges, scholars, orators, ay—and divines; that you are alcalde, governor, senator in Congress—an honorable, a remarkable, a *smart* man. And your dream is true.

CHAPTER VI.

MR. KARL JOSEPH KRAFFT OF THE OLD CALIFORNIANS.

IN the year One of the Founding of the City, came to San Francisco Mr. Karl Joseph Krafft, whose appearance in these pages is not, say certain of the spiritualistics, the first of his apparitions since he died.

Mr. Krafft was a German adventurer—an accomplished gentleman, a natural artist, poet, soldier, traveller, speculator. It was said he had been, in his early youth, and attendant on the person of Prince Metternich, in the capacity of page; that later in his life he had been an officer of Austrian Cavalry—a probable story, to judge from his military carriage and habits, his gallant horsemanship, his habile familiarity with pistol and sword, and even a faint trace of uniform in 203 his clothes. Somewhere about 1839 he came to Valparaiso quite penniless—nothing extraordinary in a constitutional adventurer, especially in a German one, and more especially such a German adventurer as Mr. Krafft, whose life, if the latter part of it might represent the whole, had been a life of scrapes, and awkward shifts, and desperate passes.

Mr. Krafft was abundantly provided with letters of introduction from the most distinguished sources about European courts. Indeed, the genuiness of them was afterward sweepingly challenged in Valparaiso, no doubt by envious and detracting persons. Still, it must be acknowledged that Mr. Krafft had a lively fancy, a fine inventive faculty, and a ready pen. Whatever those qualities may have had to do with his letters of introduction, it is known that he quickly ingratiated himself in the favor of a rich Italian, the first of the foreign merchants: a success wholly due, perhaps, to his cleverness, his varied and useful accomplishments—especially as a linguist, in which character he was polyglot—and his adroit address, which was in a remarkable degree courtly after the 204 manner of the old world, instructed, searching, wily, irresistibly charming.

In a short time, Mr. Krafft became a principal confidential clerk in the mercantile house of his patron—a position which afforded his natural and acquired diplomacy the rarest advantages, and gave him opportunities for sudden strides of promotion of which he was by no means slow to avail himself. Perhaps some of the larger operations of the concern had not been of a sort to bear

investigation; therefore Mr. Krafft investigated them diligently. All secrets were fish that came to the cunning net of his finesse. No one doubted that Mr. Krafft had found something out—there was no other way of accounting for his proud and jealous patron's excessive and even loud partiality, his undisguised preference of the interloping and by no means popular adventurer, as a suitor for the hand of his daughter: indeed—as many an American naval officer knows, who, on the Pacific station, and at Valparaiso, has been admitted to the delight of her society—the most beautiful, the most accomplished, the most altogether charming señorita in Chili or 205 Peru. When the lovely Maria was married to Mr. Krafft, which happened before long, there were those who said they would not mock her with congratulations. I think their consideration never met with lively appreciation from the lady; for certainly, if her regard for her husband was but an enforced liking at first, there is reason to believe that it became a profound, and naturally a blind, passion in the end. Mr. Krafft was a winning man; he had, in a degree as eminent as I have ever known, the trick of procuring the love—even though its ingenuity were sadly taxed to invent excuses for him—he was bent on having. The eyes, the lips, the mind, the culture, the soul of Maria were things worth the winning, and Mr. Karl Joseph Krafft was master of the ways to make them his.

Very soon the son-in-law became a partner in his patron's business; immediately, one brilliant speculation after another, all successful; and then a sublime failure—a sort of Paradise Lost among the epics of speculation—which swallowed them all up. When Mr. Krafft sailed for San Francisco in Forty-Nine, the 206 white-haired Italian had just died, a broken-hearted, half-witted bankrupt, and the incomparable Maria, with her three little Kraffts, was in the most picturesque straits, a pretty pensioner on the bounty of her father's old friends.

My acquaintance with Mr. Krafft was made under somewhat singular circumstances, when he was cashier in the Custom-house. A very San Franciscan incident, on that occasion, drew out some of his peculiarities and showed him to great advantage. Having occasion to visit a medical friend of mine, on Sacramento street, I was conversing with him in his office, when two forlorn wretches, one far gone in consumption, the other utterly disabled by rheumatism, were brought to the door by comrades not much better off than themselves. They had an order from the Alcalde. My friend was to “render them all immediately necessary relief, and attend them professionally at their lodgings;

he would also provide them with the proper medicines, nursing, and nourishment, and charge the City for the same, according to the regulations provided in such cases.”

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“Now here,” said my friend, “is the beauty of being a doctor in good standing in this golden anomaly of a city, called San Francisco. These men, being sick, destitute, friendless, and completely wretched, apply to the Alcalde for relief. There is no public hospital, no hospital fund, no city-physician. The Alcalde cannot quarter them on the Town Council, for the simple reason that the Town Council is here to-day and gone to-morrow, their tenure of office being regulated for the most part by the vicissitudes of business in their respective vocations—lightering, mule-driving, peddling, or bar-keeping, as the case may be. He cannot convert the Town Hall into a hospital; for what was a rum-shop yesterday will, as likely as not, be a church to-morrow. He can hardly share his own couch with them; since, even if its dimensions were more liberal than they are, soft planks are but poorly adapted to the joints of this man or the lungs of that. So he sends them to me, to be bedded and boarded, as though I were Abraham's bosom, and had a natural affinity for old sores and purulent expectoration. I am to provide them with the 208 necessary medicines, nursing, and nourishment; that means that I am to clothe, nurse, and cook for them, till they die or get well, at my proper expense, for the pleasure and fame of my own beneficence. And I am to attend them professionally at their lodgings; that means that I am to perform perilous navigation through the municipal quagmires two or three times daily or nightly, as may be required, to a hide tent in Happy Valley—so called because it is the most unhappy locality on God's earth—or the loft of a Sydney convict's hell at Clarke's Point. And I am to charge them to the City; that means that I am to present my humble bill a great many times to the Town Council, whose ‘petitioner will ever pray,’ etc.; by the time I have become quite desperate and have exhausted my resources of interest, bribes, and blasphemy, they will refer it to a long succession of special committees, to be audited—each committee cordially voting me a bore, wishing me, and my accounts, and my benevolence, and my grievances, all at the devil together; at last some verdant committee man, who has not been long in the business, will get my bill passed, by 209 dividing the total by two; and finally, the Comptroller will put the crowning glory on the whole, by ordering me to be paid in city script, at fifty cents

on the dollar. Some thousands of dollars in the vocative, I shall console myself with my first-rate grievance, and count on eloquent sympathy, and public meetings, and the thanks of public-spirited people, while my patients, rheumatic, phthisical, and the rest, will vote me a rapacious villain, and seriously discuss the expediency of lynching me. That, briefly summed up, is just what this paper means.”

“But the regulations,” I asked—“‘according to the regulations in such cases provided’—what does that mean?”

“That means the Alcalde's authority, vested in him by the Town Council at my expense, to send my forlorn friends here to sleep in my bed and share my pot-luck. So, if you have indulged in any friendly hopes that, because my practice is worth from eighty to a hundred dollars a day, I shall go home with a splendid pile in a few steamers, please remember this paper, consider the price of blankets and board—to 210 say nothing of my own boot-leather—and moderate your transports.”

“Why not make a statement of the matter, in the light in which you are now presenting it to me, to the Town Council, in person?”

“So I did. ‘Gentlemen,’ said I, ‘do you take me for Sam Brannan, or Burgoyne's Bank, or Mr. Steinberger, or the Mariposa diggins? Is your servant a whole row of front water-lots on Clarke's Point, that he should do this munificent duty?’—And they called me to order.”

With this sally, my droll friend turned to his patients, whom—having ascertained the exact nature and gravity of their ailments, and provided them with medicines—he presently dismissed with a few cheering words, some money, and an order for food and lodgings. Then, rejoining me, he resumed the rather comical story of his troubles.

In the midst of it, a gentleman entered, whose peculiar appearance I noted with interest then, and have ever vividly remembered since: a man of medium stature, slender, but very graceful with 211 almost effeminate feet and hands—the former neatly shod, the latter scrupulously kept, and with a certain appearance of fragility; very soft blue eyes, sleepily curtained with drooping lids;

a classically correct nose; short upper lip; a light moustache of somewhat military cut, precisely trimmed; rosy, moist, sensuous lips; a most fine lower jaw and chin; hair light, thin, straight, and soft as a child's. His clothes, which he wore with an officer-like air, consisted of a claret-colored coat, neither dress nor frock, but mixed of both fashions, with a velvet collar and brass buttons; a black velvet vest, double-breasted; iron-gray pantaloons; fresh, well-starched, and very fine linen; plain black cravat, tied with a kind of picturesque negligence; a cambric handkerchief of fastidious texture, and dark brown kid gloves. He wore gold spectacles, and carried a Malacca cane, with an elaborately carved gold head, having his name and a date on the top, which suggested some memorable occasion, perhaps a compliment, and a presentation. His complexion was unnaturally flushed, or rather stained, as though by a refined intemperance. He 212 had a singular trick of caressing his lips, even prettily, with the tip of his tongue, between his talk; and when he spoke his chin trembled, like that of a man whose nerves are unstrung, who is more or less spasmodically inclined. And yet there was a most rare deliberation, gentleness, and a graceful composure in his manner, as of one who, to use his own favorite and frequent expression, never “fashed himself.” His attitudes were simply chosen and full of sense—his gestures few, quiet, and a little quaint—the whole man bred to the most polished courtliness, and expert in the management of his polite machinery. And yet, there was a degree of devil-may-careness about him, evidently not recently acquired, which made you curious to know him better; for in that, plainly, you were to look for the nature of the man—the rest came of his education and closest associations. In his figure was a decided stoop, which to your least examination betrayed the elegant debauchee. This stoop, you perceived, could not be of long standing, for he was unmistakably conscious of it. Nor was it even a defect—he carried it with such a pleasant air, as one 213 who thought “scapegrace” of himself. And yet it imparted to him the appearance of more years than he had—for though but thirty-seven, as I learned, he passed for ten years older—and, with the complicity of the gold spectacles, betrayed him into being called, behind his back only, by a few graceless and irreverent youths, “Old Krafft.”

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His talk was fluent, his words well chosen, the brokenness of his English rather in the deliberation of his utterance, the slow procession of his words—which had a perceptible interval between them,

as though they were measured off with dashes—than in any vice of grammar or pronunciation. When he speaks, my reader will try to remember this. His utterance was just that which, to me, has always seemed best adapted to convey the ideas of Kurz Pacha in the *Potiphar Papers*. ““This is the way to take life, my dear. Let us go gent-ly. Here we go back-wards and for-wards. You tick-le, and I'll tick-le, and we'll all tick-le—and here we go round, round, round-y!’ We will not fash ourselves”—comically beating time with both his white hands.

Mr. Krafft had come to take the Doctor to a poor devil he had in his bed at home, who—for all that his lungs were ruined, and he hadn't any friends or any money—had a notion that he'd like to live a little longer.

“We'll go presently,” said the Doctor. “But sit you down now, Krafft, and hear what I was just 215 saying to my friend here; for you'll be sure to get into the Town Council, if it ever happens to be worth your while; and then you'll be put on one of my special committees, and rather than fash yourself with inventing excuses to put me off, you'll have me paid, and do something for my rheumatics and consumptives besides.”

And then, resuming his story, with even more of melancholy drollery than before, he soon made the affable German sympathetically sensible of the wrongs that were put upon him.

“Where,” inquired Mr. Krafft, “are these new patients you speak of—the person with the lungs, and the other person with the joints, I mean—now?”

“Oh, close by—at Ay-cow's, the Chinaman's chophouse.”

“Let us go get them. We will lay them before the Alcalde immediately. I think he will audit and pass them very quickly, without waiting for the meeting of the Council or your special committee.”

And Mr. Krafft arose, and passed out, as though all he meant was very apparent, and very easy to do, 216 and nobody need fash himself with the why or how of it.

“Come along,” said the Doctor to me; “I’ve no idea what he’s up to; but he’ll do something out of the common, and it will be pretty sure to be the best thing to do under the circumstances. It is not fair to ‘fash’ him beforehand.”

In a short time we had dragged our astonished invalids from their rude bunks, or rather pens, over Ay-cow's feeding-place, and, one on each arm of our German friend, were conducting them in solemn procession to the Alcalde's office. It was mid-day, and his Honor was in all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of full court—a time most opportune for the purposes of Mr. Karl Joseph Krafft. Pushing, with his bewildered protegés, straight to the green table in front of the judge's bench, he abruptly interrupted the business of the court with a characteristic address:

“Your Honor, and Gentlemen: —We are very sick, and hungry, and helpless, and wretched. If somebody does not do something for us, we shall die; and that will be hard, considering how far we have come, 217 and how hard it was to get here, and how short a time we have been here, and that we have not had a fair chance. All we ask is a fair chance; and we say again, upon our honor, Gentlemen, if somebody does not do something for us, we shall die, by God! We have told the Town Council so, and offered to prove it; but they were busy running streets through their own lots, and laying out grave-yards in everybody's else's, and so, you see, they wouldn't fash themselves with our case. Our friend, the doctor here, will tell you all about us. He hopes you will take us up, and pass us at once; and he thinks, as we do, that if something isn't done for us, very soon, we shall be setting fire to the town first, and then cutting all our own throats.”

“This is an extraordinary piece of business, Doctor; what does it all mean?” inquired his Honor.

So the Doctor told over again his story, as he had told it to us a little while before—only this time he delivered it with more gravity, indeed with a telling touch of pathos, and a dash of indignant expostulation. And at the close, Mr. Krafft, catching and 218 turning to quick account, the popular mood, as the rapidly increasing and curious crowd, moved by the Doctor's tale, closed around his protegés, pitying, scolding, and advising, all at once—Mr. Krafft, taking off his cap and throwing three ounces into it, said:

“Gentlemen, we head the subscription for our own relief with fifty dollars; and as there are a great many of us we need a great many ounces. But we tell you again, if something is not done for us, we shall die in the streets, and then we shall all smell very bad, and everybody will become affected with typhus fever, and we shall set fire to the city and cut our throats.”

So saying, he held out his cap with a bow, and a winning smile, to the crowd. In a very few minutes, it was almost full of ounces. Pouring them out on the table, in a careless, generous heap, he said:

“There, Mr. Alcalde—we lend you those. In a few days we shall come to ask what use you have made of them. And you can say to the Council for us, that if they have no time for such cases as ours, they need not fash themselves about water-lots or street improvements.”

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Then he led out his invalids in triumph—“approved and ordered to be paid,” as he said; and as he conducted them across the Plaza toward Sacramento street, he was followed by three hearty cheers.

The appropriation of a hospital fund, and the first steps towards the founding of a City Hospital, followed closely upon Mr. Kraft's coup de main.

Going, one day, aboard an American barque, just in after a long and ugly voyage, Mr. Krafft found an insane passenger, who had not tasted food for several days, nor spoken for several weeks. Our queer friend became at once warmly interested in the case: an interest, indeed, which he evinced for every man whose equanimity was violently disturbed, or who had fashed himself to such excess as to go crazy—seeming to regard him, from a purely scientific standpoint, as a phenomenon not to be slighted by the philosophic mind. Mr. Krafft asked many questions about the crazy passenger, and the spirit of his investigations conciliating all the rest, he was overwhelmed with officious information. From some bushels of foolish gabble he sifted a grain or two of 220 useful fact—such as that the man, an Irishman, had been a laborer, very industrious and trustworthy—a sort of head

man or overseer of shovel-and-pick gangs on railroads and canals; that he had been ambitious, and had set his heart on rising to the post of contractor—and so on.

Mr. Krafft at once conceived the idea of curing this man. Requesting to be left alone with him for a while, he took a seat beside him, and talked—quietly, kindly, very naturally—of his old pursuits, asking no questions, not seeming to be aware of his companion's witlessness, indeed compelling himself to quite forget that. At first his efforts were rewarded only with the same vacant stare which had repaid the more benevolent of the poor fellow's comrades, who had already endeavored to inspire him with an idea or a remembrance. But presently, when Mr. Krafft began to talk of splendid contracts, of millions of dollars' worth of work—of whole streets to be graded, and foundations to be dug, and an army of barrows, and shovels, and picks, the command of which he requested his crazy friend to accept—the man's eye brightened, and, laying his hand in Mr. Krafft's, he said in a low but decided tone, “I'll do it.”

Then Mr. Krafft, assuming the responsibility for his safety—which, by the same token, they of the ship were willing to resign, seeing that on the voyage out, the man, taking umbrage at something, had held the mate over the rail by the waistband, while the ship was going twelve knots an hour—bade him come with him; and philosopher and madman went ashore together in a small boat.

The white School-house, near the Old Adobe, was the headquarters of the police then. It was on the west side of the Plaza, overlooking the heart of the young city and its busiest life. Thither Mr. Krafft conducted his crazy friend, and showing him the ground in front of the little building—indeed, in the very midst of what is now Portsmouth Square—told him his operations were to begin there. Then calling up a few policemen, whom with a word or two he inducted into the secret, he put them under the orders of his madman, and bade them bring shovels and picks—at the same time suggesting to the 222 devil-possessed digger that it would be as well to break ground at once, as the rest of his working force, some thousands of able-bodied fellows, would be on hand presently.

Not a word spake the madman—not a word had he uttered, since he said “I'll do it”—but flinging down his coat and hat, silently, with eyes wild, and teeth set, he went to work. Beautiful! how

evenly, how steadily, how swiftly yet how fusslessly, he cleared the ground before him, tossing the flying shovelfuls with the flirt of a nimble gravemaker!

“Beautiful!” cried Mr. Karl Joseph Krafft, exulting in the success of his experiment, “beautiful! we are a trifle crack-brained, to be sure; but for digging we are worth a dozen philosophers yet—worth a hundred of some sorts of fellows who never had their little gusts of madness, never knew the luxury of returning reason. When this is through with, we shall be hungry, and then we shall eat; after that we shall feel congenial, and then we shall talk—shall talk ourselves to sleep, shall dream, and have memories soothing and saving—shall awake, the sanest fellows 223 in town, and never fash ourselves again about the devils that are cast out.”

Steadily “the subject” worked on, and the field of his successes grew apace. But the Sun had laid his heavy hand upon the bare head of the man, and was down-bearing, more and more heavily, every moment, upon his brain; and a fiend flew along his veins and heated them, and twitched at his nerves till they quivered; and his fancy became filled with hostile shapes, as all the ground around was filled with curious spectators; so that at last, brandishing his spade, he flung himself upon the host before him, and the first man he laid low was his friend, philosopher, and guide.

They bound him down and gave him shower-baths, and expostulated with him; but he never spoke nor ate again till he died. And Mr. Karl Joseph Krafft said, picking up his cane, that no confidence was to be reposed in persons of that description; all impetuous people were fools, he said.

Mr. Krafft was one of the few men who had a home in San Francisco in Forty-Nine; at least, he had a comfortable abode, a fireside, and a knot of friends to 224 gather round it, with pipes and punch—to tell stories and play whist, in the good old way. He had taken a better sort of adobe house, on the corner of Dupont and Pacific streets, and put it in good repair with paint and plaster. Like all the adobe buildings of old Yerba Buena, it had but one story. The entrance, set fairly in the middle of the front, was on Pacific street; a narrow hall, from front to back door, divided the house, so as to give one large sitting-room on the right, and a smaller apartment, which was for a bed-chamber, on the left, in front, with a kitchen behind it. The sitting-room, hospitably furnished, was Mr. Krafft's

“spare room,” and from the first he had warmly entertained in it one after another of self-appointed friends, or new but preferred acquaintances; so that, indeed, it was never without an occupant. His own apartment deserved to be styled luxurious, for San Francisco then. It had a marble floor, alternately tiled in black and white. The cornices showed a rude attempt at carving. The fire-place was a very throne of comfort. There was an English brass bedstead, which Mr. Krafft, being justly proud of it, kept 225 in a superfine state of brightness. A blue silk coverlet—the handiwork of his absent wife, no doubt—adorned the bed; and over that again, were laid two curious spotted skins, which came, he said, from Patagonia. There was an oaken chest of drawers, and a flawless old looking-glass; large camphor-wood chests, of genuine Canton manufacture, brass-bound and painted blue, were disposed about the room. On the walls hung portraits in oil of himself and his Maria—most lovely!—and an unfinished sketch in water colors, of his three children, in graceful group. A Wesson rifle stood in the corner next the door; a Mexican saddle and head-stall, with serape, lariat, and spurs, hung on large wooden pegs near the foot of the bed. A cavalry sabre was between the windows, and a pair of German duelling-pistols, hung, crossed, against the wall, within the curtains, at the back part of the bed. Near the head of the bed, and always within reach of the arm of its occupant, stood an empty barrel, over the top of which a sort of shawl was thrown. Here lay at all times a loaded pistol, also of German make, having a curiously mounted 226 and inlaid stock; and here, every night, on retiring to bed, Mr. Krafft placed his watch, a valuable diamond ring and pin, some rare and curiously shaped specimens of gold, and whatever papers of value he may have had about his person that day.

When I knew Mr. Krafft, he was quite happy in this home of his. On returning from his afternoon ride to the Mission or the Presidio, which he regularly took when the day's business was over, he was wont to amuse himself with pistol practice at his back door; or he would take up the foils with some friend whose training had been German and military. Feats of strength and skill had always a peculiar charm for Mr. Krafft. I have heard him boast that he could stop a run-away horse with the pressure of his knees, and I have seen him disarm an antagonist of acknowledged expertness, with a nice movement of the wrist, most difficult to acquire.

One night, as he was returning late from the Plaza, where he had been recreating himself with monte, a party of Hounds, having attacked some Chilian tents on Dupont street, were driving out the inmates, and 227 setting fire to their canvas shelter. Some five or six of them had a hapless Chilena girl among them, and hustling her brutally about, were quarrelling noisily for possession of her much coveted person. Mr. Krafft, with his gold-headed cane, felled four of them, to their extreme astonishment; and though, when the rest recovered from the shock, they fired their revolvers at him in the dark, he got off safely with the girl and led her tenderly to his own home. There he soothed her terror and consoled her grief, in his characteristic way, before returning to seek for her friends: “We must not cry,” said he—“we must not distract our little brains. So our bones or our hearts are not broken, we will not fash ourselves about the money, and the clothes, and the rest of the folks— ‘Io son ricco, Tu sei bella.’ ”

And afterward, when the affair got to be talked of to his honor, the skill and dispatch with which the rescue had been effected were all that Mr. Krafft asked to be applauded for.

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For a time I had much pleasure in the society of my eccentric friend. The striking quaintness of his character enhanced the charm of his conversation, which was full of unusual experiences, versatility of accomplishment, originality of opinion, delicacy of taste, refinement of sensibility, and a good-natured, even comical philosophy, which had in it a kind of universal *quien sabe* for all subjects and people. Not to fash ourselves, was the advice which Mr. Krafft was for ever benevolently bestowing upon us, because he sincerely believed he had himself derived great advantage from steadily following it. So long as matters went towardly with him, his companionship was a privilege that I enjoyed with even a degree of jealousy; and on Sunday afternoons, as we walked to the old Switzer's house at Washerwoman's Bay, or the extemporaneous grave-yard at the foot of Telegraph Hill, and he amused, flattered, delighted, instructed, impressed, sadly moved me, in quick succession or all at once, I simply wondered how such a man came to be speculating in Pacific street lots, and cudgelling Hounds by way of a sandwich.

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But a sudden, dreadful, and complete change came, no one knew whence, over the for-a-time quiet, if not eminently beneficent, life of Mr. Karl Joseph Krafft. He seemed to have suffered a shame or a hurt from an unknown hand, and to be feeling blindly, desperately, about for revenge—and as a rage-drunk man will, hurting himself more and more at every turn.

He plunged stupidly into speculations, with little heed to the depth or current of them. With cards and dice, roulette wheels and rondo balls, he fooled himself to the top of his bent. He untuned the strings of his heart, so that the most skilful touches of his kindest friends could produce nothing but discord. He wounded all who loved him, and when they turned away their faces, in sorrow for his shameful pass, sang, maudlin, his favorite song, the beautiful duet in Lucia, the invariable music of his cups— “Verranno la sull' aure, I miei sospiri ardenti.”

He entertained traitors, and the cunning foes of his prosperity, to the very bottom of his purse; they laid 230 him “down among the dead men” nightly. Indeed, he bleared his eyes and bemuddled his brains with everlasting drams, till the devil of Delirium Tremens got among his poor wits.

One night, during the progress of one of his most desperate debauches, fearing some harm might befall him, from himself or others—for besides his rascally boon-companions, there were deceived creditors, who were dangerously incensed against him—I slept on the floor at the foot of his bed. Awakened, after midnight, by his piteous moaning, I arose, and was feeling about in the dark for a match, when he suddenly became quiet; but presently the profound stillness and darkness were disturbed by the crack of a cap; and a slight flash. He had stealthily got down one of his loaded pistols, and had tried to fire at me; fortunately, only the cap snapped—the weapon was foul and hung fire. “My dear sir,” said I, very quietly, knowing my man—“don't shoot *me*; that would be supremely stupid.”

“Ah! my dear, good friend—is it you? I congratulate you. Diable! do you know, I had you 231 covered, dead. That only shows that one should not fash himself nervously about thieves, where no thieves are. But I must clean my pistols.”

About this time his door was besieged from morning till night by fierce duns. He kept the bolts fast, and while they cursed without, lay in bed, smoking cigars, tossing off goblets of champagne, laughing, coughing, raving, singing—

232

“‘Io son ricco, Tu sei bella,’ Tra, la, la, la, h'm-dle, d'm.

“‘What impatient people!> “‘Quale amore, Un Senatore Me d'amore Supplicar! Ma Zanetto E un giovinetto Che mi piace, vo sposar.’ ”

One evening, about dusk, when the rest had departed, tired with their fruitless coaxing and cursing, a young man in whose generous confidence Mr. Krafft had formerly held the highest place, who had endorsed for him recklessly, whom indeed Krafft loved, but whom he had ruined—if a man could be ruined in California in Forty-Nine—came, and in set phrases of insult, most deliberately, skilfully cruel, accused, condemn, punished him. They had been old and very intimate friends, which gave the 233 creditor an almost dreadful advantage; he knew the “raws” of his man, and he tore them, till Mr. Karl Joseph Krafft could have shrieked. But he gallantly preserved his habitual composure, and only said—

“If you will not stop saying such dangerous things, I have pistols at hand, and we must go behind the house together.”

“No, sir!” the other answered; “I won't fight you; you must learn to be honest before you can afford to be brave. There is but one just debt, Mr. Krafft, that you will ever pay, and that's the debt of nature. Make society and your disgusted friends the only reparation in your power, by blowing your brains out with those very pistols you flourish so saucily.”

“Well, I'll think about it,” said Mr. Krafft.

The young man was going. But suddenly, by a most strange impulse, he turned, and walking straight to Mr. Krafft, said, “Forgive me, sir.”

“We will forgive each other,” said Mr. Krafft—“Good night! I will pay you in the morning.”

Next morning, at nine o'clock, Mr. Karl Joseph Krafft blew out his brains—literally, all of his brains.

234

But a little while after his angry young creditor had taken his singular leave, Mr. Krafft sent for the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, which was then but a tent on a neighboring lot. On the arrival of the clergyman, he informed him that, having been much in ill health of late, he thought it possible his death might be sudden, and he wished, on the score of prudence, to take steps, at once, to secure some property to his family, then living in Valparaiso. He wished the clergyman to be the executor of his will, and if he would call on him the next morning at eight o'clock, he would have all the papers prepared, and would commit them to his charge.

“They think I have forgotten my angel and my darlings,” said he, “but let them not fash themselves; they shall see”—smiling, and pointing most significantly to the floor as he spoke; as it were, emphasizing his words with his long, thin finger—“they shall see, sir—they shall see.”

Mr. Krafft, after that, entertained some friends at his room, most agreeably.

Next morning, an accident called off the reverend 235 gentleman, and he missed the appointed hour. His services were never required.

In the “spare room,” Mr. Krafft had two guests, who were seated at breakfast, when they heard the report of a pistol in their host's apartment. They flew to his door; it was locked. Running into the street, they looked through the only window they could find open. The room was full of smoke. They waited, and strained their eyes. Presently, they said, they could see the couch and Mr. Krafft; he was sitting up in bed, his eyes open, his mouth open; “he was rolling his head from side to side—but there *was no top to it!*”

This was the report they made to me a few minutes later. For I lived hard by, and as an intimate friend of the suicide, they had recourse at once to me. Although I lost no time, I found a crowd had already gathered about the spot when I reached Mr. Krafft's door. We forced the lock, and I entered alone. My God! He was sitting up in bed—his mouth wide open, and quite black within—one eye fast closed, the other staring. He had taken a deliberate position in 236 the middle of the bed, and propped himself against the brass cross-bars which formed the head-board. His rifle lay on his body, the stock resting on the back of a chair, the muzzle on his breast. He had taken down one of the rods which supported his curtains, to touch the trigger with; that now lay beside the rifle. He had forgotten that the weapon was not charged; he had fired it at a mark but a day or two before, to display its extraordinary force to some visitor.

He had tried his pistols also; for they lay by his side with freshly snapped caps on the nipples. They also were empty. He had discharged them at the same time with the rifle

The pistol which lay always on the barrel remained. With that he had succeeded. The charge had not been changed for many months, and the explosion had, consequently, been terrific. He had fired with the muzzle at his temple. The whole of the top of his skull was shot away, completely and cleanly, as medical students, in dissection, saw it away to get at the brains. Fragments of the skull, with hair 237 attached, were hanging from the walls on every side, and from the ceiling in the farthest corner. The wall behind the head was blackened, and bespattered with brains and blood; the brains lay, every ounce of them, in a pool of warm blood, on the floor.

No will was found, no coin, no gold dust. Remembering the significance of the gesture described by the clergyman, we took up the marble floor—nothing. His “friends” all robbed the dead man; every buzzard of them carried off a fragment. One of his pensioners in the spare room accepted a costly Spanish mantle for his share; the other deigned to be content with the brilliant breast-pin. Two days after his funeral, even the portraits disappeared from the walls.

No living man knows who the thieves were, or where is the unmarked grave of Karl Joseph Krafft. Mr. Krafft himself will, no doubt, clear up all for us some day. According to the spiritualistics, he has been heard from already.

CHAPTER VII.

OVER THE PAHRI: A FRAGMENTARY LEGEND OF SAN FRANCISCO.

WHILE as yet there remained a sentiment of Sundayness in its season to the suburbs of San Francisco, before that sordid, thankless El Dorado had hustled the green fields on the north, with all their home-suggestiveness, all their ways of pleasantness and paths of peace, into the Bay; while as yet the Presidio, the Lagoon, or the Mission San Dolores was full of picturesque recreation for hebdomadal excursionists, who, for an hour of congenial companionship, or delicious aloneness, might give their hearts an airing, and treat themselves to a brimmer of the old familiar feelings, putting the Satan-City behind them; while as yet the comfortable Dutch clock ticked 239 conservatively, as if for all time, in the old Switzer's house hard by Washerwoman's Bay, and that hospitable gray-beard laid the solid board with pork and greens of his own raising, and the fat Frau Mamma set the musical-box going, and said if Captain Sutter would only drop in now, "dat was pesser as coot be;" while as yet Frank Schaeffer had a chop and hot punch, and a gentlemanly game, and a "shake-down" for his friends, in the snug adobe cottage whither no insolent street had come; while as yet there was a small but commodious grave-yard to get away to, wherein you might lie, if so disposed, without crowding, and be readily found as often as any sentimental friend might think your rude head-board worth the walk and a sigh; while as yet the presence of the First Lady illumined Frank Ward's home at night, and blessed the darkness round about it: in those days, I took Mr. Karl Joseph Krafft by the hand every Sunday afternoon, and said to him: "Come thou with me — If from gray dawn to solemn night's approach 240 Thy soul hath wasted all its better thoughts, Toiling and panting for a little gold, Drudging amid the very lees of life For this accursed slave that makes men slaves— Come thou with me into the pleasant fields: Let nature breathe on us and make us free.

And so we made our Sabbaths—in giddy equestrian scamperings to the Presidio or the Mission; or sitting on a great stone, paddling with our naked feet in the waters of the North Bay; or pantingly climbing Telegraph-Hill, to take the seaward and mountainward views from its summit; or leaning over the rude railing of some rare inclosure in that true type of a frontier grave-yard, almost enjoying the precious quiet of the dead, released from the hurly-burly that fairly drove us living distraught.

There was naught more Californian in our quick experience of the metropolitanish bustle at our backs, than in this necropolis of Forty-Nine. It numbered not many citizens as yet, for only the richest of us could afford the luxury of extramural interment, with its sentiment of privacy, and plausible security 241 from disturbance. A grave cost sixty dollars, and one got but a clumsy hole at that price; a coffin of the roughest boards not less than thirty, and your hasty hearsing in a mule-cart as much more; a priest, if you must be extravagant, taxed you an ounce or two, and it was but short measure of farewell benediction you got for your money: as for your “Earth to earth, Ashes to ashes, Dust to dust,” a practical demonstration of the formula, by the most irreverent of shovel-flirters, came to ten dollars; and your lop-sided cross or rough-hewn head-board, of knotty pine, painted white, and inscribed by the least expert of black-letterers with the little that was known of you, (“—SMITH, Maryland; aged—. Died, July 4th, 1849,”) was an “ounce” for monument and legend.

So we showed but few tablets in memory of us; for, however munificent we Old Californians may have been in our golden lives, we stood no nonsense in our iron deaths.

Nor was our thriving little City of the Dead by any means sacredly forbidden to the sacrilegious shifts of unscrupulous speculators; for, gentlemen's sons 242 “cleaned out at monte,” or otherwise “dead broke,” were wont to live on corpses at a pinch, selling readymade graves, guaranteed against squatters, to other gentlemen's sons *deader* broke than themselves, for three ounces apiece. And when “Bones,” of the “Aguila de Oro,” bethought him of investing his surplus pile in a hearse and

pall, with the appropriate “properties,” he found he had “struck as pretty a streak of luck,” he said, “as the next man could scare up.”

“Now, why should we fash ourselves,” homilied the philosophic Krafft among the streets of that Silent City: “why should we fash ourselves for Coltongrants and government-reserves, and sites at the head of navigation? Are we not nice and dead, and comfortably disposed, as gentlemen of independent leisure, who may take their ease in their snugget of inns? Why should we fash ourselves for our twelve per cent. a month, and our collateral securities? or for the unceremonious fellows who will be squatting on our darling fifty-varas, regardless of Spanish titles and American revolvers? Why should we fash ourselves 243 for the price of lumber that is rising, or the fire that is waiting for our flimsy tenement, or the rent that is not paid, or our heart that would surely have been broken by-and-by? Are we not commodiously quartered here, and every way cosily and decently arranged? Are not our lodgings of the cheapest, and our fare free, and our landlord liberal, and ourselves at rest—nice and dead, nice and buried? Is not our claim sure? Why should we fash ourselves?

““Thy house is not Highly timbered: It is unhigh and low. When thou art therein, The heel-ways are low, The side-ways unhigh; The roof is built Thy breast full nigh: So thou shalt in mould Dwell full cold, Dimly and dark. Thus thou art laid, And leavest thy friends: Thou hast no friend

244

Who will come to thee, Who will ever see How that house pleaseth thee— Who will ever open The door for thee, And descend after thee.’

Mais, que voulez vous? Thou hast made thy fortune, thy *pile of dust* :

why shouldst thou fash thyself?” asked Mr. Karl Joseph Krafft. “Yesterday,” he said, “I bought a water-lot—that top-sail schooner lies at anchor there; but for all that, here’s a butterfly. Yesterday my bark came from Valparaiso, and brought me a cargo of ponchos and serapes. No sale for ponchos and serapes; but what of that? there goes a fellow singing—

“I set my heart upon nothing, you see: Hurrah!”

“Why should we fash ourselves?”

Thus to quote with an odd aptness, almost comical, bits of quaint verse and snatches of foreign song, was one of Mr. Krafft's peculiar accomplishments.

245

Once, on one of these Sunday saunters, we were returning townward from a visit to the old Switzer already alluded to; Mr. Krafft had been more than usually characteristic and entertaining, fitting himself, with his infallible cosmopolitan faculty, to the place and the occasion, with the grotesquest Alpine legends and fag-ends of Tyrolese ditties; now quizzing the Dutch clock, now teasing the parrot; anon gracious to our revered host, or gallant to the comfortable *frau*, and winning both simple hearts with eloquent praises of their dear Captain Sutter, who, to their compatriotic pride, stood for everything that was great and glorious.

As we leisurely followed the breezy road that is now Sansome street, toward the cluster of canvas houses and blue tents that formed the north-western out-skirt of San Francisco then, we halted to contemplate a neat white cottage of tiled adobes that stood apart from any other dwelling, in a refreshing garden-spot cleared from the bush, on the right of, and a little lower than the road.

A very fly in amber was that tremendous little 246 homestead, and “how the devil it got there” the very duet of wonder that rose to our lips. There was a pretty white paling in good repair, and two sunflowers and a hollyhock, and a plucky morning-glory climbing desperately at the back-door; and there was a brood of adolescent fowls, and a demure dog, of mastiff extraction but mild demeanor, somnolently filling the sunniest of the flags that made the truly imposing pavement in front; and there were drab paper curtains of a chaste pattern at all the windows; the green paint of the doors was fresh and smart; homely, comfortable smoke ascended from the chimney, and hung in fond delay over all the house; and the declining sun made a golden benediction at the portal.

As lost in astonished satisfaction we contemplated this phenomenon in white-washed adobes, the tones of a manly and cultivated voice—clear, ringing, and measured, as of one reading aloud or reciting—saluted our ears, and I recognised the quaint charm of Roscoe's "Dirge": "Oh! dig a grave, and dig it deep, Where I and my true-love may sleep! 247 *We'll dig a grave, and dig it deep, Where thou and thy true-love shall sleep!* "And let it be five fathom low, Where winter winds may never blow! *And it shall be five fathom low, Where winter winds shall never blow!*"

By the time the voice had got thus far, the sympathetic intelligence of Mr. Krafft had caught the trick of the verse, albeit new to him—that weird echo of repetition, its *ding-dong-bellish* burthen; and descending lightly from the road, he stepped over the prostrate dog, that listlessly stirred its tail and pointed one ear as he passed, and the next moment stood in his oddest, but still graceful, attitude of philosophic attention, at the door, which happened to be a hand's breadth ajar. The voice continued: "And let it be on yonder hill, Where grows the mountain-daffodil! *And it shall be on yonder hill, Where grows the mountain-daffodil!*"

And this time the refrain was rung in pairs, as it 248 were—Mr. Krafft joining the witch-like music of his peculiar chaunt, to complete that strange vocal chime: "The rhyming and the chiming of the bells."

For a minute the voice was still; perhaps the reader had paused to explain the mysterious phenomenon; but there was no stir within, and presently again, very slowly, very clearly, as though to challenge or invite the echo: "And plant it round with holy briers, To fright away the fairy fires!"

With impressive deliberation and a most weird remoteness of tone, that might have been ventriloquial, Mr. Krafft responded, the voice within waiting solemnly for the token: "*We'll plant it round with ho-ly briers, To fright a-way the fai-ry fi-res!*" "And set it round with celandine And nodding heads of columbine!"

(Mr. Krafft—and so to the end:) 249 "*We'll set it round with cel-an-dine, And nod-ding heads of col-um-bine*" . "And let the ruddock build his nest Just above my true-love's breast! The rud-

dock he shall build his nest Just a-bove thy true-love's breast! "Now, tender friends, my garments take, And lay me out for JESUS' sake! And we will now thy gar-ments take, And lay thee out, for Jesus' sake! "When I am dead, and buried be, Pray to GOD in heaven for me! Now thou art dead, we'll bury thee And pray to God in heaven for thee! Benedicite!" and the door was flung wide. Mr. Krafft bowed, cap off, to an intellectual-looking man, of thirty years perhaps, in dressing-gown and slippers, and with a large carved meerschaum pipe in his hand.

"God save all here!" said Mr. Krafft.

"You are welcome," responded the stranger, 250 smiling. "It is to you, sir, then, that I am indebted for my echo—a graceful trick, poetically conceived and happily executed: my dirge were much too earthy without it—the airy element so essential to complete its sprightliness; and you would seem to be the very Ariel for the occasion. But how came you here?"

"Merely idly, almost impertinently, sir. But you have sights and sounds about you that one may not easily get by, if his eye and ear be scholarly, and his heart true to the old familiar memories. Sunflowers and hollyhocks, cosy curtains and a genial chimney, and the tenderest of lyrics delivered in the fine declamation of a *bel esprit*, are not common-places as yet in our El Dorado: they are the goldsmith's work, as dainty and *rococo* as Benvenuto Cellini's, among our crude ore. Is the Dirge your own?"

"My own, sir? Oh! no: I am but the common singer of another's rare strains. But enter—enter! while I persuade the fire to join me in a cheerful welcome; for these ungentle blasts from the sea, which come every day another day too often, still take one's blood by surprise."

251

"Let us congratulate ourselves," said Mr. Krafft in a philosophic aside to me, as our interesting discovery fell back from the door: "it's to be hoped he's cracked—one of those entertaining, ever-fresh creatures known as 'madmen,' because they are more free than other men, and have a way of their own, with their wise surprises, eloquent incoherences, and other such intellectual zig-zagry.

But let us not fash ourselves for that yet: there are cracks that let in the light, you know; and his, no doubt, is one of them. We shall see.”

The fact is, my eccentric friend cultivated a hearty penchant for more or less crazy people, and himself the oddest of humanity, hailed the faintest trace of oddness, as to opinion, language, or manners, in another, as a promise of congenial companionship. In the graceful, affable, and evidently enlightened proprietor of the hollyhocks, the drab curtains, and the canary-bird, he discovered lively signs of that “zig-zagry” he so fancied, and he rejoiced accordingly. For an above-the-average man, of pure tastes, and elegantly nurtured, to be so housed, so surrounded, so 252 attired, and so employed, in San Francisco in Forty-Nine, he must (he argued) be either very great, very rich, or very mad: if he were very great, he would pretend to know us; if he were very rich, we should be sure to know him: he is therefore either here because he is mad, or mad because he is here. But let us enter, and sympathize with him, as well as men may who labor under the disadvantages of a stupid sanity.

Well, at the end of an hour we came forth again, and took the way to town; a ripple of soothing, silver talk was in our ears, only broken by small tumults of refined eloquence, or melodious falls of verse and song—what else? Merely the harmonies of a delicate spirit, and the ineffaceable impressions of a presence to which nothing of disclosure or discovery attached itself, by way of explanation, to make it common-place; simply a name—Philip Grey of New Orleans—no more. The cottage, the canary-bird, the curtains, the comfortable dog, remained for us to “fash” our wits about, in all the romantic “zig-zagry” of adventurous guessing.

253

“Philip Grey!” talked Mr. Krafft, in his waking sleep-walking.

“And that is all.”

“And that should be enough. Let us not look our glorious gift horse in the mouth.”

“But the zig-zagry, my friend?”

“We will not fash ourselves for that. If the gentleman is not mad, it is not because he lacks the acquirements and tastes to be so, gracefully. He has mind enough to rave, and he would rave delightfully. Only a name, that's true; but ‘Philip Grey’ is a fair romance to find on a Sunday saunter, between the wild restlessness of that city and the wild rest of those disordered graves.”

Oahu, of the Hawaiian group, is an insular Paradise, and the loveliest vales of earth have nothing to surpass the loveliness of its Nuuanu valley. The Nuuanu road, leading from the many-tribed town of Honolulu, is a primrose path of dalliance and delight; and like too many such paths in the heart's garden of allurements, it terminates abruptly in a 254 headlong precipice—the Pahri—sheer down, I dare not try to remember how many hundred feet; but when last I stood on its brink, clouds enveloped me like a cloak, the wayward Undine of water-fall on the right was chapleted with a gay iris, and the great stone I tossed over into the abyss might be falling to this hour, for any sound of bottom it sent up.

When King Kamehameha, first of the name, “The Solitary One,” hero and usurper, drove his enemies at the points of his flashing spears, foot by foot through that heartless garden, which mocked their death-hour with all its rainbows and cascades and flowers, he stayed not till he stood in terrible triumph on the dizzy edge of the Pahri, whence the last of his foes, wincing from his lance-point, had flung himself, with all his warlike harness on, into mid-air with a yell; and ever since, ten thousand skeletons have bleached among the pleasant plantains down below.

One excellent night in June, 1850, that glorious leap was surpassed in completeness of effect, by a 255 solitary aspirant to the fame of a consummation so imposing. A gay and handsome horseman—horse and man alike possessed of a desperate devil—rode out through the cool, bland moonlight of that mocking vale, leading in a dance of death the four-footed measure of his bewitched steed. He flung back the laughter of the water-falls with dreadful glee, and defied the fire-flies with the uncanny glitter of his eyes—still dancing, singing on; till the mad beast braced himself on the brink of the Pahri, and pawed the very edge with his daring hoof. Then the gay and handsome gentleman uncovered his head; and as the misty breeze from the remotely-sounding sea tossed his brown locks in the moonlight, he flung a parting stave to the world: “To joy a stranger, a way-worn ranger, In

every danger my course I've run; Now hope all ending, and Death befriending, His last aid lending, my cares are done.”

Turning his horse, he rode back a hundred yards:

256

“No more a rover, or hapless lover, My griefs are over, my glass runs low; Then for that reason, and for a season, Let us be merry before we go!”

And again he faced the Pahari: “Let us be merry before we—Go-o-o!”

A fierce plunge of the spurs; a cap dashed to the ground; a wild cheer; a sharp scream from the horse, “as he hangs, the rocks between, and his nostrils curdle in—as he shivers head and hoof, and the flakes of foam fall off, and his face grows fierce and thin—and a look of human woe from his staring eyes doth go—and a sharp cry utters he, in a foretold agony of the headlong death below;” a dark mass flung straight out in the face of the moon; a keen whizzing, piercing to sky and sea; a mighty crash of boughs and branches, down, down, down below—and then again the tuneful tinkle of the water-fall, the bland mocking of the moon, the happy prattle of crickets!

257

Hurrah for Philip Grey! whoever, whatever he was. Mr. Krafft was right about the zig-zagry.

THE OLD.

[INDIA.] “Let what is broken, so remain. The gods are hard to reconcile: 'tis hard to settle order once again. There is confusion worse than death, Trouble on trouble, pain on pain.” TENNYSON—*The Lotus-Eaters*.

“THE DUHRNA WOMAN.”

CHAPTER I.

MAMOUL.

THROUGH THE COSSITOLLAH KALEIDOSCOPE.

UNDER my window, in the street called Cossitollah, flows all the motliness of a Calcutta thoroughfare in two countersetting currents; one Chowringee-ward, in the direction of Nabob magnificence and grace; the other toward the Cooly squalor and deformity of the Radda Bazaar; — and as in the glare of the early forenoon sun, the shadows of the hither or thither passing throngs fall straight across the way, from the Parsee's *godown*, over against me, to the gate of the *pucca* house wherein my look-out is, I watch with interest the frequent eddies occasioned by the clear-steerings of Caste—Brahmin, Warrior, and Merchant keeping severely to the Parsee side, so that the foul shadow of 262 Soodra or Pariah may not pollute their sacred persons. It is as though my window were a tower of Allahabad, and below me, in Cossitollah, were the shy meeting of the waters. Thus, looking up or down, I mark how the limpid Jumna of high caste holds its way in a common bed, but never mingling, with the turbid Ganges of an unclean rabble.

Reader, should you ever “do” the City of Palaces, permit me to commend with especial emphasis to your consideration this same Cossitollah, as a representative street, wherein the European and Asiatic elements of the Calcutta panorama are mingled in the most picturesque proportions; for Cossitollah is the link that most directly joins the pitiful benightedness of the Black Town to the imposing splendors of Kumpnee Bahadoor—the short, but stubborn chain of responsibility, as it were, whereby the ball of helpless and infatuated stock-and-stone-worship is fastened to the leg of British enlightenment and accountability.

From the Midaun, or Parade Ground, with its long-drawn arrays of Sepoy chivalry, its grand reviews before the *Burra Lard Sahib* (as in domestic Bengalee 263 we designate the Governor General), its solemn sham battles, and its welkin-rending regimental bands, by whose brass and sheepskin God saves the Queen twice a day; from Government House, with its historic pride, pomp, and circumstance, and its red tape, its aides-de-camp and its adjutant birds, its stirring associations and its stupid architecture; from the pensioned aristocracy of Chowringhee the Magnificent; from

the carnival concourse of the Esplanade, with its kaleidoscopic surprises; from the grim patronage of Fort William, with its in-every-department-well-regulated fee-faw-fum; in fine, from Clive, and Hastings, and Wellington, and Gough, and Hardinge, and Napier, and Bentinck, and Ellenborough, and Dalhousie, and all the John Company that has come of them; from the tremendous and overwhelming SAHIB, to that most profoundly abject of human objects, the Hindoo PARIAH (who approaches thee, O Awful Being! O Benign Protector of the Poor! O Writer in the Salt-and-Opium Office! on his hands and knees, and with a wisp of grass in his mouth to denote that he is thy beast) —from all 264 those to this the shortest cut is through Cossitollah.

And so, in the current of its passengers, partaking the characteristics of its contrasted extremities, fantastically blending the purple and fine linen of Chowringhee with the breech-cloths of the Black Town, Cossitollah is, as I have said, pre-eminently the type street of Calcutta. Other localities have their peculiar throngs, and certain classes and castes are proper to certain thoroughfares: Sepoys and dog-boys to the Midaun; *circars* or clerks, and *chowkeydars* or private police, to Tank Square; a world of pampered women, fat civil servants, coachmen, *ayahs* or nurses, *durwans* or doorkeepers, *chaprassesys* or messengers, *kitmudgars* or waiters, to Garden Reach; palanquin-bearers, the smaller fry of *banyans* or shopkeepers, and *dandees* or boatmen, to the Ghauts; together with no end of coolies, and *bheestees* or water-carriers, horse-dealers, and *syces* or grooms, to Durumtollah; sailors, British and American, Malay and Lascar, to Flag Street, the quarter of punch-houses. But in Cossitollah all castes and vocations are to be met, whether their talk be of 265 gold mohurs or cowies; here the Sahib gives the horrid leper a wide berth, and the Baboo walks carefully round the shadow of Mehtur, the sweeper. Therefore, reader, Cossitollah is by all means the street for you to draw profound conclusions from.

Come! let us sit in the window and observe; it is but forty puffs of a No. 3 cheroot, in a lazy palanquin, from one end of Cossitollah to the other; and from our window, though not exactly midway, but nearer the Bazaar, we can see from Flag Street wellnigh to the Midaun.

What is this? A close *palkee*, with a passenger; the bearers, with elbows sharply crooked, and calves all varicose, trotting to a monotonous, jerking ditty, which the *sirdar*, or leader, is impudently

improving, to the refrain of *Putterum*, (“Easy now!”) at the expense of their fare's *amour-prope*. “Out of the way there! *Putterum*. There is a Rajah! *Putterum*. 266 Very small Rajah! *Putterum*. Sixpenny Rajah! *Putterum*. Holes in his elbows! *Putterum*. Capitan Slipshod! *Putterum*. Son of a sea-cook! *Putterum*. Hush! he will beat us! *Putterum*. Hush! he will kick us! *Putterum*. Kick us and curse us! *Putterum*. Not he, the greenhorn! *Putterum*. Don't understand us! *Putterum*. Don't know the lingo! *Putterum*. Let's shake the palkee! *Putterum*. 267 Rattle the pig's bones! *Putterum*. Set down the palkee! *Putterum*. Call him a great lord! *Putterum*. Ask him for buksheesh! *Putterum*.

And the four consummate knaves do set down the palkee, and shift the pads on their shoulders; while the sirdar slips round to the sliding-door, and timidly intruding his sweaty phiz, at an opening sufficiently narrow to guard his nose against assault from within, but wide enough to give us a glimpse, through an out-bursting cloud of cheroot-smoke, of a pair of stout legs encased in white duck, with the neatest of light pumps at the end of them, says:—

“*Buksheesh do, Sahib! buksheesh do!* O favorite friend of the Lord! O tender shepherd of the poor! O sublime and beautiful Being, upon whose turban Prosperity dances and Peace makes her bed! Whose mother is twin-sister to the Sacred Cow, and whose 268 grandmother is the Loto of Seven Virtues! O *Khodabund!* *buksheesh do!* Bestow upon thy abject and self-despising slave wherewithal to commemorate the golden hour when, by a blessed dispensation, he was permitted to lay his trembling forehead against thy victorious feet!”

“*Jou-jehannum, toom sooa!* —Go to Gehenna, you pig! What are you bothering about, with your ‘boxes,’ ‘boxes,’ nothing but ‘boxes?’ Insatiable brutes! *Jou!* I tell you— *jeldie jou!* or by Doorga, the goddess of awful rows, I'll smash the palkee and outrage all your religious prejudices! *Jou!*”

Evidently our vaaricose friends imagine they have caught a Tartar, and that the white ducks are not so recent an importation as they at first supposed; for now they catch up the pole of the palkee nimbly, and *jou jeldie* (that is, trot up smartly) to quite another song. “*Jeldie jou, jeldie!* *Putterum*. Carry him softly!

Putterum.

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Swiftly and smoothy! *Putterum.*

He is a Rajah! *Putterum.*

Rich little Rajah! *Putterum.*

Fierce little Rajah! *Putterum.*

See how his eyes flash! *Putterum.*

Hear how his voice roars! *Putterum.*

Fierce littl Rajah! *Putterum.*

See how his eyes flash! *Putterum.*

Hear how his voice roars! *Putterum.*

He is Tippoo! *Putterum.*

Capitan Tippoo! *Putterum.*

Tremble before him! *Putterum.*

Serve him and please him! *Putterum.*

Please him and serve him! *Putterum.*

He will reward us! *Putterum.*

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He will protect us!

Putterum.

He will enrich us!

Putterum.

Charity Lard Sa'b!

Putterum.

Out of the way there!

Putterum.

Way for the great...

Putterum.

Rajah of ten crores!

Putter....

.Ten crores!..

Putter....

Rajah ..

Put .

.Lard ..

Putter....

..Sa'b!

rum.

And so they have turned down Flag Street.

I once knew a man who was engaged to be married before he was born; that was my Parsee 271 neighbor, the amiable Gheber, who, in the pukka house that adjoined my own in Cossitollah, fed his sacred flame with orthodox solicitude and sandal-wood, cursed the Koran duly, rehearsed the precepts of Zoroaster, bragged of Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, turned an honest Parsee penny, and dwelt with his children's children in profound and mysterious content.

My Parsee neighbor was brought forth on the ground-floor (literally on the ground, or on the floor), a moralistic peculiarity of Zoroastrian obstetrics, to which he was doubtless as indifferent as he was to the circumstance of being introduced to a wife by the same ceremony that introduced him to the world; and for five days they fed him with sugar and water through a wick, regardless of the Micawberian “fount” that flowed in vain for him.

Then they brought an astrologer, abounding in beard, and voluble in gibberish, and greedily itching as to his palm; and he horoscoped my Parsee neighbor, him and all that should come of him; and he forecasted him, by the children he should have, and by rupees, and by honors, and by all the chances 272 and changes, the gains and the losses, of a Parsee experience; and he conjured from the stars a calendar of names as long as the roll of warrior-pilgrims who brought over the sacred flame from Khorassan to Ormuz; and he said to the sponsors of my Parsee neighbor, “Choose!” There was Bonnarjee, and Framjee, and Camajee, and Sorabjee, and Pestonjee, and Hormusjee, and Nusserwanjee, and Furdoonjee, and Nourojee, and Cowasjee, and Jamsetjee, and Byramjee, and Heërjee, and Rustomjee, and all the jees; and Nanabhoy, and Dhunjeebhoy, and Dadabhoy, and Dosabhoy, and Rhusabhoy, and Janjeebhoy, and Nourabhoy, and Jeejeebhoy, and all the bhoys. So they made him one of the bhoys—Kirssetjee Damthebhoy—and they all blessed him; and they

prayed that his autograph might be equivalent to many lacs, and his name a tower of financial strength for lame ducks to roost in.

Verily my Parsee neighbor was the apple of his mother's eye, and endless were her tender inspirations in the inventing of wondrous kickshaws for his holiday adornment: in all Cossitollah there was not ²⁷³ so superfine a vanity as his little jubhla of Canton silk, with flowing and fantastic sleeves; and the sun made a glory of his gold-embroidered skull-cap. When he was seven years old, all the kindred of his father's house, and all the friends thereof, assembled in the inner temple, to see the high-priest invest him with the symbolic raiment of the fire-worshipper—"the garment of the good and beneficial way," called *sudra*, and *kusti*, the consecrated cord—girded three times about his small loins, and knotted with four prayers.

And now it was time that my Parsee neighbor should come into his pre-natal wife-property: a comparison of horoscopes was accordingly effected through the instrumentality of a mercenary priest; fortunes and respectabilities, and all the delicacies of the expediency season, were discussed and approved, and the match *pucka* ed—which is, as though one should say, "clinched"—by an interchange of presents for the respective wardrobes of the bride and groom; and behold my Parsee neighbor made a man of—a little man, with a mother-in-law; which, as ²⁷⁴ Gheber mothers-in-law go, means a man with a curse, and a call for a special dispensation of patience. But my Parsee neighbor's toes had been dipped in the ceremonial milk, and his face had been rubbed with the bride's vest; so retreat was cut off, and there was no help for his predicament but to ponder his Zend-Avesta, and hold his peace. Nor was there hope that he might diminish his troubles by multiplying them; for bigamy is a Parsee abomination, and an experiment in that direction would have involved my neighbor in the scrape of the unfortunate Jemshedjee, who was excommunicated by the honorable *punchayet*, the administrative body, for flying matrimonially from the teeth of one vixen to the nails of another. He was compelled to pay two thousand rupees toward the maintenance of Teeth, and to restore to her all her jewels and ornaments, while Nails had to be repudiated for ever.

But my Parsee neighbor has his wholesome distractions and his consolations, which he finds in the golden results of the shop, in happy “operations” and rich returns, in safe investments and fat 275 contracts; and he has his pleasant dreams that are Caudle-proof; his visions of diplomas and decorations, of vice-regal compliments and parliamentary eulogiums, of baronetcies, and coats-of-arms, and statues—Sir Kirsetjee Damthebhoy!

Are there not Dadysett, and Pestonjee, and Hermosjee Wadia, and Framjee Nusserwanjee, and Cowasjee Jeehangir, and the Camas of India, China, England—true merchant-prince, to whom the shaky speculators of Western Wall Streets are but small money-mongers? Are there not “towers of silence” to erect, and hospitals to found, and colleges and schools of design to endow, and bridges and aqueducts and causeways to build, and railroads to project, and wells and tanks to construct, and libraries and free-schools, and Zend-Avesta schools, and dhurumsallas, and churches, and sailors'-homes, and book-and-prize funds, and funds for the funeral expenses of poor Parsees, and contributions to public charities, and funds for the benefit of the poor blind, and subscriptions to the Punchayet for beneficent purposes, and funds for the relief of honest debtors, and 276 schools of industry, and obstetric institutions, and patriotic funds, and memorials, and Havelock testimonials, and Wellington testimonials, and what not, to provide for: living honors and an everlasting name? And my Parsee neighbor, with closed eyes, rapturous, nurses his vision till it glows, all glorious, with the armorial bearings of Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy—a shield of the Knights of St. John, emblazoned with scrolls of gold: “at the lower part, a landscape in India, representing the island of Bombay, with the islands of Salsette and Elephanta in the distance. The sun is seen rising from behind Salsette, to denote industry, and, in diffusing its light and heat, liberality. The upper part of the shield presents a white ground, emblematic of integrity and purity, on which are two bees, signifying industry and perseverance. The whole is surmounted by a crest, representing a beautiful peacock, typical of wealth and magnificence; and in its mouth an ear of wild rice, emblematic of beneficence. Below is a white pennant, folded, on which is inscribed, ‘Industry and Liberality!’ the motto of”—Sir Kirsetjee Damthebhoy! 277 My Parsee neighbor is an exalted humanitarian in a canine direction, regarding dogs as his friends and brothers, and piously according them (in undue proportion, on the score of justice to cats) a fellow-feeling that makes him wondrous kind.

His solicitude for the Trays, Blanches, and Sweethearts of his love, is distinguished by a sweeping catholicity of scope; ignoring narrow distinctions of breed, as to mastiff or poodle, bull-dog or greyhound, spaniel or pariah, his benevolence comprehends in the circle of its kind offices the abstract animal—universal dogry, and its common good. When his operations on land and his ventures by sea, his Bombay brokerages and his Surat shipyard, shall have returned him a fair Parsee fortune, and established him on a financial footing with the princely traders of his tribe, it is his fond intention to found a hospital for the indigent sick of that great quadrupedal community, whereat halt dogs and dogs that are blind, mangy dogs and dogs stricken with confirmed asthma, dogs that have lost their tails by traps, their toes by coach-wheels, dogs whose minds have been impaired by affliction, as well as those 278 whose bodies have suffered in fights—disabled dog-kind generally, whatever the nature or degree of its melancholy dispensation, shall be free to the consolations of splints and bandages, soothing poultices and 'potecary's stuff, with wholesome bones in abundance, and the sweetest of straw beds. So shall my Parsee neighbor fulfil a particular injunction of Zoroaster, and make sure for his soul that it shall be spoken for in the day when enfranchised Dog shall speak for itself.

At times, my Parsee neighbor draws his dreams from a soaring patriotism, brought over by his pilgrim fathers from Ormuz to Sanjan with the other sacred flame, and fed, like that, with the incense of an inspiring romance. It is a fondly-cherished story, and full of the legendary loveliness of his tribe, wherewith he is wont to hold the wide-eyed wonder of his pretty boy, perched, listening, on his knee.

He tells how Mohammedan lions came down, in crushing onslaughts, on the fold of his fathers—the ancient Persian people—and drove them dismayed into the fastnesses of Khorassan; he tells of the 279 sword-conversions of the Caliphs, the bloody sermons of Moslem priests; of the dethronement and flight of the doomed Yezdézird, his wanderings in solitude and disguise, and his treacherous assassination by a miller—whence the old Persian proverb, “Beware a miller's trust;”^{*} of Caliphat troops traversing the length and breadth of Iran, with scimitar and Koran, burning the fire-temples, quenching obscenely the sacred flame, and daily forcing a hundred thousand trembling Ghebers to

The new and the old; or, California and India in romantic aspects. By J.W. Palmer ... With thirteen illustrations, engraved by A.V.S. Anthony. From original designs by John McLenan <http://www.loc.gov/resource/calbk.144>

abjure their poetic creed. He tells how, after a century of patient faith and fortitude, passed in the caves and forests of Khorassan, the persecutors penetrated to the hiding-place of the brave little band, and hunted them down to Ormuz, where yet they were not safe from the impious and the cruel. So they sought an insecure asylum on the small island of Diew, in the Gulf of Cambay, and tarried there in terror, till “an aged dastoor, reading the tablets of the stars, augured that it behooved them to depart from that place, and take up their abode elsewhere. 280 Whereat, all rejoicing, set sail for Guzerat.” Then came a mighty storm that shook their souls no less than their ships, and rent their hearts and their sails; so that they prayed, trembling, to Ormuzd, the author of light and truth, of heat and goodness, to save them from the infernal spells of Ahriman, minister of darkness, ignorance, and evil. “Deliver us, O Ormuzd! from this sea of trouble, and bring us in safety to the shores of India, that we may kindle on high the flame sacred to thee, and keep it ever bright, fed with obedience and righteousness.”

DOSABHOY FRAMJEE—“The Parsees.”

And Ormuzd hearkened to their piteous prayer, and brought them in safety to the shores of India—to Sanjan, whereof Jadao Rana was the wise and liberal ruler. When Jadao heard of the advent of the tempest-tossed strangers, he commanded that they be brought before him, and demanded who they were.

“We are worshippers of Ormuzd,” replied the venerable dastoor, “and of the Sun, and the Sea.

“We observe silence while bathing, praying, making offerings to fire, and eating.

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“We consume incense, perfumes, and flowers, in our religious ceremonies.

“We wear the sacred garment—the garment of the good and beneficial way—the cincture for the loins, and the cap of two folds.

“We rejoice in songs and instruments of music, in our marriages.

“We adorn and perfume our wives.

“We are enjoined to be bountiful in our charities, and especially to excavate tanks and wells.

“We are enjoined to extend our sympathies toward males as well as females.

“We wear the sacred girdle while praying or eating.

“We feed the sacred flame with incense.

“We practise devotion five times a day.

“We are careful observers of conjugal fidelity and purity.

“We perform annual ceremonies for the souls of our ancestors.

“We have suffered—therefore we are true; we have been patient—therefore we are brave. Give us 282 a hill, whereon we may raise a tower of silence, and bury our dead; give us a field, wherein we may build a temple, and feed our holy flame; give us a stream, wherein we may bathe and pray, girt with the sacred cord. And we will be thy brothers, at peace with thy people, at peace with thy gods.”

And Jadao Rana said: “It is well; ye shall raise your tower of silence, and bury your dead; ye shall build your fire-temple, and feed your holy flame; ye shall bathe in a pure stream, girt with your sacred cincture; and no man shall molest you. But ye shall forget your Parsee language and speak henceforth in our tongue; ye shall cast off your armor and clothe yourselves in our fashion; and when ye marry your young children, ye shall order the marriage ceremonies and processions according to our custom, having your weddings by night; so shall ye be at peace with my people, at peace with my gods.”

The Dastoor promised as the Rana required; and thus it is with My Parsee Neighbor.

But what now? Here truly is something imposing—a chariot-and-four,—four spanking Arabs in 283 gold-mounted trappings—a fat and elaborate coachman, very solemn—two tall *hurkarus*, or avant-couriers, supporting the box, one on either side, with studied symmetry, like Siva and Vishnu

upholding the throne of Brahma—four *syces* running at the horses' heads, each with his *chowree*, or fly-flapper, made from the tail of the Thibet cow—a fifth before, to clear the way—a basket of *simpkin*, which is as though one should say Champagne, behind—and our own *Banyan*, our man of contracts and ready lacs, that shrewd broker and substantial banker, the Baboo Kalidas Ramaya Mullick, on the back seat.

“*Hi! Chattah-wallah! Bheestee!—Hi! hi!*—You chap with the umbrella, you fellow with the water, clear the way! This Baboo comes, the Baboo rides—he stops not, he stays not—he is rich, he is honored. Shall a pig impede him? Shall a pig delay him? Jump, *sooa*, jump!”

And thus, amid much vociferation, and unceremonious dispersing of the common herd, who dodge with practised agility right and left, the fat and elaborate coachman pulls up the spanking Arabs at our *godown* 284 gate, and the Baboo alights with the air of a gentleman of thirty lacs, to the manner born; to him all this outcry is but *Mamoul*—usage, custom—and *Mamoul* is to him as air.

As the Baboo steps through the wide-swinging gate and enters the place that owns him master, let us mark his reception. The *Durwan* first—our grenadier doorkeeper, the man of proud port and commanding presence, to whom that portal is a post of honor—our Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, in one, of courage, strength and address, enlisted with fidelity. The loyalty of Ramee Durwan is threefold, in this order: first to his caste, next to his beard, and then to his post; only for the two first would he abandon the last; his life he holds of less account than either.

As the Baboo passes, Ramee Durwan, you think, will be ready with profound and obsequious salaam. Not so; he draws himself up to the very last of his extraordinary inches, and touches his forehead lightly with the fingers of his right hand, only slightly inclining his head—a not more than affable salute—almost with a quality of concession, gracious as well as 285 graceful; he would do as much for any puppy of a cadet who might drop in on the Sahib. On the other hand, lowly louteth the Baboo, with eyes downcast, and palm applied reverentially to his sleek forehead.

How now? This Baboo is a banyan of solid substance, and the Mullicks all are citizens of credit and renown; while Ramee Durwan gets five rupees a month, and makes his bed at the gate. Last year,

they say, when little Dwarkanath Mullick, the Baboo's adopted son, nine years old, was married to the tender child Vinda, old Lulla Seal's darling, on her fifth birthday, the Baboo Kalidas Ramaya Mullick made the occasion famous, by liberating fifty prisoners-for-debt, of the Soodra sort, with as many flourishes of his illustrious signature. Ramee Durwan has not a change of turbans.

And now the Baboo passes into the godown, and receives from a score of servile *circars*, glibbest of clerks, their several reports of the day's business. Presently, from his low desk, in the lowliest corner, uprises, and comes forward quietly, Mutty Loll Roy, the head *circar*—venerable, placid, pensive, every way 286 interesting; but he is only the Baboo's head *circar*, an humble accountant, on fifteen rupees a month. Do you perceive that fact in the style of his salutation? Hardly; for the Baboo piously raises his joined hands high above his head, and, louting lower than before, murmurs the Orthodox salutation, *Namaskarum!* Yet the Baboo contributed two thousand rupees in fireworks to the last Doorga Pooja, and sent a hundred goats to the altar; while only with many and trying shifts of saving, could Mutty Loll afford gold leaf for one image, beside two tomtoms and a horn to march before it in procession. But behold the lordly beneficence in Mutty Loll's attitude and gesture, as with outstretched hands, palms upward, he greets the Baboo condescendingly with a gift of good-will!

“*Idhur auo, Sirdar, idhur auo!* —Come hither, Karlee, my gentle bearer, thou of the good heart and grey moustache! Come hither, and enlighten this Sahib's ignorance; tell him why the Durwan is disdainful, as toward the Baboo, and the *Circar* solemn.”

“*Han, Sahib!* That Durwan *Ksatriye*, Soldier caste, Rider caste—feest-i-rat-i-man (first-rate man); 287 that Durwan have got Rajpoot blood, ver-iproud, all same Sahib. Baboo, Merchant cast—ver-igood caste, plenty rich, but not so proud Durwan caste; Baboo not have Rajpoot blood, not have i-sharp i-sword, not have musiket. Durwan arm all same tiger; Durwan beard all same lion; Durwan plenty i-strong, plenty proud.

“That *Circar*—ah! that Mutty Loll, too high caste; that *Circar* Brahmin—Kooleen Brahmin—all same *Swamy* (god); that *Circar* foot all same Baboo head; that *Circar* shoe all same Baboo turban.

'spose Baboo not make that Circar *bhote-bhote salaam*, that Circar say curse, that Circar ispeak *jou-jehannum* (go to hell). Master understand i-me? I ispeak Master so Master know?"

"Very clear, Karlee—and wholesome expounding. But here comes the Baboo to speak for himself. —Good-day, Baboo! Whither so fast with the spanking Arabs and the simpkin? —to the garden-house?"

"To the garden-house, Sahib; and the simpkin is for two young English friends of mine, who will do the garden-house the honor to make it their own for a day or two."

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"Take care, Baboo! take care! I have my doubts as to the simpkin. They do say the orthodoxy of 'Young Bengal' men is none the better for beef-steaks and Heidsieck; such diet does not become the son of a strict and straight-going heathen. Well may the Brahmins groan for the glaring scandals of the new lights; you'll be marrying widows next, and dining at clubs with fast ensigns."

"Sahib, Caste is God, and Mamoul is his prophet. The church of the Churruck post, and the orgies of Hooly, is in no danger from beef or Simpking, so long as steak or bottle costs a man his inheritance; and we of Young Bengal know too well how hard are the ways of the Pariah to try them for fun. Caste is God, and Mamoul is his prophet. The 'Glad tidings of Great Joy' your missionaries bring, fall upon ears stopped with family pride and the family jewels: you know that appropriate old saw in our proverbial philosophy, 'What is the news of the day to a frog in a well?' — *Salaam Sahib!* I have but a few minutes to spare, and the supercargo is waiting with the indigo samples.

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Presently, as the Cossitollah panorama flows on beneath our window, with all its bizarreness from the bazaars—its box-wallahs, and its pawn-makers, its pedlars of toys, its money-changers and shopmen, its basket-makers and mat-weavers and chattah-menders, its perambulating cobblers and tailors, its jugglers, gymnasts, and nautch-girls—its fellows who feed on glass bottles, for the astonishment and delectation of the Sahibs, or who, if you have such a thing as a sheep about

you, will undertake to slaughter and skin it with their teeth, and devour it on the spot—its conjure wallahs, who, for a few pice, will run sharp foils through each other's bodies, without for a moment disturbing either health or cheerfulness, or will make mangoes grow under table-cloths, “all fair and proper,” while Master waits—as the Brahmin still dodges the shadow of the Soodra, and the Soodra spits upon the footprint of the Pariah, the Baboo returns to his chariot; the fat and solemn coachman gathers up the reins, the hurkarus assume their symmetrical attitudes on the box, the syces bawl, and the soos jump.

Just now, a *palkee-gharree*, cheapest of one-horse 290 vehicles, with but one half-naked syce running at the pony's head, and never a footman near, passes the spanking Arabs; the plain turban of a respectable accountant in the Honorable Company's coal office at Garden Reach, shows between the Venetian slats of the little window; and lo! our fine Baboo steps out of his slippers, and standing barefoot in the common dust of Cossitollah—dust that has been churned by all the pig's feet that ply that promiscuous thoroughfare—humbly touches, first the vulgar ground, and then his elegant turban, murmuring a pious *Namaskarum*; for the respectable accountant in the Honorable Company's coal office is, like Mutty Loll, a Kooleen Brahmin—only a little more so. Caste is God, and Mamoul is his prophet!

At the gate-lodge of the Baboo's garden-house, on the Durumtollah Road, a grey and withered hag, all crippled and leprosid, sits *duhrna*.

What may that be?

Be patient; you shall know.

When the Baboo was as yet a youth, his uncle Rajinda, the pride of the Mullicks, died of cholera, and 291 the administration of the estate devolved upon our free-thinking Kalidas. Of course there were mortgages to foreclose, and delinquent debtors to stir up. A certain small shopkeeper, of China Bazaar, was responsible to the concern for a few thousand rupees, wherewith he had been accommodated by Uncle Rajinda, as a basis for certain operations in seersuckers and castor-oil, that had yielded no returns. So our Baboo, in a curt *chit* (that is, note, or *sheet* of paper, as near as a

Bengalee can come to the word), bade the small speculator of China Bazaar come down forth-with with the rupees.

But, behold you now, “he had paid,” he said! “By the Holy Ganges and the Blessed Cow! by the turban of his father and the veil of his mother! restitution had been made long ago,” the old man said; and the soul of Uncle Rajinda, the pride of the Mullicks, had no reason to be disquieted for the rupees, though the seersuckers had been but vanity, and the castor-oil vexation of spirit.

“Produce the documents,” said the Baboo, with a business-like impassibility that in Wall Street would 292 have made him a great bear;—“where are the receipts?”

“My Lord, I know not. Prostrating my unworthy turban beneath the lovely lilies of your feet, I swear to my *gureeb purwar*, the destitute-and-humble-protecting lord, by the Holy Water and the Blessed Cow, by the beard of my father and the veil of my mother, that I settled the little account long ago.”

That unhappy speculator in seersuckers and castor-oil died in prison, and a *gooroo* (that is, a spiritual teacher), feed by the Baboo, desolated his last hour with the assurance that he should transmigrate into the bodies of seven generations of gharree-horses, and drag *feringhee* sailor-men, in a state of beer, from the ghauts to the punch-houses, all his miserable lives.

Now whether or not the unlucky little speculator had in good faith discharged the debt will, in all the probabilities of human rights and wrongs, never appear this side of the Last Trump; for the Holy Water and the Sacred Cow, his father's beard and his mother's veil, were not good in law, the documents not forthcoming.

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But it is certain that his widow had faith in his integrity; for at once, with all her sorrows on her head, she sallied forth in quest of justice; and from Brahmin post to Sahib pillar she went crying, “See me righted! Against this hard and arrogant Baboo let my wrongs be redressed, or fear the Evil Eye of Dookhee the Sorrowful, of Haranu the Lost!”

But utterly in vain; for the clamor of the Hindoo widow, however bitterly aggrieved, is but a nuisance, and her accusation insolence. So in her pitiful outcasting, in all the forlorn loathsomeness of leprosy, and the shunned squalor of a cripple, she sat down at the Baboo's gate, to wait for justice till the gods should bestow it—till Siva, the Avenger, should behold her, and ask “Who has done this?”

And who shall challenge her? Who shall bid her move on? Mamoul has crowned her Queen of Tears, and her sublime patience and appealing have made a throne of the wayside stone on which she sits; there is no power so audacious that it would give the word to depose her; her matted gray locks and her furrowed cheeks, her sunken eyes and her hungry 294 lips, are her “sacred ashes” of the high caste of Sorrow.

The Brahmin averts his face as he passes, and mutters, “She is as the flower which is out of reach—she is dedicated to God.” That insolent official, the Baboo's pampered durwan, sees in her only Mamoul; he would as soon think of shaving himself as of driving her away. So, as the Baboo passes in or out through the great gate, the solemn coachman ships up the spanking Arabs, and the syces bawl louder than ever, and Kalidas Ramaya Mullick turns away his eyes. But for all that, the Duhrna Woman heaps dust upon her head, which he sees, and mutters a weird warning, which he hears; and though the lawn is wide, and the banian topes are leafy, and a gilded temple, the family shrine, stands between, and the marble veranda is spacious, and the state apartments remote, they do say the shadow of the Duhrna Woman falls on the iced simpkin and the steaks, in spite of Young Bengal.

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Mootrib i koosh nuwà bigo, Tazu bu tazu, nou bu nou! Baduè dil kooshà bidoh, Tazu bu tazu, nou bu nou! Koosh biu sheen bu kilwuté Chung nuwaz-a-sa-uté, Bosu sitan bu kam uz o, Tazu bu tazu, nou bu nou!

“Songster sweet, begin the lay, Ever sweet and ever gay! Bring the joy-inspiring wine, Ever fresh and ever fine! With a heart-alluring lass Gayly let the moments pass, Kisses stealing while you may, Ever fresh and ever gay!”

Now surely she who thus sings should be beautiful, after the Hindoo type; —that is, she should have the complexion of chocolate and cream; “her face should be as the full moon, her nose smooth as a flute; she should have eyes like unto lotoses, and a neck like a pigeon's; her voice should be soft as the 296 cuckoo's, and her step as the gait of a young elephant of pure blood.” Let us see.

Alas, no! She entertains a set of lazy bearers smoking the hubble-bubble around a palanquin as they wait for a fare; and her buksheesh may be a cowry or two. By no means is she of the nautch-maidens of Lucknow, who were wont to lighten the hours of debauched majesty, between the tiger-fights and the games of leap-frog; by no means is she ringed as to her fingers or belled as to her toes; and though she carries her music wherever she goes, she also carries a shiny brown baby, slung in a canvas tray between her shoulders.

No excessively voluminous folds of gold-embroidered drapery encumber her supple limbs; but her skirts are of the scantiest (what Miss Flora MacFilmsey would call *skimped*), and pitifully mean as to quality. By no means have the imperial looms of Benares contributed to her professional costume a veil of wondrous fineness and a Nabob's price; but a narrow red strip of some poor cotton stuff crosses her bosom like a scarf, and leaves exposed too much of 297 the ruins of once daintier beauties. A string of glass beads, black and red alternate, are all her jewels—save one silver bodkin, all forlorn, in her hair, and a ring of thin gold wire piercing the right nostril, and, with an effect completely deforming, encircling the lips. Her teeth and nails are deeply stained, and the darkness of her eyes is enhanced by artificial shadows.

And so, while that baby-Tantalus, catching glimpses over the unveiled shoulder of the Micawberian fount he cannot reach, stretches his little brown arms, bites, kicks, and squalls—while a small female apprentice, by way of chorus, in costume and gesture absurdly caricaturing her *prima donna* (a sort of Cossitollah Marchioness, indeed, for some Dick Swiveller of the Sahibs), shuffles

rheumatically with her feet, or impotently dislocates her slender arms, or pounds insanely on a cracked tomtom, or jangles her clumsy cymbals, while the squatting bearers cry, “*Wah wah!*” and clap their sweaty hands—our poor old glee-maiden of Cossitollah strums her two-stringed guitar, letting the baby slide, and creaks corkscrewishly her *Chota, chota natchelee*:—

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Badi subá choo boog zuree Bur suri koöe an puree, Qussué Hafiz ush bigò, Tazu bu tazu, nou bu nou! “Zephyrs, while you gently move By the mansion of my love, Softly Hafiz' strains repeat, Ever new and ever sweet!”

Heaven save the key!

“*Ka munkta*, Bearer?—what is it, my gentle Karlee?”

“*Chittee, Sahib!*—*chittee* for Master.”

“Note, hey? from whom? let us see!”

Pink paper—scented with sandal-wood, pah!—embossed, too, with cornucopias in the corners—seal motto, *Qui hi?* (“Who waits?”)—denoting that the bearer is to bring an answer. Now for the inside:—

“DEVOTED AND RESPECTFUL SIR:—

“Insured of your pitiful conduct, your obsequious 299 suppliant, an eleëmosynary lady oof decrepit widowhood, throws herself at your Excellency's mercy feet with two inbecile childrens of various denominations. For our Heavenly Father's sake, if not inconvenient—which we have been beneficently bereaved of other paternal description—we humbly present our implorations to your munificent Excellency, if any small change, to bestow the same, which it will be eternally acceptable to said eleëmosynary widow of late Colonel with distinguished medal in Honorable Service, deceased of cholera, which it was sudden attacks and us pretty near destitute. Therefore, hoping your munificent and respectable Excellency will not order, being scornful, your pitiful

Excellency's durwan to disperse us; but five rupees, which nothing to your Excellency's regards, and our tenacious gratitude never forget; but kissing Excellency's hands on indifferent occasions, and throwing at mercy feet with two imbecile offsprings of different denominations, I shall ever pray, &c.

“MRS. DIANA, THEODOSIA, COMFORT, GREEN.

“P.S. If not five rupees, two rupees five annas, 300 in name of Excellency's exalted mother, if quite convenient.”

There now! for an imposing structure in the florid style of half-caste begging-letters, Mrs. Diana Theodosia Comfort Green flatters herself that is hard to beat.

“‘*Qui hi?*’ —Karlee, who is at the gate?”

“*Mem Sahib!* one chee-chee woman wanch look see Master, ispeakee Master buksheesh give; *paunch butcha* have got.”

“*Paunch butch!*—*five* children! why, Karlee, there are but two here. But remembering, I suppose, that my Excellency has but two ‘mercy feet,’ and with an eye to symmetry in the arrangement of the grand tableau of which she proposes to make me the central figure, she has made it two ‘imbecile offsprings’ for the looks of the thing. Do you know her, Karlee?”

“*Han, Sahib!* too much quentence have got that chee-chee woman; that chee-chee woman all same dam iscamp; *paunch butcha* not have got, —one 301 *butcha* not have got. Master not give buksheesh; no good that woman, Karlee think.”

“Very well, old man; send her away; tell the durwan to disperse Mrs. Diana Theodosia Comfort Green; but let him not insult her decrepit widow-hood, nor alarm her imbecile offsprings of various denominations. For the ‘Eurasian’ is a great institution, without which polkas at Coolee Bazaar were not, nor pic-nics *dansantes* at Chandernagore.”

But now to tiffin. I smell a smell of curried prawns, and the first mangoes of the season are fragrant. Buxsoo, the khansamah, has cooled the *ish-erry-shrob*, as he calls the “green seal,” and the kit-mudgars are crying, “*Tiffin, Sahib!*” The Mamoul of meal-time knows no caste or country. *Bur zi hyat ky kooree! Gur nu moodam, mi kooree! Badu bi koor bu yadi o, Tazu bu tazu, nou bu nou!*

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“Gentle boy, whose silver feet Nimbley move to cadence sweet, Fill us quick the generous wine, Ever fresh and ever fine!”

CHAPTER II.

A TIFFIN OF TALK

LITTLE KIRSAJEE—THE MONKEY-GOD.

How runs the Hindoo saw? “Are we not to milk when there is a cow?” When Indian is giving down generous streams of paragraphy to all the greedy buckets of the press, shall I not hold my pretty pail under? As my genial young friend, Ensign Isnob, of the “Sappies and Minors,” would say—“I believe you, me boy!”

Then come with me to Cossitollah, and we'll have a tiffin of talk; some cloves of adventure, with a capsicum or two of tragic story, shall stand for the curry; the customs of the country may represent the familiar rice; a whiff of freshness and fragrance from the Mofussil will be as the mangoes and the dorians; in the piquancy and grotesqueness of the first pure Orientalism that may come to hand we shall recognise 304 the curious chow-chow of the chutney; and as for the beer—why, we will be the beer ourselves.

“Kitmudgar, remove that scorpion from the punka, before it drops into the Sahib's plate.—Hold, miscreant! who told you to kill it? “Take it up tenderly, Lift it with care— Fashioned so slenderly, Young and *so fair!*”

“For know, O Kitmudgar, that there is one beauty of women, and another beauty of scorpions; and if the beauty of scorpions be to thee as the ugliness of women, the fault is in thy godless eye.

“‘Only a crawling kaffir,’ sayest thou, O heathen! and straightway goest about to stick a fork into a political symbol? Verily, the hapless wretch shall be sacrificed unto Agnee, god of Fire, that a timely warning may enter into thy purblind soul!

“Here, take this bottle of brandy— ‘*Sahib* brandy,’ you perceive—genuine old ‘London Dock’ — and pour a cordon of ardent spirits on the table, to weave 305 a circle round him thrice.’ So! that's for British Ascendency!

“Now drop your subjugated brother into the midst thereof. See how, in his senseless, drunken rage, he wriggles and squirms—then desperately dashes, and venomously snaps! That's Indian Revolt!

“Quickly, now! light the train; so!—What think you of Anglo-Saxon Power and hereditary pride?

“Oho, my Kitmudgar! you begin to understand!—the living fable is not lost on you!

“But watch your Great Mogul! Barrackpore, Meerut, Cawnpore, Lucknow, Delhi—five imposing plunges, but impotent; for at every point the Sahib's fatal fire, fire, fire, fire, fire!—insurmountable, all-sub-duing ‘destiny!’

“Maimed, discomfited, dismayed, shivering, at wits' end, a crippled wriggler, in the midst of exulting flames—there lies your Great Mogul!

“But see!—the Scorpion, brave wretch! with a gladiator's fortitude, loosens the shameful coil in which its last agonies have twisted it, fiercely erects its head once more, lashes defiantly with its tail, 306 and then— *click! click! click!* —stings itself to death.

“And with that ends our figure of speech; for only the pitifulness of the defeat is the Great Mogul's; the sublimity of the suicide is proper to the scorpion alone.

“Take away the fable, Kitmudgar!”

I lay in bed this morning half an hour after the sun had risen, watching my Parsee neighbor on his house-top, and thereby lost my drive on the Esplanade. But I console myself with imagining that the pretty Chee-chee spinster who comes every morning from Raneemoody Gully in a green tonjon, and makes romantic eyes at me through the silk curtains, missed the New York gentleman with the gray moustache, and was lonesome.

My Parsee neighbor is quite as fat, but by no means as saucy, as ever. Last week his youngest boy died—little Kirsajee Jamsajee Bonnarjee, a contemplative young fire-worshipper, with eyes as profound as the philosophy of Zoroaster. I saw the dismal 307 procession depart from the house, and my heart ached for the little Gheber.

Four awful creatures, that were like ghosts, clad all in white, solemnly dumb and veiled, bore him away on an iron bier. When they arrived at the draw-bridge, great sheets of copper were spread before them, and they crossed upon those; for wood is sacred to their adored Element, and the touch of “them on whose shoulders the dead doth ride” would pollute it.

So they carried little Kirsajee to Golgotha, their Place of Skulls, which is a dreary, treeless field, encompassed round about with a blank wall; and they laid him naked in a stone trough on the edge of a great pit, and left him there, betaking them, still solemnly veiled and mute, to their homes again.

All but my Parsee neighbor; he went and sat him down, like Hagar in the wilderness, over against the dead Kirsajee, “a good way off, as it were a bow-shot;” and he lifted up his voice, and wept for the lad that was dead. But still he waited there, till the crows and the Brahminee kites should come to perform the 308 last horrid rites; for to Parsee custom the sepulture most becoming to men, most acceptable to God, is in the stomachs of the fowls of the air, in the craws of ghoulish vultures and sacrilegious crows.

And presently there came a great Pondicherry eagle, sniffing the feast from afar; and he came alone. Swiftly sailing, poised on tranquil wings, he circled over the “Tower of Silence,” circle within circle, circle below circle, over the child sleeping naked, over the father watching veiled.

One moment he flutters, as for a foot-hold on the pinnacle of his purpose; then— “Like a thunderbolt he falls.”

Sitting solemnly on the breast of the dead boy, the “grim, ungainly, gaunt, and ominous bird” peers with sidelong glance into his face, gloating; and then—

Immediately my Parsee neighbor uprises in his place, throws aside his veil, and, shouting, runs forward. The Pondicherry eagle soars screaming to the clouds, and the sorrow-stricken Gheber bends over 309 the dear corpse. Is it Heaven or Hell? *the right eye or the left?* Alas, the left!

He beats his breast, he falls upon his knees, and cries with frantic gestures to the setting Sun; but the sullen god only draws a cloud before his face, and leaves his poor worshipper to despair. Then my Parsee neighbor arises and girds up his loins, muffles his haggard face more closely than before, and with dishevelled beard, and chin sadly sunk upon his breast, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, and meeting no man's gaze, wends silently homeward.

To-morrow he will take his wife and go to Bombay, to feed with consecrated sandal-wood and oil the Sacred Flame the Magi brought from Persia, when they were driven thence with all their people to Ormuz. But the name of little Kirsajee shall cross their lips no more; his memory is a forbidden thing in the household; he is as if he never had been.

When Brahminee kite, and adjutant, and white-breasted crow have done their ghoulish office on little Kirsajee, his bones shall lie bleaching under the 310 pitiless eye of his people's blazing god, till the rains come, and fill the pit, and carry the waste of Gheber skeletons by subterraneous sewers down to the sea. But the Pondicherry eagle took the *left eye* first; wherefore the most pious deeds of merit, to be performed by my Parsee neighbor—even a hospital for maimed dogs, or feeding the Sacred Flame with great store of sandal-wood and precious gums, or tilling the earth with a

diligence equivalent to the efficacy of ten thousand prayers—can hardly suffice to save the soul of little Kirsajee, the Forbidden!

There is a blood-feud of three months' standing between two members of our household.

One day, Loozee, the chuprassee's cat, took Tchoop, the Khansamah's monkey, unawares, as he was sunning himself on the house-top, and with scratching and spitting, sudden and furious, so startled him, that he threw himself over the parapet into the crowded Cossitollah, and would have been killed by the fall, had he not chanced to alight on the voluminous turban of a dandy hurkaru from the Mint. As it was, 311 one of his arms sustained a compound fracture, and his nerves suffered so frightful a shock, that it was only by a miracle of surgery, and the most patient nursing, that he was ever restored to his wonted agility and sagacity.

But the day of retribution has arrived; Loozee has had kittens. There were five of them in the original litter; but only one remains. Tchoop tossed two of them from the house-top when no dandy hurkaru from the Mint was below to soften the fall; the old adjutant-bird, that for three years has stood on one leg on the Parsee's godown, gobbled up another as it lay choked in the south verandah; while the dismayed sirdar found the head of a fourth jammed inextricably in the neck of his sacred lotah, wherewith he performs his pious ablutions every morning at the ghaut.

On the other hand, Loozee has made prize of about three inches of Tchoop's tail, and displays it all over the house for a trophy. It is a blood-feud, fierce and implacable as any between Afghans, and there's no knowing where it will all end.

In Europe the monkey is a cynic, in South 312 America an overworked slave, in Africa a citizen, but in India an imp—I mean to the eye of the Western stranger, for in the estimation of the native he is mythologically a demigod, and socially a guest. At Ahmedabad, the capital of Guzerat, there are certainly two—Mr. De Ward says three—hospitals for sick and lame monkeys, who are therein provided with salaried physicians, apothecaries, and nurses.

In the famous Hindoo epic, the “Ramayana” of Valmiek,—“by singing and hearing which continually a man may attain to the highest state of enjoyment, and be shortly admitted to fraternity with the gods,”—the exploits of Hoonamunta, the Divine Monkey, are gravely related, with a dramatic force and figurativeness that hold a street audience spellbound; but to the European imagination the childish drollery of the plot is irresistible.

Boodhir, the Earth, was beset by giants, demons, and chimeras dire; so she besought Vishnu, with many tears, and vows of peculiar adoration, to put forth his strength of arms and arts against her abominable tormentors, and rout them utterly. The god was 313 gracious; whence his nine avatars, or incarnations—as fish, as tortoise, as boar, as man-lion, as dwarf Brahmin, as Pursuram—the Brahmin-warrior who overthrew the Kshatriya, or soldier-caste; the eighth avatar appeared in the person of Krishna, and the ninth in that of Boodh.

But the seventh incarnation was the avatar of Rama, and it is this that the “Ramayana” celebrates.

Vishnu proceeds to be born unto Doosurath, King of Ayodhya (Oude), as the Prince Rama, or Ramchundra. Nothing remarkable occurs thereupon until Rama has attained the marriageable age, when he espouses Seeta, daughter of the King of Mithili.

Immediately old Mrs. Mithili, our hero's mother-in-law, being of an intriguing turn of mind, applies herself to the amiable task of worrying the poor old King of Ayodhya out of his crown or his life; and so well does she succeed, that Doosurath, for the sake of peace and quietness, would fain abdicate in favor of his son.

But Rama will have none of his royalty. Was it for bored kings and mischief-making mothers-in-law, 314 he asks, speaking with the ante-natal memories of Vishnu, that he came among the sons of men? Not at all! he has a mission, and he bides his time. For the present he will take his wife Seeta, whose will is his, and go out into the wilderness, there to build him a hut of bamboos and banian-boughs and palmyra-leaves, and be—Seeta and he—two jolly yogees, that is, religious gypsies—living on grass-roots, wild rice, and white ants, and being dirty and devout to their hearts' content.

So they went; and for a little while they enjoyed, undisturbed, their yogeeish ideas of a good time. But by-and-by tidings came to Rawunna—the giant with ten heads and twice ten arms, that was King of Lunka (Ceylon)—of the plots of Mrs. Mithili, the disgust of old Doosurath, the distraction of the kingdom of Ayodhya, and the whimsical adventure of Rama and Seeta.

And immediately Rawunna, the giant, is seized in all his heads and arms with a great longing to know what manner of man this Rama may be, that he should prefer the yogee's breech-cloth to the royal 315 purple, a hut of leaves, with only his Seeta, to a harem of a hundred wives, white ants and paddy to the white camel's flesh and golden partridges of Avodhya's imperial repasts. Especially is he curious as to the charms of Seeta, as to the mighty magic wherewithal she renders monogamy acceptable to an Ayodhyan prince.

By Indra! he will see for himself! So, pleading exhaustion from the cares of state, and ten headaches of trouble and dyspepsia, he announces his intention to make an excursion a few hundred coss into the country for the benefit of his health; and taking twenty carpet-bags in his hands, he sets out, in his monstrous way, for Ayodhya, leaving his kingdom in the care of a blue dwarf with an eye in the back of his neck.

With seven-coss strides he comes to Ayodhya, and straightway finds the banian hut in the forest, where Rama dwells with Seeta in the devout dirtiness of their jolly yogeeery.

The god has gone abroad in search of a dinner, and is over the hills to the sandy nullahs, where the white 316 ants are fattest; while that greasy Joan, Seeta, “doth keel the pot” at home.

Then Rawunna, the giant, assuming the shape of a pilgrim yogee rolling to the Caves of Ellora—with Gayntree, the mystical text, on his lips, and the shadow of Siva's beard in his soul—rolls to Rama's door, and cries, “Alms, alms! in the name of the Destroyer!”

And Seeta comes forth with water in a palm-leaf, and grass-roots in the fold of her saree; and when she beholds the false yogee her heart blooms with pity, so that her smile is as the alighting of butterflies, and her voice as the rustling of roses.

But, behold you, as she bends over the prostrate yogee, and, saying “Drink from the cup of Vishnu!” offers the crisp leaf to his dusty lips, a great spasm of desire impels the impostor; and, flinging off the yogee, he leaps erect—Rawunna, the Abhorred!

With ten mouths he kisses her; with twenty arms he clasps her; and away, away to Lunka! while yet poor Seeta gasps with fear.

When Rama returned and found no Seeta, his soul³¹⁷ was seized with a mighty horror; and a blankness, like unto the mystery of Brahm, fell upon his heart. He shed not a tear, but the sky wept floods; he uttered not a groan, but Earth shook from her centre, and the mountains fell on their faces. But Rama, stupified, stood stock-still where he was stricken, and stared, till his eyelids stiffened, at the desolate hut, at the desolate hearth.

Then all the angels in heaven, who had witnessed the crime of Rawunna, and his flight, passed into the forms of monkeys; and a million of them made a monkey chain, that the rest of the celestial host might descend into the banian-groves of Ayodhya. The tails glide swiftly through each glowing hand, and quick as lightning on the trees they stand.

And Hoonamunta, their chief, prostrated himself before Rama, and said, “Behold, my Lord, we are here! I and all my host are yours—command us!”

But Rama spake not; he only stood where he was stricken, and stared at his desolation.

Then Hoonamunta turned him to his host, and said, “Bide here till I come, and be silent; break not the³¹⁸ quiet of divine sorrow.” And he went forth with mighty bounds.

That night he came to Lunka. But the city slept; if Seeta yet lived, she, too, was silent; no cry of sorrow rose on the night; no stir, as of an unusual event, disturbed the stillness and the gloom.

So Hoonamunta took upon himself the form of a rat, and sped nimbly through the huts of dwarfs and the towers of giants, through the hiding-places of misery and the high seats of power, through the places of trouble and the places of ease; till at last he came to an ivory dome, hard by the silver palace of Rawunna, the Monstrous; and there lay Seeta, buried in a profound trance of despair.

Hoonamunta bit, very tenderly, her slender white finger; but she stirred not, she made no sign.

Then he whispered softly in her ear “Rama comes!” and Seeta started from her death-sleep, and sat erect; her eyes were open, and she cried, “My Lord, I am here!”

So Hoonamunta spake to her, bidding her be of good cheer, for Brahm was with her, and the 319 Omnipotent Three—bade her be of good heart and wait. And Seeta's smile was as the alighting of many butterflies, and her voice of murmured joy was as the rustling of all the roses of Ayodhya.

Then Hoonamunta took counsel with his cunning; and he said unto himself, “I will arouse the sleepers; I will take the strength of the city; I will count the heads of Rawunna, and the arms of him.”

So straightway he resumed his monkey shape, and went forth into the streets, by the tanks and through the bazaars, among the places of the oppressed and the places of the powerful.

And he bit the ears of the Pariah dogs, so that they howled; he twisted the tails of the Brahmin bulls, so that they rushed, bellowing, down to the ghauts; he plucked the beards of gorged adjutants, till they snapped their great beaks with a terrible clatter.

He made a great splashing in the tanks; he ran through the bazaars, banging the gongs of the bell-makers, and smashing the brittle wares of the potters; he tore holes in the roofs of houses, and threw

down tiles upon them that were buried in slumber; he 320 cried with a loud voice, “Siva, Siva, the Destroyer, cometh!”

So that the city awoke with a great outcry and a din, with all its torches and all its dogs. And the multitude filled the streets, and the compounds, and the open places round about the tanks; and all cried, “Siva, Siva!”

But when they beheld Hoonamunta, how he tore off roofs, and pelted them with tiles—how he climbed to the tops of pagodas, and jangled the sacred bells—how he laid his shoulder to the city walls and overthrew them, so that the noise of their fall was as the roar of the breakers on the far-off coast of Lunka when the Typhoon blows—then they cried, “A demon! a fiend from the halls of Yama!” and they gave chase with a mighty uproar—the gooroos, and the yogeas, and the jugglers going first.

Then Hoonamunta took counsel with his cunning; and he came down and stood in the midst of the angry people, and asked, “What would you with me? and where is this demon you pursue?”

But they cried, “Hear him, how he mocks us! Hear 321 him, how he flouts us!” and they dragged him into the presence of Rawunna, the king.

And when the giant would have questioned him, who he was, and whence he came, and what his mission, he only mocked, and mimicked the fee-faw-fum-ness of Rawunna's tones, and said, “Lo! this beggar goes a-foot, but his words ride in a palanquin!”

And the king said, “I have been foolish, I have been weak, to waste words on this kaffir. Am not I a mighty monarch? Am not I a terrible giant? Let him be cast out!”

And again Hoonamunta mocked him, saying, “His insanity is past! fetch him the rice-pounder that he may gird himself! fetch him the gong that he may cover his feet!”

And Hoonamunta would have sat on the throne, on Rawunna's right hand; but Rawunna thrust him off, and cursed him.

So Hoonamunta took his tail in his hand, and pulled and pulled; and the tail grew, and grew—a fathom, a furlong, a whole coss.

And Hoonamunta coiled it on the floor, a lofty coil, 322 on the right hand of the throne, higher and higher, till it overlooked the golden cushion of the king; and Hoonamunta laughed.

Then Rawunna turned him to his councillors, and said, “What shall we do with this audacious fellow?”

And with one voice all the councillors cried, “Burn his tremendous tail!”

And the king commanded: Let all the dwarfs of Lunka Bring rags from near and far; Call all the dwarfs of Lunka To soak them well in tar!”

So they went and brought as many rags as ten strong giants could lift, and a thousand maunds of tar.

And they soaked the rags in the tar, even as Rawunna had commanded, and bound them all at once on the tremendous tail of Hoonamunta.

And when they had done this, the king said, “Lead him forth, and light him!”

And they led him forth into the great Midaun, hard 323 by the triple pagoda; and they lighted his tail with a torch. And immediately the flames leaped to the skies, and the smoke filled all the city.

Then Hoonamunta broke away from his captors, and with a shrill laugh started on his fiery race—over house-tops and hay-ricks, through close bazaars and dry rice-fields, through the porticoes of palaces and the porches of pagodas—kindling a roaring conflagration as he went.

And all the people pursued him, screaming with fear, imploring mercy, imploring pardon, crying, “Spare us, and we will make you our high-priest! Spare us, and you shall be our king!”

But Hoonamunta stayed not, till, having laid half the city in flames, he ascended to the top of a lofty tower to survey his work with satisfaction.

Thither the great men of Lunka followed him—the princes and the Brahmins and the victorious chieftains, the strong giants and the cunning dwarfs.

And when they were all gathered underneath the tower, and in the porch of it, he shook it till it fell, and crushed a thousand of the first citizens.

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Then Hoonamunta sped away northward to Ayodhya, extinguishing his tail in the sea as he went.

And when he came to where his army lay, he found them all waiting in silence. When he entered the hut of Rama, the bereaved one still lay on his face. But Hoonamunta spake softly in his ear: “My Lord, arise! for Seeta calls you, and her heart sickens within her that you come not!”

Immediately Rama uprose, and stood erect, and all the god blazed in his eyes; and he grew in the sight of Hoonamunta until his stature was as the stature of Rawunna, the giant, and his countenance was as the countenance of Indra, King of Heaven.

And he went forth, and stood at the head of Hoonamunta's monkey host, and called for a sword; and when they gave him one, it became alive in his hand, and was a sword of flame; and when they gave him a spear, lo! it became his slave, flying whithersoever he bade and striking where he listed.

So Rama and Hoonamunta, with all their monkey host, took up their march for Lunka.

When they came to the sea (which is the Gulf of 325 Manaar) there was no bridge; but Rama mounted on the back of Hoonamunta, and called to the host to follow him; and all the monkeys leaped across.

Then immediately they fell upon Lunka; and Rama slew Rawunna, the Monster, and rescued the delighted Seeta.

And now those three sit together on a throne in heaven—Seeta, the faithful wife, on the left hand of Rama—and Hoonamunta on his right hand, the shrewd and courageous friend.

Who would not be a monkey in Hindostan?

CHAPTER III.

CHILD-LIFE BY THE GANGES.

WE are told—and, being philosophers, we will amuse ourselves by believing—that there are towns in India, somewhere between Cape Comorin and the Himalayas, wherein everything is *butcha* — that is, “a little chap;” where inhabitants and inhabited are alike in the estate of urchins; where little Brahmins extort little offerings from little dupes at the foot of little altars, and ring little bells, and blow little horns, and pound little gongs, and mutter little rigmaroles before stupid little Krishnas and Sivas and Vishnus, doing their little wooden best to look solemn, mounted on little bulls or snakes, under little canopies; where little Brahmin bulls, in all the little insolence of their little sacred privileges, poke their little noses into the little rice-baskets of pious little maidens in little bazaars, and help their little selves to their little hearts' content, without “begging your little pardons,” or “by your little leaves;” where dirty little fakirs and yogees hold their dirty little arms above their dirty little heads, until their dirty little muscles are shrunk to dirty little rags, and their dirty little fingernails grow through the backs of their dirty little hands—or wear little tenpenny nails thrust through their little tongues till they acquire little chronic impediments in their decidedly dirty little speech—or, by means of little hooks through the little smalls-of-their-backs, circumgyrate from little *churruck* -posts for the edification of infatuated little crowds, and the honor

of horrid little goddesses; where plucky little widows perform their little suttees for defunct little husbands, grilling on little funeral piles; where mangy little Pariah dogs defile the little dinners of little high-caste folks, by stealing hungry little sniffs from sacred little pots; where omnivorous little adjutant-birds gobble up little glass bottles, and bones, and little dead cats, and little old slippers, and bits of little bricks, in front of little shops in little bazaars; where vociferous little 328 circars are driving little bargains with obese little banyans, and consequential little *chowkedars* —that is, policemen—are bullying inoffensive little poor people, and calling them *sooa-logue* —that is, pigs; —where—where, in fine, everything in heathen human-nature happens *butcha*, and the very fables with which the little story-tellers entertain the little loafers on the corners of the little streets, are full of *little* giants and *little* dwarfs. Let us pursue the little idea, and talk *butcha* to the end of this chapter.

When, in Calcutta, you have smitten the dry rock of your lonely life with the magic rod of connubial love, and that well-spring of pleasure, a new baby, has leaped up in the midst of your wilderness of exile, the demonstration, if any, with which your servants will receive the glad tidings, will depend wholly on the “denomination of the imbecile offspring,” as our eleemosynary widow, Mrs. Diana Theodosia Comfort Green, would call it. If it happen to be only a girl, there will be a trace of pity in the silent salaam with which the grim durwan salutes you as you roll into your palkee at the gate, to proceed to the godowns 329 where they are weighing the saltpetre and the gunnybags. As he touches his forehead with his joined palms, he thinks of the difference that color makes to the babivorous crocodiles of Ganges. Perhaps your gray-beard circar, privileged by virtue of high caste and faithful service, will take upon himself to condole with you: “*Khodabund*,” he will say, “better luck next time; Heaven is not always with one's paternal hopes; let us trust that my lord may live to say it might have been worse; let us pray that the *baba's* bridal necklace may be as gay as rubies and as light as lilies, and that she may die before her husband.”

But if to the existing number of your *suntoshums* —the jewels that hang on the Mem Sahib's bosom—a man-child is added, ah! then there is merry-making in the verandahs, and happy salaaming on the stairs; and in the fulness of his Hindoo Sary-Gampness, which counts the Sahib blessed that hath “his quiver full of sich,” he says, *Ap-ki kullejee kaisa burri ho-jaga! Khodá rukho ki beebi-*

ka kullejee bhee itni burri hoga— Gurreeb-purwan! “How large my lord's liver is about to grow! God grant to the Mem Sahib, my 330 exalted lady, a liver likewise large—O favored Protector of the Poor!” the happiness and honors which should follow upon the birth of a male child being figuratively comprehended in that liberality of the liver whence comes the good digestion for which alone life is worth the living.

Many and grievous perils do environ baby-life by the Ganges—perils by *dry* nurses, perils by wolves, perils by crocodiles, perils by the Evil Eye, perils by kidnappers, perils by cobras, perils by devils.

You are living at one of the up-country stations, where the freer air of the jungle imparts to babes and sucklings a voracious appetite. Besides your own *dhye*, brought from Calcutta, there is not another wetnurse to be had, for love or money. Immediately *Dhye* strikes for higher wages. The Baba Sahib, she says, has defiled her rice; yesterday he put his foot into her curry; to-day he washes the monkey's tail in her consecrated lotah. What shall she do? she has lost caste; she presents to the Brahmins, that her reinstatement will cost her, will consume all her earnings from the beginning. *Gurreeb-purwan*, O 331 munificent and merciful! what shall she do? She strikes for higher wages. But you are hard-hearted and hard-headed; you will not pay—by Gunga, not another pice! by Latchmee, not one cowry more!—Oh, then she will leave; with a heavy heart she will turn her back on the blessed baby; she will pour dust upon her head before the Mem Sahib, at whose door her disgrace shall lie, and she will return to her kindred. Not she! the *durwan*, grim and incorruptible, has his orders; she cannot pass the gate. Oho! then immediately she dries up; no “fount,” and Baby famishing. You try ass's milk; it does not agree with Baby; besides, it costs a rupee a pint. You try a goat; *she* does not agree with Baby, for she butts him tremendously, and, leaping over his prostrate body, scampers, like Leigh Hunt's pig in Smithfield Market, up all manner of figurative streets. Then you send for *Dhye*, and say, “Milk, or I shave your head!” Milk or Death! And, lo, a miracle!—the “fount” again!—Baby is saved.

What was, then, the conjuration and the mighty magic? In the folds of her *saree* the *dhye* conceals 332 leaves of *chambeli*, the Indian jessamine, roots of *dhallapee*, the jungle radish. She chews

the chambeli, and hungry Baby, struggling for the “fount,” is insulted with apples of Sodom; she swallows a portion of dhallapee, and he is regaled as with the melting melons of Ceylon.

Some fine afternoon your ayah takes your little Johnny to stroll by the river's bank—to watch the green budgerows, as they glide, pulled by singing *dandees* (so the boatmen of Ganges are called) up to Patna—to watch the brown corpses, as they float silently down from Benares. At night the ayah returns, wringing her hands. Where is your merry darling? She knows not. *O Khodobund*, go ask the evil spirits! O Sahib, go cry unto Gunga—go accuse the greedy river, and say to the envious waters, “Give back my boy!” She had left him sitting on a stone, she says, counting the sailing corpses, while she went to find a blue-jay's nest among the rocks; when she returned to the stone—no Jonnee Sahib! “My golden image, who hath snatched him away? 333 He that skipped and hummed, like a singing-top, where is he gone?” A month after that, your dandees capture a crocodile, and from his heathen maw recover a familiar coral necklace with an inscription on the clasp—“To Johnny, on his birth-day.” A pair of little silver bangles, whose jocund jingling had once been happy household music to some poor Hindoo mother, have kept the necklace company.

Over against the gate of our compound the Baboo's walks are bright with roses, and ixoras, and the creeping nagatallis; the Baboo's park is shady with banians, and fragrant with sandal-trees, and imposing with tall peepuls, and cool with sparkling fountains; and Chinna Tumbe, the Little Brother, the brown apple of the Baboo's eye, plays among the bamboos by the tank, just within the gate, and pelts the goldfishes with mango-seeds. Presently comes along a pleasant peddler, all the way from Cabool, with a pretty bushy-tailed kitten of Persia in the hollow of his arm, and a cunning little mungooz cracking nuts on his shoulder. A score of tiny silver bells tinkle 334 from a silken cord around Chinna Tumbe's loins, and the silver whistle with which he calls his cockatoos is suspended from his neck by a chain of gold. So the pleasant peddler, all the way from Cabool, greets Chinna Tumbe merrily, saying, “See my pretty kitten, that knows a hundred tricks! and see my brave mungooz, that can kill cobras in fair fight! My Persian kitten for your silver bells, Chinna Tumbe; and my cunning mungooz for your golden chain!” And Chinna Tumbe laughs, and claps his hands, and dances for delight, and all his silver bells jingle gleefully. And the pleasant peddler all the way from Cabool says, “Step without the gate, Little Brother, if you would see my

pretty kitten play tricks; if you would stroke my cunning mungooz, step without the gate; for I dare not pass within, lest my lord, the Baboo of many lacs, should be angry.” So Chinna Tumbe steps out into the road, and the pleasant peddler, all the way from Cabool, sets the Persian kitten on the ground, and rattles off some strange words, that sound very funnily to the Little Brother; and immediately the Persian kitten begins 335 to run round after its bushy tail, faster and faster, faster and faster, a ring of yellow light. And Chinna Tumbe claps his hands, and cries, *Wah, wah!* and all his silver bells jingle gleefully. So the pleasant peddler addresses other strange and funny words to the ring of yellow light, and instantly it stands still, and quivers its bushy tail, and pants. Then the peddler speaks to the cunning mungooz, which immediately leaps to the ground, and sitting quite erect, with its broad tail curled over its back, like a marabout feather, holds its paws together in the quaint manner of a squirrel, and looks attentive. More of the peddler's funny conjuration, and up springs the mungooz into the air, like a Birman's wicker football, and, alighting on the kitten's back, clings close and fast. Away fly kitten and mungooz—away from the gate—away from the Baboo's walks, bright with ixoras and creeping nagatallis—away from the Baboo's park, shady with banians, and fragrant with sandal-trees, and imposing with tall peepuls, and cool with sparkling fountains—away from the Baboo's home, away from the Baboo's heart, bereft thenceforth for ever! 336 For Chinna Tumbe follows fast, crying, *Wah, wah!* and clapping his hands, and jingling gleefully all his silver bells—follows across the road, and through the bamboo hedge, and into the darkness and the danger of the jungle; and the pleasant peddler, all the way from Cabool, goes smiling after—but, as he goes, what is it that he draws from the breast of his dusty *coortee*? Only a slender, smooth cord, with a slip-knot at the end of it.

Within the twelvemonth, in a stony nullah, hard by a clump of crooked saul-trees, a mile away from the Baboo's gate, some jackals brought to light the bones of a little child; and the deep grave from which they dug them with their sharp, busy claws, bore marks of the mystic pickaxe of Thuggee. But there were no tinkling bells, no chain of gold, no silver whistle; and the cockatoos and the gold-fishes knew Chinna Tumbe no more.

When a name was bestowed on the Little Brother, the Brahmins wrote a score of pretty words in rice, and set over each a lamp freshly trimmed; and the name whose light burned brightest,

with happy 337 augury, was “Chinna Tumbe.” And when they had likewise inscribed the day of his birth, and the name of his natal star, the proud and happy Baboo cried, with a loud voice, three times, “Chinna Tumbe;” and all the Brahmins stretched forth their hands and pronounced *Asirvadam* —benediction. Then they performed *arati* about the child's head, to avert the Evil Eye, describing mystic circles with lamps of rice-paste set on copper salvers, with many pious incantations. But, spite of all, the Evil Eye overtook Chinna Tumbe, when the pleasant peddler came all the way from Cabool, with his bushy-tailed kitten, and his mungooz cracking nuts.

They do say the ghost of Chinna Tumbe walks —that always at midnight, when the Indian nightingale fills the Baboo's banian topes with her lugubrious song, and the weird ulus hoot from the peepul tops, a child, girt with silver bells, and followed by a Persian kitten and a mungooz, shakes the Baboo's gate, blows upon a silver whistle, and cries, so piteously, “Ayah! Ayah!”

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At Hurdwar, in the great fair, among jugglers and tumblers, horse-tamers and snake-charmers, fakirs and pilgrims, I saw a small boy possessed of a devil —an authentic devil, as of yore, meet for miraculous driving out. In the midst of dire din, heathenish and horrible —dissonant jangle of yogeess' bells, brain-rending blasts from Brahmins' shells, strepent howling of opium-drunk devotees, delirious pounding of tom-toms, brazen clangor of gongs —a child of seven years, that might, unpossessed, have been beautiful, sat under the shed of a sort of curiosity-shop, among bangles and armlets, mouth-pieces for pipes, leaden idols, and Brahminical cords, and made infernal faces —his mouth foaming epileptically, his hair dishevelled and matted with sudden sweat, his eyes blood-shot, his whole aspect diabolic. And on the ground before the miserable lad were set dishes of rice mixed with blood, carcasses of rams and cocks, handfuls of red flowers, and ragged locks of human hair, wherewith the more miserable people sought to appease the fell *bhuta* that had set up his throne in that fair soul. *Sach bat!* It was even so. And as the possessed 339 made spasmy fists with his feet, clinching his toes strangely, and grinned, with his chin between his knees, I solemnly wished for the presence of One who might cry, with the voice of authority, as erst in the land of the Gadarenes, “Come out of the lad, thou Unclean Spirit!”

At the Hurdwar fair pretty little naked girls are exposed for sale, and in their soft brown innocence, appeal at once to the purity of your mind and the tenderness of your heart. They come from Cashmere with the shawls, or from Cabool with the kittens, or from the Punjaub with the arms and shields.

Very quaint are the little Miriams, Ruths, and Hannahs, of the Jewish houses in Bombay —with their full trousers of blue satin and gold, their boyish Fez caps of spangled red velvet, bound round with parti-colored turbans, their chin-bands of pearls, their coin chains, their great gold bangles, and the jingling tassels of their long plaits.

Less interesting, because formal and inanimate, even to sulkiness, are the prim little Parsee maidens, who often wear an “exercised” expression, of a settled 340 sort, as though they were weary of reflecting on the hollowness of the world, and how their dolls are stuffed with sawdust, and that Dakhma, the Tower of Silence, is the end of all things.

Then there are the regimental *babalogue*, the soldiers' children, sturdiest and toughest of Anglo-Indian urchins —affording, in their brown cheeks, and crisp muscles, and boisterous ways, a consoling contrast to the oh-call-it-pale-not-fairness, and the frailness, and premature pensiveness, of the little Civil Service.

And there is the half-caste child, the lisping chee-chee, or Eurasian, grandiloquently so called, much given to sentimental minstrelsy, juvenile polkas, early coquetry, and early beer, hot curries, “loud” clothes, bad English, and fast pertness. I never think of them without recalling a precocious ballad-screamer of eight years, who was flourished indispensably at every chee-chee hop in Chandernagore: “O lay me in a little pit, With a marvle thtone to cover it, 341 >And keearve thereon a turkle-dove, That the world may know I died for love!”

I left India in consequence of that child.

But for the true Anglo-Indian type of brat, at all points a complete “torn-down,” “dislikeable and rod-worthy,” as Mrs. Mackenzie describes it, there is nothing among nursery nuisances comparable

to the Civil-Service child of eight or ten years, whose father, a “Company's Bad Bargain,” in the Mint, or the Supreme Court, or the Marine Office, draws *per mensem* enough to set his brat up in the usual servile surroundings of such small despots. Deriving the only education it ever gets directly from its personal attendants, this young monster of bad temper, bad manners, and bad language, becomes precociously proficient in over-bearing ways, and voluble in Hindostanee Billingsgate, before it has acquired enough of its ancestral tongue to frame the simplest sentence. It bullies its *bearer*; it bangs distractingly on the tom-tom; it surfeits itself to an apoplectic point with pish-pash; it burns its mouth with hot curry, and bawls; it indulges in horrid Hindostanee songs, whereof the burden will 342 not bear translating; it insults whatever is most sacred to the caste attachments of its attendants; the Moab of ayahs is its wash-pot, over an Edom of bearers will it cast out its shoe; it slaps the mouth of a grey-haired khansamah with its slipper, and dips its poodle's paws in a Mohammedan kitmudgar's rice; it calls a learned Pundit an *asal ulu*, an egregious owl; it says to a high-caste circar, “Shut up, you pig!” and to an illustrious moonshee, “*Hi, toom jungle-wallah!*” Whereat its fond mamma, to whom Bengalee, Hindostanee, and Sanscrit, are alike sealed books of Babel, claps the hands of her heart, and crying, “*Wah, wah!*” in all the innocence of her philological deficiency, blesses the fine animal spirits of her darling Hastings Clive.

“*Soono, you sooa, toom kis-wasti omara bukri* not bring?” says Hastings Clive, whose English is apt to figure among his Hindostanee like Brahmins in a regiment of Sepoys—that is, one Brahmin to every twenty low-caste fellows.

The Hon. Mrs. Wellesley Gough. —“Wellesley dear, *do* listen to that darling Hastings Clive, how sweetly he 343 prattles! What *did* he say then? If any one could *only* learn that delightful Hindostanee, so that one could converse with one's dear Hastings Clive! *Do* tell me what he said.”

The Hon. Wellesley Gough, of the Company's Bad Bargains. —“Literally interpreted, my dearest Maud, our darling Hastings Clive sweetly remarks, ‘I say, you pig, why in thunder don't you fetch my goat into the parlor?’ ”

The Hon. Mrs. Wellesley Gough, of the Hon. Mr. Wellesley Gough's Bad Bargains. —“Oh, isn't he clever?

Hastings Clive. —“*Jou, you haremzeada! Burki na munkta, nimuk-aram!*”

The Hon. Wellesley Gough. —“My love, he says now, ‘Get out, you good-for-nothing rascal! I don't want that goat here.’ ”

The Hon. Mrs. Wellesley Gough. —“Oh, isn't he clever?”

What dreadful crime did you commit in another life, O illustrious Moonshee, that you should fall now among such thieves as this horrid Hastings Clive?

“Sahib, I know not. *Hum kia kurrenge? kismut hi:* What can I do? it is my fate.”

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Hastings Clive has a queer assortment of pets, first of which are the bushy-tailed Persian kittens, herein-before mentioned. When in Yankee-land, some love-lorn Zeekle is notoriously sweet upon any Huldy of the rural maids —when “His heart keeps goin' pitypat, And hern goes pity Zeekle,” —

when she is “All kind o' smily roundt he lips, And teary round the lashes,” —

it is usual to describe his condition by a feline figure; he is said to “cuddle up to her like a sick kitten to a hot brick.” But the sick oriental kitten, reversing the occidental order of kitten things, cuddles up to a water-monkey, and fondly embraces the refreshing evaporation of its beaded bulb with all her paws and all her bushy tail. The Persian kitten stands high in the favor of Hastings Clive.

Hastings Clive has a parti-colored array of parroquets and hill-mainahs, which, as they learned their small language from his peculiar scurrilous practice, are 345 but blackguard birds at best. He also rejoices in many blue jays, rescued from the Ganges, whereinto they were thrown as offerings to the vengeful Doorga, during the barbarous *pooja* celebrated in her name. Very proud, too, is Hastings

Clive of his pigeons —his many-colored pigeons from Lucknow, Delhi, and Benares; an Oudean bird-boy has trained them to the pretty sport of the Mohammedan princes; and every afternoon he flies them from the house-top in flashing flocks, for Hastings Clive's entertainment.

Hastings Clive has toys, the wooden and earthen toys for which Benares was ever famous among Indian children —nondescript animals, and as nondescript idols —little Brahmin bulls with bells, and artillery camels, like those at Rohilcund and Agra —Sahibs taking the air in buggies, country-folk in hackeries, baba-logue in gig-topped tonjons. But much more various and entertaining, though frailer, are his Calcutta toys, of paper, clay, and wax —hunting-parties in Bamboo howdahs, on elephants a foot high, that move their trunks very cunningly —avadavats of clay, which flutter so naturally, suspended by hairs in 346 bamboo cages, that the cats destroy them quickly—miniature palanquins, budgerows, bungalows, and pagodas, all of paper—figures in clay of the different castes and callings, baboos, kitmudgars, washermen, barbers, tailors, street-wateres, box-wallahs (as the peddlers are called), nautch-girls, jugglers, sepoyes, policemen, door-keepers, dog-boys—all true to the life, in costume, attitude, and expression.

Statedly, on his birth-day, the Anglo-Indian child is treated to a *kat-pootlee nautch*, and Hastings Clive has a birth-day every time he conceives a longing for a puppet-show; so that our wilful young friend may be said to be nine years, or about nineteen kat-poot-lee nautches, old.

To make a birth-day for Hastings Clive, three or four *tamasha-wallahs*, or show-fellows, are required; these, hired for a few rupees, come from the nearest bazaar, bringing with them all the fantastic apparatus of a kat-pootlee nautch, with its interludes of story-telling and jugglery. A sheet, or table-cloth, or perhaps a painted drop-curtain, expressly prepared, is hung between two pillars in the drawing-room, and 347 reaches, not to the floor, but to the tops of the miniature towers of a silver palace, where some splendid Rajah, of fabulous wealth and power, is about to hold a grand *darbar*, or levee. All the people, be they illustrious personages or the common herd, who assist in the ceremony, are puppets a span long, rudely constructed and coarsely painted, but very faithful as to costume and manners, and most dexterously played upon by the invisible tamasha-wallahs, whom the curtain conceals.

A silver throne having been wheeled out on the portico by manikin bhearers, the manikin Rajah, attended by his manikin moonshee, and as many manikin courtiers as the tamasha property-man can supply, comes forth in his wooden way, and seats himself on the throne in wooden state; a manikin *hoo-kah-badar*, or pipe-server, and a manikin *chattah-wal-lah*, or umbrella-bearer, take up their wooden positions behind, while a manikin *punkah-wallah* fans, woodenly, his manikin Highness, and the manikin courtiers dance wooden attendance around. Then manikin ladies and gentlemen come on manikin 348 elephants, and horses, and camels, or in manikin palanquins, and alight with wooden dignity at the foot of the palace stairs, taking their respective orders of wooden precedence with wooden pompositives and humilities, and all the manikin forms of the customary bore. The manikin courtiers trip woodenly down the grand stairs to meet the manikin guests with little wooden Orientalisms of compliment, and all the little wooden delicacies of the season; and they conduct the manikin sahibs and bebes into the presence of the manikin Rajah, who receives them with wooden condescension and affability, and graciously reciprocates their wooden salaams, inquiring woodenly into the health of all their manikin friends, and hoping, with the utmost ligneous solicitude, that they have had a pleasant wooden journey: and so on, manikin by manikin, to the wooden end. Of course, much desultory tom-tomry and wild trouba-douring behind the curtain make the occasion musical.

The audience is complete in all the picturesqueness of mixed baba-logue. In the front row, chattering 349 brown ayahs, gay with red sarees and nose-rings, sit on the floor, holding in their laps pale, tender babies, fair-haired and blue-eyed, lace-swaddled, coral-clasped, and amber-studded. Behind these, on high chairs, are the striplings of three years and upwards, vociferous and kicking under the hand-punkahs of their patient bhearers. Tall fellows are these bhearers, with fierce moustaches, but gentle eyes—a sort of nursery lions whom a little child can lead. On each side are small chocolate-colored heathens, in a sort of short chemises, silver-bangled as to their wrists and ankles, and already with the caste-mark on the fore-heads of some of them—shy, demure younglings just learning all the awful significance of the word *Sahib*, who have been brought from mysterious homes by fond ayahs, and smuggled in through back-stairs' influence, or boldly introduced by the durwan under the glorifying patronage of that terrible Hastings Clive.

Back of all are Dhobee, the washerman, and Dirzee, the tailor, and Mehtur, the sweeper, and Mussalchee, the torch-boy, and Metranee, the scullion—and all the rest of the household ruff-raffry. There is 350 much clapping of hands, and happy wah-wah-ing, wherefrom you conclude that Hastings Clive's birthday is at least one good result of his being born at all.

The Sahib baba-logue have a lively share in several of the native festivals. The Hoolee, for instance, is their high carnival of fun, when they pelt their elders and each other with the red powder of the *mhindee*, and repel laughing assaults with smart charges of rose-water fired from busy little squirts. During the illumination of the Duwallee, they receive from the servants presents of fantastic toys, and search in the compounds by moonlight for the flower of the tree that never blossoms, and for the soul of a snake, whence comes to the finder good luck for the rest of his life.

These are the traditional sports of the baba-logue; but they are ingenious in inventing others, wherein, from time to time, the imitative faculty, of the native child especially, is tragically manifested.

When the Nawab, Shumsh-ud-deen, was hung at Delhi for hiring a *sowar* to assassinate Mr. Fraser, 351 the British Commissioner, the country population round about were seized with the news as with the coming of a dragon or a destroying army; and the British Lion was the Bogy, the Black Douglas, in whose names poor *ryots'* wives scared refractory brats into trembling obedience. Not far from Delhi was a village school, where were many small boys—so many Asiatic frogs-in-a-well—to whom “the news of the day” was full of terrible portent. Once, when they were tired of foot-ball, and the shuttlecock had grown heavy on their hands, the cry was, “What shall we play next?” And one daring little fellow—whose father had been to Delhi with his rent, and had told how the Nawab met his *kismut* (his fate) so quietly, that the gold-embroidered slippers did not fall from his feet—cried, “Let us play hanging the Nawab! and I will be the Nawab; and Kama, here, shall be Kurreim Khan, the sowar; and Joota shall be Metcalfe Sahib, the magistrate; and the rest of you shall be the sahibs, and the sepoy, and the priests.”

Acha, Acha!—“Good, good!” they all cried. 352 “Let us play the Nawab's kismut! let us hang the Nawab! And Mungloo—he that is more clever than all of us—he that is cunning as a Thug—Mungloo shall be the Nawab!”

So they began with the murder of the Commissioner; and he who personated Kurreim Khan, the assassin, played so naturally, that he sent the Commissioner screaming to his mother, with an arrow sticking in his arm. Then they arrested Kurreim Khan, and his accomplice, Unnia, a *mehwatti*, who turned king's evidence, and betrayed the sowar; and having tried and condemned Kurreim Khan, they would have hung him on the spot; but, being but a little fellow, he became alarmed at the serious turn the sport was taking, although he had himself set so sharp an example; so he took nimbly to his heels, and followed his young friend, the Commissioner.

Then Unnia told how the Nawab had paid Kurreim Khan blood-money, because Shumsh-ud-deen did so hate Fraser Sahib. Whereupon Metcalfe Sahib, a little naked fellow, just the color of an old mahogany table, sent his sepoy and had the 353 Nawab dragged, in all his ragged breech-cloth glory, to the bar of Sahib justice. In about three minutes, the Nawab was condemned to die—condemned to be hung by an outcast sweeper. But, in consideration of his exalted rank, they consented that he should wear his slippers, and ride to the place of execution, smoking his hookah; and Mungloo acknowledged the Sahib's magnanimity by proudly inclining his head, like a true Nawab, with a dignified “*Acha!*” Then two members of the court-martial, who lived nearest at hand, ran home, and quickly returned, one with his father's slippers, the other with his mother's hubble-bubble; and having tied the slippers, that were a world too big, on Mungloo's little feet, and lighted the hubble-bubble, that he might smoke, they mounted him on a buffalo, captured from the village *hurkaru*, who happened, just in the nick of time, to come riding by, on his way to Delhi, with the mail. And they led out the prisoner, smoking his hubble-bubble—and looking, as Metcalfe Sahib said of the real Nawab, “as if he had been accustomed to be hanged every day of his life”—to the place of 354 execution, an old saul-tree with low limbs. Then, having taken the rope with which the *hurkaru*'s mail-bag was lashed to his buffalo, they slipped a noose over the Nawab's head, made the other end fast to the lower limb of the saul-tree, and led away the buffalo.

Little Mungloo, who was cunning as a Thug, acted with surprising talent; in fact, some of the Sahibs thought he rather overdid his part, for he dropped his hubble-bubble almost awkwardly, and even kicked—which the real Nawab had too much self-respect to do—so that he sent one of his slippers flying one way, and the other another. But he choked, and gasped, and showed the whites of his eyes, and turned black in the face, and shivered through all his frame, so very naturally, that his admiring companions clapped their hands vehemently, and cried *Wah, wah!* with all their little lungs. *Wah, wah!* they screamed— *Wah khoob tamasha kurta hi! Phir kello, Mungloo! Bahoot uchi-turri nuhkul, kurte ho toom!* “Hooray! Hooray! Such fun! Do it again, Mungloo—do it again! it takes you!” Certainly Mungloo did it to the life—for he was dead.

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To conclude now with a specimen of the tales with which the native story-tellers entertain little heathens on street corners.

There was once a bastard boy, the son of a Brahmin's widow; and he was excluded from a merry wedding-feast on account of his disgraceful birth. With a heart full of bitterness, he prayed to Siva for comfort or revenge; and Siva, taking pity on him, taught him the mystic *mantra*, or incantation, called Bijaksharam— *Shrum, hrim, craoom, hroom, hroo!* So the boy went to the door of the apartment where the wedding guests were regaling themselves and making merry, and he pronounced the mantra backwards— *Hroo, hroom, craoom, hrim, shrum!* Immediately the fish, and the cucumbers, and the mangoes, and the pumple-noses took the shape of toads, and jumped into the faces of the guests, and into their bosoms and laps, and on the floor. Then the boy laughed so loud that the astonished guests knew it was he who had conjured them; so they went to the door and let him in, and set him at the head of the table. Then the boy was satisfied, and uttering the mantra aright, he 356 conjured the toads back into the dishes again; and they all lay down in their places, and became fish, and cucumbers, and mangoes, and pumple-noses, just as if nothing had happened.

Glory to Siva!

CHAPTER IV.

ASIRVADAM, THE BRAHMIN.

WHO put together the machinery of the great Indian Revolt, and set it going? Who stirred up the sleeping tiger in the Sepoy's heart, and struck Christendom aghast with the dire devilries of Meerut and Cawnpore?

Asirvadam, the Brahmin!

Asirvadam is nimble with mace or cue; at the billiard-table, it is hinted, he can distinguish a kiss from a carom; at the sideboard (and here, if I were Mr. Charles Reade, I would whisper, in small type) he confounds not cocktails with cobblers; when, being in trade, he would sell you saltpetre, he tries you with flaxseed; when he would buy indigo, he offers you indigo at a sacrifice. Yet, in Asirvadam, if any quality is more noticeable than the sleek respectability 358 of the Baboo, it is the jealous orthodoxy of the Brahmin. If he knows in what presence to step out of his slippers, and when to pick them up again with his toes, in jaunty dandyisms of etiquette, he also makes the most of his insolent order and its patent of privilege, and wears the rue of his triple cord with a demure and dignified difference. High, Low, or Jack, it is always "the game" with him; and the game is —Asirvadam, the Brahmin —free tricks and Brahmin's rights —Asirvadam for his caste, and everything for Asirvadam.

The natural history of our astute and accomplished friend is worth a page or two. And first, as to his color. Asirvadam comes from the northern provinces, and calls the snow-turbaned Himalayas cousin; consequently his complexion is the brightest among Brahmins. By some who are uninitiated in the chemical mysteries of our metropolitan milk-trade, it has been likened to chocolate and cream, with plenty of cream; but the comparison depends, for the idea it conveys, so much on the taste of the ethnological inquirer, as to the proportion of cream, and still so 359 much more, as in the case of Mr. Weller's weal pies, on the reputation of "the lady as makes it," that it will hardly serve the requirements of a severe scientific statement. Copper-color has an excess of red, and sepia is too brown; the tarry tawniness of an old boatswain's hand is nearer the mark, but even that is less among men-of-war's men than in the merchant-service, and is least in the revenue marine; it varies,

also, with the habits of the individual, and the nature of his employment for the time being. The flipper of your legitimate shiver-my-timbery old salt, whose most amiable office is piping all hands to witness punishment, has long since acquired the hue of a seven-years' meerschaum; while the dandy cockswain of a forty-gun frigate lying off the navy-yard, who brings the third cutter ship-shapely alongside with a pretty girl in the stern-sheets, lends her —the pretty girl—a hand at the gangway, that has been softened by fastidious applications of solvent slush to the tint of a long envelope “on public service.” “Law sheep,” when we come to the binding of books, is too sallow for this simile; a little volume of “Familiar 360 Quotations,” in limp calf, (Bartlett: Cambridge, 1855,) might answer —if the cover of the January number of the “Atlantic Monthly” were not exactly the thing.

Simplicity, convenience, decorum, and picturesqueness distinguish the costume of Asirvadam the Brahmin. Three yards of yard-wide fine cotton cloth envelop his loins, in such a manner, that, while one end hangs in graceful folds in front, the other falls in a fine distraction behind. Over this, a robe of muslin, or silk, or piña cloth —the latter in peculiar favor, by reason of its superior purity, for high-caste wear —covers his neck, breast, and arms, and descends nearly to his ankles. Asirvadam borrowed this garment from the Mussulman; but he fastens it on the left side, which the follower of the Prophet never does, and surmounts it with an ample and elegant waistband, beside the broad Romanesque mantle that he tosses over his shoulder with such a senatorial air. His turban, also, is an innovation —not proper to the Brahmin pure and simple —but, like the robe, adopted from the Moorish wardrobe, for a more imposing appearance in Sahib society. It is formed 361 of a very narrow strip, fifteen or twenty yards long, of fine stuff, moulded to the orthodox shape and size by wrapping it, while wet, on a wooden block; having been hardened in the sun, it is worn like a hat. As for his feet, Asirvadam, uncompromising in externals, disdains to pollute them with the touch of leather. Shameless fellows, Brahmins though they be, of the sect of Vishnu, go about, without a blush, in thonged sandals, made of abominable skins; but Asirvadam, strict as a Gooroo when the eyes of his caste are on him, is immaculate in wooden clogs.

In ornaments, his taste, though somewhat grotesque, is by no means lavish. A sort of stud or button, composed of a solitary ruby, in the upper rim of the cartilage of either ear—a chain of gold,

curiously wrought, and intertwined with a string of small pearls, around his neck—a massive bangle of plain gold on his arm—a richly jewelled ring on his thumb, and others, broad and shield-like, on his toes—complete his outfit in these vanities.

As often as Asirvadam honors us with his morning 362 visit of business or ceremony, a slight yellow line drawn horizontally between his eyebrows, with a paste composed of ground sandal-wood, denotes that he has purified himself externally and internally, by bathing and prayers. To omit this, even by the most unavoidable chance to appear in public without it, were to incur a grave public scandal; only excepting the season of mourning, when, by an expressive Oriental figure, the absence of the caste-mark is accepted for the token of a profound and absorbing sorrow, which takes no thought even for the customary forms of decency. The disciple of Siva crossbars his forehead with ashes of cow-dung or ashes of the dead; the sectary of Vishnu adorns his with a sort of trident, composed of a central perpendicular line in red, and two oblique lines, white or yellow. But the true Brahmin knows no Siva or Vishnu, no sectarian distinctions or preferences; Indra has set no seal upon his brow, nor Krishna, nor Devendra. For, ignoring celestial personalities, it is the Trimurti that he grandly adores—Creation, Preservation, Destruction triune—one body with three heads; and the right line alone, 363 or *potlu*, the mystic circle, describes the sublime simplicity of his soul's aspiration.

When Asirvadam was but seven years old, he was invested with the triple cord, by a grotesque, and in most respects absurd, extravagant, and expensive ceremony, called the *Upanayana*, or Introduction to the Sciences, because none but Brahmins are freely admitted to their mysteries. This triple cord consists of three thick strands of cotton, each composed of several finer threads; these three strands, representing Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, are not twisted together, but hang separately, from the left shoulder to the right hip. The preparation of so sacred a badge is entrusted to none but the purest hands, and the process is attended with many imposing ceremonies. Only Brahmins may gather the fresh cotton; only Brahmins may card and spin and twist it; and its investiture is a matter of so great cost, that the poorer brothers must have recourse to contributions from the pious of their caste, to defray the exorbitant charges of priests and masters of ceremonies.

It is a noticeable fact in the natural history of the 364 always insolent Asirvadam, that unlike Shatriya, the warrior, Vaishya, the cultivator, or Soodra, the laborer, he is not born into the full enjoyment of his honors, but, on the contrary, is scarcely of more consideration than a Pariah, until by the Upanayana he has been admitted to his birthright. Yet, once decorated with the ennobling badge of his order, our friend becomes from that moment something superior, something exclusive, something supercilious, arrogant, exacting—Asirvadam, the high Brahmin—a creature of wide strides without awkwardness, towering airs without bombast, Sanscrit quotations without pedantry, florid phraseology without hyperbole, allegorical illustrations and proverbial points without sententiousness, fanciful flights without affectation, and formal strains of compliment without offensive adulation.

When Asirvadam meets Asirvadam in the way, compliments pass; each touches his forehead with his right hand, and murmurs twice the auspicious name of Rama. But the passing Vaishya or Soodra elevates reverently his joined palms above his head. 365 and, stepping out of his slippers, salutes the descendant of the Seven Holy Penitents with *namaskaram*, the pious obeisance. *Andam arya!* “Hail, exalted Lord!” he cries; and the exalted lord, extending the pure lilies of his hands lordliwise, as one who condescends to accept an humble offering, mutters the mysterious benediction which only Goo Roos and high Brahmins may bestow— *Asirvadam!*

The low-caste slave who may be admitted to the distinguished presence of our friend, to implore indulgence, or to supplicate pardon for an offence, must thrice touch the ground, or the honored feet, with both his hands, which immediately he lays upon his forehead; and there are occasions of peculiar humiliation which require the profound prostration of the *sashtangam*, or abasement of the eight members, wherein the suppliant extends himself face downward on the earth, with palms joined above his head.

If Asirvadam—having concluded a visit in which he has deferentially reminded me of the peculiar privilege I enjoy in being admitted to social converse with so select a being—is about to withdraw the light 366 of his presence, he retires backward, with many humbly gracious salaams. If, on the other hand, I have had the honor to be his distinguished guest at his garden-house, and am in the

act of taking my leave, he patronizes me to the gate with elaborate obsequiousness, that would be tedious, if it were not so graceful, so comfortable, so gallantly vainglorious. He shows the way by following, and spares me the indignity of seeing his back by never taking his eyes from mine. He knows what is due to his accomplished friend, the Sahib, who is learned in the four Yankee Vedas; as to what is due to Asirvadam, the Brahmin, no man knoweth the beginning or the end of that.

When Asirvadam crosses my threshold, he leaves his slippers at the door. I am flattered by the act into a self-appreciative complacency, until I discover that he thereby simply puts me on a level with his cow. When he converses with me, he keeps respectful distance, and gracefully averts from me the annoyance of his breath by holding his hand before his mouth. I inwardly applaud his refined breeding, 367 forgetting that I am a Pariah of Pariahs, whose soul, if I have one, the incense of his holy lungs might save alive—forgetting that he is one to whose very footprint the soodra salaams, alighting from his palanquin—to whose shadow poor Chakili, the cobbler, abandons the broad highway—the feared of gods, hated of giants, mistrusted of men, and adored of himself—Asirvadam, the Brahmin.

“They, the Brahmin Asirvadam, to him Phaldasana, who is obedient, who is true, who has every faithful quality, who knows how to serve with cheerfulness, to submit in silence, who by the excellent services he renders the Brahmins has become like unto the stone Chintamani, the bringer of good, who by the number and variety and acceptableness of his gifts shall attain, without further trials, to the paradise of Indra: *Asirvadam!*”

“The year Vikari, the tenth of the month Phalguna: we are at Benares in good health; bring us word of thine. It shall be thy privilege to make sashtangam at the feet—which are the true lilies of 368 Nilufar—of us the Lord Brahmin, who are endowed with all the virtues and all the sciences, who are great as Mount Meru, to whom belongs illustrious knowledge of the four Vedas, the splendor of whose beneficence is as the noon-flood of the sun, who are renowned throughout the fourteen worlds, whom the fourteen worlds admire.

“Having received with both hands that which we have abased ourself by writing to thee, and having kissed it and set it on thy head, thou wilt read with profound attention and execute with grateful alacrity the orders it contains, without swerving from the strict letter of them, the breadth of a grain of sesamum. Having hastened to us, as thou art blessed in being bidden, thou shalt wait in our presence, keeping thy distance, thy hands joined, thy mouth closed, thine eyes cast down—thou who art as though thou art not—until we shall vouchsafe to perceive thee. And when thou hast obtained our leave, then, and not sooner, shalt thou make sashtangam at our blessed feet, which are the pure flowers of Nilufar, and with many lowly kisses shalt lay down before them thy 369 unworthy offering—ten rupees, as thou knowest—more, if thou art wise—less if thou darest.

“This is all we have to say to thee: *Asirvadam!*” In the epistolary style of *Asirvadam* the Brahmin, we are at a loss which to admire most—the flowers or the force, the modesty or the magnificence.

Among the cloistered cells of the women's quarter, that surround the inner court of *Asirvadam*'s domestic establishment, is a dark and narrow chamber which is the domain of woman's rights. It is called “the Room of Anger,” because, when the wife of the bosom has been tempted by inveigling box-wallahs with a love of a pink coortee, or a pair of chased bangles, “such darlings, and *so* cheap,” and has conceived a longing for the same, her way is, without a word beforehand, to go shut herself up in the Room of Anger, and pout and sulk till she gets them; and seeing that the wife of the bosom is also the pure concoctor of the Brahminical curry and server of the Brahminical rice, that she is the goddess of the sacred kitchen and high-priestess of pots and pans, it is easy 370 to see that her success is certain. Poor little brown fool! that twelve-foot-square of curious custom is all, of the world-wide realm of beauty and caprice, that she can call her own.

When the enamored young *Asirvadam* brought to her father's gate the lover's presents—the earrings and the bangles, the veil and the loongee, the attar and the betel and the sandal, the flowers and the fruits—the lizard that chirped the happy omen for her betrothal lied. When she sat by his side at the wedding-feast, and partook of his rice, prettily picking from the same leaf, ah! then she

did not eat—she dreamed; but ever since that time, waiting for his leavings, not daring to approach the board till he has retired to his pipe, she does not dream—she feeds.

Around her neck a strange ornament of gold, having engraved upon it the likeness of Lakshmee, is suspended by a consecrated string of one hundred and eight threads of extreme fineness, dyed yellow with saffron. This is the Tahli, the wife's badge—“Asirvadam the Brahmin, his chattel.” They brought it to her on a silver salver, garnished with flowers, she 371 sitting with her betrothed on a great cushion; and ten Brahmins, holding around the happy pair a screen of silk, invoked for them the favor of the three divine couples—Brahma with Sarawastee, Vishnu with Lakshmee, Siva with Paravatee. Then they offered incense to the Tahli, and a sacrifice of fire, and they blessed it with many mantras, or holy texts; and as the bride turned her to the east, and fixed her inmost thought on the “Great Mountain of the North,” Asirvadam the Brahmin clasped his collar on her neck, never to be loosened till he, dying, shall leave her to be burned, or spurned.

No man, when he meets Asirvadam the Brahmin, presumes to ask, “How is the little brown fool today?” No man, when he visits him, ventures to inquire if she is at home; it is not the etiquette. Should the little brown fool, having a mind of her own, and being resolved not to endure this any longer, suddenly make Asirvadam ridiculous some day, the etiquette is to hush it up among their friends.

As Rajah, the warrior, sprang from the right arm of 372 Brahma, and Vaishya, the cultivator, from his belly, and Soodra, the laborer, from his feet—so Asirvadam the Brahmin was conceived in the head and brought forth from the mouth of the Creator; and he is above the others by so much as the head is above arms, belly, and feet; he is wiser than the others, inasmuch as he has lain among the thoughts of the god, has played with his inventions, and made excursions through the universe with his speech. Therefore, if it be true, as some say, that Asirvadam is an ant-hill of lies, he is also a snake's-nest of wisdom, and a bee-hive of ingenuity. Let him be respected, for his rights are plain.

It is his right to be taught the Vedas and the mantras, all the tongues of India, and the sciences; to marry a child-wife, no matter how old he may be—or a score of wives, if he be a Kooleen Brahmin,

so that he may drive a lively business in the way of dowries; to peruse the books of magic, and perform the awful sacrifice of the Yajna; to receive presents without limit, levy taxes without law, and beg with insolence.

It is his duty to study diligently; to conform rigorously to the rules of his caste; to honor and obey his superiors without question or hesitation; to insult his inferiors, for the magnifying of his office; to get him a wife without loss of time, and a male child by all means. During his religious minority he is expected to bathe and sacrifice twice a day, to abstain from adorning his forehead or his breast with sandal, to wear no flowers in his hair, to chew no betel, to regard himself in no mirrors.

Under Hindoo law, which is his own law, Asirvadam the Brahmin pays no taxes, tolls, or duties; corporal punishment can in no case be inflicted upon him; if he is detected in defalcation or the taking of bribes, partial restitution is the worst penalty that can befall him. "For the belly," he says, "one will play many tricks." To smite his cheek with your leathern glove, or to kick him with your shoe, is an outrage at which the gods rave; to kill him, would draw down a monstrous calamity upon the world. If he break faith with you, it is as nothing; if you fail him in the least promise, you take your portion with Karta, the Fox, as the good Abbé Dubois relates:

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"Karta, Karta!" screamed an Ape, one day, when he saw a Fox feeding on a rotten carcass, "thou must, in a former life, have committed some dreadful crime, to be doomed to a new state in which thou feedest on such garbage."

"Alas!" replied the Fox, "I am not punished more severely than I deserve. I was once a man, and then I promised something to a Brahmin, which I never gave him. That is the true cause of my being regenerated in this shape. Some good works which I did, have won for me the indulgence of remembering what I was in my former state, and the cause for which I have been degraded into this."

Asirvadam has choice of a hundred callings, as various in dignity and profit as they are numerous. Under native rule he makes a good cooly, because the officers of the revenue are forbidden to search a Brahmin's baggage, or anything that he carries. He is an expeditious messenger, for no man may stop him; and he can travel cheaply for whom there is free entertainment on every road. "For the belly one will play many tricks;" and Asirvadam, in financial straits, may teach dancing to nautch-girls; or he may play the mountebank or the conjurer, and with a stock of mantras and charms proceed to the curing of murrain in cattle, pip in chickens, and short-windedness in old women—at the same time telling fortunes, calculating nativities, finding lost treasure, advising as to journeys and speculations, and crossing out crosses in love for any pretty dear who will cross the poor Brahmin's palm with a rupee. He may engage in commercial pursuits; and in that case, his bulling and bearing at the opium sales will put Wall Street to the blush. He may turn his attention to the healing art; and allopathically, homœopathically, hydropathically, electropathically, or by any other path, run a muck through many heathen hospitals. The field of politics is full of charms for him, the church invites his taste and talents, and the army tempts him with opportunities for intrigue; but whether in the shape of Machiavelisms, miracles, or mutinies, he is for ever making mischief. Whether as messenger, dancing-master, conjurer, fortune-teller, speculator, mountebank, politician, priest, or sepoy, he is ever the same Asirvadam—the Brahmin—sleekest of lackeys, most servile of sycophants, expertest of tricksters, smoothest of hypocrites, coolest of liars, most insolent of beggars, most versatile of adventurers, most inventive of charlatans, most restless of schemers, most insidious of jesuits, most treacherous of confidants, falsest of friends, hardest of masters, most arrogant of patrons, cruelest of tyrants, most patient of haters, most insatiable of avengers, most gluttonous of ravishers, most infernal of devils—pleasantest of fellows.

Superlatively dainty as to his fopperies of orthodoxy, Asirvadam is continually dying of Pariah roses in aromatic pains of caste. If in his goings and comings one of the "lilies of Nilufar" should chance to stumble upon a bit of bone, or rag, a fragment of a dish, or a leaf from which some one has eaten—should his sacred raiment be polluted by the touch of a dog or a Pariah—he is ready to faint, and only a bath can revive him. He may not touch his sandals with his hand, nor repose in a strange seat, but is provided with a mat or a carpet, or an antelope's skin, to serve him for a

cushion in the houses of his friends. With a kid glove you may put his respectability in peril, and with your patent-leather pumps affright his soul within him. To him a pocket handkerchief is a sore offence, and a toothpick monstrous. All the Vedas could not save the Giaour who “chews;” nor burnt brandy, though the Seven Penitents distilled it, purify the mouth that a tooth-brush has polluted. Beware how you offer him a wafered letter; and when you present him with a copy of your travels, let it be bound in cloth.

He has the Mantalini idiosyncrasy as to dem'd unpleasant bodies; and when he hears that his mother is dead, he straightway jumps into a bath with his clothes on. Many mantras and much holy-water, together with incense of sandal-wood, and other perfumery, regardless of expense, can alone relieve his premises of the deadness of his wife.

For a Soodra even to look upon the earthen vessels wherein his rice is boiled implies the necessity of a summary smash of the infected crockery; and his kitchen is his holy of holies. When he eats, the 378 company keep silence; and when he is full, they return fervent thanks to the gods who have conducted him safely through a complexity of dangers;—a grain of rice, falling from his lips, might have poisoned his dinner; a stain on his plantain-leaf might have turned his cake to stone. His left hand, condemned to vulgar and impolite offices, is not admitted to the honor of assisting at his repasts; to the right alone, consecrated by exemption from indecorous duties, belongs the distinction of conducting his happy grub to the heaven of his mouth. When he would quench his thirst, he disdains to apply the earth-born beaker to his lips, but lets the water fall into his solemn swallow from on high—a pleasant feat to see, and one which, like a whirling dervish, diverts you by its agility, while it impresses you by its devotion.

It is easy to perceive, that, if our friend Asirvadam were not one of the “Young Bengal” lights, who do not fash themselves for trifles, his orthodox sensibilities would be subjected to so many and gross affronts from the indiscriminate contacts of a mixed community, that he would shortly be compelled to 379 take refuge in one of those Arcadias of the triple cord, called *Agramas*, where pure Brahmins are met in all the exclusiveness of high caste, and where the more a man rubs against his neighbor the more he is sanctified. True, the Soodras have an irreverent saying, “An

entire Brahmin at the Agragrama, half a Brahmin when seen at a distance, and a Soodra when out of sight;" but then the Soodras, as everybody knows, are saucy, satirical rogues, and incorrigible jokers.

There was once a foolish Brahmin, to whom a rich and charitable merchant presented two pieces of cloth, the finest that had ever been seen in the Agragrama. He showed them to the other Brahmins, who all congratulated him on so fortunate an acquisition; they told him it was the reward of some pious deed that he had done in a previous life. Before putting them on, he washed them, according to custom, in order to purify them from the pollution of the weaver's touch, and hung them up to dry, with the ends fastened to two branches of a tree. Presently a dog, happening to pass that way, ran under them, and the Brahmin could not decide whether the unclean beast was tall enough to touch the cloth, or not. He questioned his children, who were present; but they were not quite certain. How, then, was he to settle the all-important point? Ingenious Brahmin! an idea struck him. Getting down on all fours, so as to be of the same height as the dog, he crawled under the precious cloth.

"Did I touch it?"

"No!" cried all the children; and his soul was filled with joy.

But the next moment the terrible conviction took possession of his mind, that the dog had a turned-up tail; and that if, in passing under the cloths, he had elevated and wagged it, their defilement must have been consummated. Ready-witted Brahmin! another idea. He called the cleverest of his children, and bade him affix to his breech-cloth a plaintain-leaf, dog's tail-wise, and waggishly. Then resuming his all-foursness, he passed a second time under the cloth, and conscientiously, and anxiously, wagged.

"A touch! a touch!" cried all the children, and the Brahmin groaned, for he knew that his beautiful raiment was ruined. Thrice he wagged, and thrice the children cried, "A touch! a touch!"

So the strict Brahmin leaped to his feet, in a frightful rage, and, tearing the precious cloth from the tree, rent it in a hundred shreds, while he cursed the abominable dog, and the master that owned him. And the children admired and were edified, and they whispered among themselves—

“Now, surely, it behooveth us to take heed to our ways, for our father is particular.”

Moral: And the Brahmin winked.

The Samaradana is an institution for which our friend Asirvadam entertains peculiar veneration. This is simply an abundant feast of Brahminical good things, to which the “fat and greasy citizens” of the caste are bidden by some zealous or manœuvring Soodra—on occasion of the dedication of a temple, perhaps, or in a season of drought, or when a malign constellation is to be averted, or to celebrate the birth or marriage of some exalted personage. From all the 382 country round about, the Brahmins flock to the feasting, singing Sanscrit hymns and obscene songs, and shouting, *Hara! hara! Govinda!* The low fellow who has the honor to entertain so select a company is not suffered to seat himself in the midst of his guests, much less to partake of the viands he has been permitted to provide; but in consideration of his “deed of exalted merit,” and his expensive appreciation of the beauties and advantages of high-caste society, as expressed in all the delicacies of the season, he may come, when the last course has been discussed, and, prostrating himself in the sashtangam posture, receive the unanimous asirvadam of the company. If, in taking leave of his august guests, he should also signify his sense of the honor they have done him, by presenting each with a piece of cloth or a sum of money, he is assured that he is altogether superior in mind and person to the gods, and that, if he is wise, he will not neglect to remind his friends of his munificence by another exhibition of it within a reasonable time.

In the creed of Asirvadam the Brahmin the drinker 383 of strong drink is a Pariah, and the eater of cow's flesh is damned already. If, then, he can tell a cocktail from a cobbler, and scientifically discriminate between a julep and a gin-sling, it must be because the Vedas are unclasped to him; for in the Vedas all things are taught. It is of Asirvadam's father that the story is told, how, when a fire broke out in his house once, and all the pious neighbors ran to rescue his effects, the first articles

saved were a tub of pickled pork and a jar of arrack. But this, also, no doubt, is the malicious invention of some satirical rogue of a Soodra. Asirvadam, as is well known, recoils with horror from the abomination of eating aught that has once lived and moved and had a being; but if, remembering that, you should seek to fill his soul with consternation by inviting him to inspect a fig under a microscope, he would quietly advise you to break your nasty glass, and “go it blind.”

But there is one custom which Asirvadam the Brahmin observes in common with the Pariah, and that is the solemn ceremonial of Death. When his 384 time comes, he dies, is burned, and presently forgotten; and it is a consolation for his ever having been at all, that some one is sure to be the richer and happier and freer for his ceasing to be. True, he may assume new earthly conditions, may pass into other vexatious shapes of life; but the change must ever be for the better in respect of the interests of those who have suffered by the powers and capabilities of the shape which he relinquishes. He may become a snake; but then he is easily scotched, or fooled out of his fangs with a cunning charmer's tom-tom;—he may pass into the foul feathers of an indiscriminately gluttonous adjutant-bird: but some day a bone will choke him;—his soul may creep under the mangy skin of a Pariah dog, and be kicked out of compounds by scullions; he may be condemned to the abominable offices of a crow at the burning ghauts, a jackal by the wells of Thuggee, or a rat in sewers; but he can never again be such a nuisance, such a sore offence to the minds and hearts of men, as when he was Asirvadam the Brahmin.

Fortunate indeed will he be, if the low, deep curses of 385 all whom he has oppressed, betrayed, insulted, shall not have availed against him in his last hour. “Mayest thou never have a friend to lay thee on the ground when thou diest!”—no imprecation so fierce, so fell, as that; even Asirvadam the Brahmin abates his cruel greed, when some poor Soodra client, bled of his last anna, thinks of his sick wife, and the darling cow that must be sold at last, and grows desperate. “Mayest thou have no wife, to sprinkle the spot with cow-dung where thy corpse shall lie, and to spread the unspotted cloth; nor any cow, her horns tipped with rings of brass, and her neck garlanded with flowers, to lead thee, holding by her tail, through pleasant paths to the land of Yama! May no Purohita come to strew thy bier with the holy herb, nor any next of kin be near to whisper the last mantra!”

Horrid Soodra! But though thy words make the soul of Asirvadam shiver, they are but the voice of a dog, after all, and nothing can come of them. Asirvadam the Brahmin has raised up lusty boys to himself, as every good Brahmin should; and they shall bind together his thumbs and his great toes, and lay 386 him down on the ground, when his hour is come—lest the bed or the mat cling to his ghost, whithersoever it go, and torment it eternally. His wife shall spread beneath him a cloth that the hands of Kooleen Brahmins have woven. Lilies of Nilufar shall garland the neck of the happy cow that is to lead him safely beyond the fiery river, and the rings shall be golden wherewith her horns are tipped. A mighty concourse of clients shall follow him to the place of burning—to “Rudra, the place of tears”—whither ten Kooleen Brahmins will bear him; and as often as they set down the bier to feed the dead with a morsel of moistened rice, other Brahmins shall sing his wisdom and his virtues, and celebrate his meritorious deeds. When his funeral pyre is lighted, his sons, and his sons' sons, and his daughters' husbands, and his nephews, shall beat their breasts and rend the air with lamentations; and when his body has been consumed, his ashes shall be given to the Ganges—all save a certain portion, which shall be made into a paste with milk, and moulded into an image; and the image shall be set up in his house, that 387 the Brahmins and all his people may offer sacrifices before it.

On the tenth day, his wife shall adorn her forehead with a scarlet emblem, blacken the edges of her eyelids with soorma, deck her hair with scarlet flowers, her neck and bosom with sandal, stain her face, arms, and legs with turmeric, and array her in her choicest robes and all her jewels, and follow her eldest son, in full procession, to the tank hard by the “land of Rudra.” And the heir shall take three little stones, that were planted there in a row by the Purohitas, and, going down into the water as deep as his neck, shall turn his face to the sun and say, “Until this day these three stones have stood for my father, that is dead. Henceforth let him cease to be a carcass; let him enter into the joys of Swarga, the paradise of Devendra, to be blessed with all conceivable blessings, so long as the waters of Ganges shall continue to flow; —so shall the dead Brahmin not prowl through the universe, afflicting with evil tricks stars, men, and trees; so shall he be laid.”

But who shall lay the quick Asirvadam, than 388 whom there walks not a sprite more cunning, more malign?

Ever since the Solitaries, odious by their black arts to princes and people, were slain or driven out—fifteen centuries and more—Asirvadam, the Brahmin, has been selfish, wicked, and mischievously busy—corrupting the hearts, bewildering the minds, betraying the hopes, exhausting the moral and physical strength of the Hindoos. He has taught them the foolish tumult of the Hooley, the fanatical ferocities of the Yajna, the unwhisperable obscenities of the Saktis, the fierce and ruinous extravagances of the Doorga Poojah, the mutilating monstrosities of the Churruck, the enslaving sorceries of the Atharvana Veda, the raving mad revivals of Juggernath, the pious debaucheries of Nanjanagud, the strange and sorrowful delusions of Suttee, the impudent ravishments of Vengata Ramana—all the fancies and frenzies, all the delusions and passions and moral epilepsies, that go to make up a Meerut or a Cawnpore.

Of the outrageous insolence of the Seven Penitents, he omits nothing but their sincerity; of the 389 enlightened simplicity of the anchoret philosophers, he retains nothing but their selfishness; of the intellectual influence of the Gooroo pontiffs, he covets nothing but their dissimulation. He has taught his gaping disciples that a skilfully compounded and plausibly administered lie is a goodly thing—except it be told against the cause of a Brahmin; in which case, no oxyhydrogeneralities of earthly combustion can afford an idea of the particular hotness of the hell devised for such a liar. He has solemnly impressed them with the mysterious sacredness of the Ganges, and its manifold virtues of a supernatural order; to swear falsely by its waters, he says, is a crime for which Indra the Dreadful has provided an eternity of excruciations—except the false oath be taken in the interest of a Brahmin, in which case the perjurer may confidently expect a posthumous good time. For the rich to extort money from the poor, says Asirvadam, is an affront to the Gooroos and the Gods, which must be punished by forfeiture, to the Brahmins, of the whole sum extorted, the poor client to pay an additional charge for the trouble his protectors have incurred; 390 the same when fines are recovered; and in cases of enforced payment of debts, three-fourths of the sum collected are swallowed up in costs. Being a Brahmin, to pay a bribe is a foolish act; to receive one—a necessary

circumstance, perhaps. Not being a Brahmin, to offer or accept a bribe is a disgraceful transaction, requiring that both parties shall be made an example of;—the bribe is forfeited to the Brahmins, and the poorer party fined; if the fine exceed his means, the richer party to pay the excess.

As the Brahminical interpretation of an oath is not always clear to prisoners and witnesses of other castes, it is usual to illustrate the definition to the obtuser or more scrupulous unfortunates by the old-fashioned machinery of ordeals: such as compelling the conscientious or obdurate inquirer to promenade, without sandals, over burning coals; or to grasp and hold for a time a bar of red-hot iron; or to plunge the hands into boiling oil, and keep them there for several minutes. The party receiving these illustrations and practical definitions of the Brahminical nature of an oath, without discomfort or scar, is frankly adjudged innocent and reasonable.

Another pretty trick of ordeal, which borrows its more striking features from the department of natural history, is that in which the prisoner or witness is required to grope about for a trinket or small coin in a basket or jar already occupied by a lively cobra. Should the groper not be bitten, our courtly friend, Asirvadam, is satisfied there has been some mistake here, and gallantly begs the gentleman's pardon. To force the subject to swallow water, cup by cup, until it bursts from mouth and nose, is also a very neat ordeal, but requiring practice.

Formerly, Asirvadam the Brahmin “farmed” the offences of his district;—that is, he paid a certain sum to government for the right to try, and to punish, all the high crimes and misdemeanors that should be committed in his “section” for a year. Of course, fines were his favorite penalties; and although most of the time, expenses for meddlers and perjurers being heavy, the office did not pay more than a fair living profit, there would now and then come a year when, rice being scarce and opium cheap, with the aid of a little extra exasperation, he cut it pretty fat. “Take it year in and year out,” said Asirvadam the Brahmin, “a fellow couldn't complain.”

Asirvadam the Brahmin is among the Sepoys. He sits by the well of Barrackpore, a comrade on either side, and talks, as only he can talk to whom no books are sealed. To one, a rigid statue of thrilled attention, he speaks of the time when Arab horsemen first made flashing forays down

upon Mooltan; he tells of Mahmoud's mace, that clove the idol of Somnath, and of the gold and gems that burst from the treacherous wood, as water from the smitten rock in the wilderness; he tells of Timour, and Baber the Founder, and the long imperial procession of the Great Moguls—of Humayoon, and Akbar, and Shah Jehan, and Aurengzebe—of Hyder Ali and Tippoo Sultan—of Moorish splendor and the Prophet's sway; and the swarthy Mussulman stiffens in lip-parted listening.

To the other, a fiery enthusiast, fretting for the 393 acted moral of a tale he knows too well, he whispers of British blasphemy and insolence—of Brahmins insulted, and gods derided—of the Vedas violated, and the sacred Sanscrit defiled by the tongues of Kaffirs—of Pariahs taught and honored—of high and low castes indiscriminately mingled, and obscene herd, in schools and regiments—of glorious institutions, old as Mount Meru, boldly overthrown—of suttee suppressed, and infanticide abated—of widows re-married, and the dowries of the brides of Brahmins limited—of high-caste students handling dead bodies, and Soodra beggars drinking from Brahminical wells—of the Triple Cord broken in twain, and Brahmin bulls slain in the streets, and cartridges greased with the fat of cows, and Christian converts indemnified, and property not confiscated for loss of caste—and a frightful falling off in the benighting business generally; and the fierce Rajpoot grinds his white teeth, while Asirvadam the Brahmin plots, and plots, and plots.

“Incline your ears, my brothers, and I will sing you, softly and low, a song to make Moor and Rajpoot bite, with their very hearts”:—

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“Bring soma to the adorable Indra, the lord of all, the lord of wealth, the lord of heaven, the perpetual lord, the lord of men, the lord of earth, the lord of horses, the lord of cattle, the lord of water!

“Offer adoration to Indra, the overcomer, the destroyer, the munificent, the invincible, the all-endowing, the creator, the all-adorable, the sustainer, the unassailable, the ever-victorious!

“I proclaim the might exploits of that Indra who is ever victorious, the benefactor of men, the overthrower of men, the caster-down, the warrior, who is gratified by our libations, the granter of desires, the subduer of enemies, the refuge of the people!

“Unequaled in liberality, the showerer, the slayer of the malevolent, profound, mighty, of impenetrable sagacity, the dispenser of prosperity, the enfeebler, firm, vast, the performer of pious acts, Indra has given birth to the light of the morning!

“Indra, bestow upon *us* most excellent treasures, the reputation of ability, prosperity, increase of wealth, security of person, sweetness of speech, and auspiciousness of days!

“Offer worship quickly to Indra; recite hymns; let the outpoured drops exhilarate him; pay adoration to his superior strength!

“When, Indra, thou harnesses thy horses, there is no such charioteer as thou; none is equal to thee in strength; none, howsoever well horsed, has overtaken thee!

“He, who alone bestows wealth upon the man who offers him oblations, is the undisputed sovereign: Indra, ho!

“When will he trample with his foot upon the man who offers no 395 oblations, as upon a coiled snake? When will Indra listen to our praises? Indra, ho!

“Indra grants formidable strength to him who worships him, having libations prepared: Indra, ho!”

The song that was chanted low by the well of Barrackpore to the maddened Rajpoot, to the dreaming Moor, was fiercely shouted by the well of Cawnpore to a chorus of shrieking women, English wives and mothers, and spluttering of blood-choked babes, and clash of red knives, and drunken shouts of slayers, ruthless and obscene.

When Asirvadam the Brahmin conjured the wild demon of revolt, to light the horrid torch and bare the greedy blade, he tore a chapter from the Book of Menu:—

“Let no man, engaged in combat, smite his foe with concealed weapons, nor with arrows mischievously barbed, nor with poisoned arrows, nor with darts blazing with fire.

“Nor let him strike his enemy alighted on the ground; nor an effeminate man, nor one who sues for life with closed palms, nor one whose hair is loose, nor one who sits down, nor one who says, ‘I am thy captive.’

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“Nor one who sleeps, nor one who has lost his coat-of-mail, nor one who is naked, nor one who is dismayed, nor one who is a spectator, but no combatant, nor one who is fighting with another man.

“Calling to mind the duty of honorable men, let him never slay one who has broken his weapon, nor one who is afflicted, nor one who has been grievously wounded, nor one who is terrified, nor one who turns his back.”

But Asirvadam the Brahmin, like the Thug of seven victims, has tasted the sugar of blood, sweeter upon his tongue than to the lips of an eager babe the pearl-tipped nipple of its mother. Henceforth he must slay, slay, slay, mutilate and ravish, burn and slay, in the name of the queen of horrors.—
Karlee, ho!

Now what shall be done with our dangerous friend? Shall he be blown from the mouths of guns? or transported to the heart-breaking Andamans? or lashed to his own churruck-posts, and flayed with cats by stout drummers? or handcuffed with Pariahs in chain-gangs, to work on his knees in foul sewers? or choked to death with raw beef-steaks and the warm blood of cows? or swung by stout Irish wenches with bridle-ends? or smitten on the mouth 397 with kid gloves by English ladies, his turban trampled under foot by every Feringhee brat in Bengal?—Wanted, a poetical putter-down for Asirvadam the Brahmin.

“Devotion is not in the ragged garment, nor in the staff, nor in ashes, nor in the shaven head, nor in the sounding of horns.

“Numerous Mahomets there have been, and multitudes of Brahmas, Vishnus, and Sivas;

“Thousands of seers and prophets, and tens of thousands of saints and holy men;

“But the chief of lords is the one Lord, the true name of GOD!”

CHAPTER V.

THE BABOO'S NAUTCH.

SALAAM, *Sahib*; *Chittee*, *Sahib*—*Chittee hai!* said old Karlee, handing me a note as he popped the cork of my soda-water bottle, preparatory to pouring its carbonated contents upon two lumps of ice in a tumbler, according to my every-morning bedside programme; for Karlee was more regular in his habits than I, and the strict system of his *bulatta pawnee* (as he called soda-water) libations was more to his credit than mine.

Old Karlee was a picturesque type of the “bearer” caste. Taller than he seemed—being permanently bent by the bearer's professional habit of incessant salaaming, slender-limbed, well-featured, mild-eyed, and soft-spoken; mahogany-hued, and gray-moustached; simple, but appropriate in his attire—modish as to his *cumberbund*, and orthodox as to his *turban*; of manners most persuasive—humble, patient, deprecatory, quietly remonstrating—polite withal, and versed in the etiquette of servitude assigned to his caste; a faithful, painstaking heathen; gratefully attached to the *Sahib*, in consideration of kindnesses fewer than his deserts; a careful, thrifty fellow in the *Sahib's* interest; a gatherer up of loose rupees, a sewer on of truant buttons, a famous groom of the wardrobe—indeed a motherly man, a man to be loved from the antipodes, long years beyond a last farewell. Lord, keep my memory of him green! I would the child of my sowed wild oats might caress his silver moustache at this present writing.

Chittee means “note;” the word is a childish Hindostanee attempt at the pronunciation of “sheet”—a monosyllable impracticable by its consonants to the soft Indian tongue. The present *chittee* was an extraordinary, quite a splendid missive, done long-wise on yellow paper redolent of sandal-wood and significant of a complimentary occasion. Within, an emblematic wood-cut in the shape of a picture-frame—such a 400 thing as you might hew with a broad axe out heavy ship-timber—hung around with nondescript objects from the botanical kingdom, inclosed what the “management” of a Bowery ball would call a “card of admission:” Rajinda Radakant Ghose presents his respectful compliments to Dr. RICHARD ROE and requests the favor of his company to a Musical Entertainment at his House on Wednesday the 25th Inst. at 1/2 past 8 o'clock, P.M. for the celebration of the wedding of his grandson.

Calcutta, Simla. 23d Feby. 1852.

Mahindy Laul Press.

“So, Karlee, the Baboo gives a nautch.”

“*Acha, Sahib!—burra nautch* —mighty big—very fine; will have continue three day—plenty sahib there— *burra sahib* (upper-ten)— *Burra Lard Sahib* (the Governor-General). Baboo mighty rich—big Melican (American) banian—large house, very large, all same 401 Lard Sahib's house—plenty lac rupee—plenty nautch girl, plenty tom-tom, plenty conjure-wallah (jugglers), plenty isherry (wine), plenty brandee pawnee, plenty cheeroot, plenty everything. Very proper Sahib go; Wilde Sahib go, Wilton Sahib, Lode Sahib, Follin Sahib—all Melican Sahib go—Baboo Big Melican banian!”

Truly, Karlee's eloquence was persuasive. Here was no vulgar promise of Bengalee magnificence and hospitable profusion. I knew the “Great American Banian;” his person was said to be not fatter than his purse—his family pride imposing, his love of display a passion, his airs nabobish, his residence palatial, his retinue an army, his repasts sumptuous, the family jewels astonishing, his grandson a pampered pet, and himself—the Great American Banian.

“Karlee, we will go.”

The cold season was just closing, somewhat earlier than usual. Punka fans were coming into play again; the tatties, or wetted mats, were beginning to reappear in verandahs. Old Buxsoo, the Khansamah, had thrown off his quilted blue jacket, with all 402 its vanity of crimson lining and shiny buttons, for nine months to come. The fierce durwan at the gate had unmuffled his fine military head, and giving his “regulation” whiskers and moustaches to the air once more, no longer looked like a “reduced” statue of the Great Mogul as he appeared to Bishop Heber. Palkee-bearers, who had dwelt in shivering decencies for three months, were “stripping to the buff,” and trying their suppleness for a set-to with the sun. Tricksy monkeys, recovering their agility with their tropic comfort, were catching not yet limber flies on verandahs; mina-birds in bamboo cages on walls were vociferating *qui-hi! qui-hi!* with levelling irreverence to every passer, careless whether he were high Brahmin or vilest Pariah; and astute “adjutants”—those pampered scavengers—that had stood on one long leg in isolated and gymnastic wretchedness till the observer might well have fancied they would grow so, now stalked along parapets and the railings of roofs, with airs as stately as though claiming in their bipedness proud community with man, and looking abroad over the freshly steaming land, 403 regaled their nostrils with the uprising fragrance of garbage.

Cook and Co.'s is the Tattersall's of India. Twelve hundred horses stand in their stalls at once; and their crack turn-outs, from the most modest of saddle-cobs to a four-in-hand of sumptuous Arabs, with bawling syces in blue and yellow livery, are in lively demand by fast strangers who would make a splendid dash on the Esplanade, to astonish the Chee-chees—as the half-castes are called—or take the fancies of romantic French maidens in excursions to Chandernagore.

Toward dusk on the 25th, ten of the blue and yellow syces held by the heads ten well-groomed Arabs, attached to as many neat buggies with their tops down, at the corner of Sircar Lane and Cossitollah. A score of young Americans, who had reason to be atisfied if their horses were but half as fast as themselves, waited, whip in hand, in front of the go-downs. Around them a bustling crowd of natives vociferated. Chaprasseys, or footmen, who came from the Baboo with his compliments and competing proffers of 404 service, to show the way, and clear the narrow, intricate and

thronged bazaars along the line of procession, or rather course; link-men, with flaring bamboo-joints, fed with petroleum; bhearers, solicitous and vigilant, bringing to this sahib his handkerchief, to that his porte-monnaie, and to another, his cloth cap—in place of the sola hat, unseasonable after nightfall—or his warm pea-jacket, in forethought of the chilliness of the dawn; syces, with the true instinct of the Oriental varlet, bullying the rabble in a polyglot of dialects, and superlatively glorifying the sahibs—like “Eothen's” donkey-boys in Cairo, or the garree-boys at Singapore: “ *Hi! toom junglee-wal-lah, toom banchut!—hi, hi! toom sooa, toom chota sooa!—jou! jou! jeldie jou!—Sahib hai! Lard Sahib hai! jou!*” “Ho, you drunken loafer, you blackguard, get out of the way on the right! Ho, you pig, you young rascal pig, get out of the way on the left! Quick! jump quick, jump quick! for this Sahib comes—this rich, strong and terrible nobleman comes—he comes! he comes!”

And so we whirled and rattled, with infernal 405 hubbub; the chaprasseys and linkmen shouting as they ran before us, the syces still bawling as they hung on, by tooth and nail, behind—and all to astonish the denizens of that shabby quarter, whom the flashing cortége did flutter exceedingly. Men laughed and shouted, women screamed and grabbed for loose children, and youngsters of every sex, size, complexion, and degree of nakedness, scrambled and yelled.

But safely enough, nevertheless—for the munificent and careful Baboo had brilliantly illuminated every house along the route with pretty lamps—we sped through the unfragrant concourse, and the distracting din, and the bewildering glare; past the close, silent, and mysterious dens of the Jewish quarter, whose vacant verandahs, too decorous by half, made the place suspicious by their very airs of innocence; through China Bazaar, and past long lines of chow-chow stalls, with their parti-colored and fantastic balloon-like lanterns, and their queer caudated people—pleasant rascals, mongers in every thing, cordial and prepossessing but very sly—scolding, singing, laughing, laughing, singing, scolding, altogether and all at 406 once, for ever and for ever; past the substantial and demure go-downs of prominent Parsees, rich, respectable, reserved and romantic; past the neater, cooler, sweeter bazaars of the Armenians, who deal in silks, and Canton crape, and piña goods, and Cashmere shawls, and seersucker—from whose green-latticed balconies above, low, musical laughter and whispered songs, and the provoking tinkle of muffled guitars, came down

like the soft sprinkling of April showers at twilight; past the steaming, lamp-smoked, fetid dens of Bengalee peddlers, sickening with the mixed disgust of opium pipes, and rancid *ghee*, and mangy pariah dogs.

And so we sped laughing, and shouting merrily to one another—now grazing with buzzing wheel, as our horses shied from a sudden yell, or fiercer array of lights, or the red flash of a petroleum fire, the pit-falls of stone ditches on either side; now stinging with our whips the bare loins of some insolent or lazy scamp who dared to seem regardless of our haste; now dispersing with free and gallant salutations a balcony-full of dim daughters of Israel, upon whom, 407 round a sharp corner, we had come unawares—and so we reached the Baboo's lodge.

If I were called upon to describe that scene of distracting hullabaloo and scramble and glare, I could find only the imperfect comparison of an opium sale at the Exchange in Tank Square; and that can be likened to nothing in the world's hurly-burlies, sacred or profane, but the daft jargon and incoherent Kil-kenny-catness of the Tower of Babel, when masons and joiners, confounded into fiends, threw down their tools, and tore their hair, and foamed; and, with red eyes and swollen temples, hoarsely berated one another for drunkards, and dazed fools, and rolled on the ground in wits-endy desperation, and cried for their dear universal tongue, which, like Leigh Hunt's pig in Smithfield Market, had broke away from them, and would be sure to run down all manner of streets.

Winking our eyes and shielding our ears, we hurried through the gate-lodge, only staying for a moment to bestow the customary bucksheesh on the handsome durwan, all glorious in his authority and hospitality. Some chowkeedars—policemen in uniform 408 followed by an army of bhearers and chaprasseys, escorted us through the native throng that impeded the approaches, into a grand column-girt rotunda, brilliant with a firmament of perfumed lamps, and decorated with complimentary festoons of American and the Company's flags intertwined. Here we found, already gathered, a mixed concourse of European and Asiatic guests in their holiday attire, presenting in the variety of their costume and language such a picturesque and curious assemblage as can only be met with on some ceremonial occasion at Calcutta.

A numerous company were ranged in a circle on sofas, benches, and chairs, leaving the central space free for the movements of their entertainers and attendants. As many more were passing from place to place, interchanging pleasantries with their friends, following officious kitmudgars to an upper floor, where were refreshments, chess and billiards, or chatting apart with fat but dignified banians. There were graceful and scholarly baboos, of the “Young Bengal” persuasion, and the style of Rajinda Dutt; grave, enlightened, and sagacious Parsees, competent, 409 by their liberal views, if not by lacs, to fill the place—when he shall have departed from his sphere of munificent usefulness—of Sir Jamesetjee Jeejeebhoy, whom all India delights to honor for many wise and princely endowments; Anglo-Indian officers of the Napier school and practice, bluff and “devilish blunt” old Joe Bagstocks, with grizzled moustaches and complexions like a guinea—“livery” old boys who can never get their curry hot enough; puppy heroes of the ensign age, with incipient whiskers, cut mutton-chopwise, and dickeys desperate with starch—such fellows as you see periodically “bawed,” or “I believe-you-my-boyed,” or “I-say-Fwed-deuced-foine guirl-ed” in the portfolio of Mr. Punch. There, too, were chee-chee civil-servants on very chee-chee salaries—cheap, servile, and especially “nigger”—with whited sepulchres for daughters, if whited sepulchres can be touched with a Terpsichorean madness of the legs, and concentrate all their aspirations in gymnastic and perspiratory rehearsals of polkas and vales à-deux-temps. And there, too, were British civil officers on very Anglo-Indian salaries—costly, 410 supercilious, and especially, “boss”—escorting “Company's widows,” general-officers'-orphan-daughters-in-reduced circumstances, and other equivocal speculations in crinoline who had conceived a longing for “three hundred rupees, dead or alive.”

Our comfortable host, the fat and fine old Baboo, modestly attired in piña, as if to denote that the pleasure his rupees might afford his friends sufficed for him, passed from guest to guest, his hands laden with the rarest and most fragrant flowers, which ever and anon he sprinkled, as is the superfluous custom at such entertainments, with rose-water contained in a vase of gold with which a servant attended him, while another bore, on a silver dish, miniature bottles of attar of roses, pretty fans, fantastic ivory toys, and even a ruby or two, which were for presents to distinguished strangers and dearest friends. For every one, as he passed, this fine old Indian gentleman had the

true De Coverley address—prettinesses and presents for the ladies—good-fellow-familiarities or deferential compliments for the men.

On a decorated balcony the Governor-General's 411 band—graciously contributed for the occasion—discoursed the latest music from ballet or opera; while on the floor native musicians plagued unoffending fiddles, pinched and twitched obstinate guitars, mauled helpless tom-toms, and drew squeals of anguish from miserable pipes, tortured in all their stops with the question *peine et dure*. It was a pity that all played at once, and scarcely fairer to the audience than the performers. Presently there was a stir on that side of the rotunda over against the entrance and the main body of guests; and with “Trip to the Wedding” from the Government band, and something to correspond, no doubt, from the outraged tom-toms and the excruciated pipes, the bridegroom in his litter was borne into the midst of us on the honored shoulders of his bhearers.

At first, this litter was so shrouded with heavy satin curtains, in blue and crimson, purple and orange, embroidered with gold, and bordered with massive bullion fringe, that our curiosity, prepared for a rajah's splendors, was not indulged with even the dimmest hint of its quality, or the appearance and 412 state of its occupant. But when the bhearers set their burden down, and the Baboo, with proud and partial hands, drew back the hangings, we saw a sort of bed-stead, wide and high, and all of silver—arabesquely traced and gilded at the cornices, and inlaid in the posts. A cushion of cloth of gold served the purpose of a mattress, and a skirt or valence of the same material, fringed with gold cord, hung nearly to the floor. There were no pillows or coverlet—for this magnificent structure partook of the character of a royal divan rather than of a couch.

Within, a beautiful, graceful, and intelligent-looking lad, of twelve perhaps, sat enthroned on a princely pile of Cashmere and Canton shawls, true silks of Samarcand, the wondrous textures of the old consecrated looms of Benares, fine linen of Ireland, and even velvets from Lyons. He was clad—cors-leted and greaved and helmed—in jewels of a rajah's patrimony; golden bells hung silent, so motionless he sat, from his ankles—golden bells from a bright band of gold that encircled his brow; he was slippered with gems too; a Cashmere scarf served him for a 413 cumberbund, and

his loonghee cheapened Tyrian purple—or that fabulous texture of Dhacca which the cows ate unawares, as it lay on the grass where a royal rajpoot's daughters had spread it to bleach.

The Baboo—when the proud interval devoted to the first wonder and admiration of his guests had passed—took the dazzling boy tenderly in his arms, and kissing him fondly on both cheeks, with a happy smile led him forward into the midst of the company. Then the boy laughed, and all the golden bells jingled, and the band of the *Burra Lard Sahib*—as the Hindoos style the Governor-General—struck up hymeneal strains; and even the twitched guitar lifted up its now willing voice, and the squealing pipe forgot its pain and made merry; for this tender child was the newly-married spouse.

From guest to guest he passed, gracefully salaaming, and to the fair ones of the company he offered, with impartial gallantry, heliotropes, which ever turn, longing, to the sun, and white rose-buds for their significance, and mango-blossoms, meaning fruitfulness. Then, having sprinkled the brows of the fairest 414 with rose-water, and into the lap of a pretty maiden in her fresh teens dropped a pure opal, he sweetly kissed his finger-tips in salaam again, and withdrew to his throne, where he sank down among his shawls like a brown Cupid among flowers.

Then the Baboo seated himself in a plain arm-chair in the very centre of all, and clapped his hands thrice, for a signal that the minor shows of the evening might begin.

First of all came the nautch girls, arrayed in barbaric drapery and jewelled in profusion—bells on their ankles, and rings on their toes, and bright ribbons of silver braided in their hair, confined by golden bodkins. Transparent veils, dyed like the mist when the red sun goes down behind it, enfolded them from crown to toe, and pearl and sapphire-studded vests of amber satin flashed through and through. From their delicate ears, pierced in twenty places, were suspended, softly tinkling, as many rings; and a great hoop of gold, supporting a central pearl and two rubies, hung from the nose and encircled the lips, so that the jewels lay upon the chin.

415

When they began to dance it was easy to forget the obdurate guitar, the abused tom-toms, and the heart-wrung pipe, in their poetry of motion, the pantomime of tender balladry—the devotion, the anguish, the patience, the courage, the victory of love, related in curved lines of grace and beauty, in the brown roundness and suppleness and harmonious blendings of soft, elastic limbs, serpent-like in lyric spirals. It was not dancing, speaking Elsslerwise or Taglionicè—they neither leaped nor skipped, neither balanced nor pirouetted, there were no tours de force or pit-astounding gymnastics; they glided, they floated, in the melody of action; and when one sweet young singer lifted up a fresh but well-trained voice in the artless plaintiveness of *Taza Bu Taza*, our hearts were filled with the Indian ditty that Sir Walter Scott so loved.

This done, the jugglers came on—common-place fellows enough, with few and simple apparatus, and none of the awful and dazzling paraphernalia of our Cockney Herr Alexanders and Yankee Fakirs of Ava. Squatting humbly on the ground, they waited 416 for the word. The Baboo, smiling, called one to his feet, and bade him show us a trial of his art. The man asked for bottles, empty glass bottles, whole or broken, as the Baboo pleased. A kitmudgar was sent to the refreshment-rooms above, where champagne corks had been popping smartly by platoons, to fetch a few “dead men.”

When one was handed to the fellow, he sounded it once or twice against another, and stepping forward, with many salaams, to the audience, passed it from hand to hand to be examined, that it might be perceived the bottle was a good bottle, and no deception. Then returning to his place, he broke the bottle in two, and with a fragment in each hand, coolly bit off large slices, as one would devour a melon or a cake; and with no noticeable care, or any peculiarity in his manner of masticating, but with seeming satisfaction, as though he were enjoying a repast, deliberately chewed them finely, spitting forth from time to time large mouthfuls of glittering glass-powder, sometimes slightly stained with blood, till the whole was done.

Then, at a sign from the Baboo, the man approached 417 the spectators, to display his mouth to such anxious scientific inquirers as might desire to examine it. Plainly there had been no trick—the fellow had in very truth masticated the glass, and his lips had suffered a few scratches. If, in the

course of the performance, he had spit out a formidable slice of tongue, we admiring new-comers would, no doubt—like the sailor who attended an exhibition of the Wizard of the North, when he treated his audience to a trick not on the programme, by blowing off the roof of the house—have had no more alarmed exclamation to utter than “Wonder what he'll do next!”

After this glassivorous monster, came some experts of the more familiar sort—the sword-swallowers, and the fire-eaters, and the tossers of balls, and the posture-makers. We soon tired of them.

Then followed a more startling exhibition: Some Nutt gipsies were led out—a family of four, being a man, two women, and a boy. They brought with them a tall pole which the man fixed upright, in a place in the floor prepared to receive it. They had also two or three brass dishes, some eggs, an earthen jar or two, and a bottle. When the man had planted his pole, he began trotting round it, in a narrow circle, chanting a monotonous song, which every moment quickened with his pace. One of the women sat on the ground, and beat with her fingers on a small drum; the boy drew a clattering accompaniment from a sort of castanets; the other woman remained for a time silent and still. But presently the man clapped his hands with a smart double stroke, and at the sign the woman rose to her feet and, as he passed her, sprang with marvellous agility to his shoulder, and then to the very top of his head—where she stood with folded arms, statue-like, and seemingly as firmly planted.

Still the man ran on, faster and faster. Then the boy laid down his castanets, and took up one of the earthen jars, with which he followed them; and ere we could see how the nimble feat was done, the jar was on the man's head, and the woman stood upon it in the same attitude as before. And still the man ran round and round, faster and faster, and faster went his meagre-noted song, and faster went the drum.

419

Then the boy brought a brass dish and a bottle, and the man slipped the dish under the woman's feet, so that it covered the jar like a lid; and he placed the bottle upright on the dish, and the woman

poised herself on one foot on the bottle, and with outspread arms, and her free foot in air, stood perched like Mercury, “on a heaven-kissing hill.”

And still the man ran faster and faster, and the drum and the castanets hurried to keep up with him; and not until we had grown dizzy, and all the rotunda revolved in our eyes with those revolving gymnasts, did the woman leap nimbly to the floor and with a smile set us free.

Then the elder woman left her tom tom, the younger taking her place; and she stood in the centre of the cleared space with a small basket of eggs in her hand. Around her head she bound, smoothly and securely, a broad fillet, from which twelve silken cords, equidistant, having each a small noose at the end, were suspended, and hung just a little lower than her shoulders.

At once the music began—slowly at first, then 420 faster and faster, as before; and she gyrated with it, measuring her velocity by its time. Like a whirling dervish, at last she spun—a human teetotum—till the silken cords with their nooses stood centrifugally, straight out from her head; and when her velocity was at its wildest, one by one she hung twelve eggs in the loops, and whirled on, till the cords were like the spokes of a light Yankee wagon in a state of 2.40, and the eggs made a white halo round her head. Then, by slow degrees she checked her speed, and at the end replaced her astonished fœtus-poultry in the basket, undamaged by so much as a dint.

After this the Nutts withdrew amid hearty applause, and with generous bucksheesh from the Baboo. They were to be followed by the famous mango-trick—wherein a mango is made to grow from the seed and bear fruit, for the delectation and special wonder of the gazers. But we had seen that many times before, and had been bored past patience by everybody's desperate theories to explain it; indeed, we preferred to believe, with the old Indiamen, that it is a veritable miracle. So we withdrew to the refreshment saloon, 421 and having comforted our sympathetic fatigue with champagne and fruits, took our leave—happy that in India, on such occasions, we could do that without ceremony.

As we passed through the extensive compound, still brilliant and noisy, we saw people enacting legitimate drama that Dr. Bellows would hardly have approved, with puppets—wonderful make-pretences of their makers. There were celebrated wrestlers, too; and a great outcry announced that,

in a contest just concluded, one fellow had tossed another over his head and broken his ribs. In India, a wrestler is never called beaten for being merely thrown; he must be turned on his back and slapped upon the belly. For this, herculean strength is required—the struggle is at its fiercest then.

We were promised, if we would tarry, a sight of the performance of a sheep-eater—one of those horrible fellows from the mountains, a reclaimed Thug perhaps—who would strangle a large sheep with his hands, and having skinned it with his teeth, would then and there devour it without knife or fork, 422 entire, raw, reeking, and warm. But we feared this might prove too much for our suppers; so, betaking us to our buggies, we sped homeward through the still illuminated streets—one of us, at least, having visions by the way of Haroun-al-Raschid, Signorina Soto, the Wizard of the North, *Le Monstre* Paul, the Polish Brothers, Thugs, Feejee Cannibals, Charlotte Cushman, and Borro-boola-gha.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ADJUTANT'S GRAVE.

IT was at the taking of Rangoon. From the Irrawaddi, the crashing batteries of a dozen steam frigates had levelled the stockades on the river side. Black masses of naked, smoke-stained Burmese, exposed at their guns, or in shallow trenches, when the teak walls fell or were burned were mowed down like grass by a hail-storm of grape. Our artillery was landing. The 18th Royal Irish were already in the breaches and at the water-gate. The Burmese dropped their cumbrous shields, and lances and dhars, and fled yelling, back toward the great Pagoda. Those wild Irish, possessed of the same devil that dashed and slashed and stabbed and hacked and hurraed in the Enniskilleners at Waterloo, went off in hot chase. Only one regiment!—for they would 424 not wait for the slow boats which were bringing the guns, and the 80th, and the sepoy rifles, but broke away in pursuit, in spite of the almost frantic officers, who, weak and hoarse with ineffectual efforts to check their mad command, were forced to follow at last, all chasing the bubble reputation together. One regiment, at the heels of ten thousand panic-stricken savages!

One of the glorious fellows of the crack 18th in this tempestuous hurly-burly, was Fallon, the adjutant. He was the equipped model of “a gentleman and a soldier” according to the standard of his proud regiment—a jovial boon-companion, generous comrade, fast friend, frank and fearless enemy—in sport a child, in taste a scholar, impetuous in fight, pitiful in victory.

As his disordered party charged shouting up the broad Dagon Road, between the long lines of the Inner Stockade, over bamboo bridges thrown across trenches, and past grim gigantic idols, and poonghee houses fantastically carved, the Adjutant, who had lingered behind the rest, striving to the last, in his 425 habitual devotion to discipline, to restrain the men, happened to be in the rear of all.

“How now?” jestingly cried Clark, an English ensign of the Adjutant's mess, who was running just before him, “our plucky Fallon at the back of us all! This is bad enough for me, old fellow, who have my medals to win; but it will never do for you, with those red ribbons to answer for.”

“I am doing my best, Clark, my boy,” Fallon replied, “and shall be up with that crazy sergeant presently. You know I am good for a short brush of foot race; fast running is one of my accomplishments—thanks to my bog-trotting education, and the practice Lord Gough gave us.”

Hardly were the words done ringing in his comrade's ears, when the gallant Fallon, the pride of his corps, received in his generous breast a dozen musket-balls as he sprang up the broad staircase of the Golden Dagon Pagoda—first of them all, and quite alone. He fell on his face, stone dead, on the stairs, sword in hand, and smiling.

When all was over, and his regiment held the post 426 of honor on the very throne of the Boodh, they gave him a soldier's most distinguished obsequies, burying him in a solemn grave of talipot trees, behind a poonghee house of the grotesque architecture, and just outside of what were afterward the sepoy lines of the 80th. His faithful orderly planted a rude cross at his grave's head, and set an English white rose there. An American missionary gave it him.

In Calcutta, Norah Fallon—beautiful, accomplished, witty, altogether radiant with rare charms of mind and person—waited with her young child for news from her soldier-husband who had

her heart in his keeping within the stockades of Rangoon. When they told her he was dead, she fell, uttering only a sharp cry, and lay as one dead for many days. But when she awoke to the consciousness of her profound bereavement and her eternal widowhood, she shed not one tear, nor spoke a word, but took her boy and went aboard a troop-ship that sailed on the morrow for Rangoon.

427

On the voyage, still she spoke not, nor ever wept—the silence of her sorrow had something sacred, almost awful, about it, that commanded a delicacy of consideration, which was a sort of worship, from the rudest around her.

Arrived at Rangoon, no sooner had the ship dropped anchor off the King's Wharf, than Norah sent her chaprassey, her Hindoo errand-goer, with a note to Gen. Godwin, commanding the Company's forces in Burmah: “The wife of Maurice Fallon, adjutant in the 18th of her Majesty's Royal Irish, would be permitted to see her husband's grave; she awaits the expression of the General's wishes on board the Mahanuddy.”

She waited long. At last the answer came: “It was with unfeigned sorrow that Lieut.-Gen. Godwin found himself constrained, by the exigencies of his position, to refuse the widow of one of his best officers, whose loss was felt by the whole Anglo-Indian army, the sad privilege of visiting the spot where his comrades had consigned him to a brave soldier's grave. But the General's footing in 428 Rangoon was precarious; hourly apprehensions of attack, by a strong body of the enemy, were entertained. It was known that a daring Burman chief was approaching with a numerous and well-armed force, and had already arrived in the neighborhood of Kemmendine. Therefore, for the present, the Lieut.-General must forbid the landing of his countrywomen from the shipping, on any pretext. He hoped to be forgiven by the dear lady, whose grief he humbly asked to be permitted to participate in; but, in this case, he was not left in the exercise of the least discretion—such were the Regulations.”

When Norah Fallon had read these lines, she retired to her cabin in silence, and was not seen again that day. On the next, she was observed in frequent and eager conference, in whispered Hindostanee, with an old and faithful bearer, grey-bearded and of grave and dignified demeanor, who had long been in the confidence of her husband—indeed, a sort of humble but fatherly guardian to the young, inexperienced, and perhaps imprudent pair, who, with their darling between them, were all-in-all to each other, and heedless of all beside. The old Hindoo had formerly lived several years at Prome, whither he had gone in the capacity of bearer to an English commissioner; he therefore knew the Burmese character well, and could speak the language with tolerable fluency.

There were many “friendly” Burmese at Rangoon at this time, deserters from Dallah, shrewd fellows who had foreseen safety in British ascendancy, and being mostly fishermen, had offered themselves for “Inglee” muskets for the nonce, with a sharp eye to profitable nets thereafter. Indeed, not a few of these calculating traitors had taken to their old trade already, and were busily plying their poles and hooks from crazy canoes at the mouth of Kemmendine Creek. It was not long before some of them, hailed by old Buxsoo, the bearer, came alongside with, as he said, fish for the “Mem Sahib,” his mistress. On these occasions he conversed with them in Burmese, and whoever watched narrowly the astonished and anxious faces of the fishermen must have observed that neither the freshness nor the price of their finny prizes formed any part of the discussion.

430

It was a dark night—no moon and a cloudy sky; all hands had gone below and “turned in,” some hours since. The officer of the deck, night-glass in hand, paced the “bridge,” or leaned over the rail and watched the lights ashore; while the quartermaster patrolled the gangways. But these were not alone on deck; on the bull-ring of the after-gun the pale and tearless widow sat, still as a shadow, and peered through the darkness shoreward, to where the 18th's lights gleamed from the Golden Dagon. Such was her nightly wont, and officers and men had become so accustomed to it, that she sometimes sat there till after midnight, unheeded and forgotten.

The young officer still chased with his eyes the restless lights, and dreamed dreams the while of home and of a sweetheart; the gruff old quartermaster paced up and down, and thought of prize-money and the “old woman.” Neither had eye or thought for the poor lady—they were so used to her lonesome ways, d'ye see—else they might have found something unusual in the anxiety with which she watched a singular object in the water astern—only an empty 431 canoe drifting towards the ship! Not drifting either; for now that I point them out to you, you can see two black heads, with long hair twisted in a barbaric knot behind, peering warily above the water in front of the boat, which seems to follow them.

The love-lorn youngster, or the gruff old quarter-master on prize-money intent, did look toward the bull-ring a little later, and saw—nothing; the lady was gone. Whither? to her cabin? No; she could not have passed them unobserved. But that was easy to decide—her light still burned; her state-room was open and vacant. Where then was she? Good Heavens!—it could not be—and yet it must—poor lady!—poor baby! They gave the alarm; they roused the ship; a gun was fired; a search made—in vain; alas! it must be so—“she has gone to join her husband.”

True! but not *that* way, gruff old quartermaster; not *that* way, sentimental master's mate. Stop thinking about her—have ears and brains for your duty. What was that shot on shore? And, hark now! another, and another, and another! the alarm is given 432 in the British lines; the sentries have discharged their pieces and run in! See! the place is all a-blaze with lights; every poonghee-house is illuminated; you can discern the great porch of the Golden Dagon, with its griffin warders, from here. They are beating to arms; the trumpet sounds the “assembly.” What could that first and solitary shot have been?

Ah! my nautical friends, while your sapient pates were busy guessing, that pair of barbaric black heads have drifted under the stern again, and the same canoe has drifted with them—nor empty this time; for, look again, and you will see that her light is no longer burning, and her state-room door is closed, though the window is open; and—can it be?—yes, you do hear her breathing. Wait! spare

your heads the guessing; it will all be cleared up for you one day. Wait till you dare to ask Norah Fallon why she makes so much of that withered white rose.

General Godwin's next dispatch to the Governor-General contained a curious passage: "On the night of the 15th, the cantonments were thrown into disorder by a false alarm, caused by the mysterious 433 discharge of a pistol in the talipot grove, which encloses the grave of the late Adjutant Fallon, who fell gloriously in the attack on the Dagon Pagoda; the spot is close to the sepoy lines of H. M. 80th. My men maintained good order, answering the assembly call with remarkable celerity, and in complete equipment. At daybreak, a sepoy of Major Ainslie's picket found a dead boa of great size, and evidently just killed, lying across young Fallon's grave; also, suspended to the cross by a blue ribbon, a gold locket containing two locks of hair—a lady's and a child's; and fastened to the cross by a short Burmese poniard through the paper, the inclosure marked X."

Inclosure X contained the following: "There are no 'Regulations' for the heart of an Irish soldier's wife. N. F.

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