HOME AS FOUND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

HOMEWARD BOUND,

THE PIONEERS, &c. &c.

Pr. Hen. "Thou art perfect."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

Those who have done us the favour to read 'Homeward Bound' will at once perceive that the incidents of this book commence at the point where those of the work just mentioned ceased. We are fully aware of the disadvantage of dividing the interest of a tale in this manner; but in the present instance, the separation has been produced by circumstances over which the writer had very little control. As any one who may happen to take up this volume will very soon discover that there is other matter which it is necessary to know, it may be as well to tell all such persons, in the commencement, therefore, that their reading will be bootless, unless they have leisure to turn to the pages of Homeward Bound for their cue.

We remember the despair with which that admirable observer of men, Mr. Mathews the comedian, confessed the hopelessness of success, in his endeavours to obtain a sufficiency of prominent and distinctive features to compose an entertainment founded on American character. The whole nation struck him as being destitute of salient points, and as characterized by a respectable mediocrity, that, however useful it might be in its way, was utterly without poetry, humour, or interest to the observer. For one who dealt principally with the more conspicuous absurdities of his fellow-creatures, Mr. Mathews was certainly right; we also

believe him to have been right in the main, in the general tenor of his opinion; for this country, in its ordinary aspects, probably presents as barren a field to the writer of fiction, and to the dramatist, as any other on earth; we are not certain that we might not say the most barren. We believe that no attempt to delineate ordinary American life, either on the stage, or in the pages of a novel, has been rewarded with success. Even those works in which the desire to illustrate a principle has been the aim, when the picture has been brought within this homely frame, have had to contend with disadvantages that have been commonly found insurmountable. The latter being the intention of this book, the task has been undertaken with a perfect consciousness of all its difficulties, and with scarcely a hope of success. It would be indeed a desperate undertaking, to think of making anything interesting in the way of a *Roman de Société* in this country; still useful glances may possibly be made even in that direction, and we trust that the fidelity of one or two of our portraits will be recognized by the looker-on, although they will very likely be denied by the sitters themselves.

There seems to be a pervading principle in things, which gives an accumulating energy to any active property that may happen to be in the ascendant, at the time being.—Money produces money; knowledge is the parent of knowledge; and ignorance fortifies ignorance. —In a word, like begets like. The governing social evil of America is provincialism; a misfortune that is perhaps inseparable from her situation. Without a social capital, with twenty or more communities divided by distance and political barriers, her people, who are

really more homogenous than any other of the same numbers in the world perhaps, possess no standard for opinion, manners, social maxims, or even language. Every man, as a matter of course, refers to his own particular experience, and praises or condemns agreeably to notions contracted in the circle of his own habits, however narrow, provincial, or erroneous they may happen to be. As a consequence, no useful stage can exist; for the dramatist who should endeavour to delineate the faults of society, would find a formidable party arrayed against him, in a moment, with no party to defend. As another consequence, we see individuals constantly assailed with a wolf-like ferocity, while society is everywhere permitted to pass unscathed.

That the American nation is a great nation, in some particulars the greatest the world ever saw, we hold to be true, and are as ready to maintain as any one can be; but we are also equally ready to concede, that it is very far behind most polished nations in various essentials, and chiefly, that it is lamentably in arrears to its own avowed principles. Perhaps this truth will be found to be the predominant thought, throughout the pages of "Home As Found."

HOME AS FOUND.

CHAPTER I.

"Good morrow, coz.
"Good morrow, sweet Hero."

SHAKSPEARE.

When Mr. Effingham determined to return home, he sent orders to his agent to prepare his town-house in New-York for his reception, intending to pass a month or two in it, then to repair to Washington for a few weeks, at the close of its season, and to visit his country residence when the spring should fairly open. Accordingly, Eve now found herself at the head of one of the largest establishments, in the largest American town, within an hour after she had landed from the ship. Fortunately for her, however, her father was too just to consider a wife, or a daughter, a mere upper servant, and he rightly judged that a liberal portion of his income should be assigned to the procuring of that higher quality of domestic service, which can alone relieve the mistress of a household from a burthen so heavy to be borne. Unlike so many of those around him, who would spend on a single pretending and comfortless entertainment, in which the ostentatious folly of one contended with the ostentatious folly of another, a sum that, properly directed, would introduce order and system into a family for a twelvemonth, by commanding the time and knowledge of those whose study they had been, and who would be willing to devote themselves to such objects, and then permit their wives

and daughters to return to the drudgery to which the sex seems doomed in this country, he first bethought him of the wants of social life before he aspired to its parade. A man of the world, Mr. Effingham possessed the requisite knowledge, and a man of justice, the requisite fairness, to permit those who depended on him so much for their happiness, to share equitably in the good things that Providence had so liberally bestowed on himself. In other words, he made two people comfortable, by paying a generous price for a housekeeper; his daughter, in the first place, by releasing her from cares that, necessarily, formed no more a part of her duties than it would be a part of her duty to sweep the pavement before the door; and, in the next place, a very respectable woman who was glad to obtain so good a home on so easy terms. To this simple and just expedient, Eve was indebted for being at the head of one of the quietest, most truly elegant, and best ordered establishments in America, with no other demands on her time than that which was necessary to issue a few orders in the morning, and to examine a few accounts once a week.

One of the first and the most acceptable of the visits that Eve received, was from her cousin, Grace Van Cortlandt, who was in the country at the moment of her arrival, but who hurried back to town to meet her old school-fellow and kinswoman, the instant she heard of her having landed. Eve Effingham and Grace Van Cortlandt were sisters' children, and had been born within a month of each other. As the latter was without father or mother, most of their time had been passed together, until the former was taken abroad, when a separation unavoidably ensued. Mr. Effingham ardently desired, and had actually designed, to take his niece with him to Europe, but her paternal grandfather, who was still living, objected his years and affection, and the scheme was reluctantly abandoned. This grandfather was now dead, and Grace had been left,

with a very ample fortune, almost entirely the mistress of her own movements.

The moment of the meeting between these two warm-hearted and sincerely attached young women, was one of great interest and anxiety to both. They retained for each other the tenderest love, though the years that had separated them had given rise to so many new impressions and habits that they did not prepare themselves for the interview without apprehension. This interview took place about a week after Eve was established in Hudson Square, and at an hour earlier than was usual for the reception of visits. Hearing a carriage stop before the door, and the bell ring, our heroine stole a glance from behind a curtain and recognized her cousin as she alighted.

"*Qu'avez-vous, ma chere?*" demanded Mademoiselle Viefville, observing that her *élève* trembled and grew pale.

"It is my cousin, Miss Van Cortlandt—she whom I loved as a sister—we now meet for the first time in so many years!"

"*Bien—c'est une très jolie jeune personne!*" returned the governess, taking a glance from the spot Eve had just quitted. "*Sur le rapport de la personne, ma chere, vous devriez être contente, au moins.*"

"If you will excuse me, Mademoiselle, I will go down alone—I think I should prefer to meet Grace without witnesses in the first interview."

"*Très volontiers. Elle est parente, et c'est bien naturel.*"

Eve, on this expressed approbation, met her maid at the door, as she came to announce that *Mademoiselle de Cortlandt* was in the library, and descended slowly to meet her. The library was lighted from above by means of a small dome, and Grace had unconsciously placed herself in the very position that a painter would have chosen, had she been about to sit for her portrait. A strong, full, rich light fell obliquely on her

as Eve entered, displaying her fine person and beautiful features to the very best advantage, and they were features and a person that are not seen every day, even in a country where female beauty is so common. She was in a carriage dress, and her toilette was rather more elaborate than Eve had been accustomed to see, at that hour, but still Eve thought she had seldom seen a more lovely young creature. Some such thoughts, also, passed through the mind of Grace herself, who, though struck, with a woman's readiness in such matters, with the severe simplicity of Eve's attire, as well as with its entire elegance, was more struck with the charms of her countenance and figure. There was, in truth, a strong resemblance between them, though each was distinguished by an expression suited to her character, and to the habits of her mind.

"Miss Effingham!" said Grace, advancing a step to meet the lady who entered, while her voice was scarcely audible and her limbs trembled.

"Miss Van Cortlandt!" said Eve, in the same low, smothered tone.

This formality caused a chill in both, and each unconsciously stopped and curtsied. Eve had been so much struck with the coldness of the American manner, during the week she had been at home, and Grace was so sensitive on the subject of the opinion of one who had seen so much of Europe, that there was great danger, at that critical moment, the meeting would terminate unpropitiously.

Thus far, however, all had been rigidly decorous, though the strong feelings that were glowing in the bosoms of both, had been so completely suppressed. But the smile, cold and embarrassed as it was, that each gave as she curtsied, had the sweet character of her childhood in it, and recalled to both the girlish and affectionate intercourse of their younger days.

"Grace!" said Eve, eagerly, advancing a step or two impetuously, and blushing like the dawn.

"Eve!"

Each opened her arms, and in a moment they were locked in a long and fervent embrace. This was the commencement of their former intimacy, and before night Grace was domesticated in her uncle's house. It is true that Miss Effingham perceived certain peculiarities about Miss Van Cortlandt, that she had rather were absent; and Miss Van Cortlandt would have felt more at her ease, had Miss Effingham a little less reserve of manner, on certain subjects that the latter had been taught to think interdicted. Notwithstanding these slight separating shades in character, however, the natural affection was warm and sincere; and if Eve, according to Grace's notions, was a little stately and formal, she was polished and courteous, and if Grace, according to Eve's notions, was a little too easy and unreserved, she was feminine and delicate.

We pass over the three or four days that succeeded, during which Eve had got to understand something of her new position, and we will come at once to a conversation between the cousins, that will serve to let the reader more intimately into the opinions, habits and feelings of both, as well as to open the real subject of our narrative. This conversation took place in that very library which had witnessed their first interview, soon after breakfast, and while the young ladies were still alone.

"I suppose, Eve, you will have to visit the Green's. —They are Hajjis, and were much in society last winter."

"Hajjis!—You surely do not mean, Grace, that they have been to Mecca?"

"Not at all: only to Paris, my dear; that makes a Hajji in New-York."

"And does it entitle the pilgrim to wear the green turban?" asked Eve, laughing.

"To wear any thing, Miss Effingham; green, blue, or yellow, and to cause it to pass for elegance."

"And which is the favourite colour with the family you have mentioned?"

"It ought to be the first, in compliment to the name, but, if truth must be said, I think they betray an affection for all, with not a few of the half-tints in addition."

"I am afraid they are too *prononcées* for us, by this description. I am no great admirer, Grace, of walking rainbows."

"*Too* Green, you would have said, had you dared; but you are a Hajji too, and even the Greens know that a Hajji never puns, unless, indeed, it might be one from Philadelphia. But you will visit these people?"

"Certainly, if they are in society and render it necessary by their own civilities."

"They *are* in society, in virtue of their rights as Hajjis; but, as they passed three months at Paris, you probably know something of them."

"They may not have been there at the same time with ourselves," returned Eve, quietly, "and Paris is a very large town. Hundreds of people come and go, that one never hears of. I do not remember those you have mentioned."

"I wish you may escape them, for, in my untravelled judgment, they are anything but agreeable, notwithstanding all they have seen, or pretend to have seen."

"It is very possible to have been all over christendom, and to remain exceedingly disagreeable; besides one may see a great deal, and yet see very little of a good quality."

A pause of two or three minutes followed, during which Eve read a note, and her cousin played with the leaves of a book.

"I wish I knew your real opinion of us, Eve," the last suddenly exclaimed. "Why not be frank with so near a relative; tell me honestly, now—are you reconciled to your country?"

"You are the eleventh person who has asked me,

this question, which I find very extraordinary, as I have never quarrelled with my country."

"Nay, I do not mean exactly that. I wish to hear how our society has struck one who has been educated abroad."

"You wish, then, for opinions that can have no great value, since my experience at home, extends only to a fortnight. But you have many books on the country, and some written by very clever persons; why not consult them?"

"Oh! you mean the travellers. None of them are worth a second thought, and we hold them, one and all, in great contempt."

"Of that I can have no manner of doubt, as one and all, you are constantly protesting it, in the highways and bye-ways. There is no more certain sign of contempt, than to be incessantly dwelling on its intensity!"

Grace had great quickness, as well as her cousin, and though provoked at Eve's quiet hit, she had the good sense and the good nature to laugh.

"Perhaps we do protest and disdain a little too strenuously for good taste, if not to gain believers; but surely, Eve, you do not support these travellers in all that they have written of us?"

"Not in half, I can assure you. My father and cousin Jack have discussed them too often in my presence to leave me in ignorance of the very many political blunders they have made in particular."

"Political blunders!—I know nothing of them, and had rather thought them right, in most of what they said about our politics. But, surely, neither your father nor Mr. John Effingham corroborates what they say of our society!"

"I cannot answer for either, on that point."

"Speak then for yourself. Do *you* think them right?"

"You should remember, Grace, that I have not yet seen any society in New-York."

"No society, dear!—Why you were at the Henderson's, and the Morgan's, and the Drewett's; three of the greatest *réunions* that we have had in two winters!"

"I did not know that you meant those unpleasant crowds, by society."

"Unpleasant crowds! Why, child, that *is* society, is it not?"

"Not what I have been taught to consider such; I rather think it would be better to call it company."

"And is not this what is called society in Paris?"

"As far from it as possible; it may be an excrescence of society; one of its forms; but, by no means, society itself. It would be as true to call cards, which are sometimes introduced in the world, society, as to call a ball given in two small and crowded rooms, society. They are merely two of the modes in which idlers endeavour to vary their amusements."

"But we have little else than these balls, the morning visits, and an occasional evening, in which there is no dancing."

"I am sorry to hear it; for, in that case, you can have no society."

"And is it different at Paris—or Florence, or Rome?"

"Very. In Paris there are many houses open every evening to which one can go, with little ceremony. Our sex appears in them, dressed according to what a gentleman I overheard conversing at Mrs. Henderson's would call their "ulterior intentions," for the night; some attired in the simplest manner, others dressed for concerts, for the opera, for court even; some on the way from a dinner, and others going to a late ball. All this matter of course variety, adds to the ease and grace of the company, and coupled with perfect good manners, a certain knowledge of passing events, pretty modes of expression, an accurate and even utterance, the women usually find the means of making them

selves agreeable. Their sentiment is sometimes a little heroic, but this one must overlook, and it is a taste, moreover, that is falling into disuse, as people read better books."

"And you prefer this heartlessness, Eve, to the nature of your own country!"

"I do not know that quiet, *retenue* and a good tone, are a whit more heartless than flirting, giggling and childishness. There may be more nature in the latter, certainly, but it is scarcely as agreeable, after one has fairly got rid of the nursery."

Grace looked vexed, but she loved her cousin too sincerely to be angry. A secret suspicion that Eve was right, too, came in aid of her affection, and while her little foot moved, she maintained her good-nature, a task not always attainable for those who believe that their own "superlatives" scarcely reach to other people's "positives." At this critical moment, when there was so much danger of a jar in the feelings of these two young females, the library door opened and Pierre, Mr. Effingham's own man, announced——

"Monsieur Bragg."

"Monsieur who?" asked Eve, in surprise.

"Monsieur Bragg," returned Pierre, in French, "desires to see Mademoiselle."

"You mean my father,—I know no such person."

"He inquired first for Monsieur, but understanding Monsieur was out, he next asked to have the honour of seeing Mademoiselle."

"Is it what they call a *person* in England, Pierre?"

Old Pierre smiled, as he answered——

"He has the air, Mademoiselle, though he esteems himself a *personnage*, if I might take the liberty of judging."

"Ask him for his card,—there must be a mistake, I think."

While this short conversation took place, Grace Van Cortlandt was sketching a cottage with a pen, without

attending to a word that was said. But, when Eve received the card from Pierre and read aloud, with the tone of surprise that the name would be apt to excite in a novice in the art of American nomenclature, the words "Aristabulus Bragg," her cousin began to laugh.

"Who can this possibly be, Grace?—Did you ever hear of such a person, and what right can he have to wish to see me?"

"Admit him, by all means; it is your father's land agent, and he may wish to leave some message for my uncle. You will be obliged to make his acquaintance, sooner or later, and it may as well be done now as at another time."

"You have shown this gentleman into the front drawing-room, Pierre?"

"Oui, Mademoiselle."

"I will ring when you are wanted."

Pierre withdrew, and Eve opened her secretary, out of which she took a small manuscript book, over the leaves of which she passed her fingers rapidly.

"Here it is," she said, smiling, "Mr. Aristabulus Bragg, Attorney and Counsellor at Law, and the agent of the Templeton estate." This precious little work, you must understand, Grace, contains sketches of the characters of such persons as I shall be the most likely to see, by John Effingham, A. M. It is a sealed volume, of course, but there can be no harm in reading the part that treats of our present visiter, and, with your permission, we will have it in common.—'Mr. Aristabulus Bragg was born in one of the western counties of Massachusetts, and emigrated to New-York, after receiving his education, at the mature age of nineteen; at twenty-one he was admitted to the bar, and for the last seven years he has been a successful practitioner in all the courts of Otsego, from the justice's to the circuit. His talents are undeniable, as he commenced his education at fourteen and terminated it at twenty-one, the law-course included. This man is an epitome of all

that is good and all that is bad, in a very large class of his fellow citizens. He is quick-witted, prompt in action, enterprising in all things in which he has nothing to lose, but wary and cautious in all things in which he has a real stake, and ready to turn not only his hand, but his heart and his principles to any thing that offers an advantage. With him, literally, "nothing is too high to be aspired to, nothing too low to be done." He will run for Governor, or for town-clerk, just as opportunities occur, is expert in all the *practices* of his profession, has had a quarter's dancing, with three years in the classics, and turned his attention towards medicine and divinity, before he finally settled down into the law. Such a compound of shrewdness, impudence, common-sense, pretension, humility, cleverness, vulgarity, kind-heartedness, duplicity, selfishness, law-honesty, moral fraud and mother wit, mixed up with a smattering of learning and much penetration in practical things, can hardly be described, as any one of his prominent qualities is certain to be met by another quite as obvious that is almost its converse. Mr. Bragg, in short, is purely a creature of circumstances, his qualities pointing him out for either a member of congress or a deputy sheriff, offices that he is equally ready to fill. I have employed him to watch over the estate of your father, in the absence of the latter, on the principle that one practised in tricks is the best qualified to detect and expose them, and with the certainty that no man will trespass with impunity, so long as the courts continue to tax bills of costs with their present liberality.' You appear to know the gentleman, Grace; is this character of him faithful?"

"I know nothing of bills of costs and deputy sheriffs, but I do know that Mr. Aristabulus Bragg is an amusing mixture of strut, humility, roguery and cleverness. He is waiting all this time in the drawing-room, and you had better see him, as he may, now, be

almost considered part of the family. You know he has been living in the house at Templeton, ever since he was installed by Mr. John Effingham. It was there I had the honour first to meet him."

"First!—Surely you have never seen him any where else!"

"Your pardon, my dear. He never comes to town without honouring me with a call. This is the price I pay for having had the honour of being an inmate of the same house with him for a week."

Eve rang the bell, and Pierre made his appearance.

"Desire Mr. Bragg to walk into the library."

Grace looked demure while Pierre was gone to usher in their visiter, and Eve was thinking of the medley of qualities John Effingham had assembled in his description, as the door opened, and the subject of her contemplation entered.

"*Monsieur Aristabule*," said Pierre, eyeing the card, but sticking at the first name.

Mr. Aristabulus Bragg was advancing with an easy assurance to make his bow to the ladies, when the more finished air and quiet dignity of Miss Effingham, who was standing, so far disconcerted him, as completely to upset his self-possession. As Grace had expressed it, in consequence of having lived three years in the old residence at Templeton, he had begun to consider himself a part of the family, and at home he never spoke of the young lady without calling her "Eve," or "Eve Effingham." But he found it a very different thing to affect familiarity among his associates, and to practise it in the very face of its subject; and, although seldom at a loss for words of some sort or another, he was now actually dumb-founded. Eve relieved his awkwardness by directing Pierre, with her eye, to hand a chair, and first speaking.

"I regret that my father is not in," she said, by way of turning the visit from herself; "but he is to be ex-

pected every moment. Are you lately from Templeton?"

Aristabulus drew his breath, and recovered enough of his ordinary tone of manner to reply with a decent regard to his character for self-command. The intimacy that he had intended to establish on the spot, was temporarily defeated, it is true, and without his exactly knowing how it had been effected; for it was merely the steadiness of the young lady, blended as it was with a polished reserve, that had thrown him to a distance he could not explain. He felt immediately, and with taste that did his sagacity credit, that his footing in this quarter was only to be obtained by unusually slow and cautious means. Still, Mr. Bragg was a man of great decision, and, in his way, of very far-sighted views; and, singular as it may seem, at that unpropitious moment, he mentally determined that, at no very distant day, he would make Miss Eve Effingham his wife.

"I hope Mr. Effingham enjoys good health," he said, with some such caution as a rebuked school-girl enters on the recitation of her task—"he enjoyed bad health I hear, (Mr. Aristabulus Bragg, though so shrewd, was far from critical in his modes of speech) when he went to Europe, and after travelling so far in such bad company, it would be no more than fair that he should have a little respite as he approaches home and old age."

Had Eve been told that the man who uttered this nice sentiment, and that too in accents as uncouth and provincial as the thought was finished and lucid, actually presumed to think of her as his bosom companion, it is not easy to say which would have predominated in her mind, mirth or resentment. But Mr. Bragg was not in the habit of letting his secrets escape him prematurely, and certainly this was one that none but a wizard could have discovered without the aid of a direct oral or written communication.

"Are you lately from Templeton?" repeated Eve, a little surprised that the gentleman did not see fit to answer the question, which was the only one that, as it seemed to her, could have a common interest with them both.

"I left home the day before yesterday," Aristabulus now deigned to reply.

"It is so long since I saw our beautiful mountains, and I was then so young, that I feel a great impatience to revisit them, though the pleasure must be deferred until spring."

"I conclude they are the handsomest mountains in the known world, Miss Effingham!"

"That is much more than I shall venture to claim for them; but, according to my imperfect recollection, and, what I esteem of far more importance, according to the united testimony of Mr. John Effingham and my father, I think they must be very beautiful."

Aristabulus looked up, as if he had a facetious thing to say, and he even ventured on a smile, while he made his answer.

"I hope Mr. John Effingham has prepared you for a great change in the house?"

"We know that it has been repaired and altered under his directions. That was done at my father's request."

"We consider it denationalized, Miss Effingham, there being nothing like it, west of Albany at least."

"I should be sorry to find that my cousin has subjected us to this imputation," said Eve smiling—perhaps a little equivocally; "the architecture of America being generally so simple and pure. Mr. Effingham laughs at his own improvements, however, in which, he says, he has only carried out the plans of the original *artiste*, who worked very much in what was called the composite order."

"You allude to Mr. Hiram Doolittle, a gentleman I never saw; though I hear he has left behind him many

traces of his progress in the newer states. *Ex pede, Herculem,* as we say, in the classics, Miss Effingham. I believe it is the general sentiment that Mr. Doolittle's designs have been improved on, though most people think that the Grecian or Roman architecture, which is so much in use in America, would be more republican. But every body knows that Mr. John Effingham is not much of a republican."

Eve did not choose to discuss her kinsman's opinions with Mr. Aristabulus Bragg, and she quietly remarked that she "did not know that the imitations of the ancient architecture, of which there are so many in the country, were owing to attachment to republicanism."

"To what else can it be owing, Miss Eve?"

"Sure enough," said Grace Van Cortlandt; "it is unsuited to the materials, the climate, and the uses; and some very powerful motive, like that mentioned by Mr. Bragg, could alone overcome these obstacles."

Aristabulus started from his seat, and making sundry apologies, declared his previous unconsciousness that Miss Van Cortlandt was present; all of which was true enough, as he had been so much occupied mentally, with her cousin, as not to have observed her, seated as she was partly behind a screen. Grace received the excuses favourably, and the conversation was resumed.

"I am sorry that my cousin should offend the taste of the country," said Eve, "but as we are to live in the house, the punishment will fall heaviest on the offenders."

"Do not mistake me, Miss Eve," returned Aristabulus, in a little alarm, for he too well understood the influence and wealth of John Effingham, not to wish to be on good terms with him; "do not mistake me. *I* admire the house, and know it to be a perfect specimen of a pure architecture in its way, but then public opinion is not yet quite up to it. *I* see all its beauties, I would wish you to know, but then there are many,

a majority perhaps, who do not, and these persons think they ought to be consulted about such matters."

"I believe Mr. John Effingham thinks less of his own work than you seem to think of it yourself, sir, for I have frequently heard him laugh at it, as a mere enlargement of the merits of the composite order. He calls it a caprice, rather than a taste: nor do I see what concern a majority, as you term them, can have with a house that does not belong to them."

Aristabulus was surprised that any one could disregard a majority; for, in this respect, he a good deal resembled Mr. Dodge, though running a different career; and the look of surprise he gave was natural and open.

"I do not mean that the public has a legal right to control the tastes of the citizen," he said, "but in a *republican* government, you undoubtedly understand, Miss Eve, it *will* rule in all things."

"I can understand that one would wish to see his neighbour use good taste, as it helps to embellish a country; but the man who should consult the whole neighbourhood before he built, would be very apt to cause a complicated house to be erected, if he paid much respect to the different opinions he received; or, what is quite as likely, apt to have no house at all."

"I think you are mistaken, Miss Effingham, for the public sentiment, just now, runs almost exclusively and popularly into the Grecian school. We build little besides temples for our churches, our banks, our taverns, our court-houses, and our dwellings. A friend of mine has just built a brewery on the model of the Temple of the Winds."

"Had it been a mill, one might understand the conceit," said Eve, who now began to perceive that her visiter had some latent humour, though he produced it in a manner to induce one to think him any thing but a droll. "The mountains must be doubly beautiful, if they are decorated in the way you mention. I sin-

cerely hope, Grace, that I shall find the hills as pleasant as they now exist in my recollection!"

"Should they not prove to be quite as lovely as you imagine, Miss Effingham," returned Aristabulus, who saw no impropriety in answering a remark made to Miss Van Cortlandt, or any one else, "I hope you will have the kindness to conceal the fact from the world."

"I am afraid that would exceed my power, the disappointment would be so strong. May I ask why you show so much interest in my keeping so cruel a mortification to myself?"

"Why, Miss Eve," said Aristabulus, looking grave, "I am afraid that *our* people would hardly bear the expression of such an opinion from *you*."

"From *me!*—and why not from *me*, in particular?"

"Perhaps it is because they think you have travelled, and have seen other countries."

"And is it only those who have *not* travelled, and who have no means of knowing the value of what they say, that are privileged to criticise?"

"I cannot exactly explain my own meaning, perhaps, but I think Miss Grace will understand me. Do you not agree with me, Miss Van Cortlandt, in thinking it would be safer for one who never saw any other mountains to complain of the tameness and monotony of our own, than for one who had passed a whole life among the Andes and the Alps?"

Eve smiled, for she saw that Mr. Bragg was capable of detecting and laughing at provincial pride, even while he was so much under its influence; and Grace coloured, for she had the consciousness of having already betrayed some of this very silly sensitiveness, in her intercourse with her cousin, in connexion with other subjects. A reply was unnecessary, however, as the door just then opened, and John Effingham made his appearance. The meeting between the two gentlemen, for we suppose Aristabulus must be in-

cluded in the category by courtesy, if not of right, was more cordial than Eve had expected to witness, for each really entertained a respect for the other, in reference to a merit of a particular sort; Mr. Bragg esteeming Mr. John Effingham as a wealthy and caustic cynic, and Mr. John Effingham regarding Mr. Bragg much as the owner of a dwelling regards a valuable house-dog. After a few moments of conversation, the two withdrew together, and just as the ladies were about to descend to the drawing-room, previously to dinner, Pierre announced that a plate had been ordered for the land agent.

CHAPTER II.

"I know that Deformed; he has been a vile thief this seven year; he goes up and down like a gentleman."

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

Eve, and her cousin, found Sir George Templemore and Captain Truck in the drawing-room, the former having lingered in New-York, with a desire to be near his friends, and the latter being on the point of sailing for Europe, in his regular turn. To these must be added Mr. Bragg and the ordinary inmates of the house, when the reader will get a view of the whole party.

Aristabulus had never before sat down to as brilliant a table, and for the first time in his life, he saw candles lighted at a dinner; but he was not a man to be disconcerted at a novelty. Had he been a European of the same origin and habits, awkwardness would have betrayed him fifty times, before the dessert made its appearance; but, being the man he was, one who overlooked a certain prurient politeness that rather illus-

trated his deportment, might very well have permitted him to pass among the *oi polloi* of the world, were it not for a peculiar management in the way of providing for himself. It is true, he asked every one near him to eat of every thing he could himself reach, and that he used his knife as a coal-heaver uses a shovel; but the company he was in, though fastidious in its own deportment, was altogether above the silver-forkisms, and this portion of his demeanour, if it did not escape undetected, passed away unnoticed. Not so, however, with the peculiarity already mentioned as an exception. This touch of deportment, (or management, perhaps, is the better word,) being characteristic of the man, it deserves to be mentioned a little in detail.

The service at Mr. Effingham's table was made in the quiet, but thorough manner that distinguishes a French dinner. Every dish was removed, carved by the domestics, and handed in turn to each guest. But there were a delay and a finish in this arrangement that suited neither Aristabulus's go-a-head-ism, nor his organ of acquisitiveness. Instead of waiting, therefore, for the more graduated movements of the domestics, he began to take care of himself, an office that he performed with a certain dexterity that he had acquired by frequenting ordinaries—a school, by the way, in which he had obtained most of his notions of the proprieties of the table. One or two slices were obtained in the usual manner, or by means of the regular service; and, then, like one who had laid the foundation of a fortune, by some lucky windfall in the commencement of his career, he began to make accessions, right and left, as opportunity offered. Sundry *entremets*, or light dishes that had a peculiarly tempting appearance, came first under his grasp. Of these he soon accumulated all within his reach, by taxing his neighbours, when he ventured to send his plate, here and there, or wherever he saw a dish that promised to reward his trouble. By such means,

which were resorted to, however, with a quiet and unobtrusive assiduity that escaped much observation, Mr. Bragg contrived to make his own plate a sample epitome of the first course. It contained in the centre, fish, beef, and ham; and around these staple articles, he had arranged *croquettes*, *rognons*, *râgouts*, vegetables, and other light things, until not only was the plate completely covered, but it was actually covered in double and triple layers; mustard, cold butter, salt, and even pepper, garnishing its edges. These different accumulations were the work of time and address, and most of the company had repeatedly changed their plates before Aristabulus had eaten a mouthful, the soup excepted. The happy moment when his ingenuity was to be rewarded, had now arrived, and the land agent was about to commence the process of mastication, or of deglutition rather, for he troubled himself very little with the first operation, when the report of a cork drew his attention towards the champaigne. To Aristabulus this wine never came amiss, for, relishing its piquancy, he had never gone far enough into the science of the table to learn which were the proper moments for using it. As respected all the others at table, this moment had in truth arrived, though, as respected himself, he was no nearer to it, according to a regulated taste, than when he first took his seat. Perceiving that Pierre was serving it, however, he offered his own glass, and enjoyed a delicious instant, as he swallowed a beverage that much surpassed any thing he had ever known to issue out of the waxed and leaded nozles that, pointed like so many enemies' batteries, loaded with headaches and disordered stomachs, garnished sundry village bars of his acquaintance.

Aristabulus finished his glass at a draught, and when he took breath, he fairly smacked his lips. That was an unlucky instant, his plate, burthened with all its treasures, being removed, at this unguarded

moment; the man who performed the unkind office, fancying that a dislike to the dishes could alone have given rise to such an omnium-gatherum.

It was necessary to commence *de novo*, but this could no longer be done with the first course, which was removed, and Aristabulus set-to, with zeal, forthwith, on the game. Necessity compelled him to eat, as the different dishes were offered; and, such was his ordinary assiduity with the knife and fork, that, at the end of the second remove, he had actually disposed of more food than any other person at table. He now began to converse, and we shall open the conversation at the precise point in the dinner, when it was in the power of Aristabulus to make one of the interlocutors.

Unlike Mr. Dodge, he had betrayed no peculiar interest in the baronet, being a man too shrewd and worldly to set his heart on trifles of any sort; and Mr. Bragg no more hesitated about replying to Sir George Templemore, or Mr. Effingham, than he would have hesitated about answering one of his own nearest associates. With him age and experience formed no particular claims to be heard, and, as to rank, it is true he had some vague ideas about there being such a thing in the militia, but as it was unsalaried rank, he attached no great importance to it. Sir George Templemore was inquiring concerning the recording of deeds, a regulation that had recently attracted attention in England; and one of Mr. Effingham's replies contained some immaterial inaccuracy, which Aristabulus took occasion to correct, as his first appearance in the general discourse.

"I ask pardon, sir," he concluded his explanations by saying, "but I ought to know these little niceties, having served a short part of a term as a county clerk, to fill a vacancy occasioned by a death."

"You mean, Mr. Bragg, that you were employed to *write* in a county clerk's office," observed John

Effingham, who so much disliked untruth, that he did not hesitate much about refuting it; or what he now fancied to be an untruth.

"As county clerk, sir. Major Pippin died a year before his time was out, and I got the appointment. As regular a county clerk, sir, as there is in the fifty-six counties of New-York."

"When I had the honour to engage you as Mr. Effingham's agent, sir," returned the other, a little sternly, for he felt his own character for veracity involved in that of the subject of his selection, "I believe, indeed, that you were writing in the office, but I did not understand it was as *the* clerk."

"Very true, Mr. John," returned Aristabulus, without discovering the least concern, "I was *then* engaged by my successor as *a* clerk; but a few months earlier, I filled the office myself."

"Had you gone on, in the regular line of promotion, my dear sir," pithily inquired Captain Truck, "to what preferment would you have risen by this time?"

"I believe I understand you, gentlemen," returned the unmoved Aristabulus, who perceived a general smile. "I know that some people are particular about keeping pretty much on the same level, as to office: but I hold to no such doctrine. If one good thing cannot be had, I do not see that it is a reason for rejecting another. I ran that year for sheriff, and finding I was not strong enough to carry the county, I accepted my successor's offer to write in the office, until something better might turn up."

"You practised all this time, I believe, Mr. Bragg," observed John Effingham.

"I did a little in that way, too, sir; or as much as I could. Law is flat with us, of late, and many of the attorneys are turning their attention to other callings."

"And pray, sir," asked Sir George, "what is the favourite pursuit with most of them, just now?"

"Some our way have gone into the horse-line; but much the greater portion are, just now, dealing in western cities.

"In western cities!" exclaimed the baronet, looking as if he distrusted a mystification.

"In such articles, and in mill-seats, and rail-road lines, and other expectations."

"Mr. Bragg means that they are buying and selling lands on which it is hoped all these conveniences may exist, a century hence," explained John Effingham.

"The *hope* is for next year, or next week, even, Mr. John," returned Aristabulus, with a sly look, "though you may be very right as to the *reality*. Great fortunes have been made on a capital of hopes, lately, in this country."

"And have you been able, yourself, to resist these temptations?" asked Mr. Effingham. "I feel doubly indebted to you, sir, that you should have continued to devote your time to my interests, while so many better things were offering."

"It was my duty, sir," said Aristabulus, bowing so much the lower, from the consciousness that he had actually deserted his post for some months, to embark in the western speculations that were then so active in the country, "not to say my pleasure. There are many profitable occupations in this country, Sir George, that have been overlooked in the eagerness to embark in the town-trade——"

"Mr. Bragg does not mean trade in town, but trade in towns," explained John Effingham.

"Yes, sir, the traffic in cities. I never come this way, without casting an eye about me, in order to see if there is any thing to be done that is useful; and I confess that several available opportunities have offered, if one had capital. Milk is a good business."

"*Le lait!*" exclaimed Mademoiselle Viefville, involuntarily.

"Yes, ma'am, for ladies as well as gentlemen. Sweet potatoes I have heard well spoken of, and peaches are really making some rich men's fortunes."

"All of which are honester and better occupations than the traffic in cities, that you have mentioned," quietly observed Mr. Effingham.

Aristabulus looked up in a little surprise, for with him every thing was eligible that returned a good profit, and all things honest that the law did not actually punish. Perceiving, however, that the company was disposed to listen, and having, by this time, recovered the lost ground, in the way of food, he cheerfully resumed his theme.

"Many families have left Otsego, this and the last summer, Mr. Effingham, as emigrants for the west. The fever has spread far and wide."

"The fever! Is *old* Otsego," for so its inhabitants loved to call a county of half a century's existence, it being venerable by comparison, "is *old* Otsego losing its well established character for salubrity?"

"I do not allude to an animal fever, but to the western fever."

"*Ce pays de l'ouest, est-il bien malsain?*" whispered Mademoiselle Viefville.

"*Apparemment, Mademoiselle, sur plusieurs rapports.*"

"The western fever has seized old and young, and it has carried off many active families from our part of the world," continued Aristabulus, who did not understand the little aside just mentioned, and who, of course, did not heed it; "most of the counties adjoining our own have lost a considerable portion of their population."

"And they who have gone, do they belong to the permanent families, or are they merely the floating inhabitants?" inquired Mr. Effingham.

"Most of them belong to the regular movers."

"Movers!" again exclaimed Sir George—"is there

any material part of your population who actually deserve this name?"

"As much so as the man who shoes a horse ought to be called a smith, or the man who frames a house a carpenter," answered John Effingham,

"To be sure," continued Mr. Bragg, "we have a pretty considerable leaven of them in our political dough, as well as in our active business. I believe, Sir George, that in England, men are tolerably stationary."

"We love to continue for generations on the same spot. We love the tree that our forefathers planted, the roof that they built, the fire-side by which they sat, the sods that cover their remains."

"Very poetical, and I dare say there are situations in life, in which such feelings come in without much effort. It must be a great check to business operations, however, in your part of the world, sir!"

"Business operations!—what is business, as you term it, sir, to the affections, to the recollections of ancestry, and to the solemn feelings connected with history and tradition?"

"Why, sir, in the way of history, one meets with but few incumbrances in this country, but he may do very much as interest dictates, so far as that is concerned, at least. A nation is much to be pitied that is weighed down by the past, in this manner, since its industry and enterprize are constantly impeded by obstacles that grow out of its recollections. America may, indeed, be termed a happy and a free country, Mr. John Effingham, in this, as well as in all other things!"

Sir George Templemore was too well-bred to utter all he felt at that moment, as it would unavoidably wound the feelings of his hosts, but he was rewarded for his forbearance by intelligent smiles from Eve and Grace, the latter of whom the young baronet fancied, just at that moment, was quite as beautiful as her

cousin, and if less finished in manners, she had the most interesting *naiveté*.

"I have been told that most old nations have to struggle with difficulties that we escape," returned John Effingham, "though I confess this is a superiority on our part, that never before presented itself to my mind."

"The political economists, and even the geographers have overlooked it, but practical men see and feel its advantages, every hour in the day. I have been told, Sir George Templemore, that in England, there are difficulties in running high-ways and streets through homesteads and dwellings; and that even a rail-road, or a canal, is obliged to make a curve to avoid a church-yard or a tomb-stone?"

"I confess to the sin, sir."

"Our friend Mr. Bragg," put in John Effingham, "considers life as all *means* and no *end*."

"An end cannot be got at without the means, Mr. John Effingham, as I trust you will, yourself, admit. I am for the end of the road, at least, and must say that I rejoice in being a native of a country in which as few impediments as possible exist to onward impulses. The man who should resist an improvement, in our part of the country, on account of his forefathers, would fare badly among his contemporaries."

"Will you permit me to ask, Mr. Bragg, if you feel no local attachments yourself," enquired the baronet, throwing as much delicacy into the tones of his voice, as a question that he felt ought to be an insult to a man's heart, would allow—"if one tree is not more pleasant than another; the house you were born in more beautiful than a house into which you never entered; or the altar at which you have long worshipped, more sacred than another at which you never knelt?"

"Nothing gives me greater satisfaction than to answer the questions of gentlemen that travel through our country," returned Aristabulus, "for I think, in

making nations acquainted with each other, we encourage trade and render business more secure. To reply to your inquiry, a human being is not a cat, to love a locality rather than its own interests. I have found some trees much pleasanter than others, and the pleasantest tree I can remember was one of my own, out of which the sawyers made a thousand feet of clear stuff, to say nothing of middlings. The house I was born in was pulled down, shortly after my birth, as indeed has been its successor, so I can tell you nothing on that head; and as for altars, there are none in my persuasion."

"The church of Mr. Bragg has stripped itself as naked as he would strip every thing else, if he could," said John Effingham. "I much question if he ever knelt even; much less before an altar."

"We are of the standing order, certainly," returned Aristabulus, glancing towards the ladies to discover how they took his wit, "and Mr. John Effingham is as near right as a man need be, in a matter of faith. In the way of houses, Mr. Effingham, I believe it is the general opinion you might have done better with your own, than to have repaired it. Had the materials been disposed of, they would have sold well, and by running a street through the property, a pretty sum might have been realized."

"In which case I should have been without a home, Mr. Bragg."

"It would have been no great matter to get another on cheaper land. The old residence would have made a good factory, or an inn."

"Sir, I *am* a cat, and like the places I have long frequented."

Aristabulus, though not easily daunted, was awed by Mr. Effingham's manner, and Eve saw that her father's fine face had flushed. This interruption, therefore, suddenly changed the discourse, which has been related at some length, as likely to give the reader a

better insight into a character that will fill some space in our narrative, than a more laboured description.

"I trust your owners, Captain Truck," said John Effingham, by way of turning the conversation into another channel, "are fully satisfied with the manner in which you saved their property from the hands of the Arabs?"

"Men, when money is concerned, are more disposed to remember how it was lost than how it was recovered, religion and trade being the two poles, on such a point," returned the old seaman, with a serious face. "On the whole, my dear sir, I have reason to be satisfied, however; and so long as you, my passengers and my friends, are not inclined to blame me, I shall feel as if I had done at least a part of my duty."

Eve rose from table, went to a side-board and returned, when she gracefully placed before the master of the Montauk a rich and beautifully chased punch-bowl, in silver. Almost at the same moment, Pierre offered a salver that contained a capital watch, a pair of small silver tongs to hold a coal, and a deck trumpet, in solid silver.

"These are so many faint testimonials of our feelings," said Eve—"and you will do us the favour to retain them, as evidences of the esteem created by skill, kindness, and courage."

"My dear young lady!" cried the old tar, touched to the soul by the feeling with which Eve acquitted herself of this little duty, "my dear young lady—well, God bless you—God bless you all—you too, Mr. John Effingham, for that matter—and Sir George—that I should ever have taken that runaway for a gentleman and a baronet—though I suppose there are some silly baronets, as well as silly lords—retain them?"—glancing furiously at Mr. Aristabulus Bragg, "may the Lord forget me, in the heaviest hurricane, if I ever forget whence these things came, and why they were given."

Here the worthy captain was obliged to swallow

some wine, by way of relieving his emotions, and Aristabulus, profiting by the opportunity, coolly took the bowl, which, to use a word of his own, he *hefted* in his hand, with a view to form some tolerably accurate notion of its intrinsic value. Captain Truck's eye caught the action, and he reclaimed his property quite as unceremoniously as it had been taken away, nothing but the presence of the ladies preventing an outbreaking that would have amounted to a declaration of war.

"With your permission, sir," said the captain, drily, after he had recovered the bowl, not only without the other's consent, but, in some degree, against his will; "this bowl is as precious in my eyes as if it were made of my father's bones."

"You may indeed think so," returned the land-agent, "for its cost could not be less than a hundred dollars."

"Cost, sir!—But, my dear young lady, let us talk of the real value. For what part of these things am I indebted to you?"

"The bowl is my offering," Eve answered, smilingly, though a tear glistened in her eye, as she witnessed the strong unsophisticated feeling of the old tar. "I thought it might serve sometimes to bring me to your recollection, when it was well filled in honour of 'sweethearts and wives.'"

"It shall—it shall, by the Lord; and Mr. Saunders needs look to it, if he do not keep this work as bright as a cruising frigate's bottom. To whom do I owe the coal-tongs?"

"Those are from Mr. John Effingham, who insists that he will come nearer to your heart than any of us, though the gift be of so little cost."

"He does not know me, my dear young lady—nobody ever got as near my heart as you; no, not even my own dear pious old mother. But I thank Mr. John Effingham from my inmost spirit, and shall seldom smoke without thinking of him. The watch I know is Mr. Effingham's, and I ascribe the trumpet to Sir George."

The bows of the several gentlemen assured the captain he was right, and he shook each of them cordially by the hand, protesting, in the fulness of his heart, that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to be able to go through the same perilous scenes as those from which they had so lately escaped, in their good company again.

While this was going on, Aristabulus, notwithstanding the rebuke he had received, contrived to get each article, in succession, into his hands, and by dint of poising it on a finger, or by examining it, to form some approximative notion of its inherent value. The watch he actually opened, taking as good a survey of its works as the circumstances of the case would very well allow.

"I respect these things, sir, more than you respect your father's grave," said Captain Truck sternly, as he rescued the last article from what he thought the impious grasp of Aristabulus again, "and cat or no cat, they sink or swim with me for the remainder of the cruise. If there is any virtue in a will, which I am sorry to say I hear there is not any longer, they shall share my last bed with me, be it ashore or be it afloat. My dear young lady, fancy all the rest, but depend on it, punch will be sweeter than ever taken from this bowl, and 'sweethearts and wives' will never be so honoured again."

"We are going to a ball this evening, at the house of one with whom I am sufficiently intimate to take the liberty of introducing a stranger, and I wish, gentlemen," said Mr. Effingham, bowing to Aristabulus and the captain, by way of changing the conversation, "you would do me the favour to be of our party."

Mr. Bragg acquiesced very cheerfully, and quite as a matter of course; while Captain Truck, after protesting his unfitness for such scenes, was finally prevailed on by John Effingham, to comply with the request also. The ladies remained at table but a few

minutes longer, when they retired, Mr. Effingham having dropped into the old custom of sitting at the bottle, until summoned to the drawing-room, a usage that continues to exist in America, for a reason no better than the fact that it continues to exist in England; —it being almost certain that it will cease in New-York, the season after it is known to have ceased in London.

CHAPTER III.

"Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful!"
SHAKSPEARE.

As Captain Truck asked permission to initiate the new coal-tongs by lighting a cigar, Sir George Templemore contrived to ask Pierre, in an aside, if the ladies would allow him to join them. The desired consent having been obtained, the baronet quietly stole from table, and was soon beyond the odours of the dining-room.

"You miss the censer and the frankincense," said Eve, laughing, as Sir George entered the drawing-room; "but you will remember we have no church establishment, and dare not take such liberties with the ceremonials of the altar."

"That is a short-lived custom with us, I fancy, though far from an unpleasant one. But you do me injustice in supposing I am merely running away from the fumes of the dinner."

"No, no; we understand perfectly well that you have something to do with the fumes of flattery, and we will at once fancy all has been said that the occasion requires. Is not our honest old captain a jewel in his way?"

"Upon my word, since you allow me to speak of your father's guests, I do not think it possible to have

brought together two men who are so completely the opposites of each other, as Captain Truck and this Mr. Aristabulus Bragg. The latter is quite the most extraordinary person in his way, it was ever my good fortune to meet with."

"You call him a *person*, while Pierre calls him a *personnage;* I fancy he considers it very much as a matter of accident, whether he is to pass his days in the one character or in the other. Cousin Jack assures me, that, while this man accepts almost any duty that he chooses to assign him, he would not deem it at all a violation of the *convenances* to aim at the throne in the White House."

"Certainly with no hopes of ever attaining it!"

"One cannot answer for that. The man must undergo many essential changes, and much radical improvement, before such a climax to his fortunes can ever occur; but the instant you do away with the claims of hereditary power, the door is opened to a new chapter of accidents. Alexander of Russia styled himself *un heureux accident;* and should it ever be our fortune to receive Mr. Bragg as President, we shall only have to term him *un malheureux accident.* I believe that will contain all the difference."

"Your republicanism is indomitable, Miss Effingham, and I shall abandon the attempt to convert you to safer principles, more especially as I find you supported by both the Mr. Effinghams, who, while they condemn so much at home, seem singularly attached to their own system at the bottom."

"They condemn, Sir George Templemore, because they know that perfection is hopeless, and because they feel it to be unsafe and unwise to eulogize defects, and they are attached, because near views of other countries have convinced them that, comparatively at least, bad as we are, we are still better than most of our neighbours."

"I can assure you," said Grace, "that many of the opinions of Mr. John Effingham, in particular, are not

at all the opinions that are most in vogue here; he rather censures what we like, and likes what we censure. Even my dear uncle is thought to be a little heterodox on such subjects."

"I can readily believe it," returned Eve, steadily. "These gentlemen, having become familiar with better things, in the way of the tastes, and of the purely agreeable, cannot discredit their own knowledge so much as to extol that which their own experience tells them is faulty, or condemn that which their own experience tells them is relatively good. Now, Grace, if you will reflect a moment, you will perceive that people necessarily like the best of their own tastes, until they come to a knowledge of better; and that they as necessarily quarrel with the unpleasant facts that surround them; although these facts, as consequences of a political system, may be much less painful than those of other systems of which they have no knowledge. In the one case, they like their own best, simply because it is their own best; and they dislike their own worst, because it is their own worst. We cherish a taste, in the nature of things, without entering into any comparisons, for when the means of comparison offer, and we find improvements, it ceases to be a taste at all; while to complain of any positive grievance, is the nature of man, I fear!"

"I think a republic odious!"

"*Le republique est une horreur!*"

Grace thought a republic odious, without knowing any thing of any other state of society, and because it contained odious things; and Mademoiselle Viefville called a republic *une horreur*, because heads fell and anarchy prevailed in her own country, during its early struggles for liberty. Though Eve seldom spoke more sensibly, and never more temperately, than while delivering the foregoing opinions, Sir George Templemore doubted whether she had all that exquisite *finesse* and delicacy of features, that he had so much admired; and

when Grace burst out in the sudden and senseless exclamation we have recorded, he turned towards her sweet and animated countenance, which, for the moment, he fancied the loveliest of the two.

Eve Effingham had yet to learn that she had just entered into the most intolerant society, meaning purely as society, and in connexion with what are usually called liberal sentiments, in christendom. We do not mean by this, that it would be less safe to utter a generous opinion in favour of human rights in America than in any other country, for the laws and the institutions become active in this respect, but simply, that the resistance of the more refined to the encroachments of the unrefined, has brought about a state of feeling—a feeling that is seldom just and never philosophical—which has created a silent but almost unanimous bias against the effects of the institutions, in what is called the world. In Europe, one rarely utters a sentiment of this nature, under circumstances in which it is safe to do so at all, without finding a very general sympathy in the auditors; but in the circle into which Eve had now fallen, it was almost considered a violation of the proprieties. We do not wish to be understood as saying more than we mean, however, for we have no manner of doubt that a large portion of the dissentients even, are so idly, and without reflection; or for the very natural reasons already given by our heroine; but we do wish to be understood as meaning that such is the outward appearance which American society presents to every stranger, and to every native of the country too, on his return from a residence among other people. Of its taste, wisdom and safety we shall not now speak, but content ourselves with merely saying that the effect of Grace's exclamation on Eve was unpleasant, and that, unlike the baronet, she thought her cousin was never less handsome than while her pretty face was covered with the pettish frown it had assumed for the occasion.

Sir George Templemore had tact enough to perceive there had been a slight jar in the feelings of these two young women, and he adroitly changed the conversation. With Eve he had entire confidence on the score of provincialisms, and, without exactly anticipating the part Grace would be likely to take in such a discussion, he introduced the subject of general society in New-York.

"I am desirous to know," he said, "if you have your sets, as we have them in London and Paris. Whether you have your *Faubourg St. Germain* and your *Chaussée d'Antin;* your Piccadilly, Grosvenor and Russel Squares."

"I must refer you to Miss Van Cortlandt for an answer to that question," said Eve.

Grace looked up blushing, for there were both novelty and excitement in having an intelligent foreigner question her on such a subject.

"I do not know that I rightly understand the allusion," she said, "although I am afraid Sir George Templemore means to ask if we have distinctions in society?"

"And why *afraid*, Miss Van Cortlandt?"

"Because it strikes me such a question would imply a doubt of our civilization."

"There are frequently distinctions made, when the differences are not obvious," observed Eve. "Even London and Paris are not above the imputation of this folly. Sir George Templemore, if I understand him, wishes to know if we estimate gentility by streets, and quality by squares."

"Not exactly that either, Miss Effingham—but, whether among those, who may very well pass for gentlemen and ladies, you enter into the minute distinctions that are elsewhere found. Whether you have your exclusives, and your *élégants* and *élégantes;* or whether you deem all within the pale as on an equality."

"*Les femmes Americaines sont bien jolies!*" exclaimed Mademoiselle Viefville.

"It is quite impossible that *coteries* should not form in a town of three hundred thousand souls."

"I do not mean exactly even that. Is there no distinction between *coteries;* is not one placed by opinion, by a silent consent, if not by positive ordinances, above another?"

"Certainly, that to which Sir George Templemore alludes, is to be found," said Grace, who gained courage to speak, as she found the subject getting to be more clearly within her comprehension. "All the old families, for instance, keep more together than the others; though it is the subject of regret that they are not more particular than they are."

"Old families!" exclaimed Sir George Templemore, with quite as much stress as a well-bred man could very well lay on the words, in such circumstances.

"Old families," repeated Eve, with all that emphasis which the baronet himself had hesitated about giving. "As old, at least, as two centuries can make them; and this, too, with origins beyond that period, like those of the rest of the world. Indeed, the American has a better gentility than common, as, besides his own, he may take root in that of Europe."

"Do not misconceive me, Miss Effingham; I am fully aware that the people of this country are exactly like the people of all other civilized countries, in this respect; but my surprise is that, in a republic, you should have such a term even as that of 'old families.'"

"The surprise has arisen, I must be permitted to say, from not having sufficiently reflected on the real state of the country. There are two great causes of distinction every where, wealth and merit. Now, if a race of Americans continue conspicuous in their own society, through either or both of these causes, for a succession of generations, why have they not the same claims to be considered members of old families, as

Europeans under the same circumstances? A republican history is as much history as a monarchical history; and a historical name in one, is quite as much entitled to consideration, as a historical name in another. Nay, you admit this in your European republics, while you wish to deny it in ours."

"I must insist on having proofs; if we permit these charges to be brought against us without evidence, Mademoiselle Viefville, we shall finally be defeated through our own neglect."

"*C'est une belle illustration, celle de l'antiquité,*" observed the governess, in a matter of course tone.

"If you insist on proof, what answer can you urge to the *Capponi? 'Sonnez vos trompettes, et je vais faire sonner mes cloches,'*—or to the *Von Erlachs*, a family that has headed so many resistances to oppression and invasion, for five centuries?"

"All this is very true," returned Sir George, "and yet I confess it is not the way in which it is usual with us to consider American society."

"A descent from Washington, with a character and a social position to correspond, would not be absolutely vulgar, notwithstanding!"

"Nay, if you press me so hard, I must appeal to Miss Van Cortlandt for succour."

"On this point you will find no support in that quarter. Miss Van Cortlandt has an historical name herself, and will not forego an honest pride, in order to relieve one of the hostile powers from a dilemma."

"While I admit that time and merit must, in a certain sense, place families in America in the same situation with families in Europe, I cannot see that it is in conformity with your institutions to lay the same stress on the circumstance."

"In that we are perfectly of a mind, as I think the American has much the best reason to be proud of his family," said Eve, quietly.

"You delight in paradoxes, apparently, this evening, Miss Effingham, for I now feel very certain you can

hardly make out a plausible defence of this new position."

"If I had my old ally, Mr. Powis, here," said Eve, touching the fender unconsciously with her little foot, and perceptibly losing the animation and pleasantry of her voice, in tones that were gentler, if not melancholy, "I should ask him to explain this matter to you, for he was singularly ready in such replies. As he is absent, however, I will attempt the duty myself. In Europe, office, power, and consequently, consideration, are all hereditary; whereas, in this country, they are not, but they depend on selection. Now, surely, one has more reason to be proud of ancestors who have been chosen to fill responsible stations, than of ancestors who have filled them through the accidents, *heureux ou malheureux*, of birth. The only difference between England and America, as respects family, is that you add positive rank to that to which we only give consideration. Sentiment is at the bottom of our nobility, and the great seal at the bottom of yours. And now, having established the fact that there are families in America, let us return whence we started, and enquire how far they have an influence in every-day society."

"To ascertain which, we must apply to Miss Van Cortlandt."

"Much less than they ought, if my opinion is to be taken," said Grace, laughing, "for the great inroad of strangers has completely deranged all the suitablenesses, in that respect."

"And yet, I dare say, these very strangers do good," rejoined Eve. "Many of them must have been respectable in their native places, and ought to be an acquisition to a society that, in its nature, must be, Grace, *tant soit peu*, provincial."

"Oh!" cried Grace, "I can tolerate any thing but the Hajjis!"

"The what?" asked Sir George, eagerly—"will you suffer me to ask an explanation, Miss Van Cortlandt."

"The Hajjis," repeated Grace laughing, though she blushed to the eyes.

The baronet looked from one cousin to the other, and then turned an inquiring glance on Mademoiselle Viefville. The latter gave a slight shrug, and seemed to ask an explanation of the young lady's meaning herself.

"A Hajji is one of a class, Sir George Templemore," Eve at length said, "to which you and I have both the honour of belonging."

"No, not Sir George Templemore," interrupted Grace, with a precipitation that she instantly regretted; "he is not an American."

"Then I, alone, of all present, have that honour. It means the pilgrimage to Paris, instead of Mecca; and the Pilgrim must be an American, instead of a Mahommedan."

"Nay, Eve, *you* are not a Hajji, neither."

"Then there is some qualification with which I am not yet acquainted. Will you relieve our doubts, Grace, and let us know the precise character of the animal."

"*You* stayed too long to be a Hajji—one must get innoculated merely; not take the disease and become cured, to be a true Hajji."

"I thank you, Miss Van Cortlandt, for this description," returned Eve in her quiet way. "I hope, as I have gone through the malady, it has not left me pitted."

"I should like to see one of these Hajjis," cried Sir George.—"Are they of both sexes?"

Grace laughed and nodded her head.

"Will you point it out to me, should we be so fortunate as to encounter one this evening?"

Again Grace laughed and nodded her head.

"I have been thinking, Grace," said Eve, after a short pause, "that we may give Sir George Templemore a better idea of the sets about which he is so

curious, by doing what is no more than a duty of our own, and by letting him profit by the opportunity. Mrs. Hawker receives this evening without ceremony; we have not yet sent our answer to Mrs. Jarvis, and might very well look in upon her for half an hour, after which we shall be in very good season for Mrs. Houston's ball."

"Surely, Eve, you would not wish to take Sir George Templemore to such a house as that of Mrs. Jarvis!"

"*I* do not wish to take Sir George Templemore any where, for your Hajjis have opinions of their own on such subjects. But, as cousin Jack will accompany us, *he* may very well confer that important favour. I dare say, Mrs. Jarvis will not look upon it as too great a liberty."

"I will answer for it, that nothing Mr. John Effingham can do will be thought *mal à propos* by Mrs. Jared Jarvis. His position in society is too well established, and hers is too equivocal, to leave any doubt on that head."

"This, you perceive, settles the point of *côteries*," said Eve to the baronet. "Volumes might be written to establish principles; but when one can do any thing he or she pleases, any where that he or she likes, it is pretty safe to say that he or she is privileged."

"All very true, as to the fact, Miss Effingham; but I should like exceedingly to know the reason."

"Half the time, such things are decided without a reason at all. You are a little exacting in requiring a reason in New-York for that which is done in London without even the pretence of such a thing. It is sufficient that Mrs. Jarvis will be delighted to see you without an invitation, and that Mrs. Houston would, at least, think it odd, were you to take the same liberty with her."

"It follows," said Sir George, smiling, "that Mrs. Jarvis is much the most hospitable person of the two."

"But, Eve, what shall be done with Captain Truck and Mr. Bragg?" asked Grace. "We cannot take *them* to Mrs. Hawker's!"

"Aristabulus would, indeed, be a little out of place in such a house, but as for our excellent, brave, straight-forward, old captain, he is worthy to go any where. I shall be delighted to present *him* to Mrs. Hawker, myself."

After a little consultation between the ladies, it was settled that nothing should be said of the two first visits to Mr. Bragg, but that Mr. Effingham should be requested to bring him to the ball, at the proper hour, and that the rest of the party should go quietly off to the other places, without mentioning their projects. As soon as this was arranged the ladies retired to dress, Sir George Templemore passing into the library to amuse himself with a book the while; where, however, he was soon joined by John Effingham. Here the former revived the conversation on distinctions in society, with the confusion of thought that usually marks a European's notions of such matters.

CHAPTER IV.

"Ready."
"And I."
"And I."
"Where shall we go?"
MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

GRACE VAN CORTLANDT was the first to make her appearance after the retreat from the drawing-room. It has often been said that, pretty as the American females incontestably are, as a whole they appear better in *demi-toilette*, than when attired for a ball. With what would be termed high dress in other parts

of the world, they are little acquainted; but reversing the rule of Europe, where the married bestow the most care on their personal appearance, and the single are taught to observe a rigid simplicity, Grace now seemed sufficiently ornamented in the eyes of the fastidious baronet, while, at the same time, he thought her less obnoxious to the criticism just mentioned, than most of her young countrywomen, in general.

An *embonpoint* that was just sufficient to distinguish her from most of her companions, a fine colour, brilliant eyes, a sweet smile, rich hair, and such feet and hands as Sir George Templemore had, somehow—he scarcely knew how, himself—fancied could only belong to the daughters of peers and princes, rendered Grace so strikingly attractive this evening, that the young baronet began to think her even handsomer than her cousin. There was also a charm in the unsophisticated simplicity of Grace, that was particularly alluring to a man educated amidst the coldness and mannerism of the higher classes of England. In Grace, too, this simplicity was chastened by perfect decorum and *retenue* of deportment; the exuberance of the new school of manners not having helped to impair the dignity of her character, or to weaken the charm of diffidence. She was less finished in her manners than Eve, certainly; a circumstance, perhaps, that induced Sir George Templemore to fancy her a shade more simple, but she was never unfeminine or unladylike; and the term vulgar, in despite of all the capricious and arbitrary rules of fashion, under no circumstances, could ever be applied to Grace Van Cortlandt. In this respect, nature seemed to have aided her; for had not her associations raised her above such an imputation, no one could believe that she would be obnoxious to the charge, had her lot in life been cast even many degrees lower than it actually was.

It is well known that, after a sufficient similarity

has been created by education to prevent any violent shocks to our habits or principles, we most affect those whose characters and dispositions the least resemble our own. This was probably one of the reasons why Sir George Templemore, who, for some time, had been well assured of the hopelessness of his suit with Eve, began to regard her scarcely less lovely cousin, with an interest of a novel and lively nature. Quick-sighted and deeply interested in Grace's happiness, Miss Effingham had already detected this change in the young baronet's inclinations, and though sincerely rejoiced on her own account, she did not observe it without concern; for she understood better than most of her countrywomen, the great hazards of destroying her peace of mind, that are incurred by transplanting an American woman into the more artificial circles of the old world.

"I shall rely on your kind offices, in particular, Miss Van Cortlandt, to reconcile Mrs. Jarvis and Mrs. Hawker to the liberty I am about to take," cried Sir George, as Grace burst upon them in the library, in a blaze of beauty that, in her case, was aided by her attire; "and cold-hearted and unchristian-like women they must be, indeed, to resist such a mediator!"

Grace was unaccustomed to adulation of this sort; for though the baronet spoke gaily, and like one half trifling, his look of admiration was too honest to escape the intuitive perception of woman. She blushed deeply, and then recovering herself instantly, said with a *naivetē* that had a thousand charms with her listener—

"I do not see why Miss Effingham and myself should hesitate about introducing you at either place. Mrs. Hawker is a relative and an intimate—an intimate of mine, at least—and as for poor Mrs. Jarvis, she is the daughter of an old neighbour, and will be

too glad to see us, to raise objections. I fancy any one of a certain——" Grace hesitated and laughed.

"Any one of a certain——?" said Sir George, inquiringly.

"Any one from this house," resumed the young lady, correcting the intended expression, "will be welcome in Spring street."

"Pure, native aristocracy!" exclaimed the baronet, with an air of affected triumph. "This you see, Mr. John Effingham, is in aid of my argument."

"I am quite of your opinion," returned the gentleman addressed—"as much native aristocracy as you please, but no hereditary."

The entrance of Eve and Mademoiselle Viefville interrupted this pleasantry, and the carriages being just then announced, John Effingham went in quest of Captain Truck, who was in the drawing-room with Mr. Effingham and Aristabulus.

"I have left Ned to discuss trespass suits and leases with his land-agent," said John Effingham, as he followed Eve to the street-door. "By ten o'clock, they will have taxed a pretty bill of costs between them!"

Mademoiselle Viefville followed John Effingham; Grace came next, and Sir George Templemore and the Captain brought up the rear. Grace wondered the young baronet did not offer her his arm, for she had been accustomed to receive this attention from the other sex, in a hundred situations in which it was rather an incumbrance than a service; while on the other hand, Sir George himself would have hesitated about offering such assistance, as an act of uncalled-for familiarity.

Miss Van Cortlandt, being much in society, kept a chariot for her own use, and the three ladies took their seats in it, while the gentlemen took possession of Mr. Effingham's coach. The order was given to drive to Spring street, and the whole party proceeded.

The acquaintance between the Effinghams and Mr.

Jarvis had arisen from the fact of their having been near, and, in a certain sense, sociable neighbours in the country. Their town associations, however, were as distinct as if they dwelt in different hemispheres, with the exception of an occasional morning call, and, now and then, a family dinner given by Mr. Effingham. Such had been the nature of the intercourse previously to the family of the latter's having gone abroad, and there were symptoms of its being renewed on the same quiet and friendly footing as formerly. But no two beings could be less alike, in certain essentials, than Mr. Jarvis and his wife. The former was a plain painstaking, sensible man of business, while the latter had an itching desire to figure in the world of fashion. The first was perfectly aware that Mr. Effingham, in education, habits, associations and manners, was, at least, of a class entirely distinct from his own; and without troubling himself to analyze causes, and without a feeling of envy, or unkindness of any sort, while totally exempt from any undue deference or unmanly cringing, he quietly submitted to let things take their course. His wife expressed her surprise that any one in New-York should presume to be *better* than themselves; and the remark gave rise to the following short conversation, on the very morning of the day she gave the party, to which we are now conducting the reader.

"How do you know, my dear, that any one does think himself our *better?*" demanded the husband.

"Why do they not all visit us then!"

"Why do you not visit everybody yourself? A pretty household we should have, if you did nothing but visit every one who lives even in this street!"

"You surely would not have *me* visiting the grocers' wives at the corners, and all the other rubbish of the neighbourhood. What I mean is that all the people of a certain sort ought to visit all the other people of a certain sort, in the same town."

"You surely will make an exception, at least on

account of numbers. I saw number three thousand six hundred and fifty this very day on a cart, and if the wives of all these carmen should visit one another, each would have to make ten visits daily in order to get through with the list in a twelvemonth."

"I have always bad luck in making you comprehend these things, Mr. Jarvis."

"I am afraid, my dear, it is because you do not very clearly comprehend them yourself. You first say that everybody ought to visit everybody, and then you insist on it, *you* will visit none but those you think good enough to be visited by Mrs. Jared Jarvis."

"What I mean is, that no one in New-York has a right to think himself, or herself, better than ourselves."

"Better?—In what sense better?"

"In such a sense as to induce them to think themselves too good to visit us."

"That may be your opinion, my dear, but others may judge differently. You clearly think yourself too good to visit Mrs. Onion, the grocer's wife, who is a capital woman in her way; and how do we know that certain people may not fancy we are not quite refined enough for them? Refinement is a positive thing, Mrs. Jarvis, and one that has much more influence on the pleasures of association than money. We may want a hundred little perfections that escape our ignorance, and which those who are trained to such matters deem essentials."

"I never met with a man of so little social spirit, Mr. Jarvis! Really, you are quite unsuited to be a citizen of a republican country."

"Republican!—I do not really see what republican has to do with the question. In the first place, it is a droll word for *you* to use in this sense at least; for, taking your own meaning of the term, you are as anti-republican as any woman I know. But a republic does not necessarily infer equality of condition, or even equality of rights,—it meaning merely the substitution

of the right of the commonwealth for the right of a prince. Had you said a democracy, there would have been some plausibility in using the word, though even then its application would have been illogical. If I am a freeman and a democrat, I hope I have the justice to allow others to be just as free and democratic as I am myself."

"And who wishes the contrary?—all I ask is a claim to be considered a fit associate for anybody in this country—in these United States of America."

"I would quit these United States of America next week, if I thought there existed any necessity for such an intolerable state of things."

"Mr. Jarvis!—and you, too, one of the Committee of Tammany Hall!"

"Yes, Mrs. Jarvis, and I one of the Committee of Tammany Hall! What, do you think I want the three thousand six hundred and fifty carmen running in and out of my house, with their tobacco saliva and pipes, all day long?"

"Who is thinking of your carmen and grocers!—I speak now only of genteel people."

"In other words, my dear, you are thinking only of those whom you fancy to have the advantage of you, and keep those who think of you in the same way, quite out of sight. This is not my democracy and freedom. I believe that it requires two people to make a bargain; and although I may consent to dine with A——, if A—— will not consent to dine with me, there is an end of the matter."

"Now, you have come to a case in point. You often dined with Mr. Effingham before he went abroad, and yet you would never allow me to ask Mr. Effingham to dine with us. That is what I call meanness."

"It might be so, indeed, if it were done to save my money. I dined with Mr. Effingham because I like him; because he was an old neighbour; because he asked me, and because I found a pleasure in the quiet

elegance of his table and society; and I did not ask him to dine with me, because I was satisfied he would be better pleased with such a tacit acknowledgement of his superiority in this respect, than by any bustling and ungraceful efforts to pay him in kind. Edward Effingham has dinners enough, without keeping a debtor and credit account with his guests, which is rather too New-Yorkish, even for me."

"Bustling and ungraceful!" repeated Mrs. Jarvis, bitterly; "I do not know that you are at all more bustling and ungraceful than Mr. Effingham himself."

"No, my dear, I am a quiet, unpretending man, like the great majority of my countrymen, thank God."

"Then why talk of these sorts of differences in a country in which the law establishes none?"

"For precisely the reason that I talk of the river at the foot of this street, or because there is a river. A thing may exist without there being a law for it. There is no law for building this house, and yet it is built. There is no law for making Dr. Verse a better preacher than Dr. Prolix, and yet he is a much better preacher; neither is there any law for making Mr. Effingham a more finished gentleman than I happen to be, and yet I am not fool enough to deny the fact. In the way of making out a bill of parcels, I will not turn my back to him, I can promise you."

"All this strikes me as being very spiritless, and as particularly anti-republican," said Mrs. Jarvis, rising to quit the room; "and if the Effinghams do not come this evening, I shall not enter their house this winter. I am sure they have no right to pretend to be our betters, and I feel no disposition to admit the impudent claim."

"Before you go, Jane, let me say a parting word," rejoined the husband, looking for his hat, "which is just this. If you wish the world to believe you the equal of any one, no matter whom, do not be always talking about it, lest they see you distrust the fact

yourself. A positive thing will surely be seen, and they who have the highest claims are the least disposed to be always pressing them on the attention of the world. An outrage may certainly be done those social rights which have been established by common consent, and then it may be proper to resent it; but beware betraying a consciousness of your own inferiority, by letting every one see you are jealous of your station. Now, kiss me; here is the money to pay for your finery this evening, and let me see you as happy to receive Mrs. Jewett from Albion Place, as you would be to receive Mrs. Hawker herself."

"Mrs. Hawker!" cried the wife, with a toss of her head, "I would not cross the street to invite Mrs. Hawker and all her clan." Which was very true, as Mrs. Jarvis was thoroughly convinced the trouble would be unavailing, the lady in question being as near the head of fashion in New-York, as it was possible to be in a town that, in a moral sense, resembles an encampment, quite as much as it resembles a permanent and a long-existing capital.

Notwithstanding a great deal of management on the part of Mrs. Jarvis to get showy personages to attend her entertainment, the simple elegance of the two carriages that bore the Effingham party, threw all the other equipages into the shade. The arrival, indeed, was deemed a matter of so much moment, that intelligence was conveyed to the lady, who was still at her post in the inner drawing-room, of the arrival of a party altogether superior to any thing that had yet appeared in her rooms. It is true, this was not expressed in words, but it was made sufficiently obvious by the breathless haste and the air of importance of Mrs. Jarvis' sister, who had received the news from a servant, and who communicated it *propriâ personâ* to the mistress of the house.

The simple, useful, graceful, almost indispensable usage of announcing at the door, indispensable to those

who receive much, and where there is the risk of meeting people known to us by name and not in person, is but little practised in America. Mrs. Jarvis would have shrunk from such an innovation, had she known that elsewhere the custom prevailed, but she was in happy ignorance on this point, as on many others that were more essential to the much-coveted social *éclat* at which she aimed. When Mademoiselle Viefville appeared, therefore, walking unsupported, as if she were out of leading-strings, followed by Eve and Grace and the gentlemen of their party, she at first supposed there was some mistake, and that her visiters had got into the wrong house; there being an opposition party in the neighbourhood.

"What brazen people!" whispered Mrs. Abijah Gross, who having removed from an interior New-England village, fully two years previously, fancied herself *au fait* of all the niceties of breeding and social tact. "There are positively two young ladies actually walking about without gentlemen!"

But it was not in the power of Mrs. Abijah Gross, with her audible whisper and obvious sneer and laugh, to put down two such lovely creatures as Eve and her cousin. The simple elegance of their attire, the indescribable air of polish, particularly in the former, and the surpassing beauty and modesty of mien of both, effectually silenced criticism, after this solitary outbreaking of vulgarity. Mrs. Jarvis recognized Eve and John Effingham, and her hurried compliments and obvious delight proclaimed to all near her, the importance she attached to their visit. Mademoiselle Viefville she had not recollected in her present dress, and even she was covered with expressions of delight and satisfaction.

"I wish particularly to present to you a friend that we all prize exceedingly," said Eve, as soon as there was an opportunity of speaking. "This is Captain Truck, the gentleman who commands the Montauk,

the ship of which you have heard so much. Ah! Mr. Jarvis," offering a hand to him with sincere cordiality, for Eve had known him from childhood, and always sincerely respected him—"*you* will receive my friend with a cordial welcome, I am certain."

She then explained to Mr. Jarvis who the honest captain was, when the former, first paying the proper respect to his other guests, led the old sailor aside, and began an earnest conversation on the subject of the recent passage.

John Effingham presented the baronet, whom Mrs. Jarvis, out of pure ignorance of his rank in his own country, received with perfect propriety and self-respect.

"We have very few people of note in town at present, I believe," said Mrs. Jarvis to John Effingham. "A great traveller, a most interesting man, is the only person of that sort I could obtain for this evening, and I shall have great pleasure in introducing you. He is there in that crowd, for he is in the greatest possible demand; he has seen so much.—Mrs. Snow, with your permission—really the ladies are thronging about him as if he were a Pawnee,—have the goodness to step a little this way, Mr. Effingham—Miss Effingham—Mrs. Snow, just touch his arm and let him know I wish to introduce a couple of friends.—Mr. Dodge, Mr. John Effingham, Miss Effingham, Miss Van Cortlandt. I hope you may succeed in getting him a little to yourselves, ladies, for he can tell you all about Europe—saw the king of France riding out to Nully, and has a prodigious knowledge of things on the other side of the water."

It required a good deal of Eve's habitual self-command to prevent a smile, but she had the tact and discretion to receive Steadfast as an utter stranger. John Effingham bowed as haughtily as man can bow, and then it was whispered that he and Mr. Dodge were rival travellers. The distance of the former, coupled

with an expression of countenance that did not invite familiarity, drove nearly all the company over to the side of Steadfast, who, it was soon settled, had seen much the most of the world, understood society the best, and had moreover travelled as far as Timbuctoo in Africa. The *clientèle* of Mr. Dodge increased rapidly, as these reports spread in the rooms, and those who had not read the "delightful letters published in the Active Inquirer," furiously envied those who had enjoyed that high advantage.

"It is Mr. Dodge, the great traveller," said one young lady, who had extricated herself from the crowd around the 'lion,' and taken a station near Eve and Grace, and who, moreover, was a 'blue' in her own set; "his beautiful and accurate descriptions have attracted great attention in England, and it is said they have actually been republished!"

"Have you read them, Miss Brackett?"

"Not the letters themselves, absolutely; but all the remarks on them in the last week's Hebdomad. Most delightful letters, judging from those remarks; full of nature and point, and singularly accurate in all their facts. In this respect they are invaluable, travellers do fall into such extraordinary errors!"

"I hope, ma'am," said John Effingham, gravely, "that the gentleman has avoided the capital mistake of commenting on things that actually exist. Comments on its facts are generally esteemed by the people of a country, impertinent and unjust; and your true way to succeed, is to treat as freely as possible its imaginary peculiarities."

Miss Brackett had nothing to answer to this observation, the Hebdomad having, among its other profundities, never seen proper to touch on the subject. She went on praising the "Letters," however, not one of which had she read, or would she read; for this young lady had contrived to gain a high reputation in her own *coterie* for taste and knowledge in books, by

merely skimming the strictures of those who do not even skim the works they pretend to analyze.

Eve had never before been in so close contact with so much flippant ignorance, and she could not but wonder at seeing a man like her kinsman overlooked, in order that a man like Mr. Dodge should be preferred. All this gave John Effingham himself no concern, but retiring a little from the crowd, he entered into a short conversation with the young baronet.

"I should like to know your real opinions of this set," he said; "not that I plead guilty to the childish sensibility that is so common in all provincial circles to the judgments of strangers, but with a view to aid you in forming a just estimate of the real state of the country."

"As I know the precise connexion between you and our host, there can be no objection to giving a perfectly frank reply. The women strike me as being singularly delicate and pretty; well dressed, too, I might add; but, while there is a great air of decency, there is very little high finish; and what strikes me as being quite odd, under such circumstances, scarcely any downright vulgarity, or coarseness."

"A Daniel come to judgment! One who had passed a life here, would not have come so near the truth, simply because he would not have observed peculiarities, that require the means of comparison to be detected. You are a little too indulgent in saying there is no downright vulgarity; for some there is; though surprisingly little for the circumstances. But of the coarseness that would be so prominent elsewhere, there is hardly any. True, so great is the equality in all things, in this country, so direct the tendency to this respectable mediocrity, that what you now see here, to-night, may be seen in almost every village in the land, with a few immaterial exceptions in the way of furniture and other city appliances, and not much even in these."

"Certainly, as a mediocrity, this is respectable, though a fastidious taste might see a multitude of faults."

"I shall not say that the taste would be merely fastidious, for much is wanting that would add to the grace and beauty of society, while much that is wanting would be missed only by the over-sophisticated. Those young men, who are sniggering over some bad joke in the corner, for instance, are positively vulgar, as is that young lady who is indulging in practical coquetry; but, on the whole, there is little of this; and, even our hostess, a silly woman, devoured with the desire of being what neither her social position, education, habits nor notions fit her to be, is less obtrusive, bustling, and offensive, than a similar person, elsewhere."

"I am quite of your way of thinking, and intended to ask you to account for it."

"The Americans are an imitative people of necessity, and they are apt at this part of imitation, in particular. Then they are less artificial in all their practices, than older and more sophisticated nations; and this company has got that essential part of good breeding, simplicity, as it were *per force*. A step higher in the social scale, you will see less of it; for greater daring and bad models lead to blunders in matters that require to be exceedingly well done, if done at all. The faults here would be more apparent, by an approach near enough to get into the tone of mind, the forms of speech, and the attempts at wit."

"Which I think we shall escape to-night, as I see the ladies are already making their apologies and taking leave. We must defer this investigation to another time."

"It may be indefinitely postponed, as it would scarcely reward the trouble of an inquiry."

The gentlemen now approached Mrs. Jarvis, paid their parting compliments, hunted up Captain Truck,

whom they tore by violence from the good-natured hospitality of the master of the house, and then saw the ladies into their carriage. As they drove off, the worthy mariner protested that Mr. Jarvis was one of the honestest men he had ever met, and announced that he intended giving him a dinner on board the Montauk, the very next day.

The dwelling of Mrs. Hawker was in Hudson Square; or in a portion of the city that the lovers of the grandiose are endeavouring to call St. John's Park; for it is rather an amusing peculiarity among a certain portion of the emigrants who have flocked into the Middle States, within the last thirty years, that they are not satisfied with permitting any family, or thing, to possess the name it originally enjoyed, if there exists the least opportunity to change it. There was but a carriage or two before the door, though the strong lights in the house showed that company had collected.

"Mrs. Hawker is the widow and the daughter of men of long established New-York families; she is childless, affluent, and universally respected where known, for her breeding, benevolence, good sense, and heart," said John Effingham, while the party was driving from one house to the other. "Were you to go into most of the sets of this town, and mention Mrs. Hawker's name, not one person in ten would know there is such a being in their vicinity; the *pêle mêle* of a migratory population keeping persons of her character and condition in life, quite out of view. The very persons who will prattle by the hour, of the establishments of Mrs. Peleg Pond, and Mrs. Jonah Twist, and Mrs. Abiram Wattles, people who first appeared on this island five or six years since, and, who having accumulated what to them are relatively large fortunes, have launched out into vulgar and uninstructed finery, would look with surprise at hearing Mrs. Hawker mentioned as one having any claims

to social distinction. Her historical names are overshadowed in their minds by the parochial glories of certain local prodigies in the townships whence they emigrated; her manners would puzzle the comprehension of people whose imitation has not gone beyond the surface, and her polished and simple mind would find little sympathy among a class who seldom rise above a common-place sentiment without getting upon stilts."

"Mrs. Hawker, then, is a lady," observed Sir George Templemore.

"Mrs. Hawker is a lady, in every sense of the word; by position, education, manners, association, mind, fortune and birth. I do not know that we ever had more of her class than exist to-day, but certainly we once had them more prominent in society."

"I suppose, sir," said Captain Truck, "that this Mrs. Hawker is of what is called the old school?"

"Of a very ancient school, and one that is likely to continue, though it may not be generally attended."

"I am afraid, Mr. John Effingham, that I shall be like a fish out of water in such a house. I can get along very well with your Mrs. Jarvis, and with the dear young lady in the other carriage; but the sort of woman you have described, will be apt to jam a plain mariner like myself. What in nature should I do, now, if she should ask me to dance a minuet?"

"Dance it agreeably to the laws of nature," returned John Effingham, as the carriages stopped.

A respectable, quiet, and an aged black admitted the party, though even he did not announce the visiters, while he held the door of the drawing-room open for them, with respectful attention. Mrs. Hawker arose, and advanced to meet Eve and her companions, and, though she kissed the cousins affectionately, her reception of Mademoiselle Viefville was so simply polite as to convince the latter she was valued on account of her services. John Effingham, who was ten or fifteen

years the junior of the old lady, gallantly kissed her hand, when he presented his two male companions. After paying the proper attention to the greatest stranger, Mrs. Hawker turned to Captain Truck and said—

"This, then, is the gentleman to whose skill and courage you all owe so much—*we* all owe so much, I might better have said—the commander of the Montauk?"

"I have the honour of commanding that vessel, ma'am," returned Captain Truck, who was singularly awed by the dignified simplicity of his hostess, although her quiet, natural, and yet finished manner, which extended even to the intonation of the voice, and the smallest movement, were as unlike what he had expected as possible; "and with such passengers as she had last voyage I can only say, it is a pity that she is not better off for one to take care of her."

"Your passengers give a different account of the matter, but, in order that I may judge impartially, do me the favour to take this chair, and let me learn a few of the particulars from yourself."

Observing that Sir George Templemore had followed Eve to the other side of the room, Mrs. Hawker now resumed her seat, and, without neglecting any to attend to one in particular, or attending to one in a way to make him feel oppressed, she contrived, in a few minutes, to make the captain forget all about the minuet, and to feel much more at his ease than would have been the case with Mrs. Jarvis, in a month's intercourse.

In the mean time, Eve had crossed the room to join a lady whose smile invited her to her side. This was a young, slightly framed female, of a pleasing countenance, but who would not have been particularly distinguished, in such a place, for personal charms. Still, her smile was sweet, her eyes were soft, and the expression of her face was what might almost be called illuminated. As Sir George Templemore followed her,

Eve mentioned his name to her acquaintance, whom she addressed as Mrs. Bloomfield.

"You are bent on perpetrating further gaiety to-night," said the latter, glancing at the ball-dresses of the two cousins; "are you in the colours of the Houston faction, or in those of the Peabody."

"Not in pea-green, certainly," returned Eve, laughing—"as you may see; but in simple white."

"You intend then to be 'led a measure' at Mrs. Houston's. It were more suitable than among the other faction."

"Is fashion, then, faction, in New-York?" inquired Sir George.

"Fractions would be a better word, perhaps. But we have parties in almost every thing, in America; in politics, religion, temperance, speculations, and taste; why not in fashion?"

"I fear we are not quite independent enough to form parties on such a subject," said Eve.

"Perfectly well said, Miss Effingham; one must think a little originally, let it be ever so falsely, in order to get up a fashion. I fear we shall have to admit our insignificance on this point. You are a late arrival, Sir George Templemore?"

"As lately as the commencement of this month; I had the honour of being a fellow-passenger with Mr. Effingham and his family."

"In which voyage you suffered shipwreck, captivity, and famine, if half we hear be true."

"Report has a little magnified our risks; we encountered some serious dangers, but nothing amounting to the sufferings you have mentioned."

"Being a married woman, and having passed the crisis in which deception is not practised, I expect to hear truth again," said Mrs. Bloomfield, smiling. "I trust, however, you underwent enough to qualify you all for heroes and heroines, and shall content myself with knowing that you are here, safe and happy—if,"

she added, looking inquiringly at Eve, "one who has been educated abroad *can* be happy at home."

"One educated abroad *may* be happy at home, though possibly not in the modes most practised by the world," said Eve, firmly.

"Without an opera, without a court, almost without society!"

"An opera would be desirable, I confess; of courts I know nothing, unmarried females being cyphers in Europe; and I hope better things than to think I shall be without society."

"Unmarried females are considered cyphers too, here, provided there be enough of them with a good respectable digit at their head. I assure you no one quarrels with the cyphers under such circumstances. I think, Sir George Templemore, a town like this must be something of a paradox to you."

"Might I venture to inquire the reason for this opinion!"

"Merely because it is neither one thing nor another. Not a capital, nor yet merely a provincial place; with something more than commerce in its bosom, and yet with that something hidden under a bushel. A good deal more than Liverpool, and a good deal less than London. Better even than Edinburgh, in many respects, and worse than Wapping, in others."

"You have been abroad, Mrs. Bloomfield?"

"Not a foot out of my own country; scarcely a foot out of my own state. I have been at Lake George, the Falls, and the Mountain House; and, as one does not travel in a balloon, I saw some of the intermediate places. As for all else, I am obliged to go by report."

"It is a pity Mrs. Bloomfield was not with us, this evening, at Mrs. Jarvis's," said Eve, laughing. "She might then have increased her knowledge, by listening to a few cantos from the epic of Mr. Dodge."

"I have glanced at some of that author's wisdom," returned Mrs. Bloomfield, "but I soon found it was

learning backwards. There is a never-failing rule, by which it is easy to arrive at a traveller's worth, in a negative sense, at least."

"That is a rule which may be worth knowing," said the baronet, "as it would save much useless wear of the eyes."

"When one betrays a profound ignorance of his own country, it is a fair presumption that he cannot be very acute in his observation of strangers. Mr. Dodge is one of these writers, and a single letter fully satisfied my curiosity. I fear, Miss Effingham, very inferior wares, in the way of manners, have been lately imported, in large quantities, into this country, as having the Tower mark on them."

Eve laughed, but declared that Sir George Templemore was better qualified than herself to answer such a question.

"We are said to be a people of facts, rather than a people of theories," continued Mrs. Bloomfield, without attending to the reference of the young lady, "and any coin that offers passes, until another that is better, arrives. It is a singular, but a very general mistake, I believe, of the people of this country, in supposing that they can exist under the present régime, when others would fail, because their opinions keep even pace with, or precede the actual condition of society; whereas, those who have thought and observed most on such subjects, agree in thinking the very reverse to be the case."

"This would be a curious condition for a government so purely conventional," observed Sir George, with interest, "and it certainly is entirely opposed to the state of things all over Europe."

"It is so, and yet there is no great mystery in it, after all. Accident has liberated us from trammels that still fetter you. We are like a vehicle on the top of a hill, which, the moment it is pushed beyond the point of resistance, rolls down of itself, without the aid

of horses. One may follow with the team, and hook on when it gets to the bottom, but there is no such thing as keeping company with it until it arrives there."

"You will allow, then, that there is a bottom?"

"There is a bottom to every thing—to good and bad; happiness and misery; hope, fear, faith and charity; even to a woman's mind, which I have sometimes fancied the most bottomless thing in nature. There may, therefore, well be a bottom even to the institutions of America."

Sir George listened with the interest with which an Englishman of his class always endeavours to catch a concession that he fancies is about to favour his own political predilections, and he felt encouraged to push the subject further.

"And you think the political machine is rolling downwards towards this bottom?" he said, with an interest in the answer that, living in the quiet and forgetfulness of his own home, he would have laughed at himself for entertaining. But our sensibilities become quickened by collision, and opposition is known even to create love.

Mrs. Bloomfield was quick-witted, intelligent, cultivated and shrewd. She saw the motive at a glance, and, notwithstanding she saw and felt all its abuses, strongly attached to the governing principle of her country's social organization, as is almost universally the case with the strongest minds and most generous hearts of the nation, she was not disposed to let a stranger carry away a false impression of her sentiments on such a point.

"Did you ever study logic, Sir George Templemore?" she asked, archly.

"A little, though not enough I fear to influence my mode of reasoning, or even to leave me familiar with the terms."

"Oh! I am not about to assail you with *sequiturs*

and *non sequiturs*, dialectics and all the mysteries of *Denk-Lehre*, but simply to remind you there is such a thing as the bottom of a subject. When I tell you we are flying towards the bottom of our institutions, it is in the intellectual sense, and not, as you have erroneously imagined, in an unintellectual sense. I mean that we are getting to understand them, which, I fear, we did not absolutely do at the commencement of the 'experiment.'"

"But I think you will admit, that as the civilization of the country advances, some material changes must occur; your people cannot always remain stationary; they must either go backwards or forward."

"Up or down, if you will allow me to correct your phraseology. The civilization of the country, in one sense at least, is retrogressive, and the people, as they cannot go 'up,' betray a disposition to go 'down.'"

"You deal in enigmas, and I am afraid to think I understand you."

"I mean, merely, that gallowses are fast disappearing, and that the people—*le peuple* you will understand—begin to accept money. In both particulars, I think there is a sensible change for the worse, within my own recollection."

Mrs. Bloomfield then changed her manner, and from using that light-hearted gaiety with which she often rendered her conversation *piquante*, and even occasionally brilliant, she became more grave and explicit. The subject soon turned to that of punishments, and few men could have reasoned more sensibly, justly or forcibly, on such a subject, than this slight and fragile-looking young woman. Without the least pedantry, with a beauty of language that the other sex seldom attains, and with a delicacy of discrimination, and a sentiment that were strictly feminine, she rendered a theme interesting, that, however important in itself, is forbidding, veiling all its odious and revolting features in the refinement and finesse of her own polished mind.

Eve could have listened all night, and, at every syllable that fell from the lips of her friend, she felt a glow of triumph; for she was proud of letting an intelligent foreigner see that America did contain women worthy to be ranked with the best of other countries, a circumstance that they who merely frequented what is called the world, she thought might be reasonably justified in distrusting. In one respect, she even fancied Mrs. Bloomfield's knowledge and cleverness superior to those which she had so often admired in her own sex abroad. It was untrammelled, equally by the prejudices incident to a factitious condition of society, or by their reaction; two circumstances that often obscured the sense and candour of those to whom she had so often listened with pleasure in other countries. The singularly feminine tone, too, of all that Mrs. Bloomfield said or thought, while it lacked nothing in strength, added to the charm of her conversation, and increased the pleasure of those that listened.

"Is the circle large to which Mrs. Hawker and her friends belong?" asked Sir George, as he assisted Eve and Grace to cloak, when they had taken leave. "A town which can boast of half-a-dozen such houses need not accuse itself of wanting society."

"Ah! there is but one Mrs. Hawker in New-York," answered Grace, "and not many Mrs. Bloomfields in the world. It would be too much to say, we have even half-a-dozen such houses."

"Have you not been struck with the admirable tone of this drawing-room," half whispered Eve. "It may want a little of that lofty ease that one sees among the better portion of the old *Princesses et Duchesses*, which is a relic of a school that, it is to be feared, is going out; but in its place there is a winning nature, with as much dignity as is necessary, and a truth that gives us confidence in the sincerity of those around us."

"Upon my word, I think Mrs. Hawker quite fit for a Duchess."

"You mean a *Duchesse*," said Eve, "and yet she is without the manner that we understand by such a word. Mrs. Hawker is a lady, and there can be no higher term."

"She is a delightful old woman," cried John Effingham, "and if twenty years younger and disposed to change her condition, I should really be afraid to enter the house."

"My dear sir," put in the captain, "I will make her Mrs. Truck to-morrow, and say nothing of years, if she could be content to take up with such an offer. Why, sir, she is no woman, but a saint in petticoats! I felt the whole time as if talking to my own mother, and as for ships, she knows more about them than I do!"

The whole party laughed at the strength of the captain's admiration, and getting into the carriages proceeded to the last of the houses they intended visiting that night.

CHAPTER V.

"So turns she every man the wrong side out;
And never gives to truth and virtue, that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth."

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

MRS. HOUSTON was what is termed a fashionable woman in New-York. She, too, was of a family of local note, though of one much less elevated in the olden time than that of Mrs. Hawker. Still her claims were admitted by the most fastidious on such points, for a few do remain who think descent indisputable to gentility; and as her means were ample, and her tastes perhaps superior to those of most around her, she kept what was thought a house of better tone than com-

mon, even in the highest circle. Eve had but a slight acquaintance with her; but in Grace's eyes, Mrs. Houston's was the place of all others that she thought might make a favourable impression on her cousin. Her wish that this should prove to be the case was so strong, that, as they drove towards the door, she could not forbear from making an attempt to prepare Eve for what she was to meet.

"Although Mrs. Houston has a very large house for New-York, and lives in a uniform style, you are not to expect ante-chambers, and vast suites of rooms, Eve," said Grace; "such as you have been accustomed to see abroad."

"It is not necessary, my dear cousin, to enter a house of four or five windows in front, to see it is not a house of twenty or thirty. I should be very unreasonable to expect an Italian palazzo, or a Parisian hotel, in this good town."

"We are not old enough for that yet, Eve; a hundred years hence, Mademoiselle Viefville, such things may exist here."

"*Bien sûr. C'est naturel.*"

"A hundred years hence, as the world tends, Grace, they are not likely to exist any where, except as taverns, or hospitals, or manufactories. But what have we to do, coz, with a century ahead of us? young as we both are, we cannot hope to live that time."

Grace would have been puzzled to account satisfactorily to herself, for the strong desire she felt that neither of her companions should expect to see such a house as their senses so plainly told them did not exist in the place; but her foot moved in the bottom of the carriage, for she was not half satisfied with her cousin's answer.

"All I mean, Eve," she said, after a pause, "is, that one ought not to expect in a town as new as this, the improvements that one sees in an older state of society."

"And have Mademoiselle Viefville, or I, ever been so weak as to suppose that New-York is Paris, or Rome, or Vienna?"

Grace was still less satisfied, for, unknown to herself, she *had* hoped that Mrs. Houston's ball might be quite equal to a ball in either of those ancient capitals; and she was now vexed that her cousin considered it so much a matter of course that it should not be. But there was no time for explanations, as the carriage now stopped.

The noise, confusion, calling out, swearing, and rude clamour before the house of Mrs. Houston, said little for the out-door part of the arrangements. Coachmen are nowhere a particularly silent and civil class; but the uncouth European peasants, who have been preferred to the honours of the whip in New-York, to the usual feelings of competition and contention, added that particular feature of humility which is known to distinguish "the beggar on horseback." The imposing equipages of our party, however, had that effect on most of these rude brawlers, which a display of wealth is known to produce on the vulgar-minded; and the ladies got into the house, through a lane of coachmen, by yielding a little to a *chevau de frise* of whips, without any serious calamity.

"One hardly knows which is the most terrific," said Eve, involuntarily, as soon as the door closed on them —"the noise within, or the noise without!"

This was spoken rapidly, and in French, to Mademoiselle Viefville, but Grace heard and understood it, and for the first time in her life, she perceived that Mrs. Houston's company was not composed of nightingales. The surprise is that the discovery should have come so late.

"I am delighted at having got into this house," said Sir George, who, having thrown his cloak to his own servant, stood with the two other gentlemen waiting the descent of the ladies from the upper room, where

the bad arrangements of the house compelled them to uncloak and to put aside their shawls, "as I am told it is the best house in town to see the other sex."

"To *hear them*, would be nearer the truth, perhaps," returned John Effingham. "As for pretty women, one can hardly go amiss in New-York; and your ears now tell you, that they do not come into the world to be seen only."

The baronet smiled, but he was too well bred to contradict or to assent. Mademoiselle Viefville, unconscious that she was violating the proprieties, walked into the rooms by herself, as soon as she descended, followed by Eve; but Grace shrank to the side of John Effingham, whose arm she took as a step necessary even to decorum.

Mrs. Houston received her guests with ease and dignity. She was one of those females that the American world calls gay; in other words, she opened her own house to a very promiscuous society, ten or a dozen times in a winter, and accepted the greater part of the invitations she got to other people's. Still, in most other countries, as a fashionable woman, she would have been esteemed a model of devotion to the duties of a wife and a mother, for she paid a personal attention to her household, and had actually taught all her children the Lord's prayer, the creed, and the ten commandments. She attended church twice every Sunday, and only staid at home from the evening lectures, that the domestics might have the opportunity of going (which, by the way, they never did) in her stead. Feminine, well-mannered, rich, pretty, of a very positive social condition, and naturally kind-hearted and disposed to sociability, Mrs. Houston, supported by an indulgent husband, who so much loved to see people with the appearance of happiness, that he was not particular as to the means, had found no difficulty in rising to the pinnacle of fashion, and of having her name in the mouths of all those who find it necessary

to talk of somebodies, in order that they may seem to be somebodies themselves. All this contributed to Mrs. Houston's happiness, or she fancied it did; and as every passion is known to increase by indulgence, she had insensibly gone on in her much-envied career, until, as has just been said, she reached the summit.

"These rooms are very crowded," said Sir George, glancing his eyes around two very pretty little narrow drawing-rooms, that were beautifully, not to say richly, furnished; "one wonders that the same contracted style of building should be so very general, in a town that increases as rapidly as this, and where fashion has no fixed abode, and land is so abundant."

"Mrs. Bloomfield would tell you," said Eve, "that these houses are types of the social state of the country, in which no one is permitted to occupy more than his share of ground."

"But there are reasonably large dwellings in the place. Mrs. Hawker has a good house, and your father's for instance, would be thought so, too, in London even; and yet I fancy you will agree with me in thinking that a good room is almost unknown in New-York."

"I do agree with you, in this particular, certainly, for to meet with a good room, one must go into the houses built thirty years ago. We have inherited these snuggeries, however, England not having much to boast of in the way of houses."

"In the way of town residences, I agree with you entirely, as a whole, though we have some capital exceptions. Still, I do not think we are quite as compact as this—do you not fancy the noise increased in consequence of its being so confined?"

Eve laughed and shook her head quite positively.

"What would it be if fairly let out!" she said. "But we will not waste the precious moments, but turn our eyes about us in quest of the *belles*. Grace, you who are so much at home, must be our cicerone, and tell us which are the idols we are to worship."

"*Dites moi premierement; que veut dire une belle à New-York?*" demanded Mademoiselle Viefville. *Apparemment, tout le monde est joli.*"

"A *belle*, Mademoiselle," returned John Effingham, "is not necessarily beautiful, the qualifications for the character, being various and a little contradictory. One may be a *belle* by means of money, a tongue, an eye, a foot, teeth, a laugh, or any other separate feature, or grace; though no woman was ever yet a *belle*, I believe, by means of the head, considered collectively. But why deal in description, when the thing itself confronts us? The young lady standing directly before us, is a *belle* of the most approved stamp and silvery tone. Is it not Miss Ring, Grace?"

The answer was in the affirmative, and the eyes of the whole party turned towards the subject of this remark. The young lady in question was about twenty, rather tall for an American woman, not conspicuously handsome, but like most around her of delicate features and frame, and with such a *physique*, as, under proper training, would have rendered her the *beau idéal* of feminine delicacy and gentleness. She had natural spirit, likewise, as appeared in her clear blue eye, and moreover she had the spirit to be a *belle*.

Around this young creature were clustered no less than five young men, dressed in the height of the fashion, all of whom seemed to be entranced with the words that fell from her lips, and each of whom appeared anxious to say something clever in return. They all laughed, the lady most, and sometimes all spoke at once. Notwithstanding these outbreakings, Miss Ring did most of the talking, and once or twice, as a young man would gape after a most exhilarating show of merriment, and discover an inclination to retreat, she managed to recall him to his allegiance, by some remark particularly pertinent to himself, or his feelings.

"*Qui est cette dame?*" asked Mademoiselle Viefville, very much as one would put a similar question, on

seeing a man enter a church during service with his hat on.

"*Elle est demoiselle*," returned Eve.

"*Quelle horreur!*"

"Nay, nay, Mademoiselle, I shall not allow you to set up France as immaculate on this point, neither—" said John Effingham, looking at the last speaker with an affected frown—"A young lady may have a tongue, and she may even speak to a young gentleman, and not be guilty of felony; although I will admit that five tongues are unnecessary, and that five listeners are more than sufficient, for the wisdom of twenty in petticoats."

"*C'est une horreur!*"

"I dare say Miss Ring would think it a greater horror to be obliged to pass an evening in a row of girls, unspoken to, except to be asked to dance, and admired only in the distance. But let us take seats on that sofa, and then we may go beyond the pantomime, and become partakers in the sentiment of the scene."

Grace and Eve were now led off to dance, and the others did as John Effingham had suggested. In the eyes of the *belle* and her admirers, they who had passed thirty were of no account, and our listeners succeeded in establishing themselves quietly within ear-shot—this was almost at duelling distance, too, —without at all interrupting the regular action of the piece. We extract a little of the dialogue, by way of giving a more dramatic representation of the scene.

"Do you think the youngest Miss Danvers beautiful?" asked the *belle*, while her eye wandered in quest of a sixth gentleman to "entertain," as the phrase is. "In my opinion, she is absolutely the prettiest female in Mrs. Houston's rooms this night."

The young men, one and all, protested against this judgment, and with perfect truth, for Miss Ring was too original to point out charms that every one could see.

"They say it will not be a match between her and Mr. Egbert, after every body has supposed it settled so long. What is your opinion, Mr. Edson?"

This timely question prevented Mr. Edson's retreat, for he had actually got so far in this important evolution, as to have gaped and turned his back. Recalled, as it were by the sound of the bugle, Mr. Edson was compelled to say something, a sore affliction to him always.

"Oh! I'm quite of your way of thinking; they have certainly courted too long to think of marrying."

"I detest long courtships; they must be perfect antidotes to love; are they not, Mr. Moreland?"

A truant glance of Mr. Moreland's eye was rebuked by this appeal, and instead of looking for a place of refuge, he now merely looked sheepish. He, however, entirely agreed with the young lady, as the surer way of getting out of the difficulty.

"Pray, Mr. Summerfield, how do you like the last Hajji—Miss Eve Effingham? To my notion, she is prettyish, though by no means as well as her cousin, Miss Van Cortlandt, who is really rather good-looking."

As Eve and Grace were the two most truly lovely young women in the rooms, this opinion, as well as the loud tone in which it was given, startled Mademoiselle Viefville quite as much as the subjects that the belle had selected for discussion. She would have moved, as listening to a conversation that was not meant for their ears; but John Effingham quietly assured her that Miss Ring seldom spoke in company without intending as many persons as possible to hear her.

"Miss Effingham is very plainly dressed for an only daughter," continued the young lady, "though that lace of her cousin's is real point! I'll engage it cost every cent of ten dollars a yard! They are both engaged to be married, I hear."

"*Ciel!*" exclaimed Mademoiselle Viefville.

"Oh! That is nothing," observed John Effingham, coolly. "Wait a moment, and you 'll hear that they have been privately married these six months, if, indeed, you hear no more."

"Of course this is but an idle tale?" said Sir George Templemore with a concern, which, in despite of his good breeding, compelled him to put a question that, under other circumstances, would scarcely have been permissible.

"As true as the gospel. But listen to the *bell*, it is *ringing* for the good of the whole parish."

"The affair between Miss Effingham and Mr. Morpeth, who knew her abroad, I understand is entirely broken off; some say the father objected to Mr. Morpeth's want of fortune; others that the lady was fickle, while some accuse the gentleman of the same vice. Don't you think it shocking to jilt, in either sex, Mr. Mosely?"

The *retiring* Mr. Mosely was drawn again within the circle, and was obliged to confess that he thought it was very shocking, in either sex, to jilt.

"If I were a man," continued the *belle*, "I would never think of a young woman who had once jilted a lover. To my mind, it bespeaks a bad heart, and a woman with a bad heart cannot make a very amiable wife."

"What an exceedingly clever creature she is," whispered Mr. Mosely to Mr. Moreland, and he now made up his mind to remain and be 'entertained' some time longer.

"I think poor Mr. Morpeth greatly to be pitied; for no man would be so silly as to be attentive seriously to a lady without encouragement. Encouragement is the *ne plus ultra* of courtship; are you not of my opinion, Mr. Walworth?"

Mr. Walworth was number five of the entertainees, and he did understand Latin, of which the young lady,

though fond of using scraps, knew literally nothing. He smiled an assent, therefore, and the *belle* felicitated herself in having 'entertained' *him* effectually; nor was she mistaken.

"Indeed, they say Miss Effingham had several affairs of the heart, while in Europe, but it seems she was unfortunate in them all."

"*Mais, ceci est trop fort! Je ne peux plus écouter.*"

"My dear Mademoiselle, compose yourself. The crisis is not yet arrived, by any means."

"I understand she still corresponds with a German Baron, and an Italian Marquis, though both engagements are absolutely broken off. Some people say she walks into company alone, unsupported by any gentleman, by way of announcing a firm determination to remain single for life."

A common exclamation from the young men proclaimed their disapprobation; and that night three of them actually repeated the thing, as a well established truth, and two of the three, failing of something better to talk about, also announced that Eve was actually engaged to be married.

"There is something excessively indelicate in a young lady's moving about a room without having a gentleman's arm to lean on! I always feel as if such a person was out of her place, and ought to be in the kitchen."

"But, Miss Ring, what well-bred person does it?" sputtered Mr. Moreland. "No one ever heard of such a thing in good society. 'Tis quite shocking! Altogether unprecedented."

"It strikes me as being excessively coarse!"

"Oh! manifestly; quite rustic!" exclaimed Mr. Edson.

"What can possibly be more vulgar?" added Mr Walworth.

"I never heard of such a thing among the right sort!" said Mr. Mosely.

"A young lady who can be so brazen as to come into a room without a gentleman's arm to lean on, is, in my judgment at least, but indifferently educated, Hajji or no Hajji. Mr. Edson, have you ever felt the tender passion? I know you have been desperately in love, once, at least; do describe to me some of the symptoms, in order that I may know when I am seriously attacked myself by the disease."

"*Mais, ceci est ridicule! L'enfant s'est sauvée du Charenton de New-York.*"

"From the nursery rather, Mademoiselle; you perceive she does not yet know how to walk alone."

Mr. Edson now protested that he was too stupid to feel a passion as intellectual as love, and that he was afraid he was destined by nature to remain as insensible as a block.

"One never knows, Mr. Edson," said the young lady, encouragingly. "Several of my acquaintances, who thought themselves quite safe, have been seized suddenly, and, though none have actually died, more than one has been roughly treated, I assure you."

Here the young men, one and all, protested that she was excessively clever. Then succeeded a pause, for Miss Ring was inviting, with her eyes, a number six to join the circle, her ambition being dissatisfied with five entertainees, as she saw that Miss Trumpet, a rival belle, had managed to get exactly that number, also, in the other room. All the gentlemen availed themselves of the cessation in wit to gape, and Mr. Edson took the occasion to remark to Mr. Summerfield that he understood "lots had been sold in seven hundredth street that morning, as high as two hundred dollars a lot."

The *quadrille* now ended, and Eve returned towards her friends. As she approached, the whole party compared her quiet, simple, feminine, and yet dignified air, with the restless, beau-catching, and worldly look of the belle, and wondered by what law of nature, or of

fashion, the one could possibly become the subject of the other's comments. Eve never appeared better than that evening. Her dress had all the accuracy and finish of a Parisian toilette, being equally removed from exaggeration and neglect; and it was worn with the ease of one accustomed to be elegantly attired, and yet never decked with finery. Her step even was that of a lady, having neither the mincing tread of a Paris grisette, a manner that sometimes ascends even to the *bourgeoise*, the march of a cockneyess, nor the tiptoe swing of a *belle;* but it was the natural though regulated step, of a trained and delicate woman. Walk alone she could certainly, and always did, except on those occasions of ceremony that demanded a partner. Her countenance, across which an unworthy thought had never left a trace, was an index, too, to the purity, high principles and womanly self-respect that controlled all her acts, and, in these particulars, was the very reverse of the feverish, half-hoydenish, half-affected expression of that of Miss Ring.

"They may say what they please," muttered Captain Truck, who had been a silent but wondering listener of all that passed; "she is worth as many of them as could be stowed in the Montauk's lower hold."

Miss Ring perceiving Eve approach, was desirous of saying something to her, for there was an *éclat* about a Hajji, after all, that rendered an acquaintance, or even an intimacy desirable, and she smiled and curtsied. Eve returned the salutation, but as she did not care to approach a group of six, of which no less than five were men, she continued to move towards her own party. This reserve compelled Miss Ring to advance a step or two, when Eve was obliged to stop. Curtsying to her partner, she thanked him for his attention, relinquished his arm, and turned to meet the lady. At the same instant the five 'entertainees' escaped in a body, equally rejoiced at their release, and proud of their captivity.

"I have been dying to come and speak to you, Miss Effingham," commenced Miss Ring, "but these *five* giants (she emphasized the word we have put in italics) so beset me, that escape was quite impossible. There ought to be a law that but one gentleman should speak to a lady at a time."

"I thought there was such a law already;" said Eve, quietly.

"You mean in good breeding; but no one thinks of those antiquated laws now-a-days. Are you beginning to be reconciled, a little, to your own country?"

"It is not easy to effect a reconciliation where there has been no misunderstanding. I hope I have never quarrelled with my country, or my country with me."

"Oh! it is not exactly that I mean. Cannot one need a reconciliation without a quarrel? What do you say to this, Mr. Edson?"

Miss Ring having detected some symptoms of desertion in the gentleman addressed, had thrown in this question by way of recal; when turning to note its effect, she perceived that all of her *clientelle* had escaped. A look of surprise and mortification and vexation it was not in her power to suppress, and then came one of horror.

"How conspicuous we have made ourselves, and it is all my fault!" she said, for the first time that evening permitting her voice to fall to a becoming tone. "Why, here we actually are, two ladies conversing together, and no gentleman near us!"

"Is that being conspicuous?" asked Eve, with a simplicity that was entirely natural.

"I am sure, Miss Effingham, one who has seen as much of society as you, can scarcely ask that question seriously. I do not think I have done so improper a thing, since I was fifteen; and, dear me! dear me! how to escape is the question. You have permitted your partner to go, and I do not see a gentleman of my acquaintance near us, to give me his arm!"

"As your distress is occasioned by my company," said Eve, "it is fortunately in my power to relieve it." Thus saying, she quietly walked across the room, and took her seat next to Mademoiselle Viefville.

Miss Ring held up her hands in amazement, and then fortunately perceiving one of the truants gaping at no great distance, she beckoned him to her side.

"Have the goodness to give me your arm, Mr. Summerfield," she said, "I am dying to get out of this unpleasantly conspicuous situation; but you are the first gentleman that has approached me this twelvemonth. I would not for the world do so brazen a thing as Miss Effingham has just achieved; would you believe it, she positively went from this spot to her seat, quite alone!"

"The Hajjis are privileged."

"They make themselves so. But every body knows how bold and unwomanly the French females are. One could wish, notwithstanding, that our own people would not import their audacious usages into this country."

"It is a thousand pities that Mr. Clay, in his compromise, neglected to make an exception against that article. A tariff on impudence would not be at all sectional."

"It might interfere with the manufacture at home, notwithstanding," said John Effingham; for the lungs were strong, and the rooms of Mrs. Houston so small, that little was said that evening, which was not heard by any who chose to listen. But Miss Ring never listened, it being no part of the vocation of a *belle* to perform that inferior office, and sustained by the protecting arm of Mr. Summerfield, she advanced more boldly into the crowd, where she soon contrived to catch another group of even six "entertainees." As for Mr. Summerfield, he lived a twelvemonth on the reputation of the exceedingly clever thing he had just uttered.

"There come Ned and Aristabulus," said John Effingham, as soon as the tones of Miss Ring's voice were lost in the din of fifty others, pitched to the same key. "*A present, Mademoiselle, je vais nous venger.*"

As John Effingham uttered this, he took Captain Truck by the arm, and went to meet his cousin and the land agent. The latter he soon separated from Mr. Effingham, and with this new recruit, he managed to get so near to Miss Ring as to attract her attention. Although fifty, John Effingham was known to be a bachelor, well connected, and to have twenty thousand a year. In addition, he was well preserved and singularly handsome, besides having an air that set all pretending gentility at defiance. These were qualities that no *belle* despised, and ill-assorted matches were, moreover, just coming into fashion in New-York. Miss Ring had an intuitive knowledge that he wished to speak to her, and she was not slow in offering the opportunity. The superior tone of John Effingham, his caustic wit and knowledge of the world, dispersed the five *beaux*, incontinently; these persons having a natural antipathy to every one of the qualities named.

"I hope you will permit me to presume on an acquaintance that extends back as far as your grandfather, Miss Ring," he said, "to present two very intimate friends; Mr. Bragg and Mr. Truck; gentlemen who will well reward the acquaintance."

The lady bowed graciously, for it was a matter of conscience with her to receive every man with a smile. She was still too much in awe of the master of ceremonies to open her batteries of attack, but John Effingham soon relieved her, by affecting a desire to speak to another lady. The *belle* had now the two strangers to herself, and having heard that the Effinghams had an Englishman of condition as a companion, who was travelling under a false name, she fancied herself very clever in detecting him at once in the

person of Aristabulus; while by the aid of a lively imagination, she thought Mr. Truck was his travelling Mentor, and a divine of the church of England. The incognito she was too well bred to hint at, though she wished both the gentlemen to perceive that a *belle* was not to be mystified in this easy manner. Indeed, she was rather sensitive on the subject of her readiness in recognizing a man of fashion under any circumstances, and to let this be known was her very first object, as soon as she was relieved from the presence of John Effingham.

"You must be struck with the unsophisticated nature and the extreme simplicity of our society, Mr. Bragg," she said, looking at him significantly; "we are very conscious it is not what it might be, but do you not think it pretty well for beginners?"

Now, Mr. Bragg had an entire consciousness that he had never seen any society that deserved the name before this very night, but he was supported in giving his opinions by that secret sense of his qualifications to fill any station, which formed so conspicuous a trait in his character, and his answer was given with an *aplomb* that would have added weight to the opinion of the veriest *élégant* of the *Chaussée d'Antin*.

"It is indeed a good deal unsophisticated," he said, "and so simple that any body can understand it. I find but a single fault with this entertainment, which is, in all else, the perfection of elegance in my eyes, and that is, that there is too little room to swing the legs in dancing."

"Indeed!—I did not expect that—is it not the best usage of Europe, now, to bring a quadrille into the very minimum of space?"

"Quite the contrary, Miss. All good dancing requires evolutions. The dancing Dervishes, for instance, would occupy quite as much space as both of these sets that are walking before us, and I believe it is now

generally admitted that all good dancing needs room for the legs."

"We necessarily get a little behind the fashions, in this distant country. Pray, sir, is it usual for ladies to walk alone in society?"

"Woman was not made to move through life alone, Miss," returned Aristabulus with a sentimental glance of the eye, for he never let a good opportunity for preferment slip through his fingers, and, failing of Miss Effingham, or Miss Van Cortlandt, of whose estates and connections he had some pretty accurate notions, it struck him Miss Ring might, possibly, be a very eligible connection, as all was grist that came to his mill; "this I believe, is an admitted truth."

"By life you mean matrimony, I suppose."

"Yes, Miss, a man always means matrimony, when he speaks to a young lady."

This rather disconcerted Miss Ring, who picked her nosegay, for she was not accustomed to hear gentlemen talk to ladies of matrimony, but ladies to talk to gentlemen. Recovering her self-possession, however, she said with a promptitude that did the school to which she belonged infinite credit,—

"You speak, sir, like one having experience."

"Certainly, Miss; I have been in love ever since I was ten years old; I may say I was born in love, and hope to die in love."

This a little out-Heroded Herod, but the *belle* was not a person to be easily daunted on such a subject. She smiled graciously, therefore, and continued the conversation with renewed spirit.

"You travelled gentlemen get odd notions," she said, "and more particularly on such subjects. I always feel afraid to discuss them with foreigners, though with my own countrymen I have few reserves. Pray, Mr. Truck, are you satisfied with America?—Do you find it the country you expected to see?"

"Certainly, marm;" for so they pronounced this

word in the river, and the captain cherished his first impressions; "when we sailed from Portsmouth, I expected that the first land we should make would be the Highlands of Navesink; and, although a little disappointed, I have had the satisfaction of laying eyes on it at last."

"Disappointment, I fear, is the usual fate of those who come from the other side. Is this dwelling of Mrs. Houston's equal to the residence of an English nobleman, Mr. Bragg?"

"Considerably better, Miss, especially in the way of republican comfort."

Miss Ring, like all *belles*, detested the word republican, their vocation being clearly to exclusion, and she pouted a little affectedly.

"I should distrust the quality of such comfort, sir," she said, with point; "but, are the rooms at all comparable with the rooms in Apsley House, for instance?"

"My dear Miss, Apsley House is a toll-gate lodge, compared to this mansion! I doubt if there be a dwelling in all England half as magnificent—indeed, I cannot imagine any thing more brilliant and rich."

Aristabulus was not a man to do things by halves, and it was a point of honour with him to know something of every thing. It is true he no more could tell where Apsley House is, or whether it was a tavern or a gaol, than he knew half the other things on which he delivered oracular opinions; but when it became necessary to speak, he was not apt to balk conversation from any ignorance, real or affected. The opinion he had just given, it is true, had a little surpassed Miss Ring's hopes; for the next thing, in her ambition to being a *belle*, and of "entertaining" gentlemen, was to fancy she was running her brilliant career in an orbit of fashion that lay parallel to that of the "nobility and gentry" of Great Britain.

"Well, this surpasses my hopes," she said, "although I was aware we are nearly on a level with the more

improved tastes of Europe: still, I thought we were a little inferior to that part of the world, yet."

"Inferior, Miss! That is a word that should never pass your lips; you are inferior to nothing, whether in Europe or America, Asia or Africa."

As Miss Ring had been accustomed to do most of the flattering herself, as behoveth a *belle*, she began to be disconcerted with the directness of the compliments of Aristabulus, who was disposed to 'make hay while the sun shines;' and she turned, in a little confusion, to the captain, by way of relief; we say confusion, for the young lady, although so liable to be misunderstood, was not actually impudent, but merely deceived in the relations of things; or, in other words, by some confusion in usages, she had hitherto permitted herself to do that in society, which female performers sometimes do on the stage; enact the part of a man.

"You should tell Mr. Bragg, sir," she said, with an appealing look at the captain, "that flattery is a dangerous vice, and one altogether unsuited to a Christian."

"It is, indeed, marm, and one that I never indulge in. No one under my orders, can accuse me of flattery."

By 'under orders,' Miss Ring understood curates and deacons; for she was aware the church of England had clerical distinctions of this sort, that are unknown in America.

"I hope, sir, you do not intend to quit this country without favouring us with a discourse."

"Not I, marm—I am discoursing pretty much from morning till night, when among my own people, though I own that this conversing rather puts me out of my reckoning. Let me get my foot on the planks I love, with an attentive audience, and a good cigar in my mouth, and I 'll hold forth with any bishop in the universe."

"A cigar!" exclaimed Miss Ring, in surprise. "Do gentlemen of your profession use cigars when on duty?"

"Does a parson take his fees? Why, Miss, there is not a man among us, who does not smoke from morning till night."

"Surely not on Sundays!"

"Two for one, on those days, more than on any other."

"And your people, sir, what do they do, all this time?"

"Why, marm, most of them chew; and those that don't, if they cannot find a pipe, have a dull time of it. For my part, I shall hardly relish the good place itself, if cigars are prohibited."

Miss Ring was surprised; but she had heard that the English clergy were more free than our own, and then she had been accustomed to think every thing English of the purest water. A little reflection reconciled her to the innovation; and the next day, at a dinner party, she was heard defending the usage as a practice that had a precedent in the ancient incense of the altar. At the moment, however, she was dying to impart her discoveries to others; and she kindly proposed to the captain and Aristabulus to introduce them to some of her acquaintances, as they must find it dull, being strangers, to know no one. Introductions and cigars were the captain's hobbies, and he accepted the offer with joy, Aristabulus uniting cordially in the proposition, as he fancied he had a right, under the Constitution of the United States of America, to be introduced to every human being with whom he came in contact.

It is scarcely necessary to say how much the party with whom the two neophytes in fashion had come, enjoyed all this, though they concealed their amusement under the calm exterior of people of the world. From Mr. Effingham the mystification was carefully concealed by his cousin, as the former would have felt it due to Mrs. Houston, a well-meaning, but silly woman, to put an end to it. Eve and Grace laughed,

as merry girls would be apt to laugh, at such an occurrence, and they danced the remainder of the evening with lighter hearts than ever. At one, the company retired in the same informal manner, as respects announcements and the calling of carriages, as that in which they had entered; most to lay their drowsy heads on their pillows, and Miss Ring to ponder over the superior manners of a polished young Englishman, and to dream of the fragrance of a sermon that was preserved in tobacco.

CHAPTER VI.

"Marry, our play is the most lamentable Comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby."

PETER QUINCE.

Our task in the way of describing town society will soon be ended. The gentlemen of the Effingham family had been invited to meet Sir George Templemore at one or two dinners, to which the latter had been invited in consequence of his letters, most of which were connected with his pecuniary arrangements. As one of these entertainments was like all the rest of the same character, a very brief account of it will suffice to let the reader into the secret of the excellence of the genus.

A well-spread board, excellent viands, highly respectable cookery, and delicious wines, were every where met. Two rows of men clad in dark dresses, a solitary female at the head of the table, or, if fortunate, with a supporter of the same sex near her, invariably composed the *convives*. The exaggerations of a province were seen ludicrously in one particular custom. The host, or perhaps it might have been the

hostess, had been told there should be a contrast between the duller light of the reception-room, and the brilliancy of the table, and John Effingham actually hit his legs against a stool, in floundering through the obscurity of the first drawing-room he entered on one of the occasions in question.

When seated at table, the first great duty of restauration performed, the conversation turned on the prices of lots, speculations in towns, or the currency. After this came the regular assay of wines, during which it was easy to fancy the master of the house a dealer, for he usually sat either sucking a syphon or flourishing a cork-screw. The discourse would now have done credit to the annual meeting and dinner of the German exporters, assembled at Rudesheim to bid for the article.

Sir George was certainly on the point of forming a very erroneous judgment concerning the country, when Mr. Effingham extricated him from this set, and introduced him properly into his own. Here, indeed, while there was much to strike a European as peculiar, and even provincial, the young baronet fared much better. He met with the same quality of table, relieved by an intelligence that was always respectable, and a manliness of tone which, if not unmixed, had the great merit of a simplicity and nature that are not always found in more sophisticated circles. The occasional incongruities struck them all, more than the positive general faults; and Sir George Templemore did justice to the truth, by admitting frankly, the danger he had been in of forming a too hasty opinion.

All this time, which occupied a month, the young baronet got to be more and more intimate in Hudson Square, Eve gradually becoming more frank and unreserved with him, as she grew sensible that he had abandoned his hopes of success with herself, and Grace gradually more cautious and timid, as she became con-

scious of his power to please, and the interest he took in herself.

It might have been three days after the ball at Mrs. Houston's that most of the family was engaged to look in on a Mrs. Legend, a lady of what was called a literary turn, Sir George having been asked to make one of their party. Aristabulus was already returned to his duty in the country, where we shall shortly have occasion to join him, but an invitation had been sent to Mr. Truck, under the general, erroneous impression of his real character.

Taste, whether in the arts, literature, or any thing else, is a natural impulse, like love. It is true both may be cultivated and heightened by circumstances, but the impulses must be voluntary, and the flow of feeling, or of soul, as it has become a law to style it, is not to be forced, or commanded to come and go at will. This is the reason that all premeditated enjoyments connected with the intellect, are apt to baffle expectations, and why academies, literary clubs, coteries and dinners are commonly dull. It is true that a body of clever people may be brought together, and, if left to their own impulses, the characters of their mind will show themselves; wit will flash, and thought will answer thought spontaneously; but every effort to make the stupid agreeable, by giving a direction of a pretending intellectual nature to their efforts, is only rendering dullness more conspicuous by exhibiting it in contrast with what it ought to be to be clever, as a bad picture is rendered the more conspicuous by an elaborate and gorgeous frame.

The latter was the fate of most of Mrs. Legend's literary evenings, at which it was thought an illustration to understand even one foreign language. But, it was known that Eve was skilled in most of the European tongues, and, the good lady, not feeling that such accomplishments are chiefly useful as a means, looked about her in order to collect a set, among whom our

heroine might find some one with whom to converse in each of her dialects. Little was said about it, it is true, but great efforts were made to cause this evening to be memorable in the annals of *conversazioni*.

In carrying out this scheme, nearly all the wits, writers, artists and *literati*, as the most incorrigible members of the book clubs were styled, in New-York, were pressingly invited to be present. Aristabulus had contrived to earn such a reputation for the captain, on the night of the ball, that he was universally called a man of letters, and an article had actually appeared in one of the papers, speaking of the literary merits of the "Hon. and Rev. Mr. Truck, a gentleman travelling in our country, from whose liberality and just views, an account of our society was to be expected, that should, at last, do justice to our national character." With such expectations, then, every true American and Americaness, was expected to be at his or her post, for the solemn occasion. It was a rally of literature, in defence of the institutions—no, not of the institutions, for they were left to take care of themselves—but of the social character of the community.

Alas! it is easier to feel high aspirations on such subjects, in a provincial town, than to succeed; for merely calling a place an Emporium, is very far from giving it the independence, high tone, condensed intelligence and tastes of a capital. Poor Mrs. Legend, desirous of having all the tongues duly represented, was obliged to invite certain dealers in gin from Holland, a German linen merchant from Saxony, an Italian *Cavaliero*, who amused himself in selling beads, and a Spanish master, who was born in Portugal, all of whom had just one requisite for conversation in their respective languages, and no more. But such assemblies were convened in Paris, and why not in New-York?

We shall not stop to dwell on the awful sensations with which Mrs. Legend heard the first ring at her

door, on the eventful night in question. It was the precursor of the entrance of Miss Annual, as regular a devotee of letters as ever conned a primer. The meeting was sentimental and affectionate. Before either had time, however, to disburthen her mind of one half of its prepared phrases, ring upon ring proclaimed more company, and the rooms were soon as much sprinkled with talent, as a modern novel with jests. Among those who came first, appeared all the foreign corps, for the refreshments entered as something into the account with them; every blue of the place, whose social position in the least entitled her to be seen in such a house, Mrs. Legend belonging quite positively to good society.

The scene that succeeded was very characteristic. A professed genius does nothing like other people, except in cases that require a display of talents. In all minor matters, he, or she, is *sui generis;* for sentiment is in constant ebullition in their souls; this being what is meant by the flow of that part of the human system.

We might here very well adopt the Homeric method, and call the roll of heroes and heroines, in what the French would term a *catalogue raisonnée;* but our limits compel us to be less ambitious, and to adopt a simpler mode of communicating facts. Among the ladies who now figured in the drawing-room of Mrs. Legend, besides Miss Annual, were Miss Monthly, Mrs. Economy, S. R. P., Marion, Longinus, Julietta, Herodotus, D. O. V. E., and Mrs. Demonstration; besides many others of less note; together with at least a dozen female Hajjis, whose claims to appear in such society were pretty much dependent on the fact, that having seen pictures and statues abroad, they necessarily must have the means of talking of them at home. The list of men was still more formidable in numbers, if not in talents. At its head stood Steadfast Dodge, Esquire, whose fame as a male Hajji had so far swollen since Mrs. Jarvis's *réunion,* that, for the first time in

his life, he now entered one of the better houses of his own country. Then there were the authors of "Lapis Lazuli," "The Aunts," "The Reformed," "The Conformed," "The Transformed," and "The Deformed;" with the editors of "The Hebdomad," "The Night Cap," "The Chrysalis," "The Real Maggot," and "The Seek no Further;" as also, "Junius," "Junius Brutus," "Lucius Junius Brutus," "Captain Kant," "Florio," the 'Author of the History of Billy Linkum Tweedle', the celebrated Pottawattamie Prophet, "Single Rhyme," a genius who had prudently rested his fame in verse, on a couplet composed of one line; besides divers *amateurs* and *connoisseurs*, Hajjis, who *must* be men of talents, as they had acquired all they knew, very much as American Eclipse gained his laurels on the turf; that is to say, by a free use of the whip and spur.

As Mrs. Legend sailed about her rooms amid such a circle, her mind expanded, her thoughts diffused themselves among her guests on the principle of Animal Magnetism, and her heart was melting with the tender sympathies of congenial tastes. She felt herself to be at the head of American talents, and, in the secret recesses of her reason, she determined that, did even the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah menace her native town, as some evil disposed persons had dared to insinuate might one day be the case, here was enough to save it from destruction.

It was just as the mistress of the mansion had come to this consoling conclusion, that the party from Hudson Square rang. As few of her guests came in carriages, Mrs. Legend, who heard the rolling of wheels, felt persuaded that the lion of the night was now indeed at hand; and with a view to a proper reception, she requested the company to divide itself into two lines, in order that he might enter, as it were, between lanes of genius.

It may be necessary to explain, at this point of our narrative, that John Effingham was perfectly aware

of the error which existed in relation to the real character of Captain Truck, wherein he thought great injustice had been done the honest seaman; and, the old man intending to sail for London next morning, had persuaded him to accept this invitation, in order that the public mind might be disabused in a matter of so much importance. With a view that this might be done naturally and without fuss, however, he did not explain the mistake to his nautical friend, believing it most probable that this could be better done incidentally, as it were, in the course of the evening; and feeling certain of the force of that wholesome apothegm, which says that "truth is powerful and must prevail." "If this be so," added John Effingham, in his explanations to Eve, "there can be no place where the sacred quality will be so likely to assert itself, as in a galaxy of geniuses, whose distinctive characteristic is 'an intuitive perception of things in their real colours.'"

When the door of Mrs. Legend's drawing-room opened, in the usual noiseless manner, Mademoiselle Viefville, who led the way, was startled at finding herself in the precise situation of one who is condemned to run the gauntlet. Fortunately, she caught a glimpse of Mrs. Legend, posted at the other end of the proud array, inviting her, with smiles, to approach. The invitation had been to a "*literary fête*," and Mademoiselle Viefville was too much of a Frenchwoman to be totally disconcerted at a little scenic effect on the occasion of a *fête* of any sort. Supposing she was now a witness of an American ceremony for the first time, for the want of *representation* in the country had been rather a subject of animadversion with her, she advanced steadily towards the mistress of the house, bestowing smile for smile, this being a part of the *programme* at which a *Parisienne* was not easily outdone. Eve followed, as usual, *sola;* Grace came next; then Sir George; then John Effingham; the captain bringing up the rear. There had been a friendly contest,

for the precedency, between the two last, each desiring to yield it to the other on the score of merit; but the captain prevailed, by declaring "that he was navigating an unknown sea, and that he could do nothing wiser than to sail in the wake of so good a pilot as Mr. John Effingham."

As Hajjis of approved experience, the persons who led the advance in this little procession, were subjects of a proper attention and respect; but as the admiration of mere vulgar travelling would in itself be vulgar, care was taken to reserve the condensed feeling of the company for the celebrated English writer and wit, who was known to bring up the rear. This was not a common house, in which dollars had place, or *belles* rioted, but the temple of genius; and every one felt an ardent desire to manifest a proper homage to the abilities of the established foreign writer, that should be in exact proportion to their indifference to the twenty thousand a year of John Effingham, and to the nearly equal amount of Eve's expectations.

The personal appearance of the honest tar was well adapted to the character he was thus called on so unexpectedly to support. His hair had long been getting grey, but the intense anxiety of the chase, of the wreck, and of his other recent adventures, had rapidly, but effectually, increased this mark of time; and his head was now nearly as white as snow. The hale, fresh, red of his features, which was in truth the result of exposure, might very well pass for the tint of port, and his tread, which had always a little of the quarter-deck swing about it, might quite easily be mistaken by a tyro, for the human frame staggering under a load of learning. Unfortunately for those who dislike mystifications, the captain had consulted John Effingham on the subject of the toilette, and that kind and indulgent friend had suggested the propriety of appearing in black small-clothes for the occasion, a costume that he often wore himself of an evening. Reality, in this

instance, then, did not disappoint expectation, and the burst of applause with which the captain was received, was accompanied by a general murmur in commendation of the admirable manner in which he "looked the character."

"What a Byronic head," whispered the author of "The Transformed" to D. O. V. E.; "and was there ever such a curl of the lip, before, to mortal man!"

The truth is, the captain had thrust his tobacco into "an aside," as a monkey is known to *empocher* a spare nut, or a lump of sugar.

"Do you think him Byronic?—To my eye, the cast of his head is Shaksperian, rather; though I confess there is a little of Milton about the forehead!"

"Pray," said Miss Annual, to Lucius Junius Brutus, "which is commonly thought to be the best of his works; that on a—a—a,—or that on e—e—e?"

Now, so it happened, that not a soul in the room, but the lion himself, had any idea what books he had written, and he knew only of some fifteen or twenty log-books. It was generally understood, that he was a great English writer, and this was more than sufficient.

"I believe the world generally prefers the a—a—a," said Lucius Junius Brutus; "but the few give a decided preference to the e—e—e——"

"Oh! out of all question preferable!" exclaimed half a dozen, in hearing.

"With what a classical modesty he pays his compliments to Mrs. Legend," observed "S. R. P."—"One can always tell a man of real genius, by his *tenu!*"

"He is so English!" cried Florio. "Ah! *they* are the only people, after all!"

This Florio was one of those geniuses who sigh most for the things that they least possess.

By this time Captain Truck had got through with listening to the compliments of Mrs. Legend, when he was seized upon by a circle of rabid literati, who

badgered him with questions concerning his opinions, notions, inferences, experiences, associations, sensations, sentiments and intentions, in a way that soon threw the old man into a profuse perspiration. Fifty times did he wish, from the bottom of his soul, that soul which the crowd around him fancied dwelt so high in the clouds, that he was seated quietly by the side of Mrs. Hawker, who, he mentally swore, was worth all the *literati* in Christendom. But fate had decreed otherwise, and we shall leave him to his fortune, for a time, and return to our heroine and her party.

As soon as Mrs. Legend had got through with her introductory compliments to the captain, she sought Eve and Grace, with a consciousness that a few civilities were now their due.

"I fear, Miss Effingham, after the elaborate *soirées* of the literary circles in Paris, you will find our *réunions* of the same sort, a little dull; and yet I flatter myself with having assembled most of the talents of New-York on this memorable occasion, to do honour to your friend. Are you acquainted with many of the company?"

Now, Eve had never seen nor ever heard of a single being in the room, with the exception of Mr. Dodge and her own party, before this night, although most of them had been so laboriously employed in puffing each other into celebrity, for many weary years; and, as for elaborate *soirées;* she thought she had never seen one half as elaborate as this of Mrs. Legend's. As it would not very well do, however, to express all this in words, she civilly desired the lady to point out to her some of the most distinguished of the company.

"With the greatest pleasure, Miss Effingham," Mrs. Legend taking pride in dwelling on the merits of her guests.—"This heavy, grand-looking personage, in whose air one sees refinement and modesty at a glance, is Captain Kant, the editor of one of our most de-

cidedly pious newspapers. His mind is distinguished for its intuitive perception of all that is delicate, reserved and finished in the intellectual world, while, in opposition to this quality, which is almost feminine, his character is just as remarkable for its unflinching love of truth. He was never known to publish a falsehood, and of his foreign correspondence, in particular, he is so exceedingly careful, that he assures me he has every word of it written under his own eye."

"On the subject of his religious scruples," added John Effingham, "he is so fastidiously exact, that I hear he 'says grace' over every thing that goes *from* his press, and 'returns thanks' for every thing that comes *to* it."

"You know him, Mr. Effingham, by this remark? Is he not, truly, a man of a vocation?"

"That, indeed, he is, ma'am. He may be succinctly said to have a newspaper mind, as he reduces every thing in nature or art to news, and commonly imparts to it so much of his own peculiar character, that it loses all identity with the subjects to which it originally belonged. One scarcely knows which to admire most about this man, the atmospheric transparency of his motives, for he is so disinterested as seldom even to think of paying for a dinner when travelling, and yet so conscientious as always to say something obliging of the tavern as soon as he gets home—his rigid regard to facts, or the exquisite refinement and delicacy that he imparts to every thing he touches. Over all this, too, he throws a beautiful halo of morality and religion, never even prevaricating in the hottest discussion, unless with the unction of a saint!"

"Do you happen to know Florio?" asked Mrs. Legend, a little distrusting John Effingham's account of Captain Kant.

"If I do, it must indeed be by accident. What are his chief characteristics, ma'am?"

"Sentiment, pathos, delicacy, and all in rhyme, too.

You, no doubt, have heard of his triumph over Lord Byron, Miss Effingham?"

Eve was obliged to confess that it was new to her.

"Why, Byron wrote an ode to Greece, commencing with 'The Isles of Greece! the Isles of Greece!' a very feeble line, as any one will see, for it contained a useless and an unmeaning repetition."

"And you might add vulgar, too, Mrs. Legend," said John Effingham, "since it made a palpable allusion to all those vulgar incidents that associate themselves in the mind, with these said common-place isles. The arts, philosophy, poetry, eloquence, and even old Homer, are brought unpleasantly to one's recollection, by such an indiscreet invocation."

"So Florio thought, and, by way of letting the world perceive the essential difference between the base and the pure coin, *he* wrote an ode on England, which commenced as such an ode *should!*"

"Do you happen to recollect any of it, ma'am?"

"Only the first line, which I greatly regret, as the rhyme is Florio's chief merit. But this line is, of itself, sufficient to immortalize a man."

"Do not keep us in torment, dear Mrs. Legend, but let us have it, of heaven's sake!"

"It began in this sublime strain, sir—'Beyond the wave!—Beyond the wave!' Now, Miss Effingham, that is what *I* call poetry!"

"And well you may, ma'am," returned the gentleman, who perceived Eve could scarce refrain from breaking out in a very unsentimental manner—"So much pathos."

"And so sententious and flowing!"

"Condensing a journey of three thousand miles, as it might be, into three words, and a note of admiration. I trust it was printed with a note of admiration, Mrs. Legend?"

"Yes, sir, with two—one behind each wave—and such waves, Mr. Effingham!"

"Indeed, ma'am, you may say so. One really gets a grand idea of them, England lying beyond each."

"So much expressed in so few syllables!"

"I think I see every shoal, current, ripple, rock, island, and whale, between Sandy Hook and the Land's End."

"He hints at an epic."

"Pray God he may execute one. Let him make haste, too, or he may get 'behind the age,' 'behind the age.'"

Here the lady was called away to receive a guest.

"Cousin Jack!"

"Eve Effingham?"

"Do you not sometimes fear offending?"

"Not a woman who begins with expressing her admiration of such a sublime thing as this. You are safe with such a person, any where short of a tweak of the nose."

"*Mais, tout ceci est bien drôle!*"

"You never were more mistaken in your life, Mademoiselle; every body here looks upon it as a matter of life and death."

The new guest was Mr. Pindar, one of those careless, unsentimental fellows, that occasionally throw off an ode that passes through Christendom, as dollars are known to pass from China to Norway, and yet, who never fancied spectacles necessary to his appearance, solemnity to his face, nor *soirées* to his renown. After quitting Mrs. Legend, he approached Eve, to whom he was slightly known, and accosted her.

"This is the region of taste, Miss Effingham," he said, with a shrug of the jaw, if such a member can shrug; "and I do not wonder at finding you here."

He then chatted pleasantly a moment, with the party, and passed on, giving an ominous gape, as he drew nearer to the *oi polloi* of literature. A moment after appeared Mr. Gray, a man who needed nothing but taste in the public, and the encouragement that would

follow such a taste, to stand at, or certainly near, the head of the poets of our own time. He, too, looked shily at the galaxy, and took refuge in a corner. Mr. Pith followed; a man whose caustic wit needs only a sphere for its exercise, manners to portray, and a society with strong points about it to illustrate, in order to enrol his name high on the catalogue of satirists. Another ring announced Mr. Fun, a writer of exquisite humour, and of finished periods, but who, having perpetrated a little too much sentiment, was instantly seized upon by all the ultra ladies who were addicted to the same taste in that way, in the room.

These persons came late, like those who had already been too often dosed in the same way, to be impatient of repetitions. The three first soon got together in a corner, and Eve fancied they were laughing at the rest of the company; whereas, in fact, they were merely laughing at a bad joke of their own; their quick perception of the ludicrous having pointed out a hundred odd combinations and absurdities, that would have escaped duller minds.

"Who, in the name of the twelve Cæsars, has Mrs. Legend got to lionize, yonder, with the white summit and the dark base?" asked the writer of odes.

"Some English pamphleteer, by what I can learn," answered he of satire; "some fellow who has achieved a pert review, or written a Minerva Pressism, and who now flourishes like a bay tree among us. A modern Horace, or a Juvenal on his travels."

"Fun is well badgered," observed Mr. Gray.—"Do you not see that Miss Annual, Miss Monthly, and that young alphabet D. O. V. E., have got him within the circle of their petticoats, where he will be martyred on a sigh?"

"He casts longing looks this way; he wishes you to go to his rescue, Pith."

"I!—Let him take his fill of sentiment! I am no homœpathist in such matters. Large doses in quick

succession, will soonest work a cure. Here comes the lion, and he breaks loose from his cage, like a beast that has been poked up with sticks."

"Good evening, gentlemen," said Captain Truck, wiping his face intensely, and who having made his escape from a throng of admirers, took refuge in the first port that offered. "You seem to be enjoying yourselves here in a rational and agreeable way. Quite cool and refreshing in this corner."

"And yet we have no doubt that both our reason and our amusement will receive a large increase from the addition of your society, sir," returned Mr. Pith.—"Do us the favour to take a seat, I beg of you, and rest yourself."

"With all my heart, gentlemen; for, to own the truth, these ladies make warm work about a stranger. I have just got out of what I call a category."

"You appear to have escaped with life, sir," observed Pindar, taking a cool survey of the other's person.

"Yes, thank God, I have done that, and it is pretty much all," answered the captain, wiping his face. "I served in the French war—Truxtun's war, as we call it—and I had a touch with the English in the privateer trade, between twelve and fifteen; and here, quite lately, I was in an encounter with the savage Arabs down on the coast of Africa; and I account them all as so much snow-balling, compared with the yard-arm and yard-arm work of this very night. I wonder if it is permitted to try a cigar at these conversation-onies, gentlemen?"

"I believe it is, sir," returned Pindar, coolly. "Shall I help you to a light?"

"Oh! Mr. Truck!" cried Mrs. Legend, following the chafed animal to his corner, as one would pursue any other runaway, "instinct has brought you into this good company. You are, now, in the very focus of American talents."

"Having just escaped from the focus of American talons," whispered Pith.

"I must be permitted to introduce you myself. Mr. Truck, Mr. Pindar—Mr. Pith—Mr. Gray—gentlemen, you must be so happy to be acquainted, being, as it were, engaged in the same pursuits!"

The captain rose and shook each of the gentlemen cordially by the hand, for he had, at least, the consolation of a great many introductions that night. Mrs. Legend disappeared to say something to some other prodigy.

"Happy to meet you, gentlemen," said the captain. "In what trade do you sail?"

"By whatever name we may call it," answered Mr. Pindar—"we can scarcely be said to go before the wind."

"Not in the Injee business, then, or the monsoons would keep the stun'sails set, at least."

"No, sir.—But yonder is Mr. Moccasin, who has lately set up, *secundum artem*, in the Indian business, having written two novels in that way already, and begun a third."

"Are you all regularly employed, gentlemen?"

"As regularly as inspiration points," said Mr. Pith. "Men of our occupation must make fair weather of it, or we had better be doing nothing."

"So I often tell my owners, but 'go ahead' is the order. When I was a youngster, a ship remained in port for a fair wind; but, now, she goes to work and makes one. The world seems to get young, as I get old."

"This is a *rum litterateur*," Gray whispered to Pindar.

"It is an obvious mystification," was the answer; "poor Mrs. Legend has picked up some straggling porpoise, and converted him, by a touch of her magical wand, into a Boanerges of literature. The thing is as clear as day, for the worthy fellow smells of tar

and cigar smoke. I perceive that Mr. Effingham is laughing out of the corner of his eyes, and will step across the room, and get the truth, in a minute."

The rogue was as good as his word, and was soon back again, and contrived to let his friends understand the real state of the case. A knowledge of the captain's true character encouraged this trio in the benevolent purpose of aiding the honest old seaman in his wish to smoke, and Pith managed to give him a lighted paper, without becoming an open accessary to the plot.

"Will you take a cigar yourself, sir," said the captain, offering his box to Mr. Pindar.

"I thank you, Mr. Truck, I never smoke, but am a profound admirer of the flavour. Let me entreat you to begin as soon as possible."

Thus encouraged, Captain Truck drew two or three whiffs, when the rooms were immediately filled with the fragrance of a real Havana. At the first discovery, the whole literary pack went off on the scent. As for Mr. Fun, he managed to profit by the agitation that followed, in order to escape to the three wags in the corner, who were enjoying the scene, with the gravity of so many dervishes.

"As I live," cried Lucius Junius Brutus, "there is the author of a—a—a— actually smoking a cigar!—How excessively *piquant!*"

"Do my eyes deceive me, or is not that the writer of e—e—e— fumigating us all!" whispered Miss Annual.

"Nay, this cannot certainly be right," put in Florio, with a dogmatical manner. "All the periodicals agree that smoking is ungenteel in England."

"You never were more mistaken, dear Florio," replied D. O. V. E. in a cooing tone. "The very last novel of society has a chapter in which the hero and heroine smoke in the declaration scene."

"Do they, indeed!—That alters the case. Really, one would not wish to get behind so great a nation,

nor yet go much before it. Pray, Captain Kant, what do your friends in Canada say; is, or is not smoking permitted in good society there? the Canadians must, at least, be ahead of us."

"Not at all, sir," returned the editor in his softest tones; "it is revolutionary and jacobinical."

But the ladies prevailed, and, by a process that is rather peculiar to what may be called a "credulous" state of society, they carried the day. This process was simply to make one fiction authority for another. The fact that smoking was now carried so far in England, that the clergy actually used cigars in the pulpits, was affirmed on the authority of Mr. Truck himself, and, coupled with his present occupation, the point was deemed to be settled. Even Florio yielded, and his plastic mind soon saw a thousand beauties in the usage, that had hitherto escaped it. All the literati drew round the captain in a circle, to enjoy the spectacle, though the honest old mariner contrived to throw out such volumes of vapour as to keep them at a safe distance. His four demure-looking neighbours got behind the barrier of smoke, where they deemed themselves entrenched against the assaults of sentimental petticoats, for a time, at least.

"Pray, Mr. Truck," inquired S. R. P., "is it commonly thought in the English literary circles, that Byron was a developement of Shakspeare, or Shakspeare a shadowing forth of Byron?"

"Both, marm," said the captain, with a coolness that would have done credit to Aristabulus, for he had been fairly badgered into impudence, profiting by the occasion to knock the ashes off his cigar; "all incline to the first opinion, and most to the last."

"What finesse!" murmured one. "How delicate!" whispered a second. "A dignified reserve!" ejaculated a third. "So English!" exclaimed Florio.

"Do you think, Mr. Truck," asked D. O. V. E., "that the profane songs of Little have more pathos

than the sacred songs of Moore; or that the sacred songs of Moore have more sentiment than the profane songs of Little?"

"A good deal of both, marm, and something to spare. I think there is little in one, and more in the other."

"Pray, sir," said J. R. P., "do you pronounce the name of Byron's lady-love, Guy-kee-oh-*ly*, or, Gwy-ky-o-*lee*?"

"That depends on how the wind is. If on shore, I am apt to say 'oh-lee;' and if off shore, 'oh-lie.'"

"That's capital!" cried Florio, in an extasy of admiration. "What man in this country could have said as crack a thing as that?"

"Indeed it is very witty," added Miss Monthly—"what does it mean?"

"Mean! More than is seen or felt by common minds. Ah! the English are truly a great nation!—How delightfully he smokes!"

"I think he is much the most interesting man we have had out here," observed Miss Annual, "since the last bust of Scott!"

"Ask him, dear D. O. V. E.," whispered Julietta, who was timid, from the circumstance of never having published, "which he thinks the most ecstatic feeling, hope or despair?"

The question was put by the more experienced lady, according to request, though she first said, in a hurried tone, to her youthful sister—"you can have felt but little, child, or you would know that it is despair, as a matter of course."

The honest captain, however, did not treat the matter so lightly, for he improved the opportunity to light a fresh cigar, throwing the still smoking stump into Mrs. Legend's grate, through a lane of literati, as he afterwards boasted, as coolly as he could have thrown it overboard, under other circumstances. Luckily for his reputation for sentiment, he mistook "ecstatic," a

word he had never heard before, for "erratic;" and recollecting sundry roving maniacs that he had seen, he answered promptly——

"Despair, out and out."

"I knew it," said one.

"It's in nature," added a second.

"All can feel its truth," rejoined a third.

"This point may now be set down as established," cried Florio, "and I hope no more will be said about it."

"This is encouragement to the searchers after truth," put in Captain Kant.

"Pray, Hon. and Rev. Mr. Truck," asked Lucius Junius Brutus, at the joint suggestion of Junius Brutus and Brutus, "does the Princess Victoria smoke?"

"If she did not, sir, where would be the use in being a princess. I suppose you know that all the tobacco seized in England, after a deduction to informers, goes to the crown."

"I object to this usage," remarked Captain Kant, "as irreligious, French, and tending to *sans-culotteism*. I am willing to admit of this distinguished instance as an exception; but on all other grounds, I shall maintain that it savours of infidelity to smoke. The Prussian government, much the best of our times, never smokes."

"This man thinks he has a monoply of the puffing, himself," Pindar whispered into the captain's ear; "whiff away, my dear sir, and you'll soon throw him into the shade."

The captain winked, drew out his box, lighted another cigar, and, by way of reply to the envious remark, he put one in each corner of his mouth, and soon had both in full blast, a state in which he kept them for near a minute.

"This is the very picturesque of social enjoyment," exclaimed Florio, holding up both hands in a glow of rapture. "It is absolutely Homeric, in the way of usages! Ah! the English are a great nation!"

"I should like to know excessively if there was really such a person as Baron Mun-chaw-sen?" said Julietta, gathering courage from the success of her last question.

"There was, Miss," returned the captain, through his teeth, and nodding his head in the affirmative. "A regular traveller, that; and one who knew him well, swore to me that he hadn't related one half of what befel him."

"How very delightful to learn this from the highest quarter!" exclaimed Miss Monthly.

"Is Gatty (Goethe) really dead?" inquired Longinus, "or, is the account we have had to that effect, merely a metaphysical apotheosis of his mighty soul?"

"Dead, marm—stone dead—dead as a door-nail," returned the captain, who saw a relief in killing as many as possible.

"You have been in France, Mr. Truck, beyond question?" observed Lucius Junius Brutus, in the way one puts a question.

"France!—I was in France before I was ten years old. I know every foot of the coast, from Havre de Grace to Marseilles."

"Will you then have the goodness to explain to us whether the soul of Chat-*to*-bri-*ong* is more expanded than his reason, or his reason more expanded than his soul?"

Captain Truck had a very tolerable notion of Baron Munchausen and of his particular merits; but Chateaubriant was a writer of whom he knew nothing. After pondering a moment, and feeling persuaded that a confession of ignorance might undo him; for the old man had got to be influenced by the atmosphere of the place; he answered coolly—

"Oh! Chat-*to*-bri-*ong*, is it you mean?—As whole-souled a fellow as I know. All soul, sir, and lots of reason, besides."

"How simple and unaffected!"

"Crack!" exclaimed Florio.

"A thorough Jacobin!" growled Captain Kant, who was always offended when any one but himself took liberties with the truth.

Here the four wags in the corner observed that head went to head in the crowd, and that the rear rank of the company began to disappear, while Mrs. Legend was in evident distress. In a few minutes, all the Romans were off; Florio soon after vanished, grating his teeth in a poetical frenzy; and even Captain Kant, albeit so used to look truth in the face, beat a retreat. The alphabet followed, and even the Annual and the Monthly retired, with leave-takings so solemn and precise, that poor Mrs. Legend was in total despair.

Eve, foreseeing something unpleasant, had gone away first, and, in a few minutes, Mr. Dodge, who had been very active in the crowd, whispering and gesticulating, made his bow also. The envy of this man had, in fact, become so intolerable, that he had let the cat out of the bag. No one now remained but the party entrenched behind the smoke, and the mistress of the house. Pindar solemnly proposed to the captain that they should go and enjoy an oyster-supper, in company; and, the proposal being cordially accepted, they rose in a body, to take leave.

"A most delightful evening, Mrs. Legend," said Pindar, with perfect truth, "much the pleasantest I ever passed in a house, where one passes so many that are agreeable."

"I cannot properly express my thanks for the obligation you have conferred by making me acquainted with Mr. Truck," added Gray. "I shall cultivate it as far as in my power, for a more capital fellow never breathed."

"Really, Mrs. Legend, this has been a Byronic night!" observed Pith, as he made his bow. "I shall long remember it, and I think it deserves to be commemorated in verse."

Fun endeavoured to look sympathetic and sentimental, though the spirit within could scarcely refrain from grinning in Mrs. Legend's face. He stammered out a few compliments, however, and disappeared.

"Well, good night, marm," said Captain Truck, offering his hand cordially. "This has been a pleasant evening, altogether, though it was warm work at first. If you like ships, I should be glad to show you the Montauk's cabins when we get back; and if you ever think of Europe, let me recommend the London line as none of the worst. We'll try to make you comfortable, and trust to me to choose a state-room, a thing I am experienced in."

Not one of the wags laughed until they were fairly confronted with the oysters. Then, indeed, they burst out into a general and long fit of exuberant merriment, returning to it, between the courses from the kitchen, like the *refrain* of a song. Captain Truck, who was uncommonly well satisfied with himself, did not understand the meaning of all this boyishness, but he has often declared since, that a heartier or a funnier set of fellows he never fell in with, than his four companions proved to be that night.

As for the literary *soirée*, the most profound silence has been maintained concerning it, neither of the wits there assembled having seen fit to celebrate it in rhyme, and Florio having actually torn up an impromptu for the occasion, that he had been all the previous day writing.

CHAPTER VII.

"There is a history in all men's lives,
Figuring the nature of the times deceased,
The which observed, a man may prophesy
With a near aim, of the main chance of things,
As yet not come to life."

KING HENRY VI.

THE following morning the baronet breakfasted in Hudson Square. While at table, little was said concerning the events of the past night, though sundry smiles were exchanged, as eye met eye, and the recollection of the mystification returned. Grace alone looked grave, for she had been accustomed to consider Mrs. Legend a very discriminating person, and she had even hoped that most of those who usually figured in her rooms, were really the clever persons they laid claim to be.

The morning was devoted to looking at the quarter of the town which is devoted to business, a party having been made for that express purpose under the auspices of John Effingham. As the weather was very cold, although the distances were not great, the carriages were ordered, and they all set off about noon.

Grace had given up expecting a look of admiration from Eve in behalf of any of the lions of New-York, her cousin having found it necessary to tell her, that, in a comparative sense at least, little was to be said in behalf of these provincial wonders. Even Mademoiselle Viefville, now that the freshness of her feelings were abated, had dropped quietly down into a natural way of speaking of these things; and Grace, who was quick-witted, soon discovered that when she did make any allusions to similar objects in Europe, it was always to those that existed in some country town. A

silent convention existed, therefore, to speak no more on such subjects; or if any thing was said, it arose incidentally and as inseparable from the regular thread of the discourse.

When in Wall street, the carriages stopped and the gentlemen alighted. The severity of the weather kept the ladies in the chariot, where Grace endeavoured to explain things as well as she could to her companions.

"What are all these people running after, so intently?" inquired Mademoiselle Viefville, the conversation being in French, but which we shall render freely into English, for the sake of the general reader.

"Dollars, I believe, Mademoiselle; am I right, Grace?"

"I believe you are," returned Grace, laughing, "though I know little more of this part of the town than yourself."

"*Quelle foule!* Is that building filled with dollars, into which the gentlemen are now entering? Its steps are crowded."

"That is the *Bourse*, Mademoiselle, and it ought to be well lined, by the manner in which some who frequent it live. Cousin Jack and Sir George are going into the crowd, I see."

We will leave the ladies in their seats, a few minutes, and accompany the gentlemen on their way into the Exchange.

"I shall now show you, Sir George Templemore," said John Effingham, "what is peculiar to this country, and what, if properly improved, it is truly worth a journey across the ocean to see. You have been at the Royal Exchange in London, and at the *Bourse* of Paris, but you have never witnessed a scene like that which I am about to introduce you to. In Paris, you have beheld the unpleasant spectacle of women gambling publicly in the funds; but it was in driblets, compared to what you will see here."

While speaking, John Effingham led the way up stairs into the office of one of the most considerable

auctioneers. The walls were lined with maps, some representing houses, some lots, some streets, some entire towns.

"This is the focus of what Aristabulus Bragg calls the town trade," said John Effingham, when fairly confronted with all these wonders. "Here, then, you may suit yourself with any species of real estate that heart can desire. If a villa is wanted, there are a dozen. Of farms, a hundred are in market; that is merely half-a-dozen streets; and here are towns, of dimensions and value to suit purchasers."

"Explain this; it exceeds comprehension."

"It is simply what it professes to be. Mr. Hammer, do us the favour to step this way. Are you selling today?"

"Not much, sir. Only a hundred or two lots on this island, and some six or eight farms, with one western village."

"Can you tell us the history of this particular piece of property, Mr. Hammer?"

"With great pleasure, Mr. Effingham; we know you to have means, and hope you may be induced to purchase. This was the farm of old Volkert Van Brunt, five years since, off of which he and his family had made a livelihood for more than a century, by selling milk. Two years since, the sons sold it to Peter Feeler for a hundred an acre; or for the total sum of five thousand dollars. The next spring Mr. Feeler sold it to John Search, as keen a one as we have, for twenty-five thousand. Search sold it, at private sale, to Nathan Rise for fifty thousand, the next week, and Rise had parted with it, to a company, before the purchase, for a hundred and twelve thousand cash. The map ought to be taken down, for it is now eight months since we sold it out in lots, at auction, for the gross sum of three hundred thousand dollars. As we have received our commission, we look at that land as out of the market, for a time."

"Have you other property, sir, that affords the same wonderful history of a rapid advance in value?" asked the baronet.

"These walls are covered with maps of estates in the same predicament. Some have risen two or three thousand per cent. within five years, and some only a few hundred. There is no calculating in the matter, for it is all fancy."

"And on what is this enormous increase in value founded?—Does the town extend to these fields?"

"It goes much farther, sir; that is to say, on paper. In the way of houses, it is still some miles short of them. A good deal depends on what you *call* a thing, in this market. Now, if old Volkert Van Brunt's property had been still called a farm, it would have brought a farm price; but, as soon as it was surveyed into lots, and mapped——"

"Mapped!"

"Yes, sir; brought into visible lines, with feet and inches. As soon as it was properly mapped, it rose to its just value. We have a good deal of the bottom of the sea that brings fair prices in consequence of being well mapped."

Here the gentlemen expressed their sense of the auctioneer's politeness, and retired.

"We will now go into the sales-room," said John Effingham, "where you shall judge of the spirit, or *energy*, as it is termed, which, at this moment, actuates this great nation."

Descending, they entered a crowd, where scores were eagerly bidding against each other, in the fearful delusion of growing rich by pushing a fancied value to a point still higher. One was purchasing ragged rocks, another the bottom of rivers, a third a bog, and all on the credit of maps. Our two observers remained some time silent spectators of the scene.

"When I first entered that room," said John Effingham, as they left the place, "it appeared to me to be

filled with maniacs. Now, that I have been in it several times, the impression is not much altered."

"And all those persons are hazarding their means of subsistence on the imaginary estimate mentioned by the auctioneer?"

"They are gambling as recklessly as he who places his substance on the cast of the die. So completely has the mania seized every one, that the obvious truth, a truth which is as apparent as any other law of nature, that nothing can be sustained without a foundation, is completely overlooked, and he who should now proclaim, in this building, principles that bitter experience will cause every man to feel, within the next few years, would be happy if he escaped being stoned. I have witnessed many similar excesses in the way of speculations; but never an instance as gross, as wide-spread, and as alarming as this."

"You apprehend serious consequences, then, from the reaction?"

"In that particular, we are better off than older nations, the youth and real stamina of the country averting much of the danger; but I anticipate a terrible blow, and that the day is not remote when this town will awake to a sense of its illusion. What you see here is but a small part of the extravagance that exists, for it pervades the whole community, in one shape or another. Extravagant issues of paper-money, inconsiderate credits that commence in Europe, and extend throughout the land, and false notions as to the value of their possessions, in men who five years since had nothing, has completely destroyed the usual balance of things, and money has got to be so completely the end of life, that few think of it as a means. The history of the world, probably, cannot furnish a parallel instance, of an extensive country that is so absolutely under this malign influence, as is the fact with our own at this present instant. All principles are swallowed up in the absorbing desire for gain; national honour,

permanent security, the ordinary rules of society, law, the constitution, and every thing that is usually so dear to men, are forgotten, or are perverted, in order to sustain this unnatural condition of things."

"This is not only extraordinary, but it is fearful!"

"It is both. The entire community is in the situation of a man who is in the incipient stages of an exhilarating intoxication, and who keeps pouring down glass after glass, in the idle notion that he is merely sustaining nature in her ordinary functions. This wide-spread infatuation extends from the coast to the extremest frontiers of the west; for, while there is a justifiable foundation for a good deal of this fancied prosperity, the true is so interwoven with the false, that none but the most observant can draw the distinction; and, as usual, the false predominates."

"By your account, sir, the tulip mania of Holland was trifling compared to this?"

"That was the same in principle as our own, but insignificant in extent. Could I lead you through these streets, and let you into the secret of the interests, hopes, infatuations and follies that prevail in the human breast, you, as a calm spectator, would be astonished at the manner in which your own species can be deluded. But let us move, and something may still occur to offer an example."

"Mr. Effingham—I beg pardon—Mr. Effingham," said a very gentlemanly-looking merchant, who was walking about the hall of the exchange, "what do you think now of our French quarrel?"

"I have told you, Mr. Bale, all I have to say on that subject. When in France, I wrote you that it was not the intention of the French government to comply with the treaty; you have since seen this opinion justified in the result; you have the declaration of the French minister of state, that, without an apology from this government, the money will not be paid; and I have given it as my opinion, that the vane on yonder steeple

will not turn more readily than all this policy will be abandoned, should any thing occur in Europe to render it necessary, or could the French ministry believe it possible for this country to fight for a principle. These are my opinions, in all their phases, and you may compare them with facts and judge for yourself."

"It is all General Jackson, sir—all that monster's doings. But for his message, Mr. Effingham, we should have had the money long ago."

"But for his message, or some equally decided step, Mr. Bale, you would never have it."

"Ah, my dear sir, I know your intentions, but I fear you are prejudiced against that excellent man, the King of France! Prejudice, Mr. Effingham, is a sad innovator on justice."

Here Mr. Bale shook his head, laughed, and disappeared in the crowd, perfectly satisfied that John Effingham was a prejudiced man, and that he, himself, was only liberal and just.

"Now, that is a man who wants for neither abilities nor honesty, and yet he permits his interests, and the influence of this very speculating mania, to overshadow all his sense of right, facts plain as noon-day, and the only principles that can rule a country in safety."

"He apprehends war, and has no desire to believe even facts, so long as they serve to increase the danger."

"Precisely so; for even prudence gets to be a perverted quality, when men are living under an infatuation like that which now exists. These men live like the fool who says there is no death."

Here the gentlemen rejoined the ladies, and the carriages drove through a succession of narrow and crooked streets, that were lined with warehouses filled with the products of the civilized world.

"Very much of all this is a part of the same lamentable illusion," said John Effingham, as the carriages made their way slowly through the encumbered

streets. "The man who sells his inland lots at a profit, secured by credit, fancies himself enriched, and he extends his manner of living in proportion; the boy from the country becomes a merchant, or what is here called a merchant, and obtains a credit in Europe a hundred times exceeding his means, and caters to these fancied wants; and thus is every avenue of society thronged with adventurers, the ephemera of the same wide-spread spirit of reckless folly. Millions in value pass out of these streets, that go to feed the vanity of those who fancy themselves wealthy, because they hold some ideal pledges for the payment of advances in price like those mentioned by the auctioneer, and which have some such security for the eventual payment, as one can find in *calling* a thing, that is really worth a dollar, worth a hundred."

"Are the effects of this state of things apparent in your ordinary associations?"

"In every thing. The desire to grow suddenly rich has seized on all classes. Even women and clergymen are infected, and we exist under the active control of the most corrupting of all influences—'the love of money.' I should despair of the country altogether, did I not feel certain that the disease is too violent to last, and entertain a hope that the season of calm reflection and of repentance, that is to follow, will be in proportion to its causes."

After taking this view of the town, the party returned to Hudson Square, where the baronet dined, it being his intention to go to Washington on the following day. The leave-taking in the evening was kind and friendly; Mr. Effingham, who had a sincere regard for his late fellow-traveller, cordially inviting him to visit him in the mountains in June.

As Sir George took his leave, the bells began to ring for a fire. In New-York one gets so accustomed to these alarms, that near an hour had passed before any of the Effingham family began to reflect on the long

continuance of the cries. A servant was then sent out to ascertain the reason, and his report made the matter more serious than usual.

We believe that in the frequency of these calamities, the question lies between Constantinople and New-York. It is a common occurrence for twenty or thirty buildings to be burnt down, in the latter place, and for the residents of the same ward to remain in ignorance of the circumstance, until enlightened on the fact by the daily prints; the constant repetition of the alarms hardening the ear and the feelings against the appeal. A fire of greater extent than common, had occurred only a night or two previously to this; and a rumour now prevailed, that the severity of the weather, and the condition of the hoses and engines, rendered the present danger double. On hearing this intelligence, the Messrs. Effinghams wrapped themselves up in their over-coats, and went together into the streets.

"This seems something more than usual, Ned," said John Effingham, glancing his eye upward at the lurid vault, athwart which gleams of fiery light began to shine; "the danger is not distant, and it seems serious."

Following the direction of the current, they soon found the scene of the conflagration, which was in the very heart of those masses of warehouses, or stores, that John Effingham had commented on, so lately. A short street of high buildings was already completely in flames, and the danger of approaching the enemy, added to the frozen condition of the apparatus, the exhaustion of the firemen from their previous efforts, and the intense coldness of the night, conspired to make the aspect of things in the highest degree alarming.

The firemen of New-York have that superiority over those of other places, that the veteran soldier obtains over the recruit. But the best troops can be appalled, and, on this memorable occasion, these cele-

brated firemen, from a variety of causes, became for a time, little more than passive spectators of the terrible scene.

There was an hour or two when all attempts at checking the conflagration seemed really hopeless, and even the boldest and the most persevering scarcely knew which way to turn, to be useful. A failure of water, the numerous points that required resistance, the conflagration extending in all directions from a common centre, by means of numberless irregular and narrow streets, and the impossibility of withstanding the intense heat, in the choked passages, soon added despair to the other horrors of the scene.

They who stood the fiery masses, were freezing on one side with the Greenland cold of the night, while their bodies were almost blistered with the fierce flames on the other. There was something frightful in this contest of the elements, nature appearing to condense the heat within its narrowest possible limits, as if purposely to increase its fierceness. The effects were awful; for entire buildings would seem to dissolve at their touch, as the forked flames enveloped them in sheets of fire.

Every one being afoot, within sound of the alarm, though all the more vulgar cries had ceased, as men would deem it mockery to cry murder in a battle, Sir George Templemore met his friends, on the margin of this sea of fire. It was now drawing towards morning, and the conflagration was at its height, having already laid waste a nucleus of *blocks*, and it was extending by many lines, in every possible direction.

"Here is a fearful admonition for those who set their hearts on riches," observed Sir George Templemore, recalling the conversation of the previous day. "What, indeed, are the designs of man, as compared with the will of Providence!"

"I foresee that this is *le commencement de la fin*," returned John Effingham. "The destruction is already

so great, as to threaten to bring down with it the usual safe-guards against such losses, and one pin knocked out of so frail and delicate a fabric, the whole will become loose, and fall to pieces."

"Will nothing be done to arrest the flames?"

"As men recover from the panic, their plans will improve and their energies will revive. The wider streets are already reducing the fire within more certain limits, and they speak of a favourable change of wind. It is thought five hundred buildings have already been consumed, in scarcely half a dozen hours."

That Exchange, which had so lately resembled a bustling temple of Mammon, was already a dark and sheeted ruin, its marble walls being cracked, defaced, tottering, or fallen. It lay on the confines of the ruin, and our party was enabled to take their position near it, to observe the scene. All in their immediate vicinity was assuming the stillness of desolation, while the flushes of fierce light in the distance marked the progress of the conflagration. Those who knew the localities, now began to speak of the natural or accidental barriers, such as the water, the slips, and the broader streets, as the only probable means of arresting the destruction. The crackling of the flames grew distant fast, and the cries of the firemen were now scarcely audible.

At this period in the frightful scene, a party of seamen arrived, bearing powder, in readiness to blow up various buildings, in the streets that possessed of themselves, no sufficient barriers to the advance of the flame. Led by their officers, these gallant fellows, carrying in their arms the means of destruction, moved up steadily to the verge of the torrents of fire, and planted their kegs; laying their trains with the hardy indifference that practice can alone create, and with an intelligence that did infinite credit to their coolness. This deliberate courage was rewarded with complete

success, and house crumbled to pieces after house, under the dull explosions, happily without an accident.

From this time the flames became less ungovernable, though the day dawned and advanced, and another night succeeded, before they could be said to be got fairly under, Weeks, and even months passed, however, ere the smouldering ruins ceased to send up smoke, the fierce element continuing to burn, like a slumbering volcano, as it might be in the bowels of the earth.

The day that succeeded this disaster, was memorable for the rebuke it gave the rapacious longing for wealth. Men who had set their hearts on gold, and who prided themselves on their possession, and on that only, were made to feel its insanity; and they who had walked abroad as gods, so lately, began to experience how utterly insignificant are the merely rich, when stripped of their possessions. Eight hundred buildings, containing fabrics of every kind, and the raw material in various forms, had been destroyed, as it were in the twinkling of an eye.

A faint voice was heard from the pulpit, and there was a moment when those who remembered a better state of things, began to fancy that principles would once more assert their ascendency, and that the community would, in a measure, be purified. But this expectation ended in disappointment, the infatuation being too wide-spread and corrupting, to be stopped by even this check, and the rebuke was reserved for a form that seems to depend on a law of nature, that of causing a vice to bring with it its own infallible punishment.

CHAPTER VIII.

"First, tell me, have you ever been at Pisa."
SHAKSPEARE.

THE conflagration alluded to, rather than described, in the proceeding chapter, threw a gloom over the gaieties of New-York, if that ever could be properly called gay, which was little more than a strife in prodigality and parade, and leaves us little more to say of the events of the winter. Eve regretted very little the interruption to scenes in which she had found no pleasure, however much she lamented the cause; and she and Grace passed the remainder of the season quietly, cultivating the friendship of such women as Mrs. Hawker and Mrs. Bloomfield, and devoting hours to the improvement of their minds and tastes, without ever again venturing however, within the hallowed precincts of such rooms as those of Mrs. Legend.

One consequence of a state of rapacious infatuation, like that which we have just related, is the intensity of selfishness which smothers all recollection of the past, and all just anticipations of the future, by condensing life, with its motives and enjoyments, into the present moment. Captain Truck, therefore, was soon forgotten, and the literati, as that worthy seaman had termed the associates of Mrs. Legend, remained just as vapid, as conceited, as ignorant, as imitative, as dependent, and as provincial as ever.

As the season advanced, our heroine began to look with longings towards the country. The town life of an American offers little to one accustomed to a town life in older and more permanently regulated communities; and Eve was already heartily weary of crowded and noisy balls, (for a few were still given;) *belles*, the struggles of an uninstructed taste, and a represent-

ation in which extravagance was so seldom relieved by the elegance and convenience of a condition of society, in which more attention is paid to the fitness of things.

The American spring is the least pleasant of its four seasons, its character being truly that of "winter lingering in the lap of May." Mr. Effingham, who the reader will probably suspect, by this time, to be a descendant of a family of the same name, that we have had occasion to introduce into another work, had sent orders to have his country residence prepared for the reception of our party; and it was with a feeling of delight that Eve stepped on board a steam-boat to escape from a town that, while it contains so much that is worthy of any capital, contains so much more that is unfit for any place, in order to breathe the pure air, and to enjoy the tranquil pleasure of the country. Sir George Templemore had returned from his southern journey, and made one of the party, by express arrangement.

"Now, Eve," said Grace Van Cortlandt, as the boat glided along the wharves, "if it were any person but you, I should feel confident of having something to show that *would* extort admiration."

"You are safe enough, in that respect, for a more imposing object in its way, than this very vessel, eye of mine, never beheld. It is positively the only thing that deserves the name of magnificent I have yet seen, since our return,—unless, indeed, it may be magnificent projects."

"I am glad, dear coz, there is this one magnificent object, then, to satisfy a taste so fastidious."

As Grace's little foot moved, and her voice betrayed vexation, the whole party smiled; for the whole party, while it felt the justice of Eve's observation, saw the real feeling that was at the bottom of her cousin's remark. Sir George, however, though he could not conceal from himself the truth of what had been said by

the one party, and the weakness betrayed by the other, had too much sympathy for the provincial patriotism of one so young and beautiful, not to come to the rescue.

"You should remember, Miss Van Cortlandt," he said, "that Miss Effingham has not had the advantage yet of seeing the Delaware, Philadelphia, the noble bays of the south, nor so much that is to be found out of the single town of New-York."

"Very true, and I hope yet to see her a sincere penitent for all her unpatriotic admissions against her own country. *You* have seen the Capitol, Sir George Templemore; is it not, truly, one of the finest edifices of the world?"

"You will except St. Peter's, surely, my child," observed Mr. Effingham, smiling, for he saw that the baronet was embarrassed to give a ready answer.

"And the Cathedral at Milan," said Eve, laughing.

"*Et le Louvre!*" cried Mademoiselle Viefville, who had some such admiration for every thing Parisian, as Eve had for every thing American.

"And, most especially, the north-east corner of the south-west end of the north-west wing of Versailles," said John Effingham, in his usual dry manner.

"I see you are all against me," Grace rejoined, "but I hope, one day, to be able to ascertain for myself the comparative merits of things. As nature makes rivers, I hope the Hudson, at least, will not be found unworthy of your admiration, gentlemen and ladies."

"You are safe enough, there, Grace," observed Mr. Effingham; "for few rivers, perhaps no river, offers so great and so pleasing a variety, in so short a distance, as this."

It was a lovely, bland morning, in the last week of May; and the atmosphere was already getting the soft hues of summer, or assuming the hazy and solemn calm that renders the season so quiet and soothing, after the fiercer strife of the elements. Under such a sky, the

Palisadoes, in particular, appeared well; for, though wanting in the terrific grandeur of an Alpine nature, and perhaps disproportioned to the scenery they adorned, they were bold and peculiar.

The great velocity of the boat added to the charm of the passage, the scene scarce finding time to pall on the eye; for, no sooner was one object examined in its outlines, than it was succeeded by another.

"An extraordinary taste is afflicting this country, in the way of architecture," said Mr. Effingham, as they stood gazing at the eastern shore; "nothing but a Grecian temple being now deemed a suitable residence for a man, in these classical times. Yonder is a structure, for instance, of beautiful proportions, and, at this distance, apparently of a precious material, and yet it seems better suited to heathen worship than to domestic comfort."

"The malady has infected the whole nation," returned his cousin, "like the spirit of speculation. We are passing from one extreme to the other, in this, as in other things. One such temple, well placed in a wood, might be a pleasant object enough, but to see a river lined with them, with children trundling hoops before their doors, beef carried into their kitchens, and smoke issuing, moreover, from those unclassical objects chimnies, is too much even of a high taste; one might as well live in a fever. Mr. Aristabulus Bragg, who is a wag in his way, informs me that there is one town in the interior that has actually a market-house on the plan of the Parthenon!"

"*Il Capo di Bove* would be a more suitable model for such a structure," said Eve, smiling. "But I think I have heard that the classical taste of our architects is any thing but rigid."

"This *was* the case, rather than *is*," returned John Effingham, "as witness all these temples. The country has made a quick and a great *pas, en avant*, in the way of the fine arts, and the fact shows what might

be done with so ready a people, under a suitable direction. The stranger who comes among us is apt to hold the art of the nation cheap, but, as all things are comparative, let him inquire into its state ten years since, and look at it to-day. The fault just now, is perhaps to consult the books too rigidly, and to trust too little to invention; for no architecture, and especially no domestic architecture, can ever be above serious reproach, until climate, the uses of the edifice, and the situation, are respected as leading considerations. Nothing can be uglier, *per se*, than a Swiss cottage, or any thing more beautiful under its precise circumstances. As regards these mushroom temples, which are the offspring of Mammon, let them be dedicated to whom they may, I should exactly reverse the opinion, and say, that while nothing can be much more beautiful, *per se*, nothing can be in worse taste, than to put them where they are."

"We shall have an opportunity of seeing what Mr. John Effingham can do in the way of architecture," said Grace, who loved to revenge some of her fancied wrongs, by turning the tables on her assailant, "for I understand he has been improving on the original labours of that notorious Palladio, Master Hiram Doolittle!"

The whole party laughed, and every eye was turned on the gentleman alluded to, expecting his answer.

"You will remember, good people," answered the accused by implication, "that my plans were handed over to me from my great predecessor, and that they were originally of the composite order. If, therefore, the house should turn out to be a little complex and mixed, you will do me the justice to remember this important fact. At all events, I have consulted comfort; and that I would maintain, in the face of Vitruvius himself, is a *sine quâ non* in domestic architecture."

"I took a run into Connecticut the other day," said

Sir George Templemore, "and, at a place called New Haven, I saw the commencement of a taste that bids fair to make a most remarkable town. It is true, you cannot expect structures of much pretension in the way of cost and magnitude in this country, but, so far as fitness and forms are concerned, if what I hear be true, and the next fifty years do as much in proportion for that little city, as I understand has been done in the last five, it will be altogether a wonder in its way. There are some abortions, it is true, but there are also some little jewels."

The baronet was rewarded for this opinion, by a smile from Grace, and the conversation changed. As the boat approached the mountains, Eve became excited, a very American state of the system by the way, and Grace still more anxious.

"The view of that bluff is Italian;" said our heroine, pointing down the river at a noble headland of rock, that loomed grandly in the soft haze of the tranquil atmosphere. "One seldom sees a finer or a softer outline on the shores of the Mediterranean itself."

"But the Highlands, Eve!" whispered the uneasy Grace. "We are entering the mountains."

The river narrowed suddenly, and the scenery became bolder, but neither Eve nor her father expressed the rapture that Grace expected.

"I must confess, Jack," said the mild, thoughtful Mr. Effingham, "that these rocks strike my eyes as much less imposing than formerly. The passage is fine, beyond question, but it is hardly grand scenery."

"You never uttered a juster opinion, Ned, though after your eye loses some of the forms of the Swiss and Italian lakes, and of the shores of Italy, you will think better of these. The Highlands are remarkable for their surprises, rather than for their grandeur, as we shall presently see. As to the latter, it is an affair of feet and inches, and is capable of arithmetical demonstration. We have often been on lakes, beneath

beetling cliffs of from three to six thousand feet in height; whereas, here, the greatest elevation is materially less than two. But, Sir George Templemore, and you, Miss Effingham, do me the favour to combine your cunning, and tell me whence this stream cometh, and whither we are to go?"

The boat had now approached a point where the river was narrowed to a width not much exceeding a quarter of a mile, and in the direction in which it was steering, the water seemed to become still more contracted until they were lost in a sort of bay, that appeared to be closed by high hills, through which, however, there were traces of something like a passage.

"The land in that direction looks as if it had a ravine-like entrance," said the baronet; "and yet it is scarcely possible that a stream like this can flow there!"

"If the Hudson truly passes through those mountains," said Eve, "I will concede all in its favour that you can ask, Grace."

"Where else can it pass?" demanded Grace, exultingly.

"Sure enough—I see no other place, and that seems insufficient."

The two strangers to the river now looked curiously around them, in every direction. Behind them was a broad and lake-like basin, through which they had just passed; on the left, a barrier of precipitous hills, the elevation of which was scarcely less than a thousand feet; on their right, a high but broken country, studded with villas, farm-houses, and hamlets; and in their front the deep but equivocal bay mentioned.

"I see no escape!" cried the baronet, gaily, "unless indeed, it be by returning."

A sudden and broad sheer of the boat caused him to turn to the left, and then they whirled round an angle of the precipice, and found themselves in a reach of the river, between steep declivities, running at right angles to their former course.

"This is one of the surprises of which I spoke," said John Effingham, "and which render the highlands so *unique;* for, while the Rhine is very sinuous, it has nothing like this."

The other travellers agreed in extolling this and many similar features of the scenery, and Grace was delighted; for, warm-hearted, affectionate, and true, Grace loved her country like a relative or a friend, and took an honest pride in hearing its praises. The patriotism of Eve, if a word of a meaning so lofty can be applied to feelings of this nature, was more discriminating from necessity, her tastes having been formed in a higher school, and her means of comparison being so much more ample. At West Point they stopped for the night, and here every body was in honest raptures; Grace, who had often visited the place before, being actually the least so of the whole party.

"Now, Eve, I know that you *do* love your country," she said, as she slipped an arm affectionately through that of her cousin. "This is feeling and speaking like an American girl, and as Eve Effingham should!"

Eve laughed, but she had discovered that the provincial feeling was so strong in Grace, that its discussion would probably do no good. She dwelt, therefore, with sincere eloquence on the beauties of the place, and for the first time since they had met, her cousin felt as if there was no longer any point of dissension between them.

The following morning was the first of June, and it was another of those drowsy, dreamy days, that so much aid a landscape. The party embarked in the first boat that came up, and as they entered Newburgh bay, the triumph of the river was established. This is a spot, in sooth, that has few equals in any region, though Eve still insisted that the excellence of the view was in its softness rather than in its grandeur. The country-houses, or boxes, for few could claim to

be much more, were neat, well placed, and exceedingly numerous. The heights around the town of Newburgh, in particular, were fairly dotted with them, though Mr. Effingham shook his head as he saw one Grecian temple appear after another.

"As we recede from the influence of the vulgar architects," he said, "we find imitation taking the place of instruction. Many of these buildings are obviously disproportioned, and then, like vulgar pretension of any sort, Grecian architecture produces less pleasure than even Dutch."

"I am surprised at discovering how little of a Dutch character remains in this state," said the baronet; "I can scarcely trace that people in any thing, and yet, I believe, they had the moulding of your society, having carried the colony through its infancy."

"When you know us better, you will be surprised at discovering how little of any thing remains a dozen years," returned John Effingham. "Our towns pass away in generations like their people, and even the names of a place undergo periodical mutations, as well as every thing else. It is getting to be a predominant feeling in the American nature, I fear, to love change."

"But, cousin Jack, do you not overlook causes, in your censure. That a nation advancing as fast as this in wealth and numbers, should desire better structures than its fathers had either the means or the taste to build, and that names should change with persons, are both things quite in rule."

"All very true, though it does not account for the peculiarity I mean. Take Templeton, for instance; this little place has not essentially increased in numbers, within my memory, and yet fully one-half its names are new. When he reaches his own home, your father will not know even the names of one-half his neighbours. Not only will he meet with new faces, but he will find new feelings, new opinions in the place

of traditions that he may love, an indifference to every thing but the present moment, and even those who may have better feelings, and a wish to cherish all that belongs to the holier sentiments of man, afraid to utter them, lest they meet with no sympathy."

"No cats, as Mr. Bragg would say."

"Jack is one who never paints *en beau*," said Mr. Effingham. "I should be very sorry to believe that a dozen short years can have made all these essential changes in my neighbourhood."

"A dozen years, Ned! You name an age. Speak of three or four, if you wish to find any thing in America where you left it! The whole country is in such a constant state of mutation, that I can only liken it to that game of children, in which as one quits his corner, another runs into it, and he that finds no corner to get into, is the laughing-stock of the others. Fancy that dwelling the residence of one man from childhood to old age; let him then quit it for a year or two, and on his return he would find another in possession, who would treat him as an impertinent intruder, because he had been absent two years. An American 'always,' in the way of usages, extends no further back than eighteen months. In short, every thing is condensed into the present moment; and services, character, for evil as well as good unhappily, and all other things, cease to have weight, except as they influence the interests of the day."

"This is the colouring of a professed cynic," observed Mr. Effingham, smiling.

"But the law, Mr. John Effingham," eagerly inquired the baronet—"surely the law would not permit a stranger to intrude in this manner on the rights of an owner."

"The law-*books* would do him that friendly office, perhaps, but what is a precept in the face of practices so ruthless. '*Les absents ont toujours tort*,' is a maxim of peculiar application in America."

"Property is as secure in this country as in any other, Sir George; and you will make allowances for the humours of the present annotator."

"Well, well, Ned; I hope you will find every thing *couleur de rose*, as you appear to expect. You will get quiet possession of your house, it is true, for I have put a Cerberus in it, that is quite equal to his task, difficult as it may be, and who has quite as much relish for a bill of costs, as any squatter can have for a trespass; but without some such guardian of your rights, I would not answer for it, that you would not be compelled to sleep in the high-way."

"I trust Sir George Templemore knows how to make allowances for Mr. John Effingham's pictures," cried Grace, unable to refrain from expressing her discontent any longer.

A laugh succeeded, and the beauties of the river again attracted their attention. As the boat continued to ascend, Mr. Effingham triumphantly affirmed that the appearance of things more than equalled his expectations, while both Eve and the baronet declared that a succession of lovelier landscapes could hardly be presented to the eye.

"Whited sepulchres!" muttered John Effingham—"all outside. Wait until you get a view of the deformity within."

As the boat approached Albany, Eve expressed her satisfaction in still stronger terms; and Grace was made perfectly happy, by hearing her and Sir George declare that the place entirely exceeded their expectations.

"I am glad to find, Eve, that you are so fast recovering your American feelings," said her beautiful cousin, after one of those expressions of agreeable disappointment, as they were seated at a late dinner, in an inn. "You have at last found words to praise the exterior of Albany; and I hope, by the time we return, you will be disposed to see New-York with different eyes."

"I expected to see a capital in New-York, Grace, and in this I have been grievously disappointed. Instead of finding the tastes, tone, conveniences, architecture, streets, churches, shops, and society of a capital, I found a huge expansion of common-place things, a commercial town, and the most mixed and the least regulated society, that I had ever met with. Expecting so much, where so little was found, disappointment was natural. But in Albany, although a political capital, I knew the nature of the government too well, to expect more than a provincial town; and in this respect, I have found one much above the level of similar places in other parts of the world. I acknowledge that Albany has as much exceeded my expectations in one sense, as New-York has fallen short of them in another."

"In this simple fact, Sir George Templemore," said Mr. Effingham, "you may read the real condition of the country. In all that requires something more than usual, a deficiency; in all that is deemed an average, better than common. The tendency is to raise every thing that is elsewhere degraded to a respectable height, when there commences an attraction of gravitation that draws all towards the centre; a little closer too, than could be wished perhaps."

"Ay, ay, Ned; this is very pretty, with your attractions and gravitations; but wait and judge for yourself of this average, of which you now speak so complacently.

"Nay, John, I borrowed the image from you; if it be not accurate, I shall hold you responsible for its defects."

"They tell me," said Eve, "that all American villages are the towns in miniature; children dressed in hoops and wigs. Is this so, Grace?"

"A little; there is too much desire to imitate the towns, perhaps, and possibly too little feeling for country life."

"This is a very natural consequence, after all, of people's living entirely in such places," observed Sir George Templemore. "One sees much of this on the continent of Europe, because the country population is purely a country population; and less of it in England, perhaps, because those who are at the head of society, consider town and country as very distinct things."

"*La campagne est vraiment délicieuse en Amérique*," exclaimed Mademoiselle Viefville, in whose eyes the whole country was little more than *campagne*.

The next morning, our travellers proceeded by the way of Schenectady, whence they ascended the beautiful valley of the Mohawk, by means of a canal-boat, the cars that now rattle along its length not having commenced their active flights, at that time. With the scenery, every one was delighted; for while it differed essentially from that the party had passed through the previous day, it was scarcely less beautiful.

At a point where the necessary route diverged from the direction of the canal, carriages of Mr. Effingham's were in readiness to receive the travellers, and here they were also favoured by the presence of Mr. Bragg, who fancied such an attention might be agreeable to the young ladies, as well as to his employer.

CHAPTER IX.

"Tell me, where is fancy bred—
Or in the heart, or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?"

SONG IN SHAKSPEARE.

THE travellers were several hours ascending into the mountains, by a country road that could scarcely be surpassed by a French wheel-track of the same sort,

for Mademoiselle Viefville protested, twenty times in the course of the morning, that it was a thousand pities Mr. Effingham had not the privilege of the *corvée*, that he might cause the approach to his *terres* to be kept in better condition. At length they reached the summit, a point where the waters began to flow south, when the road became tolerably level. From this time their progress became more rapid, and they continued to advance two or three hours longer at a steady pace.

Aristabulus now informed his companions that, in obedience to instructions from John Effingham, he had ordered the coachmen to take a road that led a little from the direct line of their journey, and that they had now been travelling for some time on the more ancient route to Templeton.

"I was aware of this," said Mr. Effingham, "though ignorant of the reason. We are on the great western turnpike."

"Certainly, sir, and all according to Mr. John's request. There would have been a great saving in distance, and agreeably to my notion, in horse-flesh, had we quietly gone down the banks of the lake."

"Jack will explain his own meaning," returned Mr, Effingham, "and he has stopped the other carriage, and alighted with Sir George,—a hint, I fancy, that we are to follow their example."

Sure enough, the second carriage was now stopped, and Sir George hastened to open its door.

"Mr. John Effingham, who acts as cicerone," cried the baronet, "insists that every one shall put *pied à terre* at this precise spot, keeping the important reason still a secret, in the recesses of his own bosom."

The ladies complied, and the carriages were ordered to proceed with the domestics, leaving the rest of the travellers by themselves, apparently in the heart of a forest.

"It is to be hoped, Mademoiselle, there are no banditti in America," said Eve, as they looked around

them at the novel situation in which they were placed, apparently by a pure caprice of her cousin.

"*Ou des sauvages*," returned the governess, who, in spite of her ordinary intelligence and great good sense, had several times that day cast uneasy and stolen glances into the bits of dark wood they had occasionally passed.

"I will ensure your purses and your scalps, *mesdames*," cried John Effingham gaily, "on condition that you will follow me implicitly; and by way of pledge for my faith, I solicit the honour of supporting Mademoiselle Viefville on this unworthy arm."

The governess laughingly accepted the conditions, Eve took the arm of her father, and Sir George offered his to Grace; Aristabulus, to his surprise, being left to walk entirely alone. It struck him, however, as so singularly improper that a young lady should be supported on such an occasion by her own father, that he frankly and gallantly proposed to Mr. Effingham to relieve him of his burthen, an offer that was declined with quite as much distinctness as it was made.

"I suppose cousin Jack has a meaning to his melodrama," said Eve, as they entered the forest, "and I dare say, dearest father, that you are behind the scenes, though I perceive determined secrecy in your face."

"John may have a cave to show us, or some tree of extraordinary height; such things existing in the country."

"We are very confiding, Mademoiselle, for I detect treachery in every face around us. Even Miss Van Cortlandt has the air of a conspirator, and seems to be in league with something or somebody. Pray Heaven, it be not with wolves."

"*Des loups!*" exclaimed Mademoiselle Viefville, stopping short, with a mien so alarmed as to excite a general laugh—"*est ce qu'il y a des loups et des sangliers dans cette forêt?*"

"No, Mademoiselle," returned her companion—"this

is only barbarous America, and not civilized France. Were we in *le departement de la Seine*, we might apprehend some such dangers, but being merely in the mountains of Otsego, we are reasonably safe."

"*Je l'espère*," murmured the governess, as she reluctantly and distrustfully proceeded, glancing her eyes incessantly to the right and left. The path now became steep and rather difficult; so much so, indeed, as to indispose them all to conversation. It led beneath the branches of lofty pines, though there existed, on every side of them, proofs of the ravages man had committed in that noble forest. At length they were compelled to stop for breath, after having ascended considerably above the road they had left.

"I ought to have said that the spot where we entered on this path, is memorable in the family history," observed John Effingham, to Eve—"for it was the precise spot where one of our predecessors lodged a shot in the shoulder of another."

"Then I know precisely where we are!" cried our heroine, "though I cannot yet imagine why we are led into this forest, unless it be to visit some spot hallowed by a deed of Natty Bumppo's!"

"Time will solve this mystery, as well as all others. Let us proceed."

Again they ascended, and, after a few more minutes of trial, they reached a sort of table-land, and drew near an opening in the trees, where a small circle had evidently been cleared of its wood, though it was quite small and untilled. Eve looked curiously about her, as did all the others to whom the place was novel, and she was lost in doubt.

"There seems to be a void beyond us," said the baronet—"I rather think Mr. John Effingham has led us to the verge of a view."

At this suggestion the party moved on in a body, and were well rewarded for the toil of the ascent, by a *coup d'œil* that was almost Swiss in character and beauty.

"Now do I know where we are," exclaimed Eve, clasping her hands in rapture—"this is the 'Vision,' and yonder, indeed, is our blessed home!"

The whole artifice of the surprise was exposed, and after the first bursts of pleasure had subsided, all to whom the scene was novel felt, that they would not have missed this *piquante* introduction to the valley of the Susquehannah, on any account. That the reader may understand the cause of so much delight, and why John Effingham had prepared this scene for his friends, we shall stop to give a short description of the objects that first met the eyes of the travellers.

It is known that they were in a small open spot in a forest, and on the verge of a precipitous mountain. The trees encircled them on every side but one, and on that lay the panorama, although the tops of tall pines, that grew in lines almost parallel to the declivity, rose nearly to a level with the eye. Hundreds of feet beneath them, directly in front, and stretching leagues to the right, was a lake embedded in woods and hills. On the side next the travellers, a fringe of forest broke the line of water; tree tops that intercepted the view of the shores; and on the other, high broken hills, or low mountains rather, that were covered with farms, beautifully relieved by patches of wood, in a way to resemble the scenery of a vast park, or a royal pleasure ground, limited the landscape. High valleys lay among these uplands, and in every direction comfortable dwellings dotted the fields. The contrast between the dark hues of the evergreens, with which all the heights near the water were shaded, was in soft contrast to the livelier green of the other foliage, while the meadows and pastures were luxuriant with a verdure unsurpassed by that of England. Bays and points added to the exquisite outline of the glassy lake on this shore, while one of the former withdrew towards the north-west, in a way to leave the eye doubtful whether it was the termination of the transparent sheet or not.

Towards the south, bold, varied, but cultivated hills, also bounded the view, all teeming with the fruits of human labour, and yet all relieved by pieces of wood, in the way already mentioned, so as to give the entire region the character of park scenery. A wide, deep, even valley, commenced at the southern end of the lake, or nearly opposite to the stand of our travellers, and stretched away south, until concealed by a curvature in the ranges of the mountains. Like all the mountain-tops, this valley was verdant, peopled, wooded in places, though less abundantly than the hills, and teeming with the signs of life. Roads wound through its peaceful retreats, and might be traced working their way along the glens, and up the weary ascents of the mountains, for miles, in every direction.

At the northern termination of this lovely valley, and immediately on the margin of the lake, lay the village of Templeton, immediately under the eyes of the party. The distance, in an air line, from their stand to the centre of the dwellings, could not be much less than a mile, but the air was so pure, and the day so calm, that it did not seem so far. The children and even the dogs were seen running about the streets, while the shrill cries of boys at their gambols, ascended distinctly to the ear.

As this was the Templeton of the Pioneers, and the progress of society during half a century is connected with the circumstance, we shall give the reader a more accurate notion of its present state, than can be obtained from incidental allusions. We undertake the office more readily because this is not one of those places that shoot up in a day, under the unnatural efforts of speculation, or which, favoured by peculiar advantages in the way of trade, becomes a precocious city, while the stumps still stand in its streets; but a sober county town, that has advanced steadily, *pari passu* with the surrounding country, and offers a fair specimen of the more regular advancement of the whole nation, in its progress towards civilization.

The appearance of Templeton, as seen from the height where it is now exhibited to the reader, was generally beautiful and map-like. There might be a dozen streets, principally crossing each other at right-angles, though sufficiently relieved from this precise delineation, to prevent a starched formality. Perhaps the greater part of the buildings were painted white, as is usual in the smaller American towns; though a better taste was growing in the place, and many of the dwellings had the graver and chaster hues of the grey stones of which they were built. A general air of neatness and comfort pervaded the place, it being as unlike a continental European town, south of the Rhine, in this respect, as possible, if indeed we except the picturesque bourgs of Switzerland. In England, Templeton would be termed a small market-town, so far as size was concerned; in France, a large *bourg;* while in America it was, in common parlance, and legal appellation, styled a village.

Of the dwellings of the place, fully twenty were of a quality that denoted ease in the condition of their occupants, and bespoke the habits of those accustomed to live in a manner superior to the *oi polloi* of the human race. Of these, some six or eight had small lawns, carriage sweeps, and the other similar appliances of houses that were not deemed unworthy of the honour of bearing names of their own. No less than five little steeples, towers, or belfries, for neither word is exactly suitable to the architectural prodigies we wish to describe, rose above the roofs, denoting the sites of the same number of places of worship; an American village usually exhibiting as many of these proofs of liberty of conscience—*caprices of conscience* would perhaps be a better term—as dollars and cents will by any process render attainable. Several light carriages, such as were suitable to a mountainous country, were passing to and fro in the streets; and, here and there, a single-horse vehicle was fastened before the door of

a shop, or a lawyer's office, denoting the presence of some customer, or client, from among the adjacent hills.

Templeton was not sufficiently a thoroughfare to possess one of those monstrosities, a modern American tavern, or a structure whose roof should overtop that of all its neighbours. Still its inns were of respectable size, well piazzaed, to use a word of our own invention, and quite enough frequented.

Near the centre of the place, in grounds of rather limited extent, still stood that model of the composite order, which owed its existence to the combined knowledge and taste, in the remoter ages of the region, of Mr. Richard Jones and Mr. Hiram Doolittle. We will not say that it had been modernized, for the very reverse was the effect, in appearance at least; but, it had since undergone material changes, under the more instructed intelligence of John Effingham.

This building was so conspicuous by position and size, that as soon as they had taken in glimpses of the entire landscape, which was not done without constant murmurs of pleasure, every eye became fastened on it, as the focus of interest. A long and common silence denoted how general was this feeling, and the whole party took seats on stumps and fallen trees before a syllable was uttered, after the building had attracted their gaze. Aristabulus alone permitted his look to wander, and he was curiously examining the countenance of Mr. Effingham, near whom he sate, with a longing to discover whether the expression was that of approbation, or of disapprobation, of the fruits of his cousin's genius.

"Mr. John Effingham has considerably regenerated and revivified, not to say transmogrified, the old dwelling," he said, cautiously using terms that might leave his own opinion of the changes doubtful. "The work of his hand has excited some speculation, a good deal of inquiry, and a little conversation,

throughout the country. It has almost produced an excitement!"

"As my house came to me from my father," said Mr. Effingham, across whose mild and handsome face a smile was gradually stealing, "I knew its history, and when called on for an explanation of its singularities, could refer all to the composite order. But, you, Jack, have supplanted all this, by a style of your own, for which I shall be compelled to consult the authorities for explanations."

"Do you dislike my taste, Ned?—To my eye, now, the structure has no bad appearance from this spot!"

"Fitness and comfort are indispensable requisites for domestic architecture, to use your own argument. Are you quite sure that yonder castellated roof, for instance, is quite suited to the deep snows of these mountains?"

John Effingham whistled, and endeavoured to look unconcerned, for he well knew that the very first winter had demonstrated the unsuitableness of his plans for such a climate. He had actually felt disposed to cause the whole to be altered privately, at his own expense; but, besides feeling certain his cousin would resent a liberty that inferred his indisposition to pay for his own buildings, he had a reluctance to admit, in the face of the whole country, that he had made so capital a mistake, in a branch of art in which he prided himself rather more than common; almost as much as his predecessor in the occupation, Mr. Richard Jones.

"If you are not pleased with your own dwelling, Ned," he answered, "you can have, at least, the consolation of looking at some of your neighbours' houses, and of perceiving that they are a great deal worse off. Of all abortions of this sort, to my taste, a Grecian abortion is the worst—mine is only Gothic, and that too, in a style so modest, that I should think it might pass unmolested."

It was so unusual to see John Effingham on the defensive, that the whole party smiled, while Aristabulus, who stood in salutary fear of his caustic tongue, both smiled and wondered.

"Nay, do not mistake me, John," returned the proprietor of the edifice under discussion—"it is not your *taste* that I call in question, but your provision against the seasons. In the way of mere outward show, I really think you deserve high praise, for you have transformed a very ugly dwelling into one that is almost handsome, in despite of proportions and the necessity of regulating the alterations by prescribed limits. Still, I think, there is a little of the composite left about even the exterior."

"I hope, cousin Jack, you have not innovated on the interior," cried Eve; "for I think I shall remember that, and nothing is more pleasant than the *cattism* of seeing objects that you remember in childhood—pleasant, I mean, to those whom the mania of mutation has not affected."

"Do not be alarmed, Miss Effingham," replied her kinsman, with a pettishness of manner that was altogether extraordinary, in a man whose mien, in common, was so singularly composed and masculine; "you will find all that you knew, when a kitten, in its proper place. I could not rake together, again, the ashes of Queen Dido, which were scattered to the four winds of Heaven, I fear; nor could I discover a reasonably good bust of Homer; but respectable substitutes are provided, and some of them have the great merit of puzzling all beholders to tell to whom they belong, which I believe was the great characteristic of most of Mr. Jones's invention."

"I am glad to see, cousin Jack, that you have, at least, managed to give a very respectable 'cloud-colour' to the whole house."

"Ay, it lay between that and an invisible green," the gentleman answered, losing his momentary spleen

in his natural love of the ludicrous—"but finding that the latter would be only too conspicuous in the droughts that sometimes prevail in this climate, I settled down into the yellowish drab, that is, indeed, not unlike some of the richer volumes of the clouds."

"On the whole, I think you are fairly entitled, as Steadfast Dodge, Esquire, would say, to 'the meed of our thanks.'"

"What a lovely spot!" exclaimed Mr. Effingham, who had already ceased to think of his own dwelling, and whose eye was roaming over the soft landscape, athwart which the lustre of a June noontide was throwing its richest glories. "This is truly a place where one might fancy repose and content were to be found for the evening of a troubled life."

"Indeed, I have seldom looked upon a more bewitching scene," answered the baronet. "The lakes of Cumberland will scarce compete with this!"

"Or that of Brienz, or Lungeren, or Nemi," said Eve, smiling in a way that the other understood to be a hit at his nationality.

"*C'est charmant!*" murmured Mademoiselle Viefville. "*On pense à l'éternité, dans une telle calme!*"

"The farm you can see lying near yonder wood, Mr. Effingham," coolly observed Aristabulus, "sold last spring for thirty dollars the acre, and was bought for twenty, the summer before!"

"*Chacun à son gout!*" said Eve.

"And yet, I fear, this glorious scene is marred by the envy, rapacity, uncharitableness, and all the other evil passions of man!" continued the more philosophical Mr. Effingham. "Perhaps, it were better as it was so lately, when it lay in the solitude and peace of the wilderness, the resort of birds and beasts."

"Who prey on each other, dearest father, just as the worst of our own species prey on their fellows."

"True, child—true. And yet, I never gaze on one of these scenes of holy calm, without wishing that the

great tabernacle of nature might be tenanted only by those who have a feeling for its perfection."

"Do you see the lady," said Aristabulus, "that is just coming out on the lawn, in front of the 'Wigwam?'" for that was the name John Effingham had seen fit to give the altered and amended abode. "Here, Miss Effingham, more in a line with the top of the pine beneath us."

"I see the person you mean; she seems to be looking in this direction."

"You are quite right, miss; she knows that we are to stop on the Vision, and no doubt sees us. That lady is your father's cook, Miss Effingham, and is thinking of the late breakfast that has been ordered to be in readiness against our arrival."

Eve concealed her amusement, for, by this time, she had discovered that Mr. Bragg had a way peculiar to himself, or at least to his class, of using many of the commoner words of the English language. It would perhaps be expecting too much of Sir George Templemore, not to expect him to smile, on such an occasion.

"Ah!" exclaimed Aristabulus, pointing towards the lake, across which several skiffs were stealing, some in one direction, and some in another, "there is a boat out, that I think must contain the poet."

"Poet!" repeated John Effingham. "Have we reached that pass at Templeton?"

"Lord, Mr. John Effingham, you must have very contracted notions of the place, if you think a poet a great novelty in it. Why, sir, we have caravans of wild beasts, nearly every summer!"

"This is, indeed, a step in advance, of which I was ignorant. Here then, in a region, that so lately was tenanted by beasts of prey, beasts are already brought as curiosities. You perceive the state of the country in this fact, Sir George Templemore."

"I do indeed; but I should like to hear from Mr. Bragg, what sort of animals are in these caravans?"

"All sorts, from monkeys to elephants. The last had a rhinoceros."

"Rhinoceros!—Why there was but one, lately, in all Europe. Neither the Zoological Gardens, nor the *Jardin des Plantes*, had a rhinoceros! I never saw but one, and that was in a caravan at Rome, that travelled between St. Petersburgh and Naples."

"Well, sir, we have rhinoceroses here;—and monkeys, and zebras, and poets, and painters, and congressmen, and bishops, and governors, and all other sorts of creatures."

"And who may the particular poet be, Mr. Bragg," Eve asked, "who honours Templeton, with his presence just at this moment?"

"That is more than I can tell you, miss, for, though some eight or ten of us have done little else than try to discover his name for the last week, we have not got even as far as that one fact. He and the gentleman who travels with him, are both uncommonly close on such matters, though I think we have some as good catechisers in Templeton, as can be found any where within fifty miles of us!"

"There is another gentleman with him—do you suspect them both of being poets?"

"Oh, no, Miss, the other is the waiter of the poet; that we know, as he serves him at dinner, and otherwise superintends his concerns; such as brushing his clothes, and keeping his room in order."

"This is being in luck for a poet, for they are of a class that are a little apt to neglect the decencies. May I ask why you suspect the master of being a poet, if the man be so assiduous?"

"Why, what else can he be? In the first place, Miss Effingham, he has no name."

"That is a reason in point," said John Effingham; "very few poets having names."

"Then he is out on the lake half his time, gazing up at the 'Silent Pine,' or conversing with the 'Speaking Rocks,' or drinking at the 'Fairy Spring.'"

"All suspicious, certainly; especially the dialogue with the rocks; though not absolutely conclusive."

"But, Mr. John Effingham, the man does not take his food like other people. He rises early, and is out on the water, or up in the forest, all the morning, and then returns to eat his breakfast in the middle of the forenoon; he goes into the woods again, or on the lake, and comes back to dinner, just as I take my tea."

"This settles the matter. Any man who presumes to do all this, Mr. Bragg, deserves to be called by some harder name, even, than that of a poet. Pray, sir, how long has this eccentric person been a resident of Templeton?"

"Hist—there he is, as I am a sinner; and it was not he and the other gentlemen that were in the boat."

The rebuked manner of Aristabulus, and the dropping of his voice, induced the whole party to look in the direction of his eye, and, sure enough, a gentleman approached them, in the dress a man of the world is apt to assume in the country, an attire of itself that was sufficient to attract comment in a place where the general desire was to be as much like town as possible, though it was sufficiently neat and simple. He came from the forest, along the table-land that crowned the mountain for some distance, following one of the footpaths that the admirers of the beautiful landscape have made all over that pleasant wood. As he came out into the cleared spot, seeing it already in possession of a party, he bowed, and was passing on, with a delicacy that Mr. Bragg would be apt to deem eccentric, when suddenly stopping, he gave a look of intense and eager interest at the whole party, smiled, advanced rapidly nearer, and discovered his entire person.

"I ought not to be surprised," he said, as he advanced so near as to render doubt any longer impossible, "for

I knew you were expected, and indeed waited for your arrival, and yet this meeting has been so unexpected as to leave me scarcely in possession of my faculties."

It is needless to dwell upon the warmth and number of the greetings. To the surprise of Mr. Bragg, his poet was not only known, but evidently much esteemed by all the party, with the exception of Miss Van Cortlandt, to whom he was cordially presented by the name of Mr. Powis. Eve managed, by an effort of womanly pride, to suppress the violence of her emotions, and the meeting passed off as one of mutual surprise and pleasure, without any exhibition of unusual feeling to attract comment.

"We ought to express our wonder at finding you here before us, my dear young friend," said Mr. Effingham, still holding Paul's hand affectionately between his own; "and, even now, that my own eyes assure me of the fact, I can hardly believe you would arrive at New-York, and quit it, without giving us the satisfaction of seeing you."

"In that, sir, you are not wrong; certainly nothing could have deprived me of that pleasure, but the knowledge that it would not have been agreeable to yourselves. My sudden appearance here, however, will be without mystery, when I tell you that I returned from England, by the way of Quebec, the Great Lakes, and the Falls, having been induced by my friend Ducie to take that route, in consequence of his ship's being sent to the St. Lawrence. A desire for novelty, and particularly a desire to see the celebrated cataract, which is almost *the* lion of America, did the rest."

"We are glad to have you with us on any terms, and I take it as particularly kind, that you did not pass my door. You have been here some days?"

"Quite a week. On reaching Utica I diverged from the great route to see this place, not anticipating the pleasure of meeting you here so early; but hearing you were expected, I determined to remain, with a hope, which I

rejoice to find was not vain, that you would not be sorry to see an old fellow-traveller again."

Mr. Effingham pressed his hands warmly again, before he relinquished them; an assurance of welcome that Paul received with thrilling satisfaction.

"I have been in Templeton almost long enough," the young man resumed, laughing, "to set up as a candidate for the public favour, if I rightly understand the claims of a denizen. By what I can gather from casual remarks, the old proverb that 'the new broom sweeps clean' applies with singular fidelity throughout all this region."

"Have you a copy of your last ode, or a spare epigram, in your pocket?" inquired John Effingham.

Paul looked surprised, and Aristabulus, for a novelty, was a little dashed. Paul looked surprised, as a matter of course, for, although he had been a little annoyed by the curiosity that is apt to haunt a village imagination, since his arrival in Templeton, he did not in the least suspect that his love of a beautiful nature had been imputed to devotion to the muses. Perceiving, however, by the smiles of those around him, that there was more meant than was expressed, he had the tact to permit the explanation to come from the person who had put the question, if it were proper it should come at all.

"We will defer the great pleasure that is in reserve," continued John Effingham, "to another time. At present, it strikes me that the lady of the lawn is getting to be impatient, and the *déjeuner à la fourchette*, that I have had the precaution to order, is probably waiting our appearance. It must be eaten, though under the penalty of being thought moon-struck rhymers by the whole State. Come, Ned; if you are sufficiently satisfied with looking at the Wigwam in a bird's-eye view, we will descend and put its beauties to the severer test of a close examination."

This proposal was readily accepted, though all tore

themselves from that lovely spot with reluctance, and not until they had paused to take another look.

"Fancy the shores of this lake lined with villas," said Eve, "church-towers raising their dark heads among these hills; each mountain crowned with a castle, or a crumbling ruin, and all the other accessories of an old state of society, and what would then be the charms of the view!"

"Less than they are to-day, Miss Effingham," said Paul Powis; "for though poetry requires—you all smile, is it forbidden to touch on such subjects?"

"Not at all, so it be done in wholesome rhymes," returned the baronet. "You ought to know that you are expected even to speak in doggerel."

Paul ceased, and the whole party walked away from the place, laughing and light-hearted.

CHAPTER X.

"It is the spot, I came to seek,
My father's ancient burial place—
It is the spot—I know it well,
Of which our old traditions tell."

BRYANT.

From the day after their arrival in New-York, or that on which the account of the arrests by the English cruiser had appeared in the journals, little had been said by any of our party concerning Paul Powis, or of the extraordinary manner in which he had left the packet, at the very moment she was about to enter her haven. It is true that Mr. Dodge, arrived at Dodgeopolis, had dilated on the subject in his hebdomadal, with divers additions and conjectures of his own, and this, too, in a way to attract a good deal of attention in the interior; but, it being a rule with those

who are supposed to dwell at the fountain of foreign intelligence, not to receive any thing from those who ought not to be better informed than themselves, the Effinghams and their friends had never heard of his account of the matter.

While all thought the incident of the sudden return extraordinary, no one felt disposed to judge the young man harshly. The gentlemen knew that military censure, however unpleasant, did not always imply moral unworthiness; and as for the ladies, they retained too lively a sense of his skill and gallantry, to wish to imagine evil on grounds so slight and vague. Still, it had been impossible altogether to prevent the obtrusion of disagreeable surmises, and all now sincerely rejoiced at seeing their late companion once more among them, seemingly in a state of mind that announced neither guilt nor degradation.

On quitting the mountain, Mr. Effingham, who had a tender regard for Grace, offered her his arm as he would have given it to a second daughter, leaving Eve to the care of John Effingham. Sir George attended to Mademoiselle Viefville, and Paul walked by the side of our heroine and her cousin, leaving Aristabulus to be what he himself called a "miscellaneous companion;" or, in other words, to thrust himself into either set, as inclination or accident might induce. Of course the parties conversed as they walked, though those in advance would occasionally pause to say a word to those in the rear; and, as they descended, one or two changes occurred to which we may have occasion to allude.

"I trust you have had pleasant passages," said John Effingham to Paul, as soon as they were separated in the manner just mentioned. "Three trips across the Atlantic in so short a time would be hard duty to a landsman, though you, as a sailor, will probably think less of it."

"In this respect I have been fortunate; the Foam,

as we know from experience, being a good traveller, and Ducie is altogether a fine fellow and an agreeable messmate. You know I had him for a companion both going and coming."

This was said naturally; and, while it explained so little directly, it removed all unpleasant uncertainty, by assuring his listeners that he had been on good terms at least, with the person who had seemed to be his pursuer. John Effingham, too, well understood that no one messed with the commander of a vessel of war, in his own ship, who was, in any way, thought to be an unfit associate.

"You have made a material circuit to reach us, the distance by Quebec being nearly a fourth more than the direct road."

"Ducie desired it so strongly, that I did not like to deny him. Indeed, he made it a point, at first, to obtain permission to land me at New-York, where he had found me, as he said; but to this I would not listen, as I feared it might interfere with his promotion, of which he stood so good a chance, in consequence of his success in the affair of the money. By keeping constantly before the eyes of his superiors, on duty of interest, I thought his success would be more certain."

"And has his government thought his perseverance in the chase worthy of such a reward?"

"Indeed it has. He is now a post, and all owing to his good luck and judgment in that affair; though in his country, rank in private life does no harm to one in public life."

Eve liked the emphasis that Paul laid on "his country," and she thought the whole remark was made in a spirit that an Englishman would not be apt to betray.

"Has it ever occurred to you," continued John Effingham, "that our sudden and unexpected separation, has caused a grave neglect of duty in me, if not in both of us?"

Paul looked surprised, and, by his manner, he demanded an explanation.

"You may remember the sealed package of poor Mr. Monday, that we were to open together on our arrival in New-York, and on the contents of which, we were taught to believe depended the settling of some important private rights. I gave that package to you, at the moment it was received, and, in the hurry of leaving us, you overlooked the circumstance."

"All very true, and to my shame I confess that, until this instant, the affair has been quite forgotten by me. I had so much to occupy my mind while in England, that it was not likely to be remembered, and then the packet itself has scarce been in my possession since the day I left you."

"It is not lost, I trust?" said John Effingham quickly.

"Surely not—it is safe, beyond a question, in the writing-desk in which I deposited it. But the moment we got to Portsmouth, Ducie and myself proceeded to London together, and, as soon as he had got through at the Admiralty, we went into Yorkshire, where we remained, much occupied with private matters of great importance to us both, while his ship was docked; and then it became necessary to make sundry visits to our relations——"

"Relations!" repeated Eve involuntarily, though she did not cease to reproach herself for the indiscretion, during the rest of the walk.

"Relations—" returned Paul, smiling. "Captain Ducie and myself are cousins-german, and we made pilgrimages together, to sundry family shrines. This duty occupied us until a few days before we sailed for Quebec. On reaching our haven, I left the ship to visit the great lakes and Niagara, leaving most of my effects with Ducie, who has promised to bring them on with himself, when he followed on my track, as he expected soon to do, on his way to the West Indies, where he is to find a frigate. He owed me this atten-

tion, as he insisted, on account of having induced me to go so far out of my way, with so much luggage, to oblige him. The packet is, unluckily, left behind with the other things."

"And do you expect Captain Ducie to arrive in this country soon?—The affair of the packet ought not to be neglected much longer, for a promise to a dying man is doubly binding, as it appeals to all our generosity. Rather than neglect the matter much longer, I would prefer sending a special messenger to Quebec."

"That will be quite unnecessary, as, indeed, it would be useless. Ducie left Quebec yesterday, and has sent his and my effects direct to New-York, under the care of his own steward. The writing-case, containing other papers that are of interest to us both, he has promised not to lose sight of, but it will accompany him on the same tour, as that I have just made; for, he wishes to avail himself of this opportunity to see Niagara and the lakes, also: he is now on my track, and will notify me by letter of the day he will be in Utica, in order that we may meet on the line of the canal, near this place, and proceed to New-York, in company."

His companions listened to this brief statement with an intense interest, with which the packet of poor Mr. Monday, however, had very little connection. John Effingham called to his cousin, and, in a few words, stated the circumstances as they had just been related to himself, without adverting to the papers of Mr. Monday, which was an affair that he had hitherto kept to himself.

"It will be no more than a return of civility, if we invite Captain Ducie to diverge from his road, and pass a few days with us, in the mountains," he added. "At what precise time do you expect him to pass, Powis?"

"Within the fortnight. I feel certain he would be

glad to pay his respects to this party, for he often expressed his sincere regrets at having been employed on a service that exposed the ladies to so much peril and delay."

"Captain Ducie is a near kinsman of Mr. Powis, dear father," added Eve, in a way to show her parent, that the invitation would be agreeable to herself, for Mr. Effingham was so attentive to the wishes of his daughter, as never to ask a guest to his house, that he thought would prove disagreeable to its mistress.

"I shall do myself the pleasure to write to Captain Ducie, this evening, urging him to honour us with his company," returned Mr. Effingham. "We expect other friends in a few days, and I hope he will not find his time heavy on his hands, while in exile among us. Mr. Powis will enclose my note in one of his letters, and will, I trust, second the request by his own solicitations."

Paul made his acknowledgments, and the whole party proceeded, though the interruption caused such a change in the *figure* of the promenade, as to leave the young man the immediate escort of Eve. The party, by this time, had not only reached the highway, but it had again diverged from it, to follow the line of an old and abandoned wheel-track, that descended the mountain, along the side of the declivity, by a wilder and more perilous direction than suited a modern enterprise; it having been one of those little calculated and rude roads, that the first settlers of a country are apt to make, before there are time and means to investigate and finish to advantage. Although much more difficult and dangerous than its successor, as a highway, this relic of the infant condition of the country was by far the most retired and beautiful; and pedestrians continued to use it, as a common foot-path to the Vision. The seasons had narrowed its surface, and the second growth had nearly covered it with their branches, shading it like an arbour; and Eve expressed

ner delight with its wildness and boldness, mingled, as both were, with so pleasant a seclusion, as they descended along a path as safe and convenient as a French *allée*. Glimpses were constantly obtained of the lake and the village, while they proceeded; and altogether, they who were strangers to the scenery, were loud in its praises.

"Most persons, who see this valley for the first time," observed Aristabulus, "find something to say in its favour; for my part, I consider it as rather curious myself."

"Curious!" exclaimed Paul; "that gentleman is, at least, singular in the choice of his expressions."

"You have met him before to-day," said Eve, laughing, for Eve was now in a humour to laugh at trifles. "This we know, since he had prepared us to meet a poet, where we only find an old friend."

"Only, Miss Effingham!—Do you estimate poets so high, and old friends so low?"

"This extraordinary person, Mr. Aristabulus Bragg, really deranges all one's notions and opinions in such a manner, as to destroy even the usual signification of words, I believe. He seems so much in, and yet so much out of his place; is both so *rusé* and so unpractised; so unfit for what he is, and so ready at every thing, that I scarcely know how to apply terms in any matter with which he has the smallest connection. I fear he has persecuted you since your arrival in Templeton?"

"Not at all; I am so much acquainted with men of his cast, that I have acquired a tact in managing them. Perceiving that he was disposed to suspect me of a disposition to 'poetize the lake,' to use his own term, I took care to drop a couple of lines, roughly written off, like a hasty and imperfect effusion, where I felt sure he would find them, and have been living for a whole week on the fame thereof."

"You do indulge in such tastes, then?" said Eve, smiling a little saucily.

"I am as innocent of such an ambition, as of wishing to marry the heiress of the British throne, which, I believe, just now, is the goal of all the Icaruses of our own time. I am merely a rank plagiarist—for the rhyme, on the fame of which I have rioted for a glorious week, was two lines of Pope's, an author so effectually forgotten in these palmy days of literature, in which all knowledge seems so condensed into the productions of the last few years, that a man might almost pass off an entire classic for his own, without the fear of detection. It was merely the first couplet of the Essay on Man, which, fortunately, having an allusion to the 'pride of Kings,' would pass for original, as well as excellent, in nineteen villages in twenty in America, in these piping times of ultra-republicanism. No doubt Mr. Bragg thought a eulogy on the 'people' was to come next, to be succeeded by a glorious picture of Templeton and its environs."

"I do not know that I ought to admit these hits at liberty from a foreigner," said Eve, pretending to look graver than she felt; for never before, in her life, had our heroine so strong a consciousness of happiness, as she had experienced that very morning.

"Foreigner, Miss Effingham!—And why a foreigner?"

"Nay, you know your own pretended cosmopolitism; and ought not the cousin of Captain Ducie to be an Englishman?"

"I shall not answer for the *ought*, the simple fact being a sufficient reply to the question. The cousin of Captain Ducie is *not* an Englishman; nor, as I see you suspect, has he ever served a day in the British navy, or in any other navy than that of his native land."

"This is indeed taking us by surprise, and that most agreeably," returned Eve, looking up at him with undisguised pleasure, while a bright glow crimsoned her face. "We could not but feel an interest in one who

had so effectually served us; and both my father and Mr. John Effingham——"

"Cousin Jack—" interrupted the smiling Paul.

"Cousin Jack, then, if you dislike the formality I used; both my father and cousin Jack examined the American navy registers for your name, without success, as I understood, and the inference that followed was fair enough, I believe you will admit."

"Had they looked at a register of a few years' date, they would have met with better luck. I have quitted the service, and am a sailor only in recollections. For the last few years, like yourselves, I have been a traveller by land as well as by water."

Eve said no more, though every syllable that the young man uttered was received by attentive ears, and retained with a scrupulous fidelity of memory. They walked some distance in silence, until they reached the grounds of a house that was beautifully placed on the side of the mountain, near a lovely wood of pines. Crossing these grounds, until they reached a terrace in front of the dwelling, the village of Templeton lay directly in their front, perhaps a hundred feet beneath them, and yet so near, as to render the minutest object distinct. Here they all stopped to take a more distinct view of a place that had so much interest with most of the party.

"I hope you are sufficiently acquainted with the localities to act as cicerone," said Mr. Effingham to Paul. "In a visit of a week to this village, you have scarcely overlooked the Wigwam."

"Perhaps I ought to hesitate, or rather ought to blush to own it," answered the young man, discharging the latter obligation by colouring to his temples; "but curiosity has proved so much stronger than manners, that I have been induced to trespass so far on the politeness of this gentleman, as to gain an admission to your dwelling, in and about which more of my time

has been passed than has probably proved agreeable to its inmates."

"I hope the gentleman will not speak of it," said Aristabulus. "In this country, we live pretty much in common, and with me it is a rule, when a gentleman drops in, whether stranger or neighbour, to show him the civility to ask him to take off his hat."

"It appears to me," said Eve, willing to change the conversation, "that Templeton has an unusual number of steeples; for what purpose can so small a place possibly require so many buildings of that nature?"

"All in behalf of orthodoxy, Miss Eve," returned Aristabulus, who conceived himself to be the proper person to answer such interrogatories. "There is a shade of opinion beneath every one of those steeples."

"Do you mean, sir, that there are as many shades of faith in Templeton, as I now see buildings that have the appearance of being devoted to religious purposes?"

"Double the number, Miss, and some to spare, in the bargain; for you see but five meeting-houses, and the county-buildings, and we reckon seven regular hostile denominations in the village, besides the diversities of sentiment on trifles. This edifice that you perceive here, in a line with the chimneys of the first house, is New St. Paul's, Mr. Grant's old church, as orthodox a house, in its way, as there is in the diocese, as you may see by the windows. This is a gaining concern, though there has been some falling off of late, in consequence of the clergyman's having caught a bad cold, which has made him a little hoarse; but I dare say he will get over it, and the church ought not to be abandoned on that account, serious as the matter undoubtedly is, for the moment. A few of us are determined to back up New St. Paul's in this crisis, and I make it a point to go there myself, quite half the time."

"I am glad we have so much of your company," said Mr. Effingham, "for that is our own church, and

in it my daughter was baptized. But, do you divide your religious opinions in halves, Mr. Bragg?"

"In as many parts, Mr. Effingham, as there are denominations in the neighbourhood, giving a decided preference to New St. Paul's, notwithstanding, under the peculiar circumstances, particularly to the windows. The dark, gloomy-looking building, Miss, off in the distance, yonder, is the Methodist affair, of which not much need be said; Methodism flourishing but little among us since the introduction of the New Lights, who have fairly managed to out-excite them, on every plan they can invent. I believe, however, they stick pretty much to the old doctrine, which, no doubt, is one great reason of their present apathetic state; for the people do love novelties."

"Pray, sir, what building is this nearly in a line with New St. Paul's, and which resembles it a little, in colour and form?"

"Windows excepted; it has two rows of regular square-topped windows, Miss, as you may observe. That is the First Presbyterian, or the old standard; a very good house, and a pretty good faith, too, as times go. I make it a point to attend there, at least once every fortnight; for change is agreeable to the nature of man. I will say, Miss, that my preference, so far as I have any, however, is for New St. Paul's, and I have experienced considerable regrets, that these Presbyterians have gained a material advantage over us, in a very essential point, lately."

"I am sorry to hear this, Mr. Bragg; for, being an Episcopalian myself, and having great reliance on the antiquity and purity of my church, I should be sorry to find it put in the wrong by any other."

"I fear we must give that point up, notwithstanding, for these Presbyterians have entirely outwitted the church people in that matter."

"And what is the point in which we have been so signally worsted?"

"Why, Miss, their new bell weighs quite a hundred more than that of New St. Paul's, and has altogether the best sound. I know very well that this advantage will not avail them any thing to boast of, in the last great account; but it makes a surprising difference in the state of probation. You see the yellowish looking building across the valley, with a heavy wall around it, and a belfry? That, in its regular character, is the county court-house, and gaol; but, in the way of religion, it is used pretty much miscellaneously."

"Do you mean, really, sir, that divine service is ever actually performed in it, or that persons of all denominations are occasionally tried there?"

"It would be truer to say that all denominations occasionally try the court-house," said Aristabulus, simpering; "for I believe it has been used in this way by every shade of religion short of the Jews. The Gothic tower in wood, is the building of the Universalists; and the Grecian edifice, that is not yet painted, the Baptists. The Quakers, I believe, worship chiefly at home, and the different shades of the Presbyterians meet, in different rooms, in private houses, about the place."

"Are there then shades of difference in the denominations, as well as all these denominations?" asked Eve, in unfeigned surprise; "and this, too, in a population so small?"

"This is a free county, Miss Eve, and freedom loves variety. 'Many men, many minds.'"

"Quite true, sir," said Paul; "but here are many minds among few men. Nor is this all; agreeably to your own account, some of these men do not exactly know their own minds. But, can you explain to us what essential points are involved in all these shades of opinion?"

"It would require a life, sir, to understand the half of them. Some say that excitement is religion, and others, that it is contentment. One set cries up prac-

tice, and another cries out against it. This man maintains that he will be saved if he does good, and that man affirms that if he only does good, he will be damned; a little evil is necessary to salvation, with one shade of opinion, while another thinks a man is never so near conversion as when he is deepest in sin."

"Subdivision is the order of the day," added John Effingham; "every county is to be subdivided that there may be more county towns, and county offices; every religion decimated, that there may be a greater variety and a better quality of saints."

Aristabulus nodded his head, and he would have winked, could he have presumed to take such a liberty with a man he held as much in habitual awe, as John Effingham.

"*Monsieur*," inquired Mademoiselle Viefville, "is there no *église*, no *véritable église*, in Templeton?"

"Oh, yes, Madame, several," returned Aristabulus, who would as soon think of admitting that he did not understand the meaning of *véritable église*, as one of the sects he had been describing would think of admitting that it was not infallible in its interpretation of Christianity—"several; but they are not be seen from this particular spot."

"How much more picturesque would it be, and even christian-like in appearance, at least," said Paul, "could these good people consent to unite in worshipping God!—and how much does it bring into strong relief, the feebleness and ignorance of man, when you see him splitting hairs about doctrines, under which he has been told, in terms as plain as language can make it, that he is simply required to believe in the goodness and power of a Being whose nature and agencies exceed his comprehension."

"All very true," cried John Effingham, "but what would become of liberty of conscience in such a case? Most men, now-a-days, understand by faith, a firm reliance on their own opinions!"

"In that case, too," put in Aristabulus, "we should want this handsome display of churches to adorn our village. There is good comes of it; for any man would be more likely to invest in a place that has five churches, than in a place with but one. As it is, Templeton has as beautiful a set of churches as any village I know."

"Say, rather, sir, a set of castors; for a stronger resemblance to vinegar-cruets and mustard-pots, than is borne by these architectural prodigies, eye never beheld."

"It is, nevertheless, a beautiful thing, to see the high pointed roof of the house of God, crowning an assemblage of houses, as one finds it in other countries," said Eve, "instead of a pile of tavern, as is too much the case in this dear home of ours."

When this remark was uttered, they descended the step that led from the terrace, and proceeded towards the village. On reaching the gate of the Wigwam, the whole party stood confronted with that offspring of John Effingham's taste; for so great had been his improvements on the original production of Hiram Doolittle, that externally, at least, that distinguished architect could no longer have recognized the fruits of his own talents.

"This is carrying out to the full, John, the conceits of the composite order," observed Mr. Effingham, drily.

"I shall be sorry, Ned, if you dislike your house, as it is amended and corrected."

"Dear cousin Jack," cried Eve, "it is an odd jumble of the Grecian and Gothic. One would like to know your authorities for such a liberty."

"What do you think of the *façade* of the cathedral of Milan, Miss," laying emphasis on the last words, in imitation of the manner of Mr. Bragg. "Is it such a novelty to see the two styles blended; or is architec-

ture so pure in America, that you think I have committed the unpardonable sin."

"Nay, nothing that is out of rule ought to strike one, in a country where imitation governs in all things immaterial, and originality unsettles all things sacred and dear."

"By way of punishment for that bold speech, I wish I had left the old rookery in the state I found it, that its beauties might have greeted your eyes, instead of this uncouth pile, which seems so much to offend them. Mademoiselle Viefville, permit me to ask how you like that house?"

"*Mais, c'est un petit château.*"

"*Un château, Effinghamisé,*" said Eve, laughing.

"*Effinghamisé si vous voulez, ma chère; pourtant c'est un château.*"

"The general opinion in this part of the country is," said Aristabulus, "that Mr. John Effingham has altered the building on the plan of some edifice of Europe, though I forget the name of the particular temple; it is not, however, the Parthenon, nor the temple of Minerva."

"I hope, at least," said Mr. Effingham, leading the way up a little lawn, "it will not turn out to be the Temple of the Winds."

CHAPTER XI.

"Nay, I'll come; if I lose a scruple of this sport, let me be boiled to death with melancholy."—SHAKSPEARE.

THE progress of society in America, has been distinguished by several peculiarities that do not so properly belong to the more regular and methodical advances of civilization in other parts of the world. On the one hand, the arts of life, like Minerva, who was

struck out of the intellectual being of her father at a blow, have started full-grown into existence, as the legitimate inheritance of the colonists, while, on the other, every thing tends towards settling down into a medium, as regards quality, a consequence of the community-character of the institutions. Every thing she had seen that day, had struck Eve as partaking of this mixed nature, in which, while nothing was vulgar, little even approached to that high standard, that her European education had taught her to esteem perfect. In the Wigwam, however, as her father's cousin had seen fit to name the family dwelling, there was more of keeping, and a closer attention to the many little things she had been accustomed to consider essential to comfort and elegance, and she was better satisfied with her future home, than with most she had seen since her return to America.

As we have described the interior of this house, in another work, little remains to be said on the subject, at present; for, while John Effingham had completely altered its external appearance, its internal was not much changed. It is true, the cloud-coloured covering had disappeared, as had that stoop also, the columns of which were so nobly upheld by their superstructure; the former having given place to a less obtrusive roof, that was regularly embattled, and the latter having been swallowed up by a small entrance tower, that the new architect had contrived to attach to the building with quite as much advantage to it, in the way of comfort, as in the way of appearance. In truth, the Wigwam had none of the more familiar features of a modern American dwelling of its class. There was not a column about it, whether Grecian, Roman, or Egyptian; no Venetian blinds; no verandah or piazza; no outside paint, nor gay blending of colours. On the contrary, it was a plain old structure, built with great solidity, and of excellent materials, and in that style of respectable dignity and propriety, tha*

was perhaps a little more peculiar to our fathers than it is peculiar to their successors, our worthy selves. In addition to the entrance tower, or porch, on its northern front, John Effingham had also placed a prettily devised conceit on the southern, by means of which the abrupt transition from an inner room to the open air was adroitly avoided. He had, moreover, removed the "firstly" of the edifice, and supplied its place with a more suitable addition that contained some of the offices, while it did not disfigure the building, a rare circumstance in an architectural after-thought.

Internally, the Wigwam had gradually been undergoing improvements, ever since that period, which, in the way of the arts, if not in the way of chronology, might be termed the dark ages of Otsego. The great hall had long before lost its characteristic decoration of the severed arm of Wolf, a Gothic paper that was better adapted to the really respectable architecture of the room being its substitute; and even the urn that was thought to contain the ashes of Queen Dido, like the pitcher that goes often to the well, had been broken in a war of extermination that had been carried on against the cobwebs by a particularly notable housekeeper. Old Homer, too, had gone the way of all baked clay; Shakspeare, himself, had dissolved into dust, "leaving not a wreck behind;" and of Washington and Franklin, even, indigenous as they were, there remained no vestiges. Instead of these venerable memorials of the past, John Effingham, who retained a pleasing recollection of their beauties as they had presented themselves to his boyish eyes, had bought a few substitutes in a New-York shop, and *a* Shakspeare, and *a* Milton, and *a* Cæsar, and *a* Dryden, and *a* Locke, as the writers of heroic so beautifully express it, were now seated in tranquil dignity on the old medallions that had held their illustrious predecessors. Although time had, as yet, done little for this new col-

lection in the way of colour, dust and neglect were already throwing around them the tint of antiquity.

"The lady," to use the language of Mr. Bragg, who did the cooking of the Wigwam, having every thing in readiness, our party took their seats at the breakfast table, which was spread in the great hall, as soon as each had paid a little attention to the *toilette*. As the service was neither very scientific, nor sufficiently peculiar, either in the way of elegance or of its opposite quality, to be worthy of notice, we shall pass it over in silence.

"One will not quite so much miss European architecture in this house," said Eve, as she took her seat at table, glancing an eye at the spacious and lofty room, in which they were assembled; "here is at least size and its comforts, if not elegance."

"Had you lost all recollection of this building, my child?" inquired her father, kindly; "I was in hopes you would feel some of the happiness of returning home, when you again found yourself beneath its roof!"

"I should greatly dislike to have all the antics I have been playing in my own dressing-room exposed," returned Eve, rewarding the parental solicitude of her father by a look of love, "though Grace, between her laughing and her tears, has threatened me with such a disgrace. Ann Sidley has also been weeping, and, as even Annette, always courteous and considerate, has shed a few tears in the way of sympathy, you ought not to imagine that I have been altogether so stoical as not to betray some feeling, dear father. But the paroxysm is past, and I am beginning to philosophize. I hope, cousin Jack, you have not forgotten that the drawing-room is a lady's empire!"

"I have respected your rights, Miss Effingham, though, with a wish to prevent any violence to your tastes, I have caused sundry antediluvian paintings and engravings to be consigned to the——"

"Garret?" inquired Eve, so quickly as to interrupt the speaker.

"Fire," coolly returned her cousin. "The garret is now much too good for them; that part of the house being converted into sleeping-rooms for the maids. Mademoiselle Annette would go into hysterics, were she to see the works of art, that satisfied the past generation of masters in this country, in too close familiarity with her Louvre-ized eyes."

"*Point du tout, monsieur*," said Mademoiselle Viefville, innocently; "*Annette a du gout dans son metier sans doute*, but she is too well bred to expect *impossibilités*. No doubt she would have conducted herself with decorum."

Every body laughed, for much light-heartedness prevailed at that board, and the conversation continued.

"I shall be satisfied if Annette escape convulsions," Eve added, "a refined taste being her weakness; and, to be frank, what I recollect of the works you mention, is not of the most flattering nature."

"And yet," observed Sir George, "nothing has surprised me more than the respectable state of the arts of engraving and painting in this country. It was unlooked for, and the pleasure has probably been in proportion to the surprise."

"In that you are very right, Sir George Templemore," John Effingham answered; "but the improvement is of very recent date. He who remembers an American town half a century ago, will see a very different thing in an American town of to-day; and this is equally true of the arts you mention, with the essential difference that the latter are taking a right direction under a proper instruction, while the former are taking a wrong direction, under the influence of money, that has no instruction. Had I left much of the old furniture, or any of the old pictures in the Wigwam, we should have had the bland features of Miss

Effingham in frowns, instead of bewitching smiles, at this very moment."

"And yet I have seen fine old furniture in this country, cousin Jack."

"Very true; though not in this part of it. The means of conveyance were wanting half a century since, and few people risk finery of any sort on corduroys. This very house had some respectable old things, that were brought here by dint of money, and they still remain; but the eighteenth century in general, may be set down as a very dark antiquity in all this region."

When the repast was over, Mr. Effingham led his guests and daughter through the principal apartments, sometimes commending, and sometimes laughing, at the conceits of his kinsman. The library was a good sized room; good sized at least for a country in which domestic architecture, as well as public architecture, is still in the chrysalis state. Its walls were hung with an exceedingly pretty gothic paper, in green, but over each window was a chasm in the upper border; and as this border supplied the arches, the unity of the entire design was broken in no less than four places, that being the precise number of the windows. The defect soon attracted the eye of Eve, and she was not slow in demanding an explanation.

"The deficiency is owing to an American accident," returned her cousin; "one of those calamities of which you are fated to experience many, as the mistress of an American household. No more of the border was to be bought in the country, and this is a land of shops and not of *fabricants*. At Paris, Mademoiselle, one would send to the paper-maker for a supply; but, alas! he that has not enough of a thing with us, is as badly off as if he had none. We are consumers, and not producers of works of art. It is a long way to send to France for ten or fifteen feet of paper hangings,

and yet this must be done, or my beautiful gothic arches will remain forever without their key-stones!"

"One sees the inconvenience of this," observed Sir George — "we feel it, even in England, in all that relates to imported things."

"And we, in nearly all things, but food."

"And does not this show that America can never become a manufacturing country?" asked the baronet, with the interest an intelligent Englishman ever feels in that all-absorbing question. "If you cannot manufacture an article as simple as that of paper-hangings, would it not be well to turn your attention, altogether, to agriculture?"

As the feeling of this interrogatory was much more apparent than its logic, smiles passed from one to the other, though John Effingham, who really had a regard for Sir George, was content to make an evasive reply, a singular proof of amity, in a man of his caustic temperament.

The survey of the house, on the whole, proved satisfactory to its future mistress, who complained, however, that it was furnished too much like a town resisidence.

"For," she added, "you will remember, cousin Jack, that our visits here will be something like a *villeggiatura*."

"Yes, yes, my fair lady; it will not be long before your Parisian and Roman tastes will be ready to pronounce the whole country a *villeggiatura!*"

"This is the penalty, Eve, one pays for being a Hajji," observed Grace, who had been closely watching the expression of the others' countenances; for, agreeably to her view of things, the Wigwam wanted nothing to render it a perfect abode. "The things that *we* enjoy, *you* despise."

"That is an argument, my dear coz, that would apply equally well, as a reason for preferring brown sugar to white."

"In coffee, certainly, Miss Eve," put in the attentive Aristabulus, who having acquired this taste, in virtue of an economical mother, really fancied it a pure one. "Every body, in these regions, prefers the brown in coffee."

"*Oh, mon père et ma mère, comme je vous en veux,*" said Eve, without attending to the nice distinctions of Mr. Bragg, which savoured a little too much of the neophyte in cookery, to find favour in the present company, "*comme je vous en veux* for having neglected so many beautiful sites, to place this building in the very spot it occupies."

"In that respect, my child, we may rather be grateful at finding so comfortable a house, at all. Compared with the civilization that then surrounded it, this dwelling was a palace at the time of its erection; bearing some such relation to the humbler structures around it, as the *château* bears to the cottage. Remember that brick had never before been piled on brick, in the walls of a house, in all this region, when the Wigwam was constructed. It is the Temple of Neptune of Otsego, if not of all the surrounding counties."

Eve pressed to her lips the hand she was holding in both her own, and they all passed out of the library into another room. As they came in front of the hall windows, a party of apprentice-boys were seen coolly making their arrangements to amuse themselves with a game of ball, on the lawn directly in front of the house.

"Surely, Mr. Bragg," said the owner of the Wigwam, with more displeasure in his voice than was usual for one of his regulated mind, "you do not countenance this liberty?"

"Liberty, sir!—I am an advocate for liberty wherever I can find it. Do you refer to the young men on the lawn, Mr. Effingham?"

"Certainly to them, sir; and permit me to say, I think they might have chosen a more suitable spot for

their sports. They are mistaking *liberties* for liberty, I fear."

"Why, sir, I believe they have *always* played ball in that precise locality."

"*Always!*—I can assure you this is a great mistake. What private family, placed as we are in the centre of a village, would allow of an invasion of its privacy in this rude manner? Well may the house be termed a Wigwam, if this whooping is to be tolerated before its door."

"You forget, Ned," said John Effingham, with a sneer, "that an American *always* means just eighteen months. *Antiquity* is reached in five lustres, and the dark ages at the end of a human life. I dare say these amiable young gentlemen, who enliven their sports with so many agreeable oaths, would think you very unreasonable and encroaching to presume to tell them they are unwelcome."

"To own the truth, Mr. John, it *would* be downright unpopular."

"As I cannot permit the ears of the ladies to be offended with these rude brawls, and shall never consent to have grounds that are so limited, and which so properly belong to the very privacy of my dwelling, invaded in this coarse manner, I beg, Mr. Bragg, that you will, at once, desire these young men to pursue their sports somewhere else."

Aristabulus received this commission with a very ill grace; for, while his native sagacity told him that Mr. Effingham was right, he too well knew the loose habits that had been rapidly increasing in the country during the last ten years, not to foresee that the order would do violence to all the apprentices' preconceived notions of their immunities; for, as he had truly stated, things move at so quick a pace in America, and popular feeling is so arbitrary, that a custom of a twelve months' existence is deemed sacred, until the public, itself, sees fit to alter it. He was reluctantly quitting

the party, on his unpleasant duty, when Mr. Effingham turned to a servant, who belonged to the place, and bade him go to the village barber, and desire him to come to the Wigwam to cut his hair; Pierre, who usually performed that office for him, being busied in unpacking trunks.

"Never mind, Tom," said Aristabulus obligingly, as he took up his hat; "I am going into the street, and will give the message to Mr. Lather."

"I cannot think, sir, of employing you on such a duty," hastily interposed Mr. Effingham, who felt a gentleman's reluctance to impose an unsuitable office on any of his dependants—"Tom, I am sure, will do me the favour."

"Do not name it, my dear sir; nothing makes me happier than to do these little errands, and, another time, you can do as much for me."

Aristabulus now went his way more cheerfully, for he determined to go first to the barber, hoping that some expedient might suggest itself, by means of which he could coax the apprentices from the lawn, and thus escape the injury to his popularity, that he so much dreaded. It is true, these apprentices were not voters, but then some of them speedily would be, and all of them, moreover, had *tongues*, an instrument Mr. Bragg held in quite as much awe as some men dread salt-petre. In passing the ball-players, he called out in a wheedling tone to their ringleader, a notorious street brawler—

"A fine time for sport, Dickey; don't you think there would be more room in the broad street than on this crowded lawn, where you lose your ball so often in the shrubbery?"

"This place will do, on a pinch," bawled Dickey—"though it might be better. If it warn't for that plagued house, we couldn't ask for a better ball-ground."

"I don't see," put in another, "what folks built a

house just in that spot for; it has spoilt the very best play-ground in the village."

"Some people have their notions as well as others," returned Aristabulus; "but, gentlemen, if I were in your place, I would try the street; I feel satisfied you would find it much the most agreeable and convenient."

The apprentices thought differently, however, or they were indisposed to the change; and so they recommenced their yells, their oaths, and their game. In the mean while, the party in the house continued their examination of John Effingham's improvements; and when this was completed, they separated, each to his or her own room.

Aristabulus soon reappeared on the lawn; and, approaching the ball-players, he began to execute his commission, as he conceived, in good earnest. Instead of simply saying, however, that it was disagreeable to the owner of the property to have such an invasion on his privacy, and thus putting a stop to the intrusion for the future as well as at the present moment, he believed some address necessary to attain the desired end.

"Well, Dickey," he said, "there is no accounting for tastes; but, in my opinion, the street would be a much better place to play ball in than this lawn. I wonder gentlemen of your observation should be satisfied with so cramped a play-ground!"

"I tell you, Squire Bragg, this will do," roared Dickey; "we are in a hurry, and no way particular; the bosses will be after us in half an hour. Heave away, Sam."

"There are so many fences hereabouts," continued Aristabulus, with an air of indifference; "it 's true the village trustees say there *shall be no ball-playing in the street*, but I conclude you don't much mind what *they* think or threaten."

"Let them sue for that, if they like," bawled a particularly amiable blackguard, called Peter, who struck his ball as he spoke, quite into the principal street of

the village. "Who 's a trustee, that he should tell gentlemen where they are to play ball!"

"Sure enough," said Aristabulus, "and, now, by following up that blow, you can bring matters to an issue. I think the law very oppressive, and you can never have so good an opportunity to bring things to a crisis. Besides, it is very aristocratic to play ball among roses and dahlias."

The bait took; for what apprentice—American apprentice, in particular—can resist an opportunity of showing how much he considers himself superior to the law? Then it had never struck any of the party before, that it was vulgar and aristocratic to pursue the sport among roses, and one or two of them actually complained that they had pricked their fingers, in searching for the ball.

"I know Mr. Effingham will be very sorry to have you go," continued Aristabulus, following up his advantage; "but gentlemen cannot always forego their pleasures for other folks."

"Who 's Mr. Effingham, I would like to know?" cried Joe Wart. "If he wants people to play ball on his premises, let him cut down his roses. Come, gentlemen, I conform to Squire Bragg, and invite you all to follow me into the street."

As the lawn was now evacuated, *en masse*, Aristabulus proceeded with alacrity to the house, and went into the library, where Mr. Effingham was patiently waiting his return.

"I am happy to inform you, sir," commenced the ambassador, "that the ball-players have adjourned; and as for Mr. Lather, he declines your proposition."

"Declines my proposition!"

"Yes, sir; he dislikes to come; for he thinks it will be altogether a poor operation. His notion is, that if it be worth his while to come up to the Wigwam to cut your hair, it may be worth your while to go down to the shop, to have it cut. Considering the matter in

all its bearings, therefore, he concludes he would rather not engage in the transaction at all."

"I regret, sir, to have consented to your taking so disagreeable a commission, and regret it the more, now I find that the barber is disposed to be troublesome."

"Not at all, sir. Mr. Lather is a good man, in his way, and particularly neighbourly. By the way, Mr. Effingham, he asked me to propose to let him take down your garden fence, in order that he may haul some manure on his potato patch, which wants it dreadfully, he says."

"Certainly, sir. I cannot possibly object to his hauling his manure, even through this house, should he wish it. He is so very valuable a citizen, and one who knows his own business so well, that I am only surprised at the moderation of his request."

Here Mr. Effingham rose, rang the bell for Pierre, and went to his own room, doubting, in his own mind, from all that he had seen, whether this was really the Templeton he had known in his youth, and whether he was in his own house or not.

As for Aristabulus, who saw nothing out of rule, or contrary to his own notions of propriety, in what had passed, he hurried off to tell the barber, who was so ignorant of the first duty of his trade, that he was at liberty to pull down Mr. Effingham's fence, in order to manure his own potato patch.

Lest the reader should suppose we are drawing caricatures, instead of representing an actual condition of society, it may be necessary to explain that Mr. Bragg was a standing candidate for popular favour; that, like Mr. Dodge, he considered every thing that presented itself in the name of the public, as sacred and paramount, and that so general and positive was his deference for majorities, that it was the bias of his mind to think half-a-dozen always in the right, as opposed to one, although that one, agreeably to the great decision of the real majority of the entire com-

munity, had not only the law on his side, but all the abstract merits of the disputed question. In short, to such a pass of freedom had Mr. Bragg, in common with a large class of his countrymen, carried his notions, that he had really begun to imagine liberty was all means and no end.

CHAPTER XII.

"In sooth, thou wast in very gracious fooling last night, when thou spokest of Pigrogromotus, of the Vapians passing the equinoctial of Queubus; 't was very good i' faith." — Sir Andrew Ague-Cheek.

The progress of society, it has just been said, in what is termed a "new country," is a little anomalous. At the commencement of a settlement, there is much of that sort of kind feeling and mutual interest, which men are apt to manifest towards each other, when they are embarked in an enterprise of common hazards. The distance that is unavoidably inseparable from education, habits and manners, is lessened by mutual wants and mutual efforts; and the gentleman, even while he may maintain his character and station, maintains them with that species of good-fellowship and familiarity, that marks the intercourse between the officer and the soldier, in an arduous campaign. Men, and even women, break bread together, and otherwise commingle, that, in different circumstances, would be strangers; the hardy adventures and rough living of the forest, apparently lowering the pretensions of the man of cultivation and mere mental resources, to something very near the level of those of the man of physical energy, and manual skill. In this rude intercourse, the parties meet, as it might be, on a sort of neutral ground, one yielding some of his superiority, and the other laying

claims to an outward show of equality, that he secretly knows, however, is the result of the peculiar circumstances in which he is placed. In short, the state of society is favourable to the claims of mere animal force, and unfavourable to those of the higher qualities.

This period may be termed, perhaps, the happiest of the first century of a settlement. The great cares of life are so engrossing and serious, that small vexations are overlooked, and the petty grievances that would make us seriously uncomfortable in a more regular state of society, are taken as matters of course, or laughed at as the regular and expected incidents of the day. Good-will abounds; neighbour comes cheerfully to the aid of neighbour; and life has much of the reckless gaiety, careless association, and buoyant merriment of childhood. It is found that they who have passed through this probation, usually look back to it with regret, and are fond of dwelling on the rude scenes and ridiculous events that distinguish the history of a new settlement, as the hunter is known to pine for the forest.

To this period of fun, toil, neighbourly feeling and adventure, succeeds another, in which society begins to marshal itself, and the ordinary passions have sway. Now it is, that we see the struggles for place, the heart-burnings and jealousies of contending families, and the influence of mere money. Circumstances have probably established the local superiority of a few beyond all question, and the condition of these serves as a goal for the rest to aim at. The learned professions, the ministry included, or what, by courtesy, are so called, take precedence, as a matter of course, next to wealth, however, when wealth is at all supported by appearances. Then commence those gradations of social station, that set institutions at defiance, and which as necessarily follow civilization, as tastes and habits are a consequence of indulgence.

This is, perhaps, the least inviting condition of society that belongs to any country that can claim to be free and removed from barbarism. The tastes are too uncultivated to exercise any essential influence; and when they do exist, it is usually with the pretension and effort that so commonly accompany infant knowledge. The struggle is only so much the more severe, in consequence of the late *pèle mèle*, while men lay claim to a consideration that would seem beyond their reach, in an older and more regulated community. It is during this period that manners suffer the most, since they want the nature and feeling of the first condition, while they are exposed to the rudest assaults of the coarse-minded and vulgar; for, as men usually defer to a superiority that is long established, there being a charm about antiquity that is sometimes able to repress the passions, in older communities the marshalling of time quietly regulates what is here the subject of strife.

What has just been said, depends on a general and natural principle, perhaps; but the state of society we are describing has some features peculiar to itself. The civilization of America, even in its older districts, which supply the emigrants to the newer regions, is unequal; one state possessing a higher level than another. Coming as it does, from different parts of this vast country, the population of a new settlement, while it is singularly homogenous for the circumstances, necessarily brings with it its local peculiarities. If to these elements be added a sprinkling of Europeans of various nations and conditions, the effects of the commingling, and the temporary social struggles that follow, will occasion no surprise.

The third and last condition of society in a "new country," is that in which the influence of the particular causes enumerated ceases, and men and things come within the control of more general and regular laws. The effect, of course, is to leave the community in possession of a civilization that conforms to

that of the whole region, be it higher or be it lower, and with the division into castes that are more or less rigidly maintained, according to circumstances.

The periods, as the astronomers call the time taken in a celestial revolution, of the two first of these epochs in the history of a settlement, depend very much on its advancement in wealth and in numbers. In some places, the pastoral age, or that of good fellowship, continues for a whole life, to the obvious retrogression of the people, in most of the higher qualities, but to their manifest advantage, however, in the pleasures of the time being; while, in others, it passes away rapidly, like the buoyant animal joys, that live their time, between fourteen and twenty.

The second period is usually of longer duration, the migratory habits of the American people keeping society more unsettled than might otherwise prove to be the case. It may be said never to cease entirely, until the great majority of the living generation are natives of the region, knowing no other means of comparison than those under which they have passed their days. Even when this is the case, there is commonly so large an infusion of the birds of passage, men who are adventurers in quest of advancement, and who live without the charities of a neighbourhood, as they may be said almost to live without a home, that there is to be found, for a long time, a middle state of society, during which it may well be questioned whether a community belongs to the second or to the third of the periods named.

Templeton was properly in this equivocal condition, for while the third generation of the old settlers were in active life, so many passers-by came and went, that the influence of the latter nearly neutralized that of time and the natural order of things. Its population was pretty equally divided between the descendants of the earlier inhabitants, and those who flitted like swallows and other migratory birds. All of those who

had originally entered the region in the pride of manhood, and had been active in converting the wilderness into the abodes of civilized men, if they had not been literally gathered to their fathers, in a physical sense, had been laid, the first of their several races, beneath those sods that were to cover the heads of so many of their descendants. A few still remained among those who entered the wilderness in young manhood, but the events of the first period we have designated, and which we have imperfectly recorded in another work, were already passing into tradition. Among these original settlers some portion of the feeling that had distinguished their earliest communion with their neighbours yet continued, and one of their greatest delights was to talk of the hardships and privations of their younger days, as the veteran loves to discourse of his marches, battles, scars, and sieges. It would be too much to say that these persons viewed the more ephemeral part of the population with distrust, for their familiarity with changes accustomed them to new faces; but they had a secret inclination for each other, preferred those who could enter the most sincerely into their own feelings, and naturally loved that communion best, where they found the most sympathy. To this fragment of the community belonged nearly all there was to be found of that sort of sentiment which is connected with locality; adventure, with them, supplying the place of time; while the natives of the spot, wanting in the recollections that had so many charms for their fathers, were not yet brought sufficiently within the influence of traditionary interest, to feel that hallowed sentiment in its proper force. As opposed in feeling to these relics of the olden time, were the birds of passage so often named, a numerous and restless class, that, of themselves, are almost sufficient to destroy whatever there is of poetry, or of local attachment, in any region where they resort.

In Templeton and its adjacent district, however, the

two hostile influences might be said to be nearly equal, the descendants of the fathers of the country beginning to make a manly stand against the looser sentiment, or the want of sentiment, that so singularly distinguishes the migratory bands. The first did begin to consider the temple in which their fathers had worshipped more hallowed than strange altars; the sods that covered their fathers' heads more sacred than the clods that were upturned by the plough; and the places of their childhood and childish sports dearer than the highway trodden by a nameless multitude.

Such, then, were the elements of the society into which we have now ushered the reader, and with which it will be our duty to make him better acquainted, as we proceed in the regular narration of the incidents of our tale.

The return of the Effinghams, after so long an absence, naturally produced a sensation in so small a place, and visiters began to appear in the Wigwam as soon as propriety would allow. Many false rumours prevailed, quite as a matter of course: and Eve, it was reported, was on the point of being married to no less than three of the inmates of her father's house, within the first ten days, viz: Sir George Templemore, Mr. Powis, and Mr. Bragg; the latter story taking its rise in some precocious hopes that had escaped the gentleman himself, in the "excitement" of helping to empty a bottle of bad Breton wine, that was dignified with the name of champagne. But these tales revived and died so often, in a state of society in which matrimony is so general a topic with the young of the gentler sex, that they brought with them their own refutation.

The third day, in particular, after the arrival of our party, was a reception day at the Wigwam; the gentlemen and ladies making it a point to be at home and disengaged, after twelve o'clock, in order to do honour to their guests. One of the first who made his appearance was a Mr. Howel, a bachelor of about the same

age as Mr. Effingham, and a man of easy fortune and quiet habits. Nature had done more towards making Mr. Howel a gentleman, than either cultivation or association; for he had passed his entire life, with very immaterial exceptions, in the valley of Templeton, where, without being what could be called a student, or a scholar, he had dreamed away his existence in an indolent communication with the current literature of the day. He was fond of reading, and being indisposed to contention, or activity of any sort, his mind had admitted the impressions of what he perused, as the stone receives a new form by the constant fall of drops of water. Unfortunately for Mr. Howel, he understood no language but his mother tongue; and, as all his reading was necessarily confined to English books, he had gradually, and unknown to himself, in his moral nature at least, got to be a mere reflection of those opinions, prejudices, and principles, if such a word can properly be used for such a state of the mind, that it had suited the interests or passions of England to promulgate by means of the press. A perfect *bonne foi* prevailed in all his notions; and though a very modest man by nature, so very certain was he that his authority was always right, that he was a little apt to be dogmatical on such points as he thought his authors appeared to think settled. Between John Effingham and Mr. Howel, there were constant amicable skirmishes in the way of discussion; for, while the latter was so dependent, limited in knowledge by unavoidable circumstances, and disposed to an innocent credulity, the first was original in his views, accustomed to see and think for himself, and, moreover, a little apt to estimate his own advantages at their full value.

"Here comes our good neighbour, and my old schoolfellow, Tom Howel," said Mr. Effingham, looking out at a window, and perceiving the person mentioned crossing the little lawn in front of the house, by following a winding foot-path—"as kind-hearted a man,

Sir George Templemore, as exists; one who is really American, for he has scarcely quitted the county half-a-dozen times in his life, and one of the honestest fellows of my acquaintance."

"Ay," put in John Effingham, "as real an American as any man can be, who uses English spectacles for all he looks at, English opinions for all he says, English prejudices for all he condemns, and an English palate for all he tastes. American, quotha! The man is no more American than the Times' newspaper, or Charing Cross! He actually made a journey to New-York, last war, to satisfy himself with his own eyes that a Yankee frigate had really brought an Englishman into port."

"His English predilections will be no fault in my eyes," said the baronet, smiling—"and I dare say we shall be excellent friends."

"I am sure Mr. Howel is a very agreeable man," added Grace—"of all in your Templeton *côterie*, he is my greatest favourite."

"Oh! I foresee a tender intimacy between Templemore and Howel," rejoined John Effingham; "and sundry wordy wars between the latter and Miss Effingham."

"In this you do me injustice, cousin Jack. I remember Mr. Howel well, and kindly; for he was ever wont to indulge my childish whims, when a girl."

"The man is a second Burchell, and, I dare say, never came to the Wigwam when you were a child, without having his pockets stuffed with cakes, or *bonbons*."

The meeting was cordial, Mr. Howel greeting the gentlemen like a warm friend, and expressing great delight at the personal improvements that had been made in Eve, between the ages of eight and twenty. John Effingham was no more backward than the others, for he, too, liked their simple-minded, kind-hearted, but credulous neighbour.

"You are welcome back—you are welcome back," added Mr. Howel, blowing his nose, in order to conceal the tears that were gathering in his eyes. "I did think of going to New-York to meet you, but the distance at my time of life is very serious. Age, gentlemen, seems to be a stranger to you."

"And yet we, who are both a few months older than yourself, Howel," returned Mr. Effingham, kindly, "have managed to overcome the distance you have just mentioned, in order to come and see *you!*"

"Ay, you are great travellers, gentlemen, very great travellers, and are accustomed to motion.—Been quite as far as Jerusalem, I hear!"

"Into its very gates, my good friend; and I wish, with all my heart, we had had you in our company. Such a journey might cure you of the home-malady."

"I am a fixture, and never expect to look upon the ocean, now. I did, at one period of my life, fancy such an event might happen, but I have finally abandoned all hope on that subject. Well, Miss Eve, of all the countries in which you have dwelt, to which do you give the preference?"

"I think Italy is the general favourite," Eve answered, with a friendly smile; "although there are some agreeable things peculiar to almost every country."

"Italy!—Well, that astonishes me a good deal! I never knew there was any thing particularly interesting about Italy! I should have expected *you* to say, England."

"England is a fine country, too, certainly; but it wants many things that Italy enjoys."

"Well, now, what?" said Mr. Howel, shifting his legs from one knee to the other, in order to be more convenient to listen, or, if necessary, to object. "What *can* Italy possess, that England does not enjoy in a still greater degree?"

"Its recollections, for one thing, and all that interest which time and great events throw around a region."

"And is England wanting in recollections and great events? Are there not the Conqueror? or, if you will, King Alfred? and Queen Elizabeth, and Shakspeare—think of Shakspeare, young lady—and Sir Walter Scott, and the Gun-Powder Plot; and Cromwell, Oliver Cromwell, my dear Miss Eve; and Westminster Abbey, and London Bridge, and George IV., the descendant of a line of real kings,—what, in the name of Heaven, can Italy possess, to equal the interest one feels in such things as these?"

"They are very interesting no doubt;" said Eve, endeavouring not to smile—"but Italy has its relics of former ages too; you forget the Cæsars."

"Very good sort of persons for barbarous times, I dare say, but what can they be to the English monarchs? I would rather look upon a *bonâ fide* English king, than see all the Cæsars that ever lived. I never can think any man a real king but the king of England."

"Not King Solomon!" cried John Effingham.

"Oh! he was a Bible king, and one never thinks of them. Italy! well, this I did not expect from your father's daughter! Your great-great-great-grandfather must have been an Englishman born, Mr. Effingham?"

"I have reason to think he was, sir."

"And Milton, and Dryden, and Newton, and Locke! These are prodigious names, and worth all the Cæsars put together. And Pope, too; what have they got in Italy to compare to Pope?"

"They have at least *the* Pope," said Eve, laughing.

"And, then, there are the Boar's Head in East-Cheap; and the Tower; and Queen Anne, and all the wits of her reign; and—and—and Titus Oates; and Bosworth Field; and Smithfield, where the martyrs were burned, and a thousand more spots and persons of intense interest in Old England!"

"Quite true," said John Effingham, with an air of

sympathy—"but, Howel, you have forgotten Peeping Tom of Coventry, and the climate!"

"And Holyrood-House; and York-Minster; and St. Paul's;" continued the worthy Mr. Howel, too much bent on a catalogue of excellencies, that to him were sacred, to heed the interruption, "and, above all, Windsor Castle. What is there in the world to equal Windsor Castle as a royal residence?"

Want of breath now gave Eve an opportunity to reply, and she seized it with an eagerness that she was the first to laugh at herself, afterwards.

"Caserta is no mean house, Mr. Howel; and, in my poor judgment, there is more real magnificence in its great stair-case, than in all Windsor Castle united, if you except the chapel."

"But, St. Paul's!"

"Why, St. Peter's may be set down, quite fairly, I think, for its *pendant* at least."

"True, the Catholics *do* say so;" returned Mr. Howel, with the deliberation one uses when he greatly distrusts his own concession; "but I have always considered it one of their frauds. I don't think there *can* be any thing finer than St. Paul's. Then there are the noble ruins of England! *They*, you must admit, are unrivalled."

"The Temple of Neptune, at Pæstum, is commonly thought an interesting ruin, Mr. Howel."

"Yes, yes, for a *temple*, I dare say; though I do not remember to have ever heard of it before. But no temple can ever compare to a ruined *abbey!*"

"Taste is an arbitrary thing, Tom Howel, as you and I know when as boys we quarrelled about the beauty of our ponies," said Mr. Effingham, willing to put an end to a discussion that he thought a little premature, after so long an absence. "Here are two young friends who shared the hazards of our late passage with us, and to whom, in a great degree, we owe our present happy security, and I am anxious to make you

acquainted with them. This is our countryman, Mr. Powis, and this is an English friend, who, I am certain, will be happy to know so warm an admirer of his own country—Sir George Templemore."

Mr. Howel had never before seen a titled Englishman, and he was taken so much by surprise that he made his salutations rather awkwardly. As both the young men, however, met him with the respectful ease that denotes familiarity with the world, he soon recovered his self-possession.

"I hope you have brought back with you a sound American heart, Miss Eve," resumed the guest, as soon as this little interruption had ceased. "We have had sundry rumours of French Marquisses, and German Barons; but I have, all along, trusted too much to your patriotism to believe you would marry a foreigner."

"I hope you except Englishmen," cried Sir George, gaily: "we are almost the same people."

"I am proud to hear you say so, sir. Nothing flatters me more than to be thought English; and I certainly should not have accused Miss Effingham of a want of love of country, had——"

"She married half-a-dozen Englishmen," interrupted John Effingham, who saw that the old theme was in danger of being revived. "But, Howel, you have paid me no compliments on the changes in the house. I hope they are to your taste."

"A little too French, Mr. John."

"French!—There is not a French feature in the whole animal. What has put such a notion into your head?"

"It is the common opinion, and I confess I should like the building better were it less continental."

"Why, my old friend, it is a nondescript-original—Effingham upon Doolittle, if you will; and, as for models, it is rather more *English* than any thing else."

"Well, Mr. John, I am glad to hear this, for I do confess to a disposition rather to like the house. I am

dying to know, Miss Eve, if you saw all our distinguished contemporaries when in Europe?—*That* to me, would be one of the greatest delights of travelling!"

"To say that we saw them *all*, might be too much; though we certainly did meet with many."

"Scott, of course."

"Sir Walter we had the pleasure of meeting, a few times, in London."

"And Southey, and Coleridge, and Wordsworth, and Moore, and Bulwer, and D'Israeli, and Rogers, and Campbell, and the grave of Byron, and Horace Smith, and Miss Landon, and Barry Cornwall, and—"

"*Cum multis aliis*," put in John Effingham, again, by way of arresting the torrent of names. "Eve saw many of these, and, as Tubal told Shylock, 'we often came where we did hear' of the rest. But you say nothing, friend Tom, of Goethe, and Tieck, and Schlegel, and La Martine, Chateaubriant, Hugo, Delavigne, Mickiewicz, Nota, Manzoni, Niccolini, &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. &c."

Honest, well-meaning Mr. Howel, listened to the catalogue that the other ran volubly over, in silent wonder; for, with the exception of one or two of these distinguished men, he had never even heard of them; and, in the simplicity of his heart, unconsciously to himself, he had got to believe that there was no great personage still living, of whom he did not know something.

"Ah, here comes young Wenham, by way of preserving the equilibrium," resumed John Effingham, looking out of a window—"I rather think you must have forgotten him, Ned, though you remember his father, beyond question."

Mr. Effingham and his cousin went out into the hall to receive the new guest, with whom the latter had become acquainted while superintending the repairs of the Wigwam.

Mr. Wenham was the son of a successful lawyer in the county, and, being an only child, he had also succeeded to an easy independence. His age, however, brought him rather into the generation to which Eve belonged, than into that of the father; and, if Mr. Howel was a reflection, or rather a continuation, of all the provincial notions that America entertained of England forty years ago, Mr. Wenham might almost be said to belong to the opposite school, and to be as ultra-American, as his neighbour was ultra-British.—If there is *la jeune France*, there is also *la jeune Amérique*, although the votaries of the latter march with less hardy steps than the votaries of the first. Mr. Wenham fancied himself a paragon of national independence, and was constantly talking of American excellencies, though the ancient impressions still lingered in his moral system, as men look askance for the ghosts which frightened their childhood on crossing a churchyard in the dark. John Effingham knew the *penchant* of the young man, and when he said that he came happily to preserve the equilibrium, he alluded to this striking difference in the characters of their two friends.

The introductions and salutations over, we shall resume the conversation that succeeded in the drawing-room.

"You must be much gratified, Miss Effingham," observed Mr. Wenham, who, like a true American, being a young man himself, supposed it *de rigueur* to address a young lady in preference to any other present,—"with the great progress made by *our* country since you went abroad."

Eve simply answered that her extreme youth, when she left home, had prevented her from retaining any precise notions on such subjects.

"I dare say it is all very true," she added, "but one, like myself, who remembers only older countries, is, I think, a little more apt to be struck with the deficiencies,

than with what may, in truth, be improvements, though they still fall short of excellence."

Mr. Wenham looked vexed, or indignant would be a better word, but he succeeded in preserving his coolness—a thing that is not always easy to one of provincial habits and provincial education, when he finds his own *beau idéal* lightly estimated by others.

"Miss Effingham must discover a thousand imperfections," said Mr. Howel, "coming, as she does, directly from England. That music, now,"—alluding to the sounds of a flute that were heard through the open windows, coming from the adjacent village—"must be rude enough to her ear, after the music of London."

"The *street* music of London is certainly among the best, if not the very best, in Europe," returned Eve, with a glance of the eye at the baronet, that caused him to smile, "and I think this fairly belongs to the class, being so freely given to the neighbourhood."

"Have you read the articles signed Minerva, in the Hebdomad, Miss Effingham," inquired Mr. Wenham, who was determined to try the young lady on a point of sentiment, having succeeded so ill in his first attempt to interest her—"they are generally thought to be a great acquisition to American literature."

"Well, Wenham, you are a fortunate man," interposed Mr. Howel, "if you can find any literature in America, to add to, or to substract from. Beyond almanacs, reports of cases badly got up, and newspaper verses, I know nothing that deserves such a name."

"We may not print on as fine paper, Mr. Howel, or do up the books in as handsome binding as other people," said Mr. Wenham, bridling and looking grave, "but so far as sentiments are concerned, or sound sense, American literature need turn its back on no literature of the day."

"By the way, Mr. Effingham, you were in Russia; did you happen to see the Emperor?"

"I had that pleasure, Mr. Howel."

"And is he really the monster we have been taught to believe him?"

"Monster!" exclaimed the upright Mr. Effingham, fairly recoiling a step in surprise. "In what sense a monster, my worthy friend? surely not in a physical?"

"I do not know that. I have somehow got the notion he is any thing but handsome. A mean, butchering, bloody-minded looking little chap, I'll engage."

"You are libelling one of the finest-looking men of the age."

"I think I would submit it to a jury. I cannot believe, after what I have read of him in the English publications, that he is so very handsome."

"But, my good neighbour, these English publications must be wrong; prejudiced perhaps, or even malignant."

"Oh! I am not the man to be imposed on in that way. Besides, what motive could an English writer have for belying an Emperor of Russia?"

"Sure enough, what motive!" exclaimed John Effingham.—"You have your answer, Ned!"

"But you will remember, Mr. Howel," Eve interposed, "that we have *seen* the Emperor Nicholas."

"I dare say, Miss Eve, that your gentle nature was disposed to judge him as kindly as possible; and, then, I think most Americans, ever since the treaty of Ghent, have been disposed to view all Russians too favourably. No, no; I am satisfied with the account of the English; they live much nearer to St. Petersburg than we do, and they are more accustomed, too, to give accounts of such matters."

"But living nearer, Tom Howel," cried Mr. Effingham, with unusual animation, "in such a case, is of no avail, unless one lives near enough to see with his own eyes."

"Well—well—my good friend, we will talk of this another time. I know your disposition to look at every body with lenient eyes. I will now wish you all a

good morning, and hope soon to see you again. Miss Eve, I have one word to say, if you dare trust yourself with a youth of fifty, for a minute in the library."

Eve rose cheerfully, and led the way to the room her father's visiter had named. When within it, Mr. Howel shut the door carefully, and then with a sort of eager delight, he exclaimed—

"For heaven's sake, my dear young lady, tell me who are these two strange gentlemen in the other room."

"Precisely the persons my father mentioned, Mr. Howel; Mr. Paul Powis, and Sir George Templemore."

"Englishmen, of course!"

"Sir George Templemore is, of course, as you say; but we may boast of Mr. Powis as a countryman."

"Sir George Templemore!—What a superb-looking young fellow!"

"Why, yes," returned Eve, laughing; "he, at least, you will admit is a handsome man."

"He is wonderful!—The other, Mr.—a—a—a—I forget what you called him—he is pretty well too; but this Sir George is a princely youth."

"I rather think a majority of observers would give the preference to the appearance of Mr. Powis," said Eve, struggling to be steady, but permitting a blush to heighten her colour, in despite of the effort.

"What could have induced him to come up among these mountains—an English baronet!" resumed Mr. Howel, without thinking of Eve's confusion. "Is he a real lord?"

"Only a little one, Mr. Howel. You heard what my father said of our having been fellow-travellers."

"But what *does* he think of us. I am dying to know what such a man *really* thinks of us?"

"It is not always easy to discover what such men *really* think; although I am inclined to believe that he is disposed to think rather favourably of some of us."

"Ay, of you, and your father, and Mr. John. You have travelled, and are more than half European; but what *can* he think of those who have never left America?"

"Even of some of those," returned Eve, smiling, "I suspect he thinks partially."

"Well, I am glad of that. Do you happen to know his opinion of the Emperor Nicholas?"

"Indeed I do not remember to have heard him mention the Emperor's name; nor do I think he has ever seen him."

"That is extraordinary! Such a man should have seen every thing, and know every thing; but I'll engage, at the bottom, he does know all about him. If you happen to have any old English newspapers, as wrappers, or by any other accident, let me beg them of you. I care not how old they are. An English journal fifty years old, is more interesting than one of ours wet from the press."

Eve promised to send him a package, when they shook hands and parted. As she was crossing the hall, to rejoin the party, John Effingham stopped her.

"Has Howel made proposals?" the gentleman inquired, in an affected whisper.

"None, cousin Jack, beyond an offer to read the old English newspapers I can send him."

"Yes, yes, Tom Howel will swallow all the nonsense that is *timbré à Londres*."

"I confess a good deal of surprise at finding a respectable and intelligent man so weak-minded as to give credit to such authorities, or to form his serious opinions on information derived from such sources."

"You may be surprised, Eve, at hearing so frank avowals of the weakness; but, as for the weakness itself, you are now in a country for which England does all the thinking, except on subjects that touch the current interests of the day."

"Nay, I will not believe this! If it were true, how

came we independent of her—where did we get spirit to war against her."

"The man who has attained his majority is independent of his father's legal control, without being independent of the lessons he was taught when a child. The soldier sometimes mutinies, and after the contest is over, he is usually the most submissive man of the regiment."

"All this to me is very astonishing! I confess that a great deal has struck me unpleasantly in this way, since our return; especially in ordinary society; but I never could have supposed it had reached to the pass in which I see it existing in our good neighbour Howel."

"You have witnessed one of the effects, in a matter of no great moment to ourselves; but, as time and years afford the means of observation and comparison, you will perceive the effects in matters of the last moment, in a national point of view. It is in human nature to undervalue the things with which we are familiar, and to form false estimates of those which are remote, either by time, or by distance. But, go into the drawing-room, and, in young Wenham, you will find one who fancies himself a votary of a new school, although his prejudices and mental dependence are scarcely less obvious than those of poor Tom Howel."

The arrival of more company, among whom were several ladies, compelled Eve to defer an examination of Mr. Wenham's peculiarities to another opportunity. She found many of her own sex, whom she had left children, grown into womanhood, and not a few of them at a period of life when they should be cultivating their physical and moral powers, already oppressed with the cares and feebleness that weigh so heavily on the young American wife.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Nay we must longer kneel; I am a suitor."
QUEEN KATHERINE.

THE Effinghams were soon regularly domesticated, and the usual civilities had been exchanged. Many of their old friends resumed their ancient intercourse, and some new acquaintances were made. The few first visits were, as usual, rather labored and formal; but things soon took their natural course, and, as the ease of country life was the aim of the family, the temporary little bustle was quickly forgotten.

The dressing-room of Eve overlooked the lake, and, about a week after her arrival, she was seated in it enjoying that peculiarly ladylike luxury, which is to be found in the process of having another gently disposing of the hair. Annette wielded the comb, as usual, while Ann Sidley, who was unconsciously jealous that any one should be employed about her darling, even in this manner, though so long accustomed to it, busied herself in preparing the different articles of attire that she fancied her young mistress might be disposed to wear that morning. Grace was also in the room, having escaped from the hands of her own maid, in order to look into one of those books which professed to give an account of the extraction and families of the higher classes of Great Britain, a copy of which Eve happened to possess, among a large collection of books, *Almanachs de Gotha*, Court Guides, and other similar works that she had found it convenient to possess as a traveller.

"Ah! here it is," said Grace, in the eagerness of one who is suddenly successful after a long and vexatious search.

"Here is what, coz?"

Grace coloured, and she could have bitten her tongue for its indiscretion, but, too ingenuous to deceive, she reluctantly told the truth.

"I was merely looking for the account of Sir George Templemore's family; it is awkward to be domesticated with one, of whose family we are utterly ignorant."

"Have you found the name?"

"Yes; I see he has two sisters, both of whom are married, and a brother who is in the Guards. But——"

"But what, dear?"

"His title is not so *very* old."

"The title of no Baronet *can* be very old, the order having been instituted in the reign of James I."

"I did not know that. His ancestor was created a baronet in 1701, I see. Now, Eve——"

"Now, what, Grace?"

"We are both—" Grace would not confine the remark to herself—"we are both of older families than this! You have even a much higher English extraction; and I think I can claim for the Van Cortlandts more antiquity than one that dates from 1701!"

"No one doubts it, Grace; but what do you wish me to understand by this? Are we to insist on preceding Sir George, in going through a door?"

Grace blushed to the eyes, and yet she laughed, involuntarily.

"What nonsense! No one thinks of such things in America."

"Except at Washington, where, I am told, 'Senators' ladies' do give themselves airs. But you are quite right, Grace; women have no rank in America, beyond their general social rank, as ladies or no ladies, and we will not be the first to set an example of breaking the rule. I am afraid our blood will pass for nothing, and that we must give place to the baronet, unless, indeed, he recognizes the rights of the sex."

"You know I mean nothing so silly. Sir George

Templemore does not seem to think of rank at all; even Mr. Powis treats him, in all respects, as an equal, and Sir George seems to admit it to be right."

Eve's maid, at the moment, was twisting her hair, with the intention to put it up; but the sudden manner in which her young mistress turned to look at Grace, caused Annette to relinquish her grasp, and the shoulders of the beautiful and blooming girl were instantly covered with the luxuriant tresses.

"And why should *not* Mr. Powis treat Sir George Templemore as one every way his equal, Grace?" she asked, with an impetuosity unusual in one so trained in the forms of the world.

"Why, Eve, one is a baronet, and the other is but a simple gentleman."

Eve Effingham sat silent for quite a minute. Her little foot moved, and she had been carefully taught, too, that a lady-like manner, required that even this beautiful portion of the female frame should be quiet and unobtrusive. But America did not contain two of the same sex, years, and social condition, less alike in their opinions, or it might be said their prejudices, than the two cousins. Grace Van Cortlandt, of the best blood of her native land, had unconsciously imbibed in childhood, the notions connected with hereditary rank, through the traditions of colonial manners, by means of novels, by hearing the vulgar reproached or condemned for their obtrusion and ignorance, and too often justly reproached and condemned, and by the aid of her imagination, which contributed to throw a gloss and brilliancy over a state of things that singularly gains by distance. On the other hand, with Eve, every thing connected with such subjects was a matter of fact. She had been thrown early into the highest associations of Europe; she had not only seen royalty on its days of gala and representation, a mere raree-show that is addressed to the senses, or purely an observance of forms that may possibly have their mean-

ing, but which can scarcely be said to have their reasons, but she had lived long and intimately among the high-born and great, and this, too, in so many different countries, as to have destroyed the influence of the particular nation that has transmitted so many of its notions to America as heir-looms. By close observation, she knew that arbitrary and political distinctions made but little difference between men of themselves; and so far from having become the dupe of the glitter of life, by living so long within its immediate influence, she had learned to discriminate between the false and the real, and to perceive that which was truly respectable and useful, and to know it from that which was merely arbitrary and selfish. Eve actually fancied that the position of an American gentleman might readily become, nay that it *ought* to be the highest of all human stations, short of that of sovereigns. Such a man had no social superior, with the exception of those who actually ruled, in her eyes, and this fact she conceived, rendered him more than noble, as nobility is usually graduated. She had been accustomed to see her father and John Effingham moving in the best circles of Europe, respected for their information and independence, undistinguished by their manners, admired for their personal appearance, manly, courteous, and of noble bearing and principles, if not set apart from the rest of mankind by an arbitrary rule connected with rank. Rich, and possessing all the habits that properly mark refinement, of gentle extraction, of liberal attainments, walking abroad in the dignity of manhood, and with none between them and the Deity, Eve had learned to regard the gentlemen of her race as the equals in station of any of their European associates, and as the superiors of most, in every thing that is essential to true distinction. With her, even titular princes and dukes had no estimation, merely as princes and dukes; and, as her quick mind glanced over the long catalogue of artificial social gradations,

and she found Grace actually attaching an importance to the equivocal and purely conventional condition of an English baronet, a strong sense of the ludicrous connected itself with the idea.

"A simple gentleman, Grace!" she repeated slowly after her cousin; "and is not a simple gentleman, a simple *American* gentleman, the equal of any gentleman on earth—of a poor baronet, in particular?"

"Poor baronet, Eve!"

"Yes, dear, *poor* baronet; I know fully the extent and meaning of what I say. It is true, we do not know as much of Mr. Powis' family," and here Eve's colour heightened, though she made a mighty effort to be steady and unmoved, "as we might; but we know he is an *American;* that, at least, is something; and we see he is a gentleman; and what American gentleman, a real American gentleman, *can* be the inferior of an English baronet? Would your uncle, think you; would cousin Jack; proud, lofty-minded cousin Jack, think you, Grace, consent to receive so paltry a distinction as a baronetcy, were our institutions to be so far altered as to admit of such social classifications?"

"Why, what would they be, Eve, if not baronets?"

"Earls, Counts, Dukes, nay Princes! These are the designations of the higher classes of Europe, and such titles, or those that are equivalent, would belong to the higher classes here."

"I fancy that Sir George Templemore would not be persuaded to admit all this!"

"If you had seen Miss Eve, surrounded and admired by princes, as I have seen her, Miss Grace," said Ann Sidley, "you would not think any simple Sir George half good enough for her."

"Our good Nanny means, *a* Sir George," interrupted Eve, laughing, "and not *the* Sir George in question. But, seriously, dearest coz, it depends more on ourselves, and less on others, in what light they are to regard us, than is commonly supposed. Do you not

suppose there are families in America who, if disposed to raise any objections beyond those that are purely personal, would object to baronets, and the wearers of red ribands, as unfit matches for their daughters, on the ground of rank? What an absurdity would it be, for *a* Sir George, or *the* Sir George either, to object to a daughter of a President of the United States for instance, on account of station; and yet I'll answer for it, *you* would think it no personal honour, if Mr. Jackson had a son, that he should propose to my dear father for you. Let us respect ourselves properly, take care to be truly ladies and gentlemen, and so far from titular rank's being necessary to us, before a hundred lustres are past, we shall bring all such distinctions into discredit, by showing that they are not necessary to any one important interest, or to true happiness and respectability any where."

"And do you not believe, Eve, that Sir George Templemore thinks of the difference in station between us?"

"I cannot answer for that," said Eve, calmly. "The man is naturally modest; and, it is possible, when he sees that we belong to the highest social condition of a great country, he may regret that such has not been his own good fortune in his native land; especially, Grace, since he has known *you*."

Grace blushed, looked pleased, delighted even, and yet surprised. It is unnecessary to explain the causes of the three first expressions of her emotions; but the last may require a short examination. Nothing but time and a change of circumstances, can ever raise a province or a provincial town to the independent state of feeling that so strikingly distinguishes a metropolitan country, or a capital. It would be as rational to expect that the inhabitants of the nursery should disregard the opinions of the drawing-room, as to believe that the provincial should do all his own thinking. Political dependency, moreover, is much more easily

thrown aside than mental dependency. It is not surprising, therefore, that Grace Van Cortlandt, with her narrow associations, general notions of life, origin, and provincial habits, should be the very opposite of Eve, in all that relates to independence of thought, on subjects like those that they were now discussing. Had Grace been a native of New England, even, she would have been less influenced by the mere social rank of the baronet than was actually the case; for, while the population of that part of the Union feel more of the general subserviency to Great Britain than the population of any other portion of the republic, they probably feel less of it, in this particular form, from the circumstance that their colonial habits were less connected with the aristocratical usages of the mother country. Grace was allied by blood, too, with the higher classes of England, as, indeed, was the fact with most of the old families among the New York gentry; and the traditions of her race came in aid of the traditions of her colony, to continue the profound deference she felt for an English title. Eve might have been equally subjected to the same feelings, had she not been removed into another sphere at so early a period of life, where she imbibed the notions already mentioned—notions that were quite as effectually rooted in her moral system, as those of Grace herself could be in her own.

"This is a strange way of viewing the rank of a baronet, Eve!" Grace exclaimed, as soon as she had a little recovered from the confusion caused by the personal allusion. "I greatly question if you can induce Sir George Templemore to see his own position with your eyes."

"No, my dear; I think he will be much more likely to regard, not only that, but most other things, with the eyes of another person. We will now talk of more agreeable things, however; for I confess, when I do dwell on titles, I have a taste for the more

princely appellations; and that a simple *chevalier* can scarce excite a feeling that such is the theme."

"Nay, Eve," interrupted Grace, with spirit, "an *English* baronet *is* noble. Sir George Templemore assured me that, as lately as last evening. The heralds, I believe, have quite recently established that fact to their own satisfaction."

"I am glad of it, dear," returned Eve, with difficulty refraining from gaping, "as it will be of great importance to them, in their own eyes. At all events, I concede that Sir George Templemore, knight or baronet, big baron or little baron, is a noble fellow; and what more can any reasonable person desire. Do you know, sweet coz, that the Wigwam will be full to overflowing next week?—that it will be necessary to light our council-fire, and to smoke the pipe of many welcomes?"

"I have understood Mr. Powis, that his kinsman, Captain Ducie, will arrive on Monday."

"And Mrs. Hawker will come on Tuesday, Mr. and Mrs. Bloomfield on Wednesday, and honest, brave, straight-forward, literati-hating Captain Truck, on Thursday, at the latest. We shall be a large country-circle, and I hear the gentlemen talking of the boats, and other amusements. But I believe my father has a consultation in the library, at which he wishes us to be present; we will join him, if you please."

As Eve's toilette was now completed, the two ladies rose, and descended together to join the party below. Mr. Effingham was standing at a table that was covered with maps, while two or three respectable-looking men, master-mechanics, were at his side. The manners of these men were quiet, civil, and respectful, having a mixture of manly simplicity, with a proper deference for the years and station of the master of the house; though all but one, wore their hats. The one who formed the exception, had become refined by a long intercourse with this particular family; and his

acquired taste had taught him that, respect for himself, as well as for decency, rendered it necessary to observe the long-established rules of decorum, in his intercourse with others. His companions, though without a particle of coarseness, or any rudeness of intention, were less decorous, simply from a loose habit, that is insensibly taking the place of the ancient laws of propriety in such matters, and which habit, it is to be feared, has a part of its origin in false and impracticable political notions, that have been stimulated by the arts of demagogues. Still, not one of the three hard-working, really civil, and even humane men, who now stood covered in the library of Mr. Effingham, was probably conscious of the impropriety of which he was guilty, or was doing more than insensibly yielding to a vicious and vulgar practice.

"I am glad you have come, my love," said Mr. Effingham, as his daughter entered the room, "for I find I need support in maintaining my own opinions here. John is obstinately silent; and, as for all these other gentlemen, I fear they have decidedly taken sides against me."

"You can usually count on my support, dearest father, feeble as it may be. But what is the disputed point to-day?"

"There is a proposition to alter the interior of the church, and our neighbour Gouge has brought the plans, on which, as he says, he has lately altered several churches in the county. The idea is, to remove the pews entirely, converting them into what are called 'slips,' to lower the pulpit, and to raise the floor, amphitheatre fashion."

"Can there be a sufficient reason for this change?" demanded Eve, with surprise. "Slips! The word has a vulgar sound even, and savours of a useless innovation. I doubt its orthodoxy."

"It is very popular, Miss Eve," answered Aristabulus, advancing from a window, where he had been

whispering assent. "This fashion takes universally, and is getting to prevail in all denominations."

Eve turned involuntarily, and to her surprise she perceived that the editor of the Active Inquirer was added to their party. The salutations, on the part of the young lady, were distant and stately, while Mr. Dodge, who had not been able to resist public opinion, and had actually parted with his moustachios, simpered, and wished to have it understood by the spectators, that he was on familiar terms with all the family.

"It may be popular, Mr. Bragg," returned Eve, as soon as she rose from her profound curtsey to Mr. Dodge; "but it can scarcely be said to be seemly. This is, indeed, changing the order of things, by elevating the sinner, and depressing the saint."

"You forget, Miss Eve, that under the old plan, the people could not see; they were kept unnaturally down, if one can so express it, while nobody had a good look-out but the parson and the singers in the front row of the gallery. This was unjust."

"I do not conceive, sir, that a good look-out, as you term it, is at all essential to devotion, or that one cannot as well listen to instruction when beneath the teacher, as when above him."

"Pardon me, Miss;" Eve recoiled, as she always did, when Mr. Bragg used this vulgar and contemptuous mode of address; "we put no body up or down; all we aim it is a just equality—to place all, as near as possible, on a level."

Eve gazed about her in wonder; and then she hesitated a moment, as if distrusting her ears.

"Equality! Equality with what? Surely not with the ordained ministers of the church, in the performance of their sacred duties! Surely not with the Deity!"

"We do not look at it exactly in this light, ma'am. The people build the church, *that* you will allow,

Miss Effingham; even *you* will allow *this*, Mr. Effingham."

Both the parties appealed to, bowed a simple assent to so plain a proposition, but neither spoke.

"Well, the people building the church very naturally ask themselves for what purpose it was built?"

"For the worship of God," returned Eve with a steady solemnity of manner that a little abashed even the ordinarily indomitable and self-composed Aristabulus.

"Yes, Miss; for the worship of God and the accommodation of the public."

"Certainly," added Mr. Dodge; "for the public accommodation and for public worship;" laying due emphasis on the adjectives.

"Father, you, at least, will never consent to this?"

"Not readily, my love. I confess it shocks all my notions of propriety to see the sinner, even when he professes to be the most humble and penitent, thrust himself up ostentatiously, as if filled only with his own self-love and self-importance."

"You will allow, Mr. Effingham," rejoined Aristabulus, "that churches are built to accommodate the public, as Mr. Dodge has so well remarked."

"No, sir; they are built for the worship of God, as my daughter has so well remarked."

"Yes, sir; that, too, I grant you——"

"As secondary to the main object—the public convenience, Mr. Bragg unquestionably means;" put in John Effingham, speaking for the first time that morning on the subject.

Eve turned quickly, and looked towards her kinsman. He was standing near the table, with folded arms, and his fine face expressing all the sarcasm and contempt that a countenance so singularly calm and gentlemanlike, could betray.

"Cousin Jack," she said earnestly, "this ought not to be."

"Cousin Eve, nevertheless this will be."

"Surely not—surely not! Men can never so far forget appearances as to convert the temple of God into a theatre, in which the convenience of the spectators is the one great object to be kept in view!"

"*You* have travelled, sir," said John Effingham, indicating by his eye that he addressed Mr. Dodge, in particular, "and must have entered places of worship in other parts of the world. Did not the simple beauty of the manner in which all classes, the great and the humble, the rich and the poor, kneel in a common humility before the altar, strike you agreeably, on such occasions; in Catholic countries, in particular?"

"Bless me! no, Mr. John Effingham. I was disgusted at the meanness of their rites, and really shocked at the abject manner in which the people knelt on the cold damp stones, as if they were no better than beggars."

"And were they not beggars?" asked Eve, with almost a severity of tone: "ought they not so to consider themselves, when petitioning for mercy of the one great and omnipotent God?"

"Why, Miss Effingham, the people *will* rule; and it is useless to pretend to tell them that they shall not have the highest seats in the church as well as in the state. Really, I can see no ground why a parson should be raised above his parishioners. The new-order churches consult the public convenience, and place every body on a level, as it might be. Now, in old times, a family was buried in its pew; it could neither see nor be seen; and I can remember the time when I could just get a look of our clergyman's wig, for he was an old-school man; and as for his fellow-creatures, one might as well be praying in his own closet. I must say I am a supporter of liberty, if it be only in pews."

"I am sorry, Mr. Dodge," answered Eve, mildly,

"you did not extend your travels into the countries of the Mussulmans, where most Christian sects might get some useful notions concerning the part of worship, at least, that is connected with appearances. There you would have seen no seats, but sinners bowing down in a mass, on the cold stones, and all thoughts of cushioned pews and drawing-room conveniences unknown. We Protestants have improved on our Catholic forefathers in this respect; and the innovation of which you now speak, in my eyes is an irreverent, almost a sinful, invasion of the proprieties of the temple."

"Ah, Miss Eve, this comes from substituting forms for the substance of things," exclaimed the editor. "For my part, I can say, I was truly shocked with the extravagancies I witnessed, in the way of worship, in most of the countries I visited. Would you think it, Mr. Bragg, rational beings, real *bonâ fide* living men and women, kneeling on the stone pavement, like so many camels in the Desert," Mr. Dodge loved to draw his images from the different parts of the world he had seen, "ready to receive the burthens of their masters; not a pew, not a cushion, not a single comfort that is suitable to a free and intelligent being, but every thing conducted in the most abject manner, as if accountable human souls were no better than so many mutes in a Turkish palace."

"You ought to mention this in the Active Inquirer," said Aristabulus.

"All in good time, sir; I have many things in reserve, among which I propose to give a few remarks, I dare say they will be very worthless ones, on the impropriety of a rational being's ever kneeling. To my notion, gentlemen and ladies, God never intended an American to kneel."

The respectable mechanics who stood around the table did not absolutely assent to this proposition, for one of them actually remarked that "he saw no great

harm in a man's kneeling to the Deity;" but they evidently inclined to the opinion that the new-school of pews was far better than the old.

"It always appears to me, Miss Effingham," said one, "that I hear and understand the sermon better in one of the low pews, than in one of the old high-backed things, that look so much like pounds."

"But can you withdraw into yourself better, sir? Can you more truly devote all your thoughts, with a suitable singleness of heart, to the worship of God?"

"You mean in the prayers, now, I rather conclude?"

"Certainly, sir, I mean in the prayers and the thanksgivings."

"Why, we leave them pretty much to the parson; though I will own it is not quite as easy leaning on the edge of one of the new-school pews as on one of the old. They are better for sitting, but not so good for standing. But then the sitting posture at prayers is quite coming into favour among our people, Miss Effingham, as well as among yours. The sermon is the main chance, after all."

"Yes," observed Mr. Gouge, "give me good, strong preaching, any day, in preference to good praying. A man may get along with second-rate prayers, but he stands in need of first-rate preaching."

"These gentlemen consider religion a little like a cordial on a cold day," observed John Effingham, "which is to be taken in sufficient doses to make the blood circulate. They are not the men to be *pounded* in pews, like lost sheep, not they?"

"Mr. John will always have his say;" one remarked: and then Mr. Effingham dismissed the party, by telling them he would think of the matter.

When the mechanics were gone, the subject was discussed at some length between those that remained—all the Effinghams agreeing that they would op-

pose the innovation, as irreverent in appearance, unsuited to the retirement and self-abasement that best comported with prayer, and opposed to the delicacy of their own habits; while Messrs. Bragg and Dodge contended to the last that such changes were loudly called for by the popular sentiment—that it was unsuited to the dignity of a man to be 'pounded,' even in a church—and virtually, that a good, 'stirring' sermon, as they called it, was of far more account, in public worship, than all the prayers and praises that could issue from the heart or throat.

CHAPTER XIV.

"We'll follow Cade—we'll follow Cade."

MOB.

"THE views of this Mr. Bragg, and of our old fellow-traveller, Mr. Dodge, appear to be peculiar on the subject of religious forms," observed Sir George Templemore, as he descended the little lawn before the Wigwam, in company with the three ladies, Paul Powis, and John Effingham, on their way to the lake. "I should think it would be difficult to find another Christian, who objects to kneeling at prayer."

"Therein you are mistaken, Templemore," answered Paul; "for this country, to say nothing of one sect which holds it in utter abomination, is filled with them. Our pious ancestors, like neophytes, ran into extremes, on the subject of forms, as well as in other matters. When you go to Philadelphia, Miss Effingham, you will see an instance of a most ludicrous nature—ludicrous, if there were not something painfully revolting mingled with it—of the manner in which men can strain at a gnat and swallow a camel; and

which, I am sorry to say, is immediately connected with our own church."

It was music to Eve's ears, to hear Paul Powis speak of his pious ancestors, as being American, and to find him so thoroughly identifying himself with her own native land; for, while condemning so many of its practices, and so much alive to its absurdities and contradictions, our heroine had seen too much of other countries, not to take an honest pride in the real excellencies of her own. There was, also, a soothing pleasure in hearing him openly own that he belonged to the same church as herself.

"And what is there ridiculous in Philadelphia, in particular, and in connection with our own church?" she asked. "I am not so easily disposed to find fault where the venerable church is concerned."

"You know that the Protestants, in their horror of idolatry, discontinued, in a great degree, the use of the cross, as an outward religious symbol; and that there was probably a time when there was not a single cross to be seen in the whole of a country that was settled by those who made a profession of love for Christ, and a dependence on his expiation, the great business of their lives?"

"Certainly. We all know our predecessors were a little over-rigid and scrupulous on all the points connected with outward appearances."

"They certainly contrived to render the religious rites as little pleasing to the senses as possible, by aiming at a sublimation that peculiarly favours spiritual pride and a pious conceit. I do not know whether travelling has had the same effect on you, as it has produced on me; but I find all my inherited antipathies to the mere visible representation of the cross, superseded by a sort of solemn affection for it, as a symbol, when it is plain, and unaccompanied by any of those bloody and minute accessories that are so often seen around it in Catholic countries. The Ger-

man Protestants, who usually ornament the altar with a cross, first cured me of the disrelish I imbibed, on this subject, in childhood."

"We, also, I think, cousin John, were agreeably struck with the same usage in Germany. From feeling a species of nervousness at the sight of a cross, I came to love to see it; and I think you must have undergone a similar change; for I have discovered no less than three among the ornaments of the great window of the entrance tower, at the Wigwam."

"You might have discovered one, also, in every door of the building, whether great or small, young lady. Our pious ancestors, as Powis calls them, much of whose piety, by the way, was any thing but meliorated with spiritual humility or Christian charity, were such ignoramuses as to set up crosses in every door they built, even while they veiled their eyes in holy horror whenever the sacred symbol was seen in a church."

"Every door!" exclaimed the Protestants of the party.

"Yes, literally every door, I might almost say; certainly every panelled door that was constructed twenty years since. I first discovered the secret of our blunder, when visiting a castle in France, that dated back from the time of the crusade. It was a *château* of the Montmorencies, that had passed into the hands of the Condé family by marriage; and the courtly old domestic, who showed me the curiosities, pointed out to me the stone *croix* in the windows, which has caused the latter to be called *croisées*, as a pious usage of the crusaders. Turning to a door, I saw the same crosses in the wooden stiles; and if you cast an eye on the first humble door that you may pass in this village, you will detect the same symbol staring you boldly in the face, in the very heart of a population that would almost expire at the thoughts

of placing such a sign of the beast on their very thresholds."

The whole party expressed their surprise; but the first door they passed corroborated this account, and proved the accuracy of John Effingham's statements. Catholic zeal and ingenuity could not have wrought more accurate symbols of this peculiar sign of the sect; and yet, here they stood, staring every passenger in the face, as if mocking the ignorant and exaggerated pretension which would lay undue stress on the minor points of a religion, the essence of which was faith and humility.

"And the Philadelphia church?" said Eve, quickly, so soon as her curiosity was satisfied on the subject of the door; "I am now more impatient than ever, to learn what silly blunder we have also committed there."

"Impious would almost be a better term," Paul answered. "The only church spire that existed for half a century, in that town, was surmounted by a *mitre*, while the *cross* was studiously rejected!"

A silence followed; for there is often more true argument in simply presenting the facts of a case, than in all the rhetoric and logic that could be urged, by way of auxiliaries. Every one saw the egregious folly, not to say presumption, of the mistake; and at the moment, every one wondered how a common-sense community could have committed so indecent a blunder. We are mistaken. There was an exception to the general feeling in the person of Sir George Templemore. To his church-and-state notions, and anti-catholic prejudices, which were quite as much political as religious, there was every thing that was proper, and nothing that was wrong, in rejecting a cross for a mitre.

"The church, no doubt, was Episcopal, Powis," he remarked, "and it was not Roman. What better symbol than the mitre could be chosen?"

"Now I reflect, it is not so very strange," said Grace, eagerly, "for you will remember, Mr. Effingham, that Protestants attach the idea of idolatry to the cross, as it is used by Catholics."

"And of bishops, peers in parliament, church and state, to a mitre."

"Yes, but the church in question I have seen; and it was erected before the war of the revolution. It was an English rather than an American church."

"It was, indeed, an English church, rather than an American; and Templemore is very right to defend it, mitre and all."

"I dare say, a bishop officiated at its altar?"

"I dare say—nay, I know, he did; and, I will add, he would rather that the mitre were two hundred feet in the air, than down on his own simple, white-haired, apostolical-looking head. But enough of divinity for the morning; yonder is Tom with the boat, let us to our oars."

The party were now on the little wharf that served as a village-landing, and the boatman mentioned lay off, in waiting for the arrival of his fare. Instead of using him, however, the man was dismissed; the gentlemen preferring to handle the oars themselves. Aquatic excursions were of constant occurrence in the warm months, on that beautifully limpid sheet of water, and it was the practice to dispense with the regular boatmen, whenever good oarsmen were to be found among the company.

As soon as the light buoyant skiff was brought to the side of the wharf, the whole party embarked; and Paul and the baronet taking the oars, they soon urged the boat from the shore.

"The world is getting to be too confined for the adventurous spirit of the age," said Sir George, as he and his companion pulled leisurely along, taking the direction of the eastern shore, beneath the forest-clad cliffs of which the ladies had expressed a wish to be

rowed; "here are Powis and myself actually rowing together on a mountain lake of America, after having boated as companions on the coast of Africa, and on the margin of the Great Desert. Polynesia, and Terra Australis, may yet see us in company, as hardy cruisers."

"The spirit of the age is, indeed, working wonders in the way you mean," said John Effingham. "Countries of which our fathers merely read, are getting to be as familiar as our own homes to their sons; and, with you, one can hardly foresee to what a pass of adventure the generation or two that will follow us may not reach."

"*Vraiment, c'est fort extraordinaire de se trouver sur un lac Americain,*" exclaimed Mademoiselle Viefville.

"More extraordinary than to find one's self on a Swiss lake, think you, my dear Mademoiselle Viefville?"

"*Non, non, mais tout aussi extraordinaire pour une Parisienne.*"

"I am now about to introduce you, Mr. John Effingham and Miss Van Cortlandt excepted," Eve continued, "to the wonders and curiosities of this lake and region. There, near the small house that is erected over a spring of delicious water, stood the hut of Natty Bumppo, once known throughout all these mountains as a renowned hunter; a man who had the simplicity of a woodsman, the heroism of a savage, the faith of a Christian, and the feelings of a poet. A better than he, after his fashion, seldom lived."

"We have all heard of him," said the baronet, looking round curiously; "and must all feel an interest in what concerns so brave and just a man. I would I could see his counterpart."

"Alas!" said John Effingham, "the days of the 'Leather-stockings' have passed away. He preceded me in life, and I see few remains of his character in a region where speculation is more rife than mo-

ralizing, and emigrants are plentier than hunters. Natty probably chose that spot for his hut on account of the vicinity of the spring: is it not so, Miss Effingham?"

"He did; and yonder little fountain that you see gushing from the thicket, and which comes glancing like diamonds into the lake, is called the 'Fairy Spring,' by some flight of poetry that, like so many of our feelings, must have been imported; for I see no connection between the name and the character of the country, fairies having never been known, even by tradition, in Otsego."

The boat now came under a shore where the trees fringed the very water, frequently overhanging the element that mirrored their fantastic forms. At this point, a light skiff was moving leisurely along in their own direction, bnt a short distance in advance. On a hint from John Effingham, a few vigorous strokes of the oars brought the two boats near each other.

"This is the flag-ship," half whispered John Effingham, as they came near the other skiff, "containing no less a man than the 'commodore.' Formerly, the chief of the lake was an admiral, but that was in times when, living nearer to the monarchy, we retained some of the European terms; now, no man rises higher than a commodore in America, whether it be on the ocean or on the Otsego, whatever may be his merits or his services. A charming day, commodore; I rejoice to see you still afloat, in your glory."

The commodore, a tall, thin, athletic man of seventy, with a white head, and movements that were quick as those of a boy, had not glanced aside at the approaching boat, until he was thus saluted in the well-known voice of John Effingham. He then turned his head, however, and scanning the whole party through his spectacles, he smiled good-naturedly, made

a flourish with one hand, while he continued paddling with the other, for he stood erect and straight in the stern of his skiff, and answered heartily—

"A fine morning, Mr. John, and the right time of the moon for boating. This is not a real scientific day for the fish, perhaps; but I have just come out to see that all the points and bays are in their right places."

"How is it, commodore, that the water near the village is less limpid than common, and that even up here, we see so many specks floating on its surface?"

"What a question for Mr. John Effingham to ask on his native water! So much for travelling in far countries, where a man forgets quite as much as he learns, I fear." Here the commodore turned entirely round, and raising an open hand in an oratorical manner, he added,—"You must know, ladies and gentlemen, that the lake is in blow."

"In blow, commodore! I did not know that the lake bore its blossoms."

"It does, sir, nevertheless. Ay, Mr. John, and its fruits, too; but the last must be dug for, like potatoes. There have been no miraculous draughts of the fishes, of late years, in the Otsego, ladies and gentlemen; but it needs the scientific touch, and the knowledge of baits, to get a fin of any of your true game above the water, now-a-days. Well, I have had the head of the sogdollager thrice in the open air, in my time; though I am told the admiral actually got hold of him once with his hand."

"The sogdollager," said Eve, much amused with the singularities of the man, whom she perfectly remembered to have been commander of the lake, even in her own infancy; "we must be indebted to you for an explanation of that term, as well as for the meaning of your allusion to the head and the open air."

"A sogdollager, young lady, is the perfection of a thing. I know Mr. Grant used to say there was no such word in the dictionary; but then there are many words that ought to be in the dictionaries that have been forgotten by the printers. In the way of salmon trout, the sogdollager is their commodore. Now, ladies and gentlemen, I should not like to tell you all I know about the patriarch of this lake, for you would scarcely believe me; but if he would not weigh a hundred when cleaned, there is not an ox in the county that will weigh a pound when slaughtered."

"You say you had his head above water?" said John Effingham.

"Thrice, Mr. John. The first time was thirty years ago; and I confess I lost him, on that occasion, by want of science; for the art is not learned in a day, and I had then followed the business but ten years. The second time was five years later; and I had then been fishing expressly for the old gentleman, about a month. For near a minute, it was a matter of dispute between us, whether he should come out of the lake or I go into it; but I actually got his gills in plain sight. That was a glorious haul! Washingington did not feel better the night Cornwallis surrendered, than I felt on that great occasion!"

"One never knows the feelings of another, it seems. I should have thought disappointment at the loss would have been the prevailing sentiment on that great occasion, as you so justly term it."

"So it would have been, Mr. John, with an unscientific fisherman; but we experienced hands know better. Glory is to be measured by quality, and not by quantity, ladies and gentlemen; and I look on it as a greater feather in a man's cap, to see the sogdollager's head above water, for half a minute, than to bring home a skiff filled with pickerel. The last time I got a look at the old gentleman, I did not try to get him into the boat, but we sat and conversed

for near two minutes; he in the water, and I in the skiff."

"Conversed!" exclaimed Eve, "and with a fish, too! What could the animal have to say!"

"Why, young lady, a fish can talk as well as one of ourselves; the only difficulty is to understand what he says. I have heard the old settlers affirm, that the Leather-stocking used to talk for hours at a time, with the animals of the forest."

"You knew the Leather-stocking, commodore?"

"No, young lady, I am sorry to say I never had the pleasure of looking on him even. He *was* a great man! They may talk of their Jeffersons and Jacksons, but I set down Washington and Natty Bumppo as the two only really great men of my time."

"What do you think of Bonaparte, commodore?" inquired Paul.

"Well, sir, Bonaparte had some strong points about him, I do really believe. But he could have been nothing to the Leather-stocking, in the woods! It's no great matter, young gentleman, to be a great man among your inhabitants of cities—what I call umbrella people. Why, Natty was almost as great with the spear as with the rifle; though I never heard that he got a sight of the sogdollager."

"We shall meet again this summer, commodore," said John Effingham; "the ladies wish to hear the echoes, and we must leave you."

"All very natural, Mr. John," returned the commodore, laughing, and again flourishing his hand in his own peculiar manner. "The women all love to hear the echoes, for they are not satisfied with what they have once said, but they like to hear it over again. I never knew a lady come on the Otsego, but one of the first things she did was to get paddled to the Speaking Rocks, to have a chat with herself. They come out in such numbers, sometimes, and then all talk at once, in a way quite to confuse the echo. I

suppose you have heard, young lady, the opinion people have now got concerning these voices."

"I cannot say I have ever heard more than that they are some of the most perfect echoes known;" answered Eve, turning her body, so as to face the old man, as the skiff of the party passed that of the veteran fisherman.

"Some people maintain that there is no echo at all, and that the sounds we hear come from the spirit of the Leather-stocking, which keeps about its old haunts, and repeats every thing we say, in mockery of our invasion of the woods. I do not say this notion is true, or that it is my own; but we all know that Natty *did* dislike to see a new settler arrive in the mountains, and that he loved a tree as a muskrat loves water. They show a pine up here on the side of the Vision, which he notched at every new-comer, until reaching seventeen, his honest old heart could go no farther, and he gave the matter up in despair."

"This is so poetical, commodore, it is a pity it cannot be true. I like this explanation of the 'Speaking Rocks,' much better than that implied by the name of 'Fairy Spring.'"

"You are quite right, young lady," called out the fisherman, as the boats separated still farther; "there never was any fairy known in Otsego; but the time has been when we could boast of a Natty Bumppo."

Here the commodore flourished his hand again, and Eve nodded her adieus. The skiff of the party continued to pull slowly along the fringed shore, occasionally sheering more into the lake, to avoid some overhanging and nearly horizontal tree, and then returning so closely to the land, as barely to clear the pebbles of the narrow strand with the oar.

Eve thought she had never beheld a more wild or beautifully variegated foliage, than that which the whole leafy mountain-side presented. More than half of the forest of tall, solemn pines, that had veiled the

earth when the country was first settled, had already disappeared; but, agreeably to one of the mysterious laws by which nature is governed, a rich second growth, that included nearly every variety of American wood, had shot up in their places. The rich Rembrandt-like hemlocks, in particular, were perfectly beautiful, contrasting admirably with the livelier tints of the various deciduous trees. Here and there, some flowering shrub rendered the picture gay, while masses of the rich chestnut, in blossom, lay in clouds of natural glory among the dark tops of the pines.

The gentlemen pulled the light skiff fully a mile under this overhanging foliage, occasionally frightening some migratory bird from a branch, or a water-fowl from the narrow strand. At length, John Effingham desired them to cease rowing, and managing the skiff for a minute or two with the paddle which he had used in steering, he desired the whole party to look up, announcing to them that they were beneath the 'Silent Pine.'

A common exclamation of pleasure succeeded the upward glance; for it is seldom that a tree is seen to more advantage than that which immediately attracted every eye. The pine stood on the bank, with its roots embedded in the earth, a few feet higher than the level of the lake, but in such a situation as to bring the distance above the water into the apparent height of the tree. Like all of its kind that grows in the dense forests of America, its increase, for a thousand years, had been upward; and it now stood in solitary glory, a memorial of what the mountains which were yet so rich in vegetation had really been in their days of nature and pride. For near a hundred feet above the eye, the even round trunk was branchless, and then commenced the dark-green masses of foliage, which clung around the stem like smoke ascending in wreaths. The tall column-like tree had inclined to-

wards the light when struggling among its fellows, and it now so far overhung the lake, that its summit may have been some ten or fifteen feet without the base. A gentle, graceful curve added to the effect of this variation from the perpendicular, and infused enough of the fearful into the grand, to render the picture sublime. Although there was not a breath of wind on the lake, the currents were strong enough above the forest to move this lofty object, and it was just possible to detect a slight, graceful yielding of the very uppermost boughs to the passing air.

"This pine is ill-named," cried Sir George Templemore, "for it is the most eloquent tree eye of mine has ever looked on!"

"It is, indeed, eloquent," answered Eve; "one hears it speak even now of the fierce storms that have whistled round its tops—of the seasons that have passed since it extricated that verdant cap from the throng of sisters that grew beneath it, and of all that has passed on the Otsego, when this limpid lake lay, like a gem embedded in the forest. When the Conqueror first landed in England, this tree stood on the spot where it now stands! Here, then, is at last, an American antiquity!"

"A true and regulated taste, Miss Effingham," said Paul, "has pointed out to you one of the real charms of the country. Were we to think less of the artificial, and more of our natural excellencies, we should render ourselves less liable to criticism."

Eve was never inattentive when Paul spoke; and her colour heightened, as he paid this compliment to her taste, but still her soft blue eye was riveted on the pine.

"Silent it may be, in one respect, but it is, indeed, all eloquence in another," she resumed, with a fervour that was not lessened by Paul's remark. "That crest of verdure, which resembles a plume of fea-

thers, speaks of a thousand things to the imagination."

"I have never known a person of any poetry, who came under this tree," said John Effingham, "that did not fall into this very train of thought. I once brought a man celebrated for his genius here, and, after gazing for a minute or two at the high, green tuft that tops the tree, he exclaimed, 'that mass of green waved there in the fierce light when Columbus first ventured into the unknown sea.' It is, indeed, eloquent; for it tells the same glowing tale to all who approach it—a tale fraught with feeling and recollections."

"And yet its silence is, after all, its eloquence," added Paul; "and the name is not so misplaced as one might at first think."

"It probably obtained its name from some fancied contrast to the garrulous rocks that lie up yonder, half concealed by the forest. If you will ply the oars, gentlemen, we will now hold a little communion with the spirit of the Leather-stocking."

The young men complied; and in about five minutes, the skiff was off in the lake, at the distance of fifty rods from the shore, where the whole mountain-side came at one glance into the view. Here they lay on their oars, and John Effingham called out to the rocks a "good morning," in a clear distinct voice. The mocking sounds were thrown back again, with a closeness of resemblance that actually startled the novice. Then followed other calls and other repetitions of the echoes, which did not lose the minutest intonation of the voice.

"This actually surpasses the celebrated echoes of the Rhine," cried the delighted Eve; "for, though those do give the strains of the bugle so clearly, I do not think they answer to the voice with so much fidelity."

"You are very right, Eve," replied her kinsman,

"for I can recall no place where so perfect and accurate an echo is to be heard as at these speaking rocks. By increasing our distance to half a mile, and using a bugle, as I well know, from actual experiment, we should get back entire passages of an air. The interval between the sound and the echo, too, would be distinct, and would give time for an undivided attention. Whatever may be said of the 'pine,' these rocks are most aptly named; and if the spirit of Leather-stocking has any concern with the matter, he is a mocking spirit."

John Effingham now looked at his watch, and then he explained to the party a pleasure he had in store for them. On a sort of small, public promenade, that lay at the point where the river flowed out of the lake, stood a rude shell of a building that was called the "gun-house." Here, a speaking picture of the entire security of the country, from foes within as well as from foes without, were kept two or three pieces of field artillery, with doors so open that any one might enter the building, and even use the guns at will, although they properly belonged to the organized corps of the state.

One of these guns had been sent a short distance down the valley; and John Effingham informed his companions that they might look momentarily for its reports to arouse the echoes of the mountains. He was still speaking when the gun was fired, its muzzle being turned eastward. The sound first reached the side of the Vision, abreast of the village, whence the reverberations reissued, and rolled along the range, from cave to cave, and cliff to cliff, and wood to wood, until they were lost, like distant thunder, two or three leagues to the northward. The experiment was thrice repeated, and always with the same magnificent effect, the western hills actually echoing the echoes of the eastern mountains, like the dying strains of some falling music.

"Such a locality would be a treasure in the vicinity of a melo-dramatic theatre," said Paul, laughing, "for certainly, no artificial thunder I have ever heard has equalled this. This sheet of water might even receive a gondola."

"And yet, I fear one accustomed to the boundless horizon of the ocean, might in time weary of it," answered John Effingham, significantly.

Paul made no answer; and the party rowed away in silence.

"Yonder is the spot where we have so long been accustomed to resort for Pic-Nics," said Eve, pointing out a lovely place, that was beautifully shaded by old oaks, and on which stood a rude house that was much dilapidated, and indeed injured, by the hands of man. John Effingham smiled, as his cousin showed the place to her companions, promising them an early and a nearer view of its beauties.

"By the way, Miss Effingham," he said, "I suppose you flatter yourself with being the heiress of that desirable retreat?"

"It is very natural that, at some day, though I trust a very distant one, I should succeed to that which belongs to my dear father."

"Both natural and legal, my fair cousin; but you are yet to learn that there is a power that threatens to rise up and dispute your claim."

"What power—human power, at least—can dispute the lawful claim of an owner to his property? That Point has been ours ever since civilized man has dwelt among these hills; who will presume to rob us of it?"

"You will be much surprised to discover that there is such a power, and that there is actually a disposition to exercise it. The public—the all-powerful, omnipotent, overruling, law-making, law-breaking public—has a passing caprice to possess itself of your

beloved Point; and Ned Effingham must show unusual energy, or it will get it?"

"Are you serious, cousin Jack?"

"As serious as the magnitude of the subject can render a responsible being, as Mr. Dodge would say."

Eve said no more, but she looked vexed, and remained almost silent until they landed, when she hastened to seek her father, with a view to communicate what she had heard. Mr. Effingham listened to his daughter, as he always did, with tender interest; and when she had done, he kissed her glowing cheek, bidding her not to believe that which she seemed so seriously to dread, possible.

"But, cousin John would not trifle with me on such a subject, father," Eve continued; "he knows how much I prize all those little heir-looms that are connected with the affections."

"We can inquire further into the affair, my child, if it be your desire; ring for Pierre, if you please."

Pierre answered, and a message was sent to Mr. Bragg, requiring his presence in the library.

Aristabulus appeared, by no means in the best humour, for he disliked having been omitted in the late excursion on the lake, fancying that he had a community-right to share in all his neighbour's amusements, though he had sufficient self-command to conceal his feelings.

"I wish to know, sir," Mr. Effingham commenced, without introduction, "whether there can be any mistake concerning the ownership of the Fishing Point on the west side of the lake."

"Certainly not, sir; it belongs to the public."

Mr. Effingham's cheek glowed, and he looked astonished; but he remained calm.

"The public! Do you gravely affirm, Mr. Bragg, that the public pretends to claim that Point?"

"Claim, Mr. Effingham! as long as I have resided in this county, I have never heard its right disputed."

"Your residence in this county, sir, is not of very ancient date, and nothing is easier than that *you* may be mistaken. I confess some curiosity to know in what manner the public has acquired its title to the spot. You are a lawyer, Mr. Bragg, and may give an intelligible account of it."

"Why, sir, your father gave it to them in his life-time. Every body, in all this region, will tell you as much as this."

"Do you suppose, Mr. Bragg, there is any body in all this region who will swear to the fact? Proof, you well know, is very requisite even to obtain justice."

"I much question, sir, if there be any body in all this region that will not swear to the fact. It is the common tradition of the whole country; and, to be frank with you, sir, there is a little displeasure, because Mr. John Effingham has talked of giving private entertainments on the Point."

"This, then, only shows how idly and inconsiderately the traditions of the country take their rise. But, as I wish to understand all the points of the case, do me the favour to walk into the village, and inquire of those whom you think the best informed in the matter, what they know of the Point, in order that I may regulate my course accordingly. Be particular, if you please, on the subject of title, as one would not wish to move in the dark."

Aristabulus quitted the house immediately, and Eve, perceiving that things were in the right train, left her father alone to meditate on what had just passed. Mr. Effingham walked up and down his library for some time, much disturbed, for the spot in question was identified with all his early feelings and recollections; and if there were a foot of land on earth, to which he was more attached than to all others, next to his immediate residence, it was this. Still, he could not conceal from himself, in despite of his opposition

to John Effingham's sarcasms, that his native country had undergone many changes since he last resided in it, and that some of these changes were quite sensibly for the worse. The spirit of misrule was abroad, and the lawless and unprincipled held bold language, when it suited their purpose to intimidate. As he ran over in his mind, however, the facts of the case, and the nature of his right, he smiled to think that any one should contest it, and sat down to his writing, almost forgetting that there had been any question at all on the unpleasant subject.

Aristabulus was absent for several hours, nor did he return until Mr. Effingham was dressed for dinner, and alone in the library, again, having absolutely lost all recollection of the commission he had given his agent.

"It is as I told you, sir—the public insists that it owns the Point; and I feel it my duty to say, Mr. Effingham, that the public is determined to maintain its claim."

"Then, Mr. Bragg, it is proper I should tell the public that it is *not* the owner of the Point, but that *I* am its owner, and that I am determined to maintain *my* claim."

"It is hard to kick against the pricks, Mr. Effingham."

"It is so, sir, as the public will discover, if it persevere in invading a private right."

"Why, sir, some of those with whom I have conversed have gone so far as to desire me to tell you—I trust my motive will not be mistaken——"

"If you have any communication to make, Mr. Bragg, do it without reserve. It is proper I should know the truth exactly."

"Well, then, sir, I am the bearer of something like a defiance; the people wish you to know that they hold your right cheaply, and that they laugh at it. Not to mince matters, they defy you."

"I thank you for this frankness, Mr. Bragg, and it increases my respect for your character. Affairs are now at such a pass, that it is necessary to act. If you will amuse yourself with a book for a moment, I shall have further occasion for your kindness."

Aristabulus did not read, for he was too much filled with wonder at seeing a man so coolly set about contending with that awful public which he himself as habitually deferred to, as any Asiatic slave defers to his monarch. Indeed, nothing but his being sustained by that omnipotent power, as he viewed the power of the public to be, had emboldened him to speak so openly to his employer, for Aristabulus felt a secret confidence that, right or wrong, it was always safe in America to make the most fearless professions in favour of the great body of the community. In the mean time, Mr. Effingham wrote a simple advertisement against trespassing on the property in question, and handed it to the other, with a request that he would have it inserted in the number of the village paper that was to appear next morning. Mr. Bragg took the advertisement, and went to execute the duty without comment.

The evening arrived before Mr. Effingham was again alone, when, being by himself in the library once more, Mr. Bragg entered, full of his subject. He was followed by John Effingham, who had gained an inkling of what had passed.

"I regret to say, Mr. Effingham," Aristabulus commenced, "that your advertisement has created one of the greatest excitements it has ever been my ill-fortune to witness in Templeton."

"All of which ought to be very encouraging to us, Mr. Bragg, as men under excitement are usually wrong."

"Very true, sir, as regards individual excitement, but this is a public excitement."

"I am not at all aware that the fact, in the least,

alters the case. If one excited man is apt to do silly things, half a dozen backers will be very likely to increase his folly."

Aristabulus listened with wonder, for excitement was one of the means for effecting public objects, so much practised by men of his habits, that it had never crossed his mind any single individual could be indifferent to its effect. To own the truth, he had anticipated so much unpopularity, from his unavoidable connexion with the affair, as to have contributed himself in producing the excitement, with the hope of "choking Mr. Effingham off," as he had elegantly expressed it to one of his intimates, in the vernacular of the country.

"A public excitement is a powerful engine, Mr. Effingham!" he exclaimed, in a sort of politico-pious horror.

"I am fully aware, sir, that it may be even a fearfully powerful engine. Excited men, acting in masses, compose what are called mobs, and have committed a thousand excesses."

"Your advertisement is, to the last degree, disrelished; to be very sincere, it is awfully unpopular!"

"I suppose it is always what you term an unpopular act, so far as the individuals opposed are concerned, to resist aggression."

"But they call your advertisement aggression, sir."

"In that simple fact exist all the merits of the question. If I own this property, the public, or that portion of it which is connected with this affair, are aggressors; and so much more in the wrong that they are many against one; if *they* own the property, I am not only wrong, but very indiscreet."

The calmness with which Mr. Effingham spoke had an effect on Aristabulus, and, for a moment, he was staggered. It was only for a moment, however, as the pains and penalties of unpopularity presented themselves afresh to an imagination that had been so

long accustomed to study the popular caprice, that it had got to deem the public favour the one great good of life.

"But *they* say, *they* own the Point, Mr. Effingham."

"And *I* say, they do *not* own the Point, Mr. Bragg; never *did* own it; and, with my consent, never *shall* own it."

"This is purely a matter of fact," observed John Effingham, "and I confess I am curious to know how or whence this potent public derives its title. You are lawyer enough, Mr. Bragg, to know that the public can hold property only by use, or by especial statute. Now, under which title does this claim present itself."

"First, by use, sir, and then by especial gift."

"The use, you are aware, must be adverse, or as opposed to the title of the other claimants. Now, I am a living witness that my late uncle *permitted* the public to use this Point, and that the public accepted the conditions. Its use, therefore, has not been adverse, or, at least, not for a time sufficient to make title. Every hour that my cousin has *permitted* the public to enjoy his property, adds to his right, as well as to the obligation conferred on that public, and increases the duty of the latter to cease intruding, whenever he desires it. If there is an especial gift, as I understand you to say, from my late uncle, there must also be a law to enable the public to hold, or a trustee; which is the fact?"

"I admit, Mr. John Effingham, that I have seen neither deed nor law, and I doubt if the latter exist. Still the public *must* have some claim, for it is impossible that every body should be mistaken."

"Nothing is easier, nor any thing more common, than for whole communities to be mistaken, and more particularly when they commence with excitement."

While his cousin was speaking, Mr. Effingham

went to a secretary, and taking out a large bundle of papers, he laid it down on the table, unfolding several parchment deeds, to which massive seals, bearing the arms of the late colony, as well as those of England, were pendent.

"Here are my titles, sir," he said, addressing Aristabulus pointedly; "if the public has a better, let it be produced, and I shall at once submit to its claim."

"No one doubts that the King, through his authorized agent, the Governor of the colony of New-York, granted this estate to your predecessor, Mr. Effingham; or that it descended legally to your immediate parent; but all contend that your parent gave this spot to the public, as a spot of public resort."

"I am glad that the question is narrowed down within limits that are so easily examined. What evidence is there of this intention, on the part of my late father?"

"Common report; I have talked with twenty people in the village, and they all agree that the 'Point' has been used by the public, as public property, from time immemorial."

"Will you be so good, Mr. Bragg, as to name some of those who affirm this."

Mr. Bragg complied, naming quite the number of persons he had mentioned, with a readiness that proved he thought he was advancing testimony of weight.

"Of all the names you have mentioned," returned Mr. Effingham, "I never heard but three, and these are the names of mere boys. The first dozen are certainly the names of persons who can know no more of this village than they have gleaned in the last few years; and several of them, I understand, have dwelt among us but a few weeks; nay, days."

"Have I not told you, Ned," interrupted John Effingham, "that an American 'always' means eighteen months, and that 'time immemorial' is only since the last general crisis in the money market!"

"The persons I have mentioned compose a part of the population, sir," added Mr. Bragg, "and, one and all, they are ready to swear that your father, by some means or other, they are not very particular as to minutiæ, gave them the right to use this property."

"They are mistaken, and I should be sorry that any one among them should swear to such a falsehood. But here are my titles—let them show better, or, if they can, any, indeed."

"Perhaps your father abandoned the place to the public; this might make a good claim."

"That he did not, I am a living proof to the contrary; he left it to his heirs at his death, and I myself exercised full right of ownership over it, until I went abroad. I did not travel with it in my pocket, sir, it is true; but I left it to the protection of the laws, which, I trust, are as available to the rich as to the poor, although this is a free country."

"Well, sir, I suppose a jury must determine the point, as you seem firm; though I warn you, Mr. Effingham, as one who knows his country, that a verdict, in the face of a popular feeling, is rather a hopeless matter. If they prove that your late father intended to abandon or give this property to the public, your case will be lost."

Mr. Effingham looked among the papers a moment, and selecting one, he handed it to Mr. Bragg, first pointing out to his notice a particular paragraph.

"This, sir, is my late father's will," Mr. Effingham said mildly; "and, in that particular clause, you will find that he makes a special devise of this very 'Point,' leaving it to his heirs, in such terms as to put any intention to give it to the public quite out of the question. This, at least, is the latest evidence I, his only son, executor, and heir possess of his final wishes; if that wondering and time-immemorial public of which you speak, has a better, I wait with patience that it may be produced."

The composed manner of Mr. Effingham had deceived Aristabulus, who did not anticipate any proof so completely annihilating to the pretensions of the public, as that he now held in his hand. It was a simple, brief devise, disposing of the piece of property in question, and left it without dispute, that Mr. Effingham had succeeded to all the rights of his father, with no reservation or condition of any sort.

"This is very extraordinary!" exclaimed Mr. Bragg, when he had read the clause seven times, each perusal contributing to leave the case still clearer in favour of his employer, the individual, and still stronger against the hoped-for future employers, the people. "The public ought to know of this bequest of the late Mr. Effingham."

"I think it ought, sir, before it pretended to deprive his child of his property; or, rather, it ought to be certain, at least, that there was no such devise."

"You will excuse me, Mr. Effingham, but I think it is incumbent on a private citizen, in a case of this sort, when the public has taken up a wrong notion, as I now admit is clearly the fact as regards the Point, to enlighten it, and to inform it that it does not own the spot."

"This has been done already, Mr. Bragg, in the advertisement you had the goodness to carry to the printers, although I deny that there exists any such obligation."

"But, sir, they object to the mode you have chosen to set them right."

"The mode is usual, I believe, in the case of trespasses."

"They expect something different, sir, in an affair in which the public is—is—is—all—"

"Wrong," put in John Effingham, pointedly. "I have heard something of this out of doors, Ned, and blame you for your moderation. Is it true that you had told several of your neighbours that you have no

wish to prevent them from using the Point, but that your sole object is merely to settle the question of right, and to prevent intrusions on your family when it is enjoying its own place of retirement?"

"Certainly, John, my only wish is to preserve the property for those to whom it is especially devised, to allow those who have the best, nay, the only right to it, its undisturbed possession, occasionally, and to prevent any more of that injury to the trees that has been committed by some of those rude men, who always fancy themselves so completely all the public, as to be masters, in their own particular persons, whenever the public has any claim. I can have no wish to deprive my neighbours of the innocent pleasure of visiting the Point, though I am fully determined they shall not deprive me of my property."

"You are far more indulgent than I should be, or, perhaps, than you will be yourself, when you read this."

As John Effingham spoke, he handed his kinsman a small handbill, which purported to call a meeting, for that night, of the inhabitants of Templeton, to resist his arrogant claim to the disputed property. This handbill had the usual marks of a feeble and vulgar malignancy about it, affecting to call Mr. Effingham, "*one* Mr. Effingham," and it was anonymous.

"This is scarcely worth our attention, John," said Mr. Effingham, mildly. "Meetings of this sort cannot decide a legal title, and no man who respects himself will be the tool of so pitiful an attempt to frighten a citizen from maintaining his rights."

"I agree with you, as respects the meeting, which has been conceived in ignorance and low malice, and will probably end, as all such efforts end, in ridicule. But——"

"Excuse me, Mr. John," interrupted Aristabulus, "there is an awful excitement! Some have even spoken of Lynching!"

"Then," said Mr. Effingham, "it does, indeed, require that we should be more firm. Do *you*, sir, know of any person who has dared to use such a menace?"

Aristabulus quailed before the stern eye of Mr. Effingham, and he regretted having communicated so much, though he had communicated nothing but the truth. He stammered out an obscure and half-intelligible explanation, and proposed to attend the meeting, in person, in order that he might be in the way of understanding the subject, without falling into the danger of mistake. To this Mr. Effingham assented, as he felt too indignant at this outrage on all his rights, whether as a citizen or a man, to wish to pursue the subject with his agent that night. Aristabulus departed, and John Effingham remained closeted with his kinsman until the family retired. During this long interview, the former communicated many things to the latter, in relation to this very affair, of which the owner of the property, until then, had been profoundly ignorant.

END OF VOL. I.