Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque, volume 1

Edgar Allan Poe

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Seltsamen tochter Jovis
Seinem schosskinde
Der Phantasie

Goethe

These Volumes are Inscribed
TO
COLONEL WILLIAM DRAYTON,
OF PHILADELPHIA,
WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF RESPECT, GRATITUDE,
AND ESTEEM,
BY HIS OBLIGED FRIEND AND SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

The epithets "Grotesque" and "Arabesque" will be found to indicate with sufficient precision the prevalent tenor of the tales here published. But from the fact that, during a period of some two or three years, I have written five−and−twenty short stories whose general character may be so briefly defined, it can− not be fairly inferred −− at all events it is not truly inferred −− that I have, for this species of writing, any inordinate, or indeed any peculiar taste or pre− possession. I may have written with an eye to this republication in volume form, and may, therefore, have desired to preserve, as far as a certain point, a certain unity of design. This is, indeed, the fact; and it may even happen that, in this manner, I shall never compose anything again. I speak of these things here, because I am led to think it is this pre− valence of the "Arabesque" in my serious tales, which has induced one or two critics to tax me, in all friendliness, with what they have been pleased to term "Germanism" and gloom. The charge is in bad taste, and the grounds of the accusation have not been sufficiently considered. Let us admit, for the moment, that the "phantasy−pieces" now given are Germanic, or what not. Then Germanism is "the vein" for the time being. To morrow I may be any− thing but German, as yesterday I was everything else. These many pieces are yet one book. My friends would be quite as wise in taxing an astronomer with too much astronomy, or an ethical author with treat− ing too largely of morals. But the truth is that, with a single exception, there is no one of these stories in which the scholar should recognise the distinctive features of that species of pseudo−horror which we are taught to call Germanic, for no better reason than that some of the secondary names of German litera− ture have become identified with its folly. If in many of my productions terror has been the thesis, I main− tain that terror is not of Germany, but of the soul, −− that I have deduced this terror only from its legitimate sources, and urged it only to its legitimate results.

There are one or two of the articles here, (con− ceived and executed in the purest spirit of extrava− ganza,) to which I expect no serious attention, and of which I shall speak no farther. But for the rest I cannot conscientiously claim indulgence on the score of hasty effort. I think it best becomes me to say, therefore, that if I have sinned, I have deliberately sinned. These brief compositions are, in chief part, the results of matured purpose and very careful elaboration.

MORELLA.

' ' , '

Itself, alone by itself, eternally one, and single.
Plato. Sympos.

With a feeling of deep yet most singular affection I regarded my friend Morella. Thrown by accident into her society many years ago, my soul, from our first meeting, burned with fires it had never before known; but the fires were not of Eros; and bitter and tormenting to my spirit was the gradual convic− tion that I could in no manner define their unusual meaning, or regulate their vague intensity. Yet we met; and fate bound us together at the altar; and I never spoke of passion, nor thought of love. She, however, shunned society, and, attaching herself to me alone, rendered me happy. It is a happiness to wonder; −− it is a happiness to dream.

Morella's erudition was profound. As I hope to live, her talents were of no common order −− her powers of mind were gigantic. I felt this, and, in many matters, became her pupil. I soon, however, found that, perhaps on account of her Presburg education, she placed before me a number of those mystical writings which are usually considered the mere dross of the early German literature. These, for what reasons I could not imagine, were her favorite and constant study −− and that in process of time they became my own should be attributed to the simple but effectual influence of habit and ex− ample.

In all this, if I err not, my reason had little to do. My convictions, or I forget myself, were in no man− ner acted upon by the ideal, nor was any tincture of the mysticism which I read to be discovered, unless I am greatly mistaken, either in my deeds or in my thoughts. Feeling deeply persuaded of this, I aban− doned myself implicitly to the guidance of my wife, and entered with an unflinching heart into the intri− cacies of her studies. And then −− then, when, poring over forbidden pages, I felt a forbidden spirit enkind− ling within me −− would Morella place her cold hand upon my own, and rake up from the ashes of a dead philosophy some low, singular words, whose strange meaning burned themselves in upon my memory −− and then hour after hour would I linger by her side and dwell upon the music of her voice −− until, at length, its melody was tainted with terror −− and fell like a shadow upon my soul −− and I grew pale, and shuddered in− wardly at those too unearthly tones. And thus joy suddenly faded into horror, and the most beautiful became the most hideous, as Hinnon became Ge− Henna.

It is unnecessary to state the exact character of those disquisitions which, growing out of the volumes I have mentioned, formed, for so long a time, almost the sole conversation of Morella and myself. By the learned in what might be termed theological morality they will be readily conceived, and by the unlearned they would, at all events, be little understood. The wild Pantheism of Fichte; the modified of the Pythagoreans; and, above all, the doctrines of Identity as urged by Schelling, were generally the points of discussion presenting the most of beauty to the imaginative Morella. That identity which is termed personal, Mr. Locke, I think, truly defines to consist in the sameness of a rational being. And since by person we understand an intelligent essence having reason, and since there is a consciousness which always accompanies thinking, it is this which makes us all to be that which we call ourselves −− there− by distinguishing us from other beings that think, and giving us our personal identity. But the principium individuationis −− the notion of that identity which at death is or is not lost forever, was to me, at all times, a consideration of intense interest, not more from the mystical and exciting nature of its consequences, than from the marked and agitated manner in which Morella mentioned them.

But, indeed, the time had now arrived when the mystery of my wife's manner oppressed me as a spell. I could no longer bear the touch of her wan fingers, nor the low tone of her musical language, nor the lustre of her melancholy eyes. And she knew all this but did not upbraid −− she seemed conscious of my weakness or my folly, and, smiling, called it Fate. She seemed, also, conscious of a cause, to me un− known, for the gradual alienation of my regard; but she gave me no hint or token of its nature. Yet was she woman, and pined away daily. In time, the crimson spot settled steadily upon the cheek, and the blue veins upon the pale forehead became

prominent; and, one instant, my nature melted into pity, but, in the next, I met the glance of her meaning eyes, and then my soul sickened and became giddy with the giddiness of one who gazes downward into some dreary and unfathomable abyss.

Shall I then say that I longed with an earnest and consuming desire for the moment of Morella's de− cease? I did; but the fragile spirit clung to its tene− ment of clay for many days −− for many weeks and irksome months −− until my tortured nerves obtained the mastery over my mind, and I grew furious through delay, and, with the heart of a fiend, cursed the days, and the hours, and the bitter moments, which seemed to lengthen and lengthen as her gentle life declined −− like shadows in the dying of the day.

But one autumnal evening, when the winds lay still in heaven, Morella called me to her side. There was a dim mist over all the earth, and a warm glow upon the waters, and, amid the rich October leaves of the forest, a rainbow from the firmament had surely fallen. As I came she was murmuring, in a low under tone, which trembled with fervor, the words of a Catholic hymn:

Sancta Maria! turn thine eyes
Upon a sinner's sacrifice
Of fervent prayer and humble love
From thy holy throne above.
At morn, at noon, at twilight dim,
Maria! thou hast heard my hymn,
In joy and wo, in good and ill,
Mother of God! be with me still.
When my hours flew gently by,
And no storms were in the sky,
My soul, lest it should truant be,
Thy love did guide to thine and thee.
Now when clouds of Fate o'ercast
All my Present and my Past,
Let my Future radiant shine
With sweet hopes of thee and thine.

"It is a day of days," said Morella; "a day of all days either to live or die. It is a fair day for the sons of earth and life −− ah! more fair for the daughter's of heaven and death."

I turned towards her, and she continued.

"I am dying −− yet shall I live. Therefore for me, Morella, thy wife, hath the charnel−house no terrors −− mark me! −− not even the terrors of the worm. The days have never been when thou couldst love me; but her whom in life thou didst abhor, in death thou shalt adore."

"Morella!"

"I repeat that I am dying. But within me is a pledge of that affection −− ah, how little! −− which you felt for me, Morella. And when my spirit departs shall the child live −− thy child and mine, Morella's. But thy days shall be days of sorrow −− that sorrow which is the most lasting of impressions, as the cypress is the most enduring of trees. For the hours of thy happiness are over; and joy is not gathered twice in a life, as the roses of Pæstum twice in a year. Thou shalt no longer, then, play the Teian with time, but, being ignorant of the myrtle and the vine, thou shalt bear about with thee thy shroud on earth, as do the Moslemin at Mecca."

"Morella!" I cried, "Morella! how knowest thou this?" −− but she turned away her face upon the pillow, and, a slight tremor coming over her limbs, she thus died, and I heard her voice no more.

Yet, as she had foretold, her child −− to which in dying she had given birth, and which breathed not until the mother breathed no more −− her child, a daughter, lived. And she grew strangely in stature and intellect, and was the perfect resemblance of her who had departed, and I loved her with a love more fervent and more intense than I had believed it pos− sible to feel for any denizen of earth.

But, ere long, the heaven of this pure affection became overcast, and gloom, and horror, and grief, swept over it in clouds. I said the child grew strangely in stature and intelligence. Strange indeed was her rapid increase in bodily size −− but terrible, oh! terrible were the tumultuous thoughts which crowded upon me while watching the development of her mental being. Could it be otherwise, when I daily discovered in the conceptions of the child the adult powers and faculties of the woman? −− when the lessons of experience fell from the lips of infancy? and when the wisdom or the passions of maturity I found hourly gleaming from its full and speculative eye? When, I say, all this became evident to my appalled senses −− when I could no longer hide it from my soul, nor throw it off from those perceptions which trembled to receive it −− is it to be wondered at that suspicions, of a nature fearful and exciting, crept in upon my spirit, or that my thoughts fell back aghast upon the wild tales and thrilling theories of the en− tombed Morella? I snatched from the scrutiny of the world a being whom destiny compelled me to adore, and, in the rigorous seclusion of my old ancestral home, watched with an agonizing anxiety over all which concerned the beloved.

And, as years rolled away, and I gazed, day after day, upon her holy, and mild, and eloquent face, and pored over her maturing form, day after day did I discover new points of resemblance in the child to her mother, the melancholy and the dead. And, hourly, grew darker these shadows of similitude, and more full, and more definite, and more perplexing, and more hideously terrible in their aspect. For that her smile was like her mother's I could bear; but then I shud− dered at its too perfect identity −− that her eyes were like Morella's I could endure; but then they too often looked down into the depths of my soul with Morella's own intense and bewildering meaning. And in the contour of the high forehead, and in the ringlets of the silken hair, and in the wan fingers which buried themselves therein, and in the sad musical tones of her speech, and above all −− oh, above all −− in the phrases and expressions of the dead on the lips of the loved and the living, I found food for consuming thought and horror −− for a worm that would not die.

Thus passed away two lustrums of her life, but my daughter remained nameless upon the earth. "My child" and "my love" were the designations usually prompted by a father's affection, and the rigid seclusion of her days precluded all other intercourse. Morella's name died with her at her death. Of the mother I had never spoken to the daughter −− it was impossible to speak. Indeed, during the brief period of her exist− tence the latter had received no impressions from the outward world but such as might have been afforded by the narrow limits of her privacy. But at length the ceremony of baptism presented to my mind, in its unnerved and agitated condition, a present deliverance from the terrors of my destiny. And at the baptismal font I hesitated for a name. And many titles of the wise and beautiful, of old and modern times, of my own and foreign lands, came thronging to my lips −− and many, many fair titles of the gentle, and the happy, and the good. What prompted me then to disturb the memory of the buried dead? What demon urged me to breathe that sound, which, in its very recollection, was wont to make ebb the purple blood in torrents from the temples to the heart? What fiend spoke from the recesses of my soul, when, amid those dim aisles, and in the silence of the night, I shrieked within the ears of the holy man the syllables −− Morella? What more than fiend convulsed the features of my child, and overspread them with the hues of death, as, starting at that sound, she turned her glassy eyes from the earth to heaven, and, falling prostrate on the black slabs of our ancestral vault, responded −− "I am here!"

Distinct, coldly, calmly distinct −− like a knell of death −− horrible, horrible death −− sank the eternal sounds within my soul. Years −− years may roll away, but the memory of that epoch −− never! Now was I indeed ignorant of the flowers and the vine −− but the hemlock and the cypress overshadowed me night and day. And I kept no reckoning of time or place, and the stars of my fate faded from heaven, and, therefore, the earth grew dark, and its figures passed by me like flitting shadows, and among them all I beheld only −− Morella. The winds of the firmament breathed but one sound within my ears, and the rip− ples upon the sea murmured evermore −−

Morella. But she died; and with my own hands I bore her to the tomb; and I laughed with a long and bitter laugh as I found no traces of the first, in the charnel where I laid the second −− Morella.

LIONIZING.

−− all people went
Upon their ten toes in wild wonderment.

Bishop Hall's Satires.

I am −− that is to say, I was −− a great man; but I am neither the author of Junius, nor the man in the mask, for my name is Thomas Smith, and I was born somewhere in the city of Fum−Fudge. The first action of my life was the taking hold of my nose with both hands; my mother saw this, and called me a genius; my father wept for joy, and bought me a treatise on Nosology. Before I was breeched I had not only mastered the treatise, but had collected into a common−place book all that is said on the subject by Pliny, Aristotle, Alexander Ross, Minutius Felix, Hermanus Pictorius, Del Rio, Villarêt, Bartholinus, and Sir Thomas Browne.

I now began to feel my way in the science, and soon came to understand that, provided a man had a nose sufficiently big, he might, by merely following it, arrive at a lionship. But my attention was not confined to theories alone; every morning I took a dram or two, and gave my proboscis a couple of pulls. When I came of age my father asked me, one day, if I would step with him into his study.

"My son," said he, when we got there, "what is the chief end of your existence?"

"Father," I said, "it is the study of Nosology."

"And what, Thomas," he continued, "is no− sology?"

"Sir," I replied, "it is the Science of Noses."

"And can you tell me," he asked, "what is the meaning of a nose?"

"A nose, my father," said I, "has been vari− ously defined by about a thousand different authors, (here I pulled out my watch). It is now noon, or thereabouts −− we shall have time enough to get through with them all before midnight. To com− mence, then. The nose, according to Bartholinus, is that protuberance, that bump, that excrescence, that −− "

"That will do, Thomas," said the old gentleman. "I am thunderstruck at the extent of your informa− tion −− I am positively −− upon my soul. Come here! (and he took me by the arm). Your education may now be considered as finished, and it is high time that you should scuffle for yourself −− so −− so −− so −− (here he kicked me down stairs and out of the door) so get out of my house, and God bless you!"

As I felt within me the divine afflatus, I considered this accident rather fortunate than otherwise, and determined to follow my nose. So I gave it a pull or two, and wrote a pamphlet on Nosology. All Fum−Fudge was in an uproar.

"Wonderful genius!" said the Quarterly.

"Superb physiologist!" said the New Monthly.

"Fine writer!" said the Edinburgh.

"Great man!" said Blackwood.

"Who can he be?" said Mrs. Bas−Bleu.

"What can he be?" said big Miss Bas−Bleu.

"Where can he be?" said little Miss Bas−Bleu. But I paid them no manner of attention, and walked into the shop of an artist.

The Duchess of Bless−my−Soul was sitting for her portrait; the Marchioness of So−and−So was holding the Duchess's poodle; the Earl of This−and−That was flirting with her salts; and his Royal Highness of Touch−me−Not was standing behind her chair. I merely walked towards the artist, and held up my proboscis.

"O beautiful!" sighed the Duchess.

"O pretty!" lisped the Marshiness.

"O horrible!" groaned the Earl.

"O abominable!" growled his Royal Highness.

"What will you take for it?" said the artist.

"A thousand pounds," said I, sitting down.

"A thousand pounds?" he inquired, turning the nose to the light.

"Precisely," said I.

"Beautiful!" said he, looking at the nose.

"A thousand pounds," said I, twisting it to one side.

"Admirable!" said he.

"A thousand pounds," said I.

"You shall have them," said he, "what a piece of virtu!" So he paid me the money, and made a sketch of my nose. I took rooms in Jermyn street, sent her Majesty the ninety−ninth edition of the Nosology with a portrait of the author's nose, and his Royal Highness of Touch−me−Not invited me to dinner.

We were all lions and recherchés.

There was a Grand Turk from Stamboul. He said that the angels were horses, cocks, and bulls −− that somebody in the sixth heaven had seventy thou− sand heads and seventy thousand tongues −− and that the earth was held up by a sky−blue cow, having four hundred horns.

There was Sir Positive Paradox. He said that all fools were philosophers, and all philosophers were fools.

There was a writer on ethics. He talked of fire, unity, and atoms; bi−part, and pre−existent soul; affinity and discord; primitive intelligence and ho− moomeria.

There was Theologos Theology. He talked of Eusebius and Arianus; heresy and the Council of Nice; consubstantialism, Homousios, and Homouioi− sios.

There was Fricassée from the Rocher de Cancale. He mentioned Latour, Markbrunnen, and Mares− chino; muriton of red tongue, and cauliflowers with velouté sauce; veal à la St. Menehoult, marinade à la St. Florentin, and orange jellies en mosaiques.

There was Signor Tintontintino from Florence. He spoke of Cimabué, Arpino, Carpaccio, and Ar− gostino; the gloom of Caravaggio, the amenity of Albano, the golden glories of Titian, the frows of Rubens, and the waggeries of Jan Steen.

There was the great geologist Feltzpar. He talked of internal fires and tertiary formations; of aëriforms, fluidiforms, and solidiforms; of quartz and marl; of schist and schorl; of gypsum, hornblende, mica− slate, and pudding−stone.

There was the President of the Fum−Fudge Uni− versity. He said that the moon was called Bendis in Thrace, Bubastis in Egypt, Dian in Rome, and Arte− mis in Greece.

There was Delphinus Polyglott. He told us what had become of the eighty−three lost tragedies of Æschylus; of the fifty−four orations of Isoeus; of the three hundred and ninety−one speeches of Lysias; of the hundred and eighty treatises of Theophrastus; of the eighth book of the conic sections of Apollonius; of Pindar's hymns and dithyrambics; and the five− and−forty tragedies of Homer Junior.

There was a modern Platonist. He quoted Por− phyry, Iamblicus, Plotinus, Proclus, Hierocles, Maxi− mus Tyrius, and Syrianus.

There was a human−perfectibility man. He quoted Turgot, Price, Priestly, Condorcet, De Stael, and "The Ambitious Student in Ill Health."

There was myself. I spoke of Pictorius, Del Rio, Alexander Ross, Minutius Felix, Bartholinus, Sir Thomas Browne, and the Science of Noses.

"Marvellous clever man!" said his Highness.

"Superb!" said his guests; and the next morning her grace of Bless−my−Soul paid me a visit.

"Will you go to Almack's, pretty creature?" she said, chucking me under the chin.

"Upon honor," said I.

"Nose and all?" she asked.

"As I live," I replied.

"Here, then, is a card, my life, shall I say you will be there?"

"Dear Duchess, with all my heart."

"Pshaw, no! −− but with all your nose?"

"Every bit of it, my love," said I; so I gave it a pull or two, and found myself at Almack's.

The rooms were crowded to suffocation.

"He is coming!" said somebody on the staircase.

"He is coming!" said somebody further up.

"He is coming!" said somebody further still.

"He is come!" said the Duchess; "he is come, the little love!" and she caught me by both hands, and looked me in the nose.

"Ah joli!" said Mademoiselle Pas Seul.

"Dios guarda!" said Don Stiletto.

"Diavolo!" said Count Capricornuto.

"Tousand teufel!" said Baron Bludennuff.

"Tweedle−dee −− tweedle−dee −− tweedle−dum!" said the Orchestra.

"Ah joli! Dios guarda! Diavolo! and Tousand teufel!" repeated Mademoiselle Pas Seul, Don Sti− letto, Count Capricornuto, and Baron Bludennuff. This applause −− it was obstreperous; it was not the thing; it was too bad; it was not to be borne. I grew angry.

"Sir!" said I to the Baron, "you are a baboon."

"Sir!" he replied after a pause, "Donner und blitzen!" This was sufficient. We exchanged cards. The next morning I shot off his nose at six o'clock, and then called upon my friends.

"Bête!" said the first.

"Fool!" said the second.

"Ninny!" said the third.

"Dolt!" said the fourth.

"Noodle!" said the fifth.

"Ass!" said the sixth.

"Be off!" said the seventh.

At all this I felt mortified, and so called upon my father.

"Father," I said, "what is the chief end of my existence?"

"My son," he replied, "it is still the study of Nosology; but in hitting the Baron's nose, you have overshot your mark. You have a fine nose, it is true; but then Bludennuff has none. You are d −− d; and he has become the lion of the day. In Fum−Fudge great is a lion with a big proboscis, but greater by far is a lion with no proboscis at all."

WILLIAM WILSON.

What say of it? what say of CONSCIENCE grim,
That spectre in my path?

Chamberlaine's Pharronida.

Let me call myself, for the present, William Wil− son. The fair page now lying before me need not be sullied with my real appellation. This has been already too much an object for the scorn, for the horror, for the detestation of my race. To the utter− most regions of the globe have not the indignant winds bruited its unparalleled infamy? Oh, outcast of all outcasts most abandoned! To the earth art thou not forever dead? to its honors, to its flowers, to its golden aspirations? and a cloud, dense, dismal, and limitless, does it not hang eternally between thy hopes and heaven?

I would not, if I could, here or to−day, embody a record of my later years of unspeakable misery, and unpardonable crime. This epoch −− these later years −− took unto themselves a sudden elevation in turpitude, whose origin alone it is my present purpose to assign. Men usually grow base by degrees. From me, in an instant, all virtue dropped bodily as a mantle. I shrouded my nakedness in triple guilt. From com− paratively trivial wickedness I passed, with the stride of a giant, into more than the enormities of an Elah− Gabalus. What chance, what one event brought this evil thing to pass, bear with me while I relate. Death approaches; and the shadow which foreruns him has thrown a softening influence over my spirit. I long, in passing through the dim valley, for the sympathy −− I had nearly said for the pity −− of my fellow−men. I would fain have them believe that I have been, in some measure, the slave of circumstances beyond human control. I would wish them to seek out for me, in the details I am about to give, some little oasis of fatality amid a wilderness of error. I would have them allow −− what they cannot refrain from allow− ing −− that, although temptation may have erewhile existed as great, man was never thus, at least, tempted before −− certainly, never thus fell. And therefore has he never thus suffered. Have I not indeed been living in a dream? And am I not now dying a victim to the horror and the mystery of the wildest of all sublunary visions?

I am come of a race whose imaginative and easily excitable temperament has at all times rendered them remarkable; and, in my earliest infancy, I gave evi− dence of having fully inherited the family character. As I advanced in years it was more strongly deve− loped; becoming, for many reasons, a cause of serious disquietude to my friends, and of positive injury to myself. I grew self−willed, addicted to the wildest caprices, and a prey to the most ungovernable pas− sions. Weak−minded, and beset with constitutional infirmities akin to my own, my parents could do but little to check the evil propensities which distinguished me. Some feeble and ill−directed efforts resulted in complete failure on their part, and, of course, in total triumph on mine. Thenceforward my voice was a household law; and at an age when few children have abandoned their leading−strings, I was left to the guidance of my own will, and became, in all but name, the master of my own actions.

My earliest recollections of a school−life are con− nected with a large, rambling, cottage−built, and some− what decayed building in a misty−looking village of England, where were a vast number of gigantic and gnarled trees, and where all the houses were exces− sively ancient and inordinately tall. In truth, it was a dream−like and spirit−soothing place, that venerable old town. At this moment, in fancy, I feel the re− freshing chilliness of its deeply−shadowed avenues, inhale the fragrance of its thousand shrubberies, and thrill anew with undefinable delight, at the deep, hollow note of the church−bell, breaking each hour, with sullen and sudden roar, upon the stillness of the dusky atmosphere in which the old, fretted, Gothic steeple lay imbedded and asleep.

It gives me, perhaps, as much of pleasure as I can now in any manner experience, to dwell upon minute recollections of the school and its concerns. Steeped in misery as I am −− misery, alas! only too real −− I shall be pardoned for seeking relief, however slight and temporary, in the weakness of a few rambling details. These, moreover, utterly trivial, and even ridiculous in themselves, assume, to my fancy, ad− ventitious importance as

connected with a period and a locality, when and where I recognise the first am− biguous monitions of the destiny which afterwards so fully overshadowed me. Let me then remember.

The house, I have said, was old, irregular, and cottage−built. The grounds were extensive, and an enormously high and solid brick wall, topped with a bed of mortar and broken glass, encompassed the whole. This prison−like rampart formed the limit of our domain; beyond it we saw but thrice a week −− once every Saturday afternoon, when, attended by two ushers, we were permitted to take brief walks in a body through some of the neighbouring fields −− and twice during Sunday, when we were paraded in the same formal manner to the morning and evening service in the one church of the village. Of this church the principal of our school was pastor. With how deep a spirit of wonder and perplexity was I wont to regard him from our remote pew in the gallery, as, with step solemn and slow, he ascended the pulpit! This reverend man, with countenance so demurely benign, with robes so glossy and so clerically flowing, with wig so minutely powdered, so rigid and so vast −− could this be he who of late, with sour visage, and in snuffy habiliments, admin− istered, ferule in hand, the Draconian laws of the academy? Oh, gigantic paradox, too utterly mon− strous for solution!

At an angle of the ponderous wall frowned a more ponderous gate. It was riveted and studded with iron bolts, and surmounted with jagged iron spikes. What impressions of deep awe it inspired! It was never opened save for the three periodical egressions and ingressions already mentioned; then, in every creak of its mighty hinges we found a plenitude of mystery, a world of matter for solemn remark, or for more solemn meditation.

The extensive enclosure was irregular in form, having many capacious recesses. Of these, three or four of the largest constituted the play−ground. It was level, and covered with fine, hard gravel. I well remember it had no trees, nor benches, nor anything similar within it. Of course it was in the rear of the house. In front lay a small parterre, planted with box and other shrubs; but through this sacred division we passed only upon rare occasions indeed, such as a first advent to school or final departure thence, or perhaps, when a parent or friend having called for us, we joyfully took our way home for the Christmas or Midsummer holydays.

But the house −− how quaint an old building was this! −− to me how veritably a palace of enchantment! There was really no end to its windings, to its in− comprehensible subdivisions. It was impossible, at any given time, to say with certainty upon which of its two stories one happened to be. From each room to every other there were sure to be found three or four steps either in ascent or descent. Then the lateral branches were innumerable −− inconceivable −− and so returning in upon themselves, that our most exact ideas in regard to the whole mansion were not very far different from those with which we pondered upon infinity. During the five years of my residence here I was never able to ascertain with precision, in what remote locality lay the little sleeping apartment assigned to myself and some eighteen or twenty other scholars.

The school−room was the largest in the house −− I could not help thinking in the world. It was very long, narrow, and dismally low, with pointed Gothic windows and a ceiling of oak. In a remote and terror−inspiring angle was a square enclosure of eight or ten feet, comprising the sanctum, "during hours," of our principal, the Reverend Dr. Bransby. It was a solid structure, with massy door, sooner than open which in the absence of the "Dominie," we would all have willingly perished by the peine forte et dure. In other angles were two other similar boxes, far less reverenced, indeed, but still greatly matters of awe. One of these was the pulpit of "the classical" usher, one of the "English and mathematical." Interspersed about the room, crossing and recrossing in endless irregularity, were innumerable benches and desks, black, ancient, and time−worn, piled desperately with much−bethumbed books, and so beseamed with initial letters, names at full length, meaningless gashes, gro− tesque figures, and other multiplied efforts of the knife, as to have entirely lost what little of original form might have been their portion in days long departed. A huge bucket with water stood at one extremity of the room, and a clock of stupendous dimensions at the other.

Encompassed by the massy walls of this venerable academy I passed, yet not in tedium or disgust, the years of the third lustrum of my life. The teeming brain of childhood requires no external world of incident to occupy or

amuse it, and the apparently dismal monotony of a school was replete with more intense excitement than my riper youth has derived from luxury, or my full manhood from crime. Yet I must believe that my first mental development had in it much of the uncommon, even much of the outré. Upon mankind at large the events of very early existence rarely leave in mature age any definite im− pression. All is gray shadow −− a weak and irregular remembrance −− an indistinct regathering of feeble pleasures and phantasmagoric pains. With me this is not so. In childhood I must have felt with the energy of a man what I now find stamped upon memory in lines as vivid, as deep, and as durable as the exergues of the Carthaginian medals.

Yet in fact −− in the fact of the world's view −− how little was there to remember! The morning's awakening, the nightly summons to bed; the con− nings, the recitations; the periodical half−holidays, and perambulations; the play−ground, with its broils, its pastimes, its intrigues −− these, by a mental sorcery long forgotten, were made to involve a wilderness of sensation, a world of rich incident, an universe of varied emotion, of excitement the most passionate and spirit−stirring. "Oh, le bon temps, que ce siecle de fer!"

In truth, the ardency, the enthusiasm, and the im− periousness of my disposition, soon rendered me a marked character among my schoolmates, and by slow, but natural gradations, gave me an ascendency over all not greatly older than myself −− over all with one single exception. This exception was found in the person of a scholar, who, although no relation, bore the same Christian and surname as myself −− a circumstance, in fact, little remarkable, for, notwith− standing a noble descent, mine was one of those every−day appellations which seem, by prescriptive right, to have been, time out of mind, the common property of the mob. In this narrative I have there− fore designated myself as William Wilson −− a fictitious title not very dissimilar to the real. My namesake alone, of those who in school phraseology constituted "our set," presumed to compete with me in the studies of the class, in the sports and broils of the play−ground −− to refuse implicit belief in my assertions, and sub− mission to my will −− indeed to interfere with my arbitrary dictation in any respect whatsoever. If there be on earth a supreme and unqualified despotism, it is the despotism of a master mind in boyhood over the less energetic spirits of its companions.

Wilson's rebellion was to me a source of the greatest embarrassment −− the more so as, in spite of the bravado with which in public I made a point of treating him and his pretensions, I secretly felt that I feared him, and could not help thinking the equality which he maintained so easily with myself, a proof of his true superiority, since not to be overcome cost me a per− petual struggle. Yet this superiority −− even this equality −− was in truth acknowledged by no one but myself; our associates, by some unaccountable blind− ness, seemed not even to suspect it. Indeed, his com− petition, his resistance, and especially his impertinent and dogged interference with my purposes, were not more pointed than private. He appeared to be utterly destitute alike of the ambition which urged, and of the passionate energy of mind which enabled me to excel. In his rivalry he might have been supposed actuated solely by a whimsical desire to thwart, astonish, or mortify myself; although there were times when I could not help observing, with a feeling made up of wonder, abasement, and pique, that he mingled with his injuries, his insults, or his contradic− tions, a certain most inappropriate, and assuredly most unwelcome affectionateness of manner. I could only conceive this singular behaviour to arise from a consummate self−conceit assuming the vulgar airs of patronage and protection.

Perhaps it was this latter trait in Wilson's conduct, conjoined with our identity of name, and the mere accident of our having entered the school upon the same day, which set afloat the notion that we were brothers, among the senior classes in the academy. These do not usually inquire with much strictness into the affairs of their juniors. I have before said, or should have said, that Wilson was not, in the most remote degree, connected with my family. But as− suredly if we had been brothers we must have been twins, for, after leaving Dr. Bransby's, I casually learned that my namesake −− a somewhat remarkable coincidence −− was born on the nineteenth of January, 1809 −− and this is precisely the day of my own nativity.

It may seem strange that in spite of the continual anxiety occasioned me by the rivalry of Wilson, and his intolerable spirit of contradiction, I could not bring myself to hate him altogether. We had, to be sure, nearly every

day a quarrel, in which, yielding me publicly the palm of victory, he, in some manner, contrived to make me feel that it was he who had deserved it; yet a sense of pride upon my part, and a veritable dignity upon his own, kept us always upon what are called "speaking terms," while there were many points of strong congeniality in our tempers, operating to awake in me a sentiment which our position alone, perhaps, prevented from ripening into friendship. It is difficult, indeed, to define, or even to describe, my real feelings towards him. They were formed of a heterogeneous mixture −− some petulant animosity, which was not yet hatred, some esteem, more respect, much fear, with a world of uneasy curiosity. To the moralist fully acquainted with the minute spirings of human action, it will be unnecessary to say, in addition, that Wilson and my− self were the most inseparable of companions.

It was no doubt the anomalous state of affairs ex− isting between us which turned all my attacks upon him, (and they were many, either open or covert) into the channel of banter or practical joke (giving pain while assuming the aspect of mere fun) rather than into that of a more serious and determined hostility. But my endeavors on this head were by no means uniformly successful, even when my plans were the most wittily concocted; for my namesake had much about him, in character, of that unassuming and quiet austerity which, while enjoying the poignancy of its own jokes, has no heel of Achilles in itself, and ab− solutely refuses to be laughed at. I could find, indeed, but one vulnerable point, and that, lying in a personal peculiarity, arising, perhaps, from constitu− tional disease, would have been spared by any an− tagonist less at his wit's end than myself −− my rival had a weakness in the faucial or guttural organs, which precluded him from raising his voice at any time above a very low whisper. Of this defect I did not fail to take what poor advantage lay in my power.

Wilson's retaliations in kind were many, and there was one form of his practical wit that disturbed me beyond measure. How his sagacity first discovered at all that so petty a thing would vex me is a ques− tion I never could solve −− but, having discovered, he habitually practised the annoyance. I had always felt aversion to my uncourtly patronymic, and its very common, if not plebeian praenomen. The words were venom in my ears; and when, upon the day of my arrival, a second William Wilson came also to the academy, I felt angry with him for bearing the name, and doubly disgusted with the name because a stranger bore it, who would be the cause of its twofold repetition, who would be constantly in my presence, and whose concerns, in the ordinary routine of the school business, must, inevitably, on account of the detestable coincidence, be often con− founded with my own.

The feeling of vexation thus engendered grew stronger with every circumstance tending to show resemblance, moral or physical, between my rival and myself. I had not then discovered the remark− able fact that we were of the same age; but I saw that we were of the same height, and I perceived that we were not altogether unlike in general con− tour of person and outline of feature. I was galled, too, by the rumor touching a relationship which had grown current in the upper forms. In a word, nothing could more seriously disturb me, (although I scrupulously concealed such disturbance,) than any allusion to a similarity of mind, person, or condition existing between us. But, in truth, I had no reason to believe that (with the exception of the matter of relationship, and in the case of Wilson himself), this similarity had ever been made a subject of comment, or even observed at all by our schoolfellows. That he observed it in all its bearings, and as fixedly as I, was apparent, but that he could discover in such cir− cumstances so fruitful a field of annoyance for my− self can only be attributed, as I said before, to his more than ordinary penetration.

His cue, which was to perfect an imitation of myself, lay both in words and in actions; and most admirably did he play his part. My dress it was an easy matter to copy; my gait and general manner, were, without difficulty, appropriated; in spite of his constitutional defect, even my voice did not escape him. My louder tones were, of course, unattempted, but then the key, it was identical; and his singular whisper, it grew the very echo of my own.

How greatly this most exquisite portraiture harassed me, (for it could not justly be termed a caricature,) I will not now venture to describe. I had but one consolation −− in the fact that the imitation, ap− parently, was noticed by myself alone, and that I had to endure only the knowing and strangely sar− castic smiles of my namesake himself. Satisfied with having produced in my bosom the intended effect, he seemed to chuckle in secret over the sting he

had inflicted, and was characteristically disre− gardful of the public applause which the success of his witty endeavors might have so easily elicited. That the school, indeed, did not feel his design, perceive its accomplishment, and participate in his sneer, was, for many anxious months, a riddle I could not resolve. Perhaps the gradation of his copy rendered it not so readily perceptible, or, more possibly, I owed my security to the masterly air of the copyist, who, disdaining the letter, which in a painting is all the obtuse can see, gave but the full spirit of his original for my individual contemplation and chagrin.

I have already more than once spoken of the dis− gusting air of patronage which he assumed towards me, and of his frequent officious interference with my will. This interference often took the ungracious character of advice; advice not openly given, but hinted or insinuated. I received it with a repug− nance which gained strength as I grew in years. Yet, at this distant day, let me do him the simple justice to acknowledge that I can recall no occasion when the suggestions of my rival were on the side of those errors or follies so usual to his immature age, and seeming inexperience; that his moral sense, at least, if not his general talents and worldly wisdom, was far keener than my own; and that I might, to− day, have been a better, and thus a happier man, had I more seldom rejected the counsels embodied in those meaning whispers which I then but too cordially hated, and too bitterly derided.

As it was, I at length grew restive in the extreme, under his distasteful supervision, and daily resented more and more openly what I considered his in− tolerable arrogance. I have said that, in the first years of our connexion as schoolmates, my feelings in regard to him might have been easily ripened into friendship; but, in the latter months of my residence at the academy, although the intrusion of his ordinary manner had, beyond doubt, in some measure, abated, my sentiments, in nearly similar proportion, partook very much of positive hatred. Upon one occasion he saw this, I think, and after− wards avoided, or made a show of avoiding me.

It was about the same period, if I remember aright, that, in an altercation of violence with him, in which he was more than usually thrown off his guard, and spoke and acted with an openness of demeanor rather foreign to his nature, I discovered, or fancied I discovered, in his accent, his air, and general ap− pearance, a something which first startled, and then deeply interested me, by bringing to mind dim visions of my earliest infancy −− wild, confused and throng− ing memories of a time when memory herself was yet unborn. I cannot better describe the sensation which oppressed me than by saying that I could with difficulty shake off the belief that myself and the being who stood before me had been acquainted at some epoch very long ago; some point of the past even infinitely remote. The delusion, however, faded rapidly as it came; and I mention it at all but to define the day of the last conversation I there held with my singular namesake.

The huge old house, with its countless subdivisions, had several enormously large chambers communica− ting with each other, where slept the greater number of the students. There were, however, as must necessarily happen in a building so awkwardly planned, many little nooks or recesses, the odds and ends of the structure; and these the economic in− genuity of Dr. Bransby had also fitted up as dormi− tories −− although, being the merest closets, they were capable of accommodating only a single indi− vidual. One of these small apartments was occupied by Wilson.

It was upon a gloomy and tempestuous night of an early autumn, about the close of my fifth year at the school, and immediately after the altercation just mentioned, that, finding every one wrapped in sleep, I arose from bed, and, lamp in hand, stole through a wilderness of narrow passages from my own bed− room to that of my rival. I had been long plotting one of those ill−natured pieces of practical wit at his expense in which I had hitherto been so uniformly unsuccessful. It was my intention, now, to put my scheme in operation, and I resolved to make him feel the whole extent of the malice with which I was imbued. Having reached his closet, I noiselessly entered, leaving the lamp, with a shade over it, on the outside. I advanced a step, and listened to the sound of his tranquil breathing. Assured of his being asleep, I returned, took the light, and with it again approach− ed the bed. Close curtains were around it, which, in the prosecution of my plan, I slowly and quietly withdrew, when the bright rays fell vividly upon the sleeper, and my eyes, at the same moment, upon his countenance. I looked, and a numbness,

an iciness of feeling instantly pervaded my frame. My breast heaved, my knees tottered, my whole spirit became possessed with an objectless yet intolerable horror. Gasping for breath, I lowered the lamp in still nearer proximity to the face. Were these −− these the linea− ments of William Wilson? I saw, indeed, that they were his, but I shook as with a fit of the ague in fancying they were not. What was there about them to confound me in this manner? I gazed −− while my brain reeled with a multitude of incoherent thoughts. Not thus he appeared −− assuredly not thus −− in the vivacity of his waking hours. The same name; the same contour of person; the same day of arrival at the academy! And then his dogged and meaningless imitation of my gait, my voice, my habits, and my manner! Was it, in truth, within the bounds of human possibility that what I now witnessed was the result of the habitual practice of this sarcastic imita− tion? Awe−stricken, and with a creeping shudder, I extinguished the lamp, passed silently from the cham− ber, and left, at once, the halls of that old academy, never to enter them again.

After a lapse of some months, spent at home in mere idleness, I found myself a student at Eton. The brief interval had been sufficient to enfeeble my re− membrance of the events at Dr. Bransby's, or at least to effect a material change in the nature of the feel− ings with which I remembered them. The truth −− the tragedy −− of the drama was no more. I could now find room to doubt the evidence of my senses: and seldom called up the subject at all but with wonder at the extent of human credulity, and a smile at the vivid force of the imagination which I heredi− tarily possessed. Neither was this species of scep− ticism likely to be diminished by the character of the life I led at Eton. The vortex of thoughtless folly into which I there so immediately and so recklessly plunged, washed away all but the froth of my past hours −− engulfed at once every solid or serious im− pression, and left to memory only the veriest levities of a former existence.

I do not wish, however, to trace the course of my miserable profligacy here −− a profligacy which set at defiance the laws, while it eluded the vigilance of the institution. Three years of folly, passed without profit, had but given me rooted habits of vice, and added, in a somewhat unusual degree, to my bodily stature, when, after a week of soulless dissipation, I invited a small party of the most dissolute students to a secret carousal in my chamber. We met at a late hour of the night, for our debaucheries were to be faithfully protracted until morning. The wine flowed freely, and there were not wanting other, perhaps more dangerous, seductions; so that the gray dawn had already faintly appeared in the east, while our delirious extravagance was at its height. Madly flushed with cards and intoxication, I was in the act of insisting upon a toast of more than intolerable profanity, when my attention was suddenly diverted by the violent, although partial unclosing of the door of the apartment, and by the eager voice from with− out of a servant. He said that some person, ap− parently in great haste, demanded to speak with me in the hall.

Wildly excited with the potent Vin de Barac, the unexpected interruption rather delighted than sur− prised me. I staggered forward at once, and a few steps brought me to the vestibule of the building. In this low and small room there hung no lamp; and now no light at all was admitted, save that of the exceedingly feeble dawn which made its way through a semicircular window. As I put my foot over the threshold I became aware of the figure of a youth about my own height, and (what then peculiarly struck my mad fancy) habited in a white cassimere morning frock, cut in the novel fashion of the one I myself wore at the moment. This the faint light enabled me to perceive −− but the features of his face I could not distinguish. Immediately upon my en− tering he strode hurriedly up to me, and, seizing me by the arm with a gesture of petulant impatience, whispered the words "William Wilson!" in my ear. I grew perfectly sober in an instant.

There was that in the manner of the stranger, and in the tremulous shake of his uplifted finger, as he held it between my eyes and the light, which filled me with unqualified amazement −− but it was not this which had so violently moved me. It was the preg− nancy of solemn admonition in the singular, low, hissing utterance; and, above all, it was the character, the tone, the key, of those few, simple, and familiar, yet whispered, syllables, which came with a thousand thronging memories of by−gone days, and struck upon my soul with the shock of a galvanic battery. Ere I could recover the use of my senses he was gone.

Although this event failed not of a vivid effect upon my disordered imagination, yet was it evanes− cent as vivid. For some weeks, indeed, I busied myself in earnest inquiry, or was wrapped in a cloud of morbid speculation. I did not pretend to disguise from my perception the identity of the singular individual who thus perseveringly interfered with my affairs, and harassed me with his insinuated counsel. But who and what was this Wilson? −− and whence came he? −− and what were his pur− poses? Upon neither of these points could I be satisfied −− merely ascertaining, in regard to him, that a sudden accident in his family had caused his removal from Dr. Bransby's academy on the after− noon of the day in which I myself had eloped. But in a brief period I ceased to think upon the subject; my attention being all absorbed in a contemplated departure for Oxford. Thither I soon went; the uncalculating vanity of my parents furnishing me with an outfit, and annual establishment, which would enable me to indulge at will in the luxury already so dear to my heart −− to vie in profuseness of expenditure with the haughtiest heirs of the wealthiest earldoms in Great Britain.

Excited by such appliances to vice, my constitu− tional temperament broke forth with redoubled ardor, and I spurned even the common restraints of decency in the mad infatuation of my revels. But it were absurd to pause in the detail of my extravagance. Let it suffice, that among spendthrifts I out−heroded Herod, and that, giving name to a multitude of novel follies, I added no brief appendix to the long cata− logue of vices then usual in the most dissolute uni− versity of Europe.

It could hardly be credited, however, that I had, even here, so utterly fallen from the gentlemanly estate as to seek acquaintance with the vilest arts of the gambler by profession, and, having become an adept in his despicable science, to practise it habitu− ally as a means of increasing my already enormous income at the expense of the weak−minded among my fellow−collegians. Such, nevertheless, was the fact. And the very enormity of this offence against all manly and honourable sentiment proved, beyond doubt, the main, if not the sole reason of the impunity with which it was committed. Who, indeed, among my most abandoned associates, would not rather have disputed the clearest evidence of his senses, than have suspected of such courses the gay, the frank, the generous William Wilson −− the noblest and most liberal commoner at Oxford −− him whose follies (said his parasites) were but the follies of youth and unbridled fancy −− whose errors but in− imitable whim −− whose darkest vice but a careless and dashing extravagance?

I had been now two years successfully busied in this way, when there came to the university a young parvenu nobleman, Glendinning −− rich, said report, as Herodes Atticus −− his riches, too, as easily acquired. I soon found him of weak intellect, and, of course, marked him as a fitting subject for my skill. I frequently engaged him in play, and con− trived, with a gambler's usual art, to let him win considerable sums, the more effectually to entangle him in my snares. At length, my schemes being ripe, I met him (with the full intention that this meet− ing should be final and decisive) at the chambers of a fellow−commoner, (Mr. Preston,) equally intimate with both, but who, to do him justice, entertained not even a remote suspicion of my design. To give to this a better coloring, I had contrived to have assembled a party of some eight or ten, and was solicitously careful that the introduction of cards should appear accidental, and originate in the pro− posal of my contemplated dupe himself. To be brief upon a vile topic, none of the low finesse was omitted, so customary upon similar occasions that it is a just matter for wonder how any are still found so besotted as to fall its victim.

We had protracted our sitting far into the night, and I had at length effected the manoeuvre of getting Glendinning as my sole antagonist. The game, too, was my favorite écarté. The rest of the company, interested in the extent of our play, had abandoned their own cards, and were standing around us as spectators. The parvenu, who had been induced by my artifices in the early part of the evening to drink deeply, now shuffled, dealt, or played, with a wild nervousness of manner for which his intoxication, I thought, might partially, but could not altogether account. In a very short period he had become my debtor to a large amount of money, when, having taken a long draught of port, he did precisely what I had been coolly anticipating, he proposed to double our already extravagant stakes. With a well−feigned show of reluctance, and not until after my repeated refusal had seduced him into some angry words which gave a color of pique to my compliance, did I finally comply. The result, of course, did but prove how entirely the prey was in my toils −− in less than a single hour he had quadrupled his debt. For some time his

countenance had been losing the florid tinge lent it by the wine −− but now, to my astonishment, I perceived that it had grown to a palor truly fear− ful. I say to my astonishment. Glendinning had been represented to my eager inquiries as immeasur− ably wealthy; and the sums which he had as yet lost, although in themselves vast, could not, I sup− posed, very seriously annoy, much less so violently affect him. That he was overcome by the wine just swallowed, was the idea which most readily presented itself; and, rather with a view to the preservation of my own character in the eyes of my associates, than from any less interested motive, I was about to insist, peremptorily, upon a discontinuance of the play, when some expressions at my elbow from among the company, and an ejaculation evincing utter despair on the part of Glendinning, gave me to understand that I had effected his total ruin under circumstances which, rendering him an object for the pity of all, should have protected him from the ill offices even of a fiend.

What now might have been my conduct it is diffi− cult to say. The pitiable condition of my dupe had thrown an air of embarrassed gloom over all, and, for some moments, a profound and unbroken silence was maintained, during which I could not help feel− ing my cheeks tingle with the many burning glances of scorn or reproach cast upon me by the less aban− doned of the party. I will even own that an in− tolerable weight of anxiety was for a brief instant lifted from my bosom by the sudden and extraor− dinary interruption which ensued. The wide, heavy, folding doors of the apartment were all at once thrown open, to their full extent, with a vigorous and rushing impetuosity that extinguished, as if by magic, every candle in the room. Their light, in dying, enabled us just to perceive that a stranger had entered, of about my own height, and closely muffled in a cloak. The darkness, however, was now total; and we could only feel that he was standing in our midst. Before any one of us could recover from the extreme astonishment into which this rudeness had thrown all, we heard the voice of the intruder.

"Gentlemen," he said, in a low, distinct, and never− to−be−forgotten whisper which thrilled to the very marrow of my bones, "Gentlemen, I make no apo− logy for this behaviour, because in thus behaving I am but fulfilling a duty. You are, beyond doubt, uninformed of the true character of the person who has to−night won at écarté a large sum of money from Lord Glendinning. I will therefore put you upon an expeditious and decisive plan of obtaining this very necessary information. Please to examine, at your leisure, the inner linings of the cuff of his left sleeve, and the several little packages which may be found in the somewhat capacious pockets of his embroidered morning wrapper."

While he spoke, so profound was the stillness that one might have heard a pin dropping upon the floor. In ceasing, he at once departed, and as abruptly as he had entered. Can I −− shall I describe my sensa− tions? −− must I say that I felt all the horrors of the damned? Most assuredly I had little time given for reflection. Many hands roughly seized me upon the spot, and lights were immediately reprocured. A search ensued. In the lining of my sleeve were found all of the court−cards essential in écarté, and, in the pockets of my wrapper, a number of packs, fac−similes of those used at our sittings, with the single exception that mine were of the species called, tech− nically, arrondées; the honors being slightly convex at the ends, the lower cards slightly convex at the sides. In this disposition, the dupe who cuts, as cus− tomary, at the breadth of the pack, will invariably find that he cuts his antagonist an honor; while the gambler, cutting at the length, will, as certainly, cut nothing for his victim which may count in the records of the game.

Any outrageous burst of indignation upon this shameful discovery would have affected me less than the silent contempt, or the sarcastic composure with which it was received.

"Mr. Wilson," said our host, stooping to remove from beneath his feet an exceedingly luxurious cloak of rare furs, "Mr. Wilson, this is your property." (The weather was cold; and, upon quitting my own room, I had thrown a cloak over my dressing wrapper, putting it off upon reaching the scene of play.) "I presume it is supererogatory to seek here (eyeing the folds of the garment with a bitter smile), for any farther evidence of your skill. Indeed we have had enough. You will see the necessity, I hope, of quitting Oxford −− at all events, of quitting, instantly, my chambers."

Abased, humbled to the dust as I then was, it is probable that I should have resented this galling language by immediate personal violence, had not my whole attention been at the moment arrested, by a fact of the most startling character. The cloak which I had worn was of a rare description of fur; how rare, how extravagantly costly, I shall not venture to say. Its fashion, too, was of my own fantastic invention; for I was fastidious, to a degree of absurd coxcombry, in matters of this frivolous nature. When, therefore, Mr. Preston reached me that which he had picked up upon the floor, and near the folding doors of the apartment, it was with an astonishment nearly bordering upon terror, that I per− ceived my own already hanging on my arm, (where I had no doubt unwittingly placed it,) and that the one presented me was but its exact counterpart in every, in even the minutest possible particular. The singular being who had so disastrously exposed me, had been muffled, I remembered, in a cloak; and none had been worn at all by any of the mem− bers of our party with the exception of myself. Re− taining some presence of mind, I took the one offered me by Preston, placed it, unnoticed, over my own, left the apartment with a resolute scowl of defiance, and, next morning ere dawn of day, commenced a hurried journey from Oxford to the continent, in a perfect agony of horror and of shame.

I fled in vain. My evil destiny pursued me as if in exultation, and proved, indeed, that the exercise of its mysterious dominion had as yet only begun. Scarcely had I set foot in Paris ere I had fresh evidence of the detestable interest taken by this Wilson in my concerns. Years flew, while I ex− perienced no relief. Villain! −− at Rome, with how untimely, yet with how spectral an officiousness, stepped he in between me and my ambition! At Vienna, too, at Berlin, and at Moscow! Where, in truth, had I not bitter cause to curse him within my heart? From his inscrutable tyranny did I at length flee, panic−stricken, as from a pestilence; and to the very ends of the earth I fled in vain.

And again, and again, in secret communion with my own spirit, would I demand the questions "Who is he? −− whence came he? −− and what are his ob− jects?" But no answer was there found. And now I scrutinized, with a minute scrutiny, the forms, and the methods, and the leading traits of his impertinent supervision. But even here there was very little upon which to base a conjecture. It was noticeable, indeed, that, in no one of the multiplied instances in which he had of late crossed my path, had he so crossed it except to frustrate those schemes, or to disturb those actions, which, fully carried out, might have resulted in bitter mischief. Poor justification this, in truth, for an authority so imperiously assumed! Poor indemnity for natural rights of self−agency so pertinaciously, so insultingly denied!

I had also been forced to notice that my tormentor, for a very long period of time, (while scrupulously and with miraculous dexterity maintaining his whim of an identity of apparel with myself,) had so con− trived it, in the execution of his varied interference with my will, that I saw not, at any moment, the features of his face. Be Wilson what he might, this, at least, was but the veriest of affectation, or of folly. Could he, for an instant, have supposed that, in my admonisher at Eton, in the destroyer of my honor at Oxford, in him who thwarted my ambition at Rome, my revenge in Paris, my passionate love at Naples, or what he falsely termed my avarice in Egypt, that in this, my arch−enemy and evil genius, I could fail to recognise the William Wilson of my schoolboy days, the namesake, the companion, the rival, the hatred and dreaded rival at Dr. Bransby's? Impossible! −− But let me hasten to the last eventful scene of the drama.

Thus far I had succumbed supinely to this im− perious domination. The sentiments of deep awe with which I habitually regarded the elevated character, the majestic wisdom, the apparent omni− presence and omnipotence of Wilson, added to a feeling of even terror, with which certain other traits in his nature and assumptions inspired me, had operated, hitherto, to impress me with an idea of my own utter weakness and helplessness, and to suggest an implicit, although bitterly reluctant submission to his arbitrary will. But, of late days, I had given myself up entirely to wine; and its maddening in− fluence upon my hereditary temper rendered me more and more impatient of control. I began to murmur, to hesitate, to resist. And was it only fancy which induced me to believe that, with the increase of my own firmness, that of my tormentor underwent a proportional diminution? Be this as it may, I now began to feel the inspiration of a burning hope, and at length nurtured in my secret thoughts a stern and desperate resolution that I would submit no longer to be enslaved.

It was at Rome, during the carnival of 18 −− , that I attended a masquerade in the palazzo of the Neapolitan Duke Di Broglio. I had indulged more freely than usual in the excesses of the wine−table; and now the suffocating atmosphere of the crowded rooms irritated me beyond endurance. The dif− ficulty, too, of forcing my way through the mazes of the company contributed not a little to the ruffling of my temper; for I was anxiously seeking, let me not say with what unworthy motive, the young, the gay, the beautiful wife of the aged and doting Di Broglio. With a too unscrupulous confidence she had previously communicated to me the secret of the costume in which she would be habited, and now, having caught a glimpse of her person, I was hurrying to make my way into her presence. At this moment I felt a light hand placed upon my shoulder, and that ever−remembered, low, damnable whisper within my ear.

In a perfect whirlwind of wrath, I turned at once upon him who had thus interrupted me, and seized him violently by the collar. He was attired, as I had expected, like myself; wearing a large Spanish cloak, and a mask of black silk which entirely covered his features.

"Scoundrel!" I said, in a voice husky with rage, while every syllable I uttered seemed as new fuel to my fury, "scoundrel! impostor! accursed villain! you shall not −− you shall not dog me unto death! Follow me, or I stab you where you stand," and I broke my way from the room into a small ante− chamber adjoining, dragging him unresistingly with me as I went.

Upon entering, I thrust him furiously from me. He staggered against the wall, while I closed the door with an oath, and commanded him to draw. He hesitated but for an instant, then, with a slight sigh, drew in silence, and put himself upon his defence.

The contest was brief indeed. I was frantic with every species of wild excitement, and felt within my single arm the energy and the power of a multitude. In a few seconds I forced him by sheer strength against the wainscoting, and thus, getting him at mercy, plunged my sword, with brute ferocity, re− peatedly through and through his bosom.

At this instant some person tried the latch of the door. I hastened to prevent an intrusion, and then immediately returned to my dying antagonist. But what human language can adequately portray that astonishment, that horror which possessed me at the spectacle then presented to view. The brief moment in which I averted my eyes had been sufficient to produce, apparently, a material change in the ar− rangements at the upper or farther end of the room. A large mirror, it appeared to me, now stood where none had been perceptible before; and, as I stepped up to it in extremity of terror, mine own image, but with features all pale and dabbled in blood, advanced, with a feeble and tottering gait, to meet me.

Thus it appeared, I say, but was not. It was my antagonist −− it was Wilson, who then stood before me in the agonies of his dissolution. Not a line in all the marked and singular lineaments of that face which was not, even identically, mine own! His mask and cloak lay where he had thrown them, upon the floor.

It was Wilson, but he spoke no longer in a whisper, and I could have fancied that I myself was speaking while he said −−

"You have conquered, and I yield. Yet, hence− forward art thou also dead −− dead to the world and its hopes. In me didst thou exist −− and, in my death, see by this image, which is thine own, how utterly thou hast murdered thyself."

THE MAN THAT WAS USED UP. A TALE OF THE LATE BUGABOO AND KICKAPOO CAMPAIGN.

I cannot just now remember when or where I first made the acquaintance of that truly fine−looking fellow, Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith. Some one did introduce me to the gentle− man, I am sure −− at some public meeting, I know very well −− held about something of great import− ance, no doubt −− and at some place or other, of this I feel convinced −− whose name I have unaccount− ably forgotten. The truth is −− that the introduction was attended, upon my part, with a degree of anxious and tremulous embarrassment which operated to prevent any definite impressions of either time or place. I am constitutionally nervous −− this, with me, is a family failing, and I can't help it. In especial, the slightest appearance of mystery −− of any point I cannot exactly comprehend −− puts me at once into a pitiable state of agitation.

There was something, as it were, remarkable −− yes, remarkable, although this is but a feeble term to express my full meaning −− about the entire indi− viduality of the personage in question. What this something was, however, I found it impossible to say. He was, perhaps, six feet in height, and of a presence singularly commanding. There was an air distingué pervading the whole man, which spoke of high breeding, and hinted at high birth. Upon this topic −− the topic of Smith's personal appearance −− I have a kind of melancholy satisfaction in being minute. His head of hair would have done honor to a Brutus −− nothing could be more richly flowing, or possess a brighter gloss. It was of a jetty black −− which was also the color, or more properly the no color, of his unimaginable whiskers. You per− ceive I cannot speak of these latter without en− thusiasm; it is not too much to say that they were the handsomest pair of whiskers under the sun. At all events, they encircled, and at times partially overshadowed, a mouth utterly unequalled. Here were the most entirely even, and the most brilliantly white of all conceivable teeth. From between them, upon every proper occasion, issued a voice of sur− passing clearness, melody, and strength. In the matter of eyes, my acquaintance was, also, pre− eminently endowed. Either one of such a pair was worth a couple of the ordinary ocular organs. They were of a deep hazel, exceedingly large and lustrous: and there was perceptible about them, ever and anon, just that amount of interesting obliquity which gives pregnancy to expression.

The bust of the General was unquestionably the finest bust I ever saw. For your life you could not have found a fault with its wonderful proportion. This rare peculiarity set off to great advantage a pair of shoulders which would have called up a blush of conscious inferiority into the countenance of the marble Apollo. I have a passion for fine shoulders, and may say that I never beheld them in perfec− tion before. His arms altogether were admirably modelled, and the fact of his wearing the right in a sling, gave a greater decision of beauty to the left. Nor were the lower limbs less marvellously superb. These were, indeed, the ne plus ultra of good legs. Every connoisseur in such matters admitted the legs to be good. There was neither too much flesh, nor too little −− neither rudeness nor fragility. I could not imagine a more graceful curve than that of the os femoris, and there was just that due gentle prominence in the rear of the fibula which goes to the conformation of a properly proportioned calf. I wish to God my young and talented friend Chi− ponchipino, the sculptor, had but seen the legs of Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith.

But although men so absolutely fine−looking are neither as plenty as reasons or blackberries, still I could not bring myself to believe that the remarkable something to which I alluded just now −− that the odd air of je ne sais quoi which hung about my new acquaintance −− lay altogether, or indeed at all, in the supreme excellence of his bodily endowments. Perhaps it might be traced to the manner −− yet here again I could not pretend to be positive. There was a primness, not to say stiffness, in his carriage −− a degree of measured, and, if I may so express it, of rectangular precision, attending his every movement, which, observed in a more petite figure, would have had the least little savor in the world of affectation, pomposity, or constraint, but which, noticed in a gentleman of his undoubted dimension, was readily placed to the account of reserve, hauteur, of a com− mendable sense, in short, of what is due to the dignity of colossal proportion.

The kind friend who presented me to General Smith whispered in my ear, at the instant, some few words of comment upon the man. He was a re− markable man −− a very remarkable man −− indeed one of the most remarkable men of the age. He was an especial favorite, too, with the ladies −− chiefly on account of his high reputation for courage.

"In that point he is unrivalled −− indeed he is a perfect desperado −− a downright fire−eater, and no mistake," said my friend, here dropping his voice excessively low, and thrilling me with the mystery of his tone.

"A downright fire−eater, and no mistake −− showed that, I should say, to some purpose, in the late tremendous swamp−fight away down south, with the Bugaboo and Kickapoo Indians. (Here my friend placed his forefinger to the side of his nose, and opened his eyes to some extent.) Bless my soul! −− blood and thunder, and all that! −− prodigies of valor! −− heard of him, of course? −− you know he's the man" −−

"Man alive, how do you do? why how are ye? very glad to see ye, indeed!" here interrupted the General himself, seizing my companian by the hand as he drew near, and bowing stiffly, but profoundly, as I was presented. I then thought, (and I think so still,) that I never heard a clearer nor a stronger voice, nor beheld a finer set of teeth −− but I must say that I was sorry for the interruption just at that moment, as, owing to the whispers and insinuations aforesaid, my interest had been greatly excited in the hero of the Bugaboo and Kickapoo campaign.

However, the delightfully luminous conversation of Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith soon completely dissipated this chagrin. My friend leaving us immediately, we had quite a long tête−à−tête, and I was not only pleased but really instructed. I never heard a more fluent talker, or a man of greater general information. With becoming modesty, he forbore, nevertheless, to touch upon the theme I had just then most at heart −− I mean the mysterious circumstances attending the Bugaboo war −− and, on my own part, what I conceive to be a proper sense of delicacy forbade me to broach the subject, although, in truth, I was exceedingly tempted to do so. I perceived, too, that the gallant soldier pre− ferred topics of philosophical interest, and that he delighted, especially, in commenting upon the rapid march of mechanical invention. Indeed −− lead him where I would −− this was a point to which he in− variably came back.

"There is nothing at all like it," he would say; "we are a wonderful people, and live in a wonder− ful age. Parachutes and rail−roads −− man−traps and spring−guns! Our steam−boats are upon every sea, and the Nassau balloon packet is about to run regular trips (fare either way only twenty pounds sterling) between London and Timbuctoo. And who shall calculate the immense influence upon social life −− upon arts −− upon commerce −− upon literature −− which will be the immediate result of the application of the great principles of electro−magnetics? Nor is this all, let me assure you! There is really no end to the march of invention. The most wonderful −− the most ingenious −− and let me add, Mr. −− Mr. −− Thompson, I believe, is your name −− let me add, I say, the most useful −− the most truly useful me− chanical contrivances, are daily springing up like mushrooms, if I may so express myself, or, more figuratively, like −− grasshoppers −− like grasshoppers, Mr. Thompson −− about us and −− ah −− around us!"

Thompson, to be sure, is not my name; but it is needless to say that I left General Smith with a heightened interest in the man, with an exalted opinion of his conversational powers, and a deep sense of the valuable privileges we enjoy in living in this age of mechanical invention. My curiosity, however, had not been altogether satisfied, and I resolved to prosecute immediate inquiry among my acquaintances touching the Brevet Brigadier General himself, and particularly respecting the tremendous events in which he performed so conspicuous a part −− quorum pars magna fuit −− during the Bugaboo and Kickapoo campaign.

The first opportunity which presented itself, and which (horresco referens) I did not in the least scruple to seize, occurred at the church of the Reverend Doctor Drummummupp, where I found myself established, one Sunday, just at sermon time, not only in the pew, but by the side, of that worthy and communicative little friend of mine, Miss Tabitha T. Thus seated, I congratulated myself, and with much reason, upon the very flattering state of affairs. If any person knew anything about Brevet Bri− gadier General John A. B. C. Smith, that person, it was clear to me, was Miss Tabitha T. We tele− graphed a few signals, and then commenced, sotto voce, a brisk tête−à−tête.

"Smith!" said she, in reply to my very earnest inquiry; "Smith! −− why, not General John A. B. C.? Bless me, I thought you knew all about him! This is a wonderfully inventive age! Horrid affair that! −− a bloody set of wretches, those Kickapoos! −− fought like a hero −− prodigies of valor −− immortal renown. Smith! −− Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C.! −− why, you know he's the man" −−

"Man," here broke in Doctor Drummummupp, at the top of his voice, and with a thump that came near knocking down the pulpit about our ears; "man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live −− he cometh up and is cut down like a flower!" I started to the extremity of the pew, and perceived by the animated looks of the divine, that the wrath which had proved so nearly fatal to the pulpit had been excited by the whispers of the lady and myself. There was no help for it −− so I sub− mitted with a good grace, and listened, in all the martyrdom of a dignified silence, to the balance of that very capital discourse.

Next evening found me a somewhat late visitor at the Rantipole theatre, where I felt sure of satisfying my curiosity at once, by merely stepping into the box of those exquisite specimens of affability and om− niscience, the Misses Arabella and Miranda Cognos− centi. That fine tragedian, Climax, however, was do− ing Iago to a very crowded house, and I experienced some little difficulty in making my wishes under− stood; especially, as our box was next to the slips, and completely overlooked the stage.

"Smith?" said Miss Arabella, as she at length comprehended the purport of my query; "Smith? −− why, not General John A. B. C.?"

"Smith?" inquired Miranda, musingly. "God bless me, did you ever behold a finer figure?"

"Never, madam; but do tell me" −−

"Or so inimitable grace?"

"Never, upon my word! −− but pray inform me" −−

"Or so just an appreciation of stage effect?"

"Madam!"

"Or a more delicate sense of the true beauties of Shakspeare? Be so good as to look at that leg!"

"The devil!" and I turned again to her sister.

"Smith?" said she, "why, not General John A. B. C.? Horrid affair that, was'nt it? −− great wretches, those Bugaboos −− savage and so on −− but we live in a wonderfully inventive age! −− Smith! −− O yes! great man! −− perfect desperado −− im− mortal renown −− prodigies of valor! Never heard! (This was given in a scream.) Bless my soul! −− why he's the man" −−

−− "mandragora, Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world, Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep Which thou owd'st yesterday!" here roared out Climax just in my ear, and shaking his fist in my face all the time, in a way that I couldn't stand, and I wouldn't. I left the Misses Cognoscenti immediately, and went behind the scenes for the purpose of giving the scoundrel a sound thrashing.

At the soirée of the lovely widow, Mrs. Kathleen O'Trump, I was very confident that I should meet with no similar disappointment. Accordingly, I was no sooner seated at the card table, with my pretty hostess for a partner, than I propounded those questions whose solution had become a matter so essential to my peace.

"Smith?" said my partner, "why, not General John A. B. C.? Horrid affair that, wasn't it? −− diamonds, did you say? −− terrible wretches, those Kickapoos! −− we are playing whist, if you please, Mr. Tattle −− however, this is the age of invention, most certainly −− the age, one may say −− the age par excellence −− speak French? −− oh, quite a hero −− perfect desperado! −− no hearts, Mr. Tattle! −− I don't believe it −− immortal renown and all that −− prodigies of valor! Never heard!! −− why, bless me, he's the man" −−

"Mann? −− Captain Mann?" here screamed some little feminine interloper from the farthest corner of the room. "Are you talking about Captain Mann and the duel? −− oh, I must hear −− do tell −− go on, Mrs. O'Trump! −− do now go on!" And go on Mrs. O'Trump did −− all about a certain Captain Mann who was either shot or hung, or should have been both shot and hung. Yes! Mrs. O'Trump, she went on, and I −− I went off. There was no chance of hearing anything farther that evening in regard to Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith.

Still, I consoled myself with the reflection that the tide of ill luck would not run against me for ever, and so determined to make a bold push for informa− tion at the rout of that bewitching little angel, the graceful Mrs. Pirouette.

"Smith?" said Mrs. P., as we twirled about together in a pas de zephyr, "Smith? −− why not General John A. B. C.? Dreadful business that of the Bugaboos, wasn't it? −− terrible creatures, those Indians! −− do turn out your toes, I really am ashamed of you −− man of great courage, poor fellow −− but this is a wonderful age for invention −− O dear me, I'm out of breath −− quite a desperado −− prodigies of valor −− never heard!! −− can't believe it −− I shall have to sit down and tell you −− Smith! why he's the man" −−

"Man−fred, I tell you!" here bawled out Miss Bas−Bleu, as I led Mrs. Pirouette to a seat. "Did ever any body hear the like? It's Man−fred, I say, and not at all by any means Man−Friday." Here Miss Bas−Bleu beckoned to me in a very peremptory manner; and I was obliged, will I nill I, to leave Mrs. P. for the purpose of deciding a dispute touch− ing the title of a certain poetical drama of Lord Byron's. Although I pronounced, with great prompt− ness, that the true title was Man−Friday, and not by any means Man−fred, yet when I returned to seek for Mrs. Pirouette she was not to be discovered, and I made my retreat from the house in a very bitter spirit of animosity against the whole race of the Bas−Bleus.

Matters had now assumed a really serious aspect, and I resolved to call at once upon my particular friend, Mr. Theodore Sinivate −− for I knew that here at least I should get something like definite in− formation.

"Smith?" said he, in his well known peculiar way of drawling out his syllables; "Smith? −− why, not General John A −− B −− C.? Savage affair that with the Kickapo−o−o−os, was'nt it? Say! don't you think so? −− perfect despera−a−ado −− great pity, 'pon my honor! −− wonderfully inventive age! −− pro−o−odigies of valor! By the by, did you ever hear about Captain Mann?"

"Captain Mann be d −− d!" said I, "please to go on with your story."

"Hem! −− oh well! −− toute la même cho−o−ose, as we say in France. Smith, eh? Brigadier General John A −− B −− C.? I say −− (here Mr. S. thought proper to put his finger to the side of his nose) −− I say, you don't mean to insinuate now, really, and truly, and conscientiously, that you don't know all about that affair of Smith's as well as I do, eh? Smith? John A −− B −− C.? Why, bless me, he's the ma−a−an" −−

"Mr. Sinivate," said I, imploringly, "is he the man in the mask?"

"No−o−o!" said he, looking wise, "nor the man in the mo−o−o−on."

This reply I considered a pointed and positive insult, and I left the house at once in high dudgeon, with a firm resolve to call my friend, Mr. Sinivate, to a speedy account for his ungentlemanly conduct and ill breeding.

In the meantime, however, I had no notion of being thwarted touching the information I desired. There was one resource left me yet. I would go to the fountain head. I would call forthwith upon the General himself, and demand, in explicit terms, a solution of this abominable piece of mystery. Here at least there should be no chance for equivocation. I would be plain, positive, peremptory −− as short as pie−crust −− as concise as Tacitus or Montesquieu.

It was early when I called, and the General was dressing; but I pleaded urgent business, and was shown at once into his bed−room by an old negro valet, who remained in attendance during my visit As I entered the chamber, I looked about, of course, for the occupant, but did not immediately perceive him. There was a large and exceedingly odd−look− ing bundle of something which lay close by my feet, on the floor, and, as I was not in the best humour in the world, I gave it a kick out of the way.

"Hem! ahem! rather civil that, I should say!" said the bundle, in one of the smallest, the weakest, and altogether the funniest little voices, between a squeak and a whistle, that ever I heard in all the days of my existence.

"Ahem! rather civil that, I should observe!" −− I fairly shouted with terror, and made off at a tangent, into the farthest extremity of the room.

"God bless me, my dear fellow," here again whistled the bundle, "what −− what −− what −− why, what is the matter? I really believe you don't know me at all."

"No −− no −− no!" said I, getting as close to the wall as possible, and holding up both hands in the way of expostulation; "don't know you −− know you −− know you −− don't know you at all! Where's your master?" here I gave an impatient squint to− wards the negro, still keeping a tight eye upon the bundle.

"He! he! he! he−aw! he−aw!" cachinnated that delectable specimen of the human family, with his mouth fairly extended from ear to ear, and with his forefinger held up close to his face, and levelled at the object of my apprehension, as if he was taking aim at it with a pistol.

"He! he! he! he−aw! he−aw! he−aw! −− what? you want Mass Smif? Why, dar's him!"

What could I say to all this −− what could I?" I staggered into an arm−chair, and, with staring eyes and open mouth, awaited the solution of the wonder.

"Strange you shouldn't know me though, isn't it?" presently re−squeaked the bundle, which I now perceived was performing, upon the floor, some in− explicable evolution, very analogous to the drawing on of a stocking. There was only a single leg, however, apparent.

"Strange you shouldn't know me, though, isn't it? Pompey, bring me that leg!" Here Pompey handed the bundle a very capital cork leg, all ready dressed, which it screwed on in a trice, and then it stood up− right before my eyes. Devil the word could I say.

"And a bloody action it was," continued the thing, as if in a soliloquy; "but then one musn't fight with the Bugaboos and Kickapoos, and think of coming off with a mere scratch. Pompey, I'll thank you now for that arm. Thomas (turning to me) is de− cidedly the best hand at a cork leg; he lives in Race street, No. 79 −− stop, I'll give you his card; but if you should ever want an arm, my dear fellow, you must really let me recommend you to Bishop." Here Pompey screwed on an arm.

"We had rather hot work of it, that you may say. Now, you dog, slip on my shoulders and bosom −− Pettitt makes the best shoulders, but for a bosom you will have to go to Ducrow."

"Bosom!" said I.

"Pompey, will you never be ready with that wig? Scalping is a rough process after all; but then you can procure such a capital scratch at De L'Orme's."

"Scratch!"

"Now, you nigger, my teeth! For a good set of these you had better go to Parmly's at once; high prices, but excellent work. I swallowed some very capital articles, though, when the big Bugaboo rammed me down with the butt end of his rifle."

"Butt end! −− ram down! −− my eye!"

"O yes, by the by, my eye −− here, Pompey, you scamp, screw it in! Those Kickapoos are not so very slow at a gouge −− but he's a belied man, that Dr. Williams, after all; you can't imagine how well I see with the eyes of his make."

I now began very clearly to perceive that the object before me was nothing more or less than my new acquaintance, Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith. The manipulations of Pompey had made, I must confess, a very striking difference in the appearance of the personal man. The voice, however, still puzzled me no little; but even this ap− parent mystery was speedily cleared up.

"Pompey, you black rascal," squeaked the General, "I really do believe you would let me go out without my palate."

Hereupon the negro, grumbling out an apology, went up to his master, opened his mouth with the knowing air of a horse−jockey, and adjusted therein a somewhat singular looking machine, in a very dex− terous manner that I could not altogether com− prehend. The alteration, however, in the whole expression of the countenance of the General was in− stantaneous and surprising. When he again spoke, his voice had resumed the whole of that rich melody and strength which I had noticed upon our original introduction.

"D −− n the vagabonds!" said he, in so clear a tone that I positively started at the change, "d −− n the vagabonds! they not only knocked in the roof of my mouth, but took the trouble to cut off at least seven−eighths of my tongue. There isn't Bonfanti's equal, however, in America, for really good articles of this description. I can recommend you to him with confidence, (here the General bowed,) and assure you that I have the greatest pleasure in so doing."

I acknowledged this kindness in my best manner, and now took leave of my friend at once, with a perfect understanding of the state of affairs −− with a full comprehension of the mystery which had troubled me so long. It was evident. It was a clear case. Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith was the man −− was

THE MAN THAT WAS USED UP.

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER.

During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melan− choly House of Usher. I know not how it was −− but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insuf− ferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half−pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment, with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I

looked upon the scene before me −− upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain −− upon the bleak walls −− upon the vacant eye−like windows −− upon a few rank sedges −− and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees −− with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after−dream of the reveller upon opium −− the bitter lapse into common life −− the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart −− an unredeemed dreariness of thought which no goad− ing of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it −− I paused to think −− what was it that so unnerved me in the contempla− tion of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory con− clusion, that while, beyond doubt, there are com− binations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the reason, and the analysis, of this power, lie among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be suf− ficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate its capacity for sorrowful impression; and, acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled lustre by the dwelling, and gazed down −− but with a shudder even more thrilling than before −− upon the re−model− led and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree−stems, and the vacant and eye−like windows.

Nevertheless, in this mansion of gloom I now pro− posed to myself a sojourn of some weeks. Its pro− prietor, Roderick Usher, had been one of my boon companions in boyhood; but many years had elapsed since our last meeting. A letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country −− a letter from him −− which, in its wildly importunate nature, had admitted of no other than a personal reply. The MS. gave evidence of nervous agitation. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness −− of a pitiable mental idiosyncrasy which oppressed him −− and of an earnest desire to see me, as his best, and indeed, his only personal friend, with a view of attempting, by the cheerfulness of my society, some alleviation of his malady. It was the manner in which all this, and much more, was said −− it was the apparent heart that went with his request −− which allowed me no room for hesitation −− and I accordingly obeyed, what I still considered a very singular summons, forthwith.

Although, as boys, we had been even intimate as− sociates, yet I really knew little of my friend. His reserve had been always excessive and habitual. I was aware, however, that his very ancient family had been noted, time out of mind, for a peculiar sensibility of temperament, displaying itself, through long ages, in many works of exalted art, and manifested, of late, in repeated deeds of munificent yet unobtrusive charity, as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies, perhaps even more than to the orthodox and easily recognisable beauties, of musical science. I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact, that the stem of the Usher race, all time−honored as it was, had put forth, at no period, any enduring branch; in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain. It was this deficiency, I considered, while running over in thought the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people, and while speculating upon the possible in− fluence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exercised upon the other −− it was this deficiency, perhaps, of collateral issue, and the con− sequent undeviating transmission, from sire to son, of the patrimony with the name, which had, at length, so identified the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appella− tion of the "House of Usher" −− an appellation which seemed to include, in the minds of the peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion.

I have said that the sole effect of my somewhat childish experiment, of looking down within the tarn, had been to deepen the first singular impression. There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition −− for why should I not so term it? −− served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis. And it might have been for this reason only, that, when I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself, from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy −− a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that around about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their im− mediate vicinity −− an

atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn, in the form of an inelastic vapor or gas −− dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden− hued. Shaking off from my spirit what must have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building. Its principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discolora− tion of ages had been great. Minute fungi over− spread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled web−work from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adapta− tion of parts, and the utterly porous, and evidently decayed condition of the individual stones. In this there was much that reminded me of the specious totality of old wood−work which has rotted for long years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zig−zag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.

Noticing these things, I rode over a short cause− way to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me, in silence, through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the studio of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me −− while the carvings of the ceilings, the sombre tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagoric armorial trophies which rattled as I strode, were but matters to which, or to such as which, I had been accustomed from my infancy −− while I hesitated not to acknowledge how familiar was all this −− I still wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up. On one of the staircases, I met the physician of the family. His countenance, I thought, wore a mingled expression of low cunning and perplexity. He accosted me with trepidation and passed on. The valet now threw open a door and ushered me into the presence of his master.

The room in which I found myself was very large and excessively lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trelliced panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around; the eye, however, strug− gled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa upon which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality −− of the constrained effort of the ennuyé man of the world. A glance, however, at his countenance convinced me of his perfect sincerity. We sat down; and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely, man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with dif− ficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood. Yet the character of his face had been at all times remarkable. A cadaverousness of complexion; an eye large, liquid, and luminous be− yond comparison; lips somewhat thin and very pallid, but of a surpassingly beautiful curve; a nose of a delicate Hebrew model, but with a breadth of nostril unusual in similar formations; a finely moulded chin, speaking, in its want of prominence, of a want of moral energy; hair of a more than web−like soft− ness and tenuity; these features, with an inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple, made up altogether a countenance not easily to be forgotten. And now in the mere exaggeration of the prevailing character of these features, and of the expression they were wont to convey, lay so much of change that I doubted to whom I spoke. The now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous lustre of the eye, above all things startled and even awed me. The silken hair, too, had been suffered to grow all unheeded, and as, in its wild gossamer texture, it floated rather than fell about the face, I could not, even with effort, connect its arabesque expression with any

idea of simply humanity.

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence −− an inconsistency; and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile strug− gles to overcome an habitual trepidancy, an excessive nervous agitation. For something of this nature I had indeed been prepared, no less by his letter, than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits, and by conclusions deduced from his peculiar physical con− formation and temperament. His action was alter− nately vivacious and sullen. His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision (when the animal spirits seemed utterly in abeyance) to that species of ener− getic concision −− that abrupt, weighty, unhurried, and hollow−sounding enunciation −− that leaden, self− balanced and perfectly modulated guttural utterance, which may be observed in the moments of the in− tensest excitement of the lost drunkard, or the irre− claimable eater of opium.

It was thus that he spoke of the object of my visit, of his earnest desire to see me, and of the solace he expected me to afford him. He entered, at some length, into what he conceived to be the nature of his malady. It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy −− a mere nervous affection, he immediately added, which would undoubtedly soon pass off. It displayed itself in a host of unnatural sensations. Some of these, as he detailed them, interested and bewildered me −− although, perhaps, the terms, and the general manner of the narration had their weight. He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses; the most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odors of all flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even a faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror.

To an anomalous species of terror I found him a bounden slave. "I shall perish," said he, "I must perish in this deplorable folly. Thus, thus, and not otherwise, shall I be lost. I dread the events of the future, not in themselves, but in their results. I shudder at the thought of any, even the most trivial, incident, which may operate upon this in− tolerable agitation of soul. I have, indeed, no ab− horrence of danger, except in its absolute effect −− in terror. In this unnerved −− in this pitiable condi− tion −− I feel that I must inevitably abandon life and reason together in my struggles with some fatal demon of fear."

I learned, moreover, at intervals, and through broken and equivocal hints, another singular feature of his mental condition. He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and from which, for many years, he had never ventured forth −− in regard to an influ− ence whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be restated −− an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and sub− stance of his family mansion, had, by dint of long sufferance, he said, obtained over his spirit −− an effect which the physique of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had, at length, brought about upon the morale of his existence.

He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin −− to the severe and long−continued illness −− indeed to the evidently approaching disso− lution −− of a tenderly beloved sister; his sole com− panion for long years −− his last and only relative on earth. "Her decease," he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, "would leave him (him the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers." As he spoke the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread. Her figure, her air, her features −− all, in their very minutest development were those −− were identically, (I can use no other sufficient term,) were identically those of the Roderick Usher who sat beside me. A feeling of stupor oppressed me, as my eyes followed her retreating steps. As a door, at length, closed upon her exit, my glance sought instinctively and eagerly the countenance of the brother −− but he had buried his face in his hands, and I could only perceive that a far more than ordinary wanness had overspread the emaciated fingers through which trickled many passionate tears.

The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physicians. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the unusual diagnosis. Hitherto she had steadily borne up against the pressure of her malady, and had not betaken herself finally to bed; but, on the closing in of the evening of my arrival at the house, she succumbed, as her brother told me at night with inexpressible agitation, to the prostrating power of the destroyer −− and I learned that the glimpse I had obtained of her person would thus probably be the last I should obtain −− that the lady, at least while living, would be seen by me no more.

For several days ensuing, her name was unmention− ed by either Usher or myself; and during this period, I was busied in earnest endeavors to alleviate the melancholy of my friend. We painted and read together −− or I listened, as if in a dream, to the wild improvisations of his speaking guitar. And thus, as a closer and still closer intimacy admitted me more unreservedly into the recesses of his spirit, the more bitterly did I perceive the futility of all attempt at cheering a mind from which darkness, as if an inhe− rent positive quality, poured forth upon all objects of the moral and physical universe, in one unceasing radiation of gloom.

I shall ever bear about me a memory of the many solemn hours I thus spent alone with the master of the House of Usher. Yet I should fail in any attempt to convey an idea of the exact character of the studies, or of the occupations, in which he involved me, or led me the way. An excited and highly dis− tempered ideality threw a sulphurous lustre over all. His long improvised dirges will ring forever in my ears. Among other things, I bear painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber. From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vaguenesses at which I shuddered the more thrillingly, because I shuddered knowing not why, from these paintings (vivid as their images now are before me) I would in vain endeavor to educe more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words. By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and overawed attention. If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roder− ick Usher. For me at least −− in the circumstances then surrounding me −− there arose out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvas, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever yet in the con− templation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli.

One of the phantasmagoric conceptions of my friend, partaking not so rigidly of the spirit of abstraction, may be shadowed forth, although feebly, in words. A small picture presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device. Certain accessory points of the design served well to convey the idea that this excavation lay at an ex− ceeding depth below the surface of the earth. No outlet was observed in any portion of its vast extent, and no torch, or other artificial source of light was discernible −− yet a flood of intense rays rolled throughout, and bathed the whole in a ghastly and inappropriate splendor.

I have just spoken of that morbid condition of the auditory nerve which rendered all music intolerable to the sufferer, with the exception of certain effects of stringed instruments. It was, perhaps, the narrow limits to which he thus confined himself upon the guitar, which gave birth, in great measure, to the fantastic character of his performances. But the fervid facility of his impromptus could not be so ac− counted for. They must have been, and were, in the notes, as well as in the words of his wild fantasias, (for he not unfrequently accompanied himself with rhymed verbal improvisations,) the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I have previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excite− ment. The words of one of these rhapsodies I have easily borne away in memory. I was, perhaps, the more forcibly impressed with it, as he gave it, because, in the under or mystic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne. The verses, which were entitled "The Haunted Palace," ran very nearly, if not accurately, thus:

I.

In the greenest of our valleys,

By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace −−

Snow−white palace −− reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion −−

It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion

Over fabric half so fair.

II.

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,

On its roof did float and flow;
(This −− all this −− was in the olden

Time long ago)
And every gentle air that dallied,

In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,

A winged odor went away.

III.

Wanderers in that happy valley

Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically

To a lute's well−tuned law,
Round about a throne, where sitting

(Porphyrogene!)
In state his glory well befitting,

The sovereign of the realm was seen.

IV.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing

Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,

And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes whose sweet duty

Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,

The wit and wisdom of their king.

V.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,

Assailed the monarch's high estate;
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow

Shall dawn upon him, desolate!)
And, round about his home, the glory

That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim−remembered story

Of the old time entombed.

VI.

And travellers now within that valley,

Through the red−litten windows, see
Vast forms that move fantastically

To a discordant melody;

While, like a rapid ghastly river,

Through the pale door,
A hideous throng rush out forever,

And laugh −− but smile no more.

I well remember that suggestions arising from this ballad led us into a train of thought wherein there became manifest an opinion of Usher's which I men− tion not so much on account of its novelty, (for other men have thought thus,) as on account of the per− tinacity with which he maintained it. This opinion, in its general form, was that of the sentience of all vegetable things. But, in his disordered fancy, the idea had assumed a more daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the king− dom of inorganization. I lack words to express the full extent, or the earnest abandon of his persuasion. The belief, however, was connected (as I have pre− viously hinted) with the gray stones of the home of his forefathers. The conditions of the sentience had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of col− location of these stones −− in the order of their ar− rangement, as well as in that of the many fungi which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around −− above all, in the long undis− turbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evi− dence −− the evidence of the sentience −− was to be seen, he said, (and I here started as he spoke,) in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmos− phere of their own about the waters and the walls. The result was discoverable, he added, in that silent, yet importunate and terrible influence which for centuries had moulded the destinies of his family, and which made him what I now saw him −− what he was. Such opinions need no comment, and I will make none.

Our books −− the books which, for years, had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid −− were, as might be supposed, in strict keeping with this character of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the Ververt et Char− treuse of Gresset; the Belphegor of Machiavelli; the Selenography of Brewster; the Heaven and Hell of Swedenborg; the Subterranean Voyage of Nicholas Klimm de Holberg; the Chiromancy of Robert Flud, of Jean d'Indaginé, and of De la Chambre; the Journey into the Blue Distance of Tieck; and the City of the Sun of Campanella. One favorite volume was a small octavo edition of the Directorium In− quisitorium, by the Dominican Eymeric de Gironne; and there were passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African Satyrs and Ægipans, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the earnest and re− peated perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic −− the manual of a

forgotten church −− the Vigilae Mortuorum secundum Chorum Ecclesiae Maguntinae.

I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence upon the hypo− chondriac, when, one evening, having informed me abruptly that the lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight, (previously to its final interment,) in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building. The wordly reason, however, assigned for this singular proceeding, was one which I did not feel at liberty to dispute. The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by considerations of the unusual character of the malady of the de− ceased, of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical men, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial−ground of the family. I will not deny that when I called to mind the sinister countenance of the person whom I met upon the staircase, on the day of my arrival at the house, I had no desire to oppose what I regarded as at best but a harmless, and not by any means an unnatural, precaution.

At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangements for the temporary entombment. The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest. The vault in which we placed it (and which had been so long unopened that our torches, half smothered in its oppressive atmosphere, gave us little opportunity for investigation) was small, damp, and entirely without means of admission for light; lying, at great depth, immediately beneath that por− tion of the building in which was my own sleeping apartment. It had been used, apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst purposes of a donjon−keep, and, in later days, as a place of deposit for powder, or other highly combustible substance, as a portion of its floor, and the whole interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper. The door, of massive iron, had been, also, similarly protected. Its immense weight caused an unusually sharp grating sound, as it moved upon its hinges.

Having deposited our mournful burden upon tres− sels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant. The exact similitude between the brother and sister even here again startled and confounded me. Usher, divining, per− haps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead −− for we could not regard her unawed. The dis− ease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid, and, having secured the door of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.

And now, some days of bitter grief having elapsed, an observable change came over the features of the mental disorder of my friend. His ordinary manner had vanished. His ordinary occupations were neglected or forgotten. He roamed from chamber to chamber with hurried, unequal, and objectless step. The pallor of his countenance had assumed, if possible, a more ghastly hue −− but the luminous− ness of his eye had utterly gone out. The once occasional huskiness of his tone was heard no more; and a tremulous quaver, as if of extreme terror, habitually characterized his utterance. −− There were times, indeed, when I thought his unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with an oppressive secret, to di− vulge which he struggled for the necessary courage. At times, again, I was obliged to resolve all into the mere inexplicable vagaries of madness, as I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for long hours, in an atti− tude of the profoundest attention, as if listening to some imaginary sound. It was no wonder that his condition terrified −− that it infected me. I felt creep− ing upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive super− stitions.

It was, most especially, upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day after the placing of the lady Madeline within the donjon, that I experienced the full power of such feelings. Sleep came not near my couch −− while the hours waned and waned away. I struggled to reason off the nervousness which had dominion over me. I en− deavoured to believe that much, if not all of what I felt, was due to the phantasmagoric influence

of the gloomy furniture of the room −− of the dark and tattered draperies, which, tortured into motion by the breath of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and fro upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. But my efforts were fruit− less. An irrepressible tremor gradually pervaded my frame; and, at length, there sat upon my very heart an incubus of utterly causeless alarm. Shak− ing this off with a gasp and a struggle, I uplifted myself upon the pillows, and, peering earnestly with− in the intense darkness of the chamber, harkened −− I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me −− to certain low and indefinite sounds which came, through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable, I threw on my clothes with haste, for I felt that I should sleep no more during the night, and endeavored to arouse myself from the pitiable condition into which I had fallen, by pacing rapidly to and fro through the apartment.

I had taken but few turns in this manner, when a light step on an adjoining staircase arrested my at− tention. I presently recognised it as that of Usher. In an instant afterwards he rapped, with a gentle touch, at my door, and entered, bearing a lamp. His countenance was, as usual, cadaverously wan −− but there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes −− an evidently restrained hysteria in his whole de− meanor. His air appalled me −− but anything was preferable to the solitude which I had so long en− dured, and I even welcomed his presence as a relief.

"And you have not seen it?" he said abruptly, after having stared about him for some moments in silence −− "you have not then seen it? −− but, stay! you shall." Thus speaking, and having carefully shaded his lamp, he hurried to one of the gigantic casements, and threw it freely open to the storm.

The impetuous fury of the entering gust nearly lifted us from our feet. It was, indeed, a tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night, and one wildly singular in its terror and its beauty. A whirlwind had ap− parently collected its force in our vicinity; for there were frequent and violent alterations in the direction of the wind; and the exceeding density of the clouds (which hung so low as to press upon the turrets of the house) did not prevent our perceiving the life−like velocity with which they flew careering from all points against each other, without passing away into the distance. I say that even their exceeding density did not prevent our perceiving this −− yet we had no glimpse of the moon or stars −− nor was there any flashing forth of the lightning. But the under sur− faces of the huge masses of agitated vapor, as well as all terrestrial objects immediately around us, were glowing in the unnatural light of a faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion.

"You must not −− you shall not behold this!" said I, shudderingly, to Usher, as I led him, with a gentle violence, from the window to a seat. "These ap− pearances, which bewilder you, are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon −− or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the tarn. Let us close this casement −− the air is chill− ing and dangerous to your frame. Here is one of your favorite romances. I will read, and you shall listen −− and so we will pass away this terrible night together.

The antique volume which I had taken up was the "Mad Trist" of Sir Launcelot Canning −− but I had called it a favorite of Usher's more in sad jest than in earnest; for, in truth, there is little in its uncouth and unimaginative prolixity which could have had interest for the lofty and spiritual ideality of my friend. It was, however, the only book immediately at hand; and I indulged a vague hope that the excitement which now agitated the hypochondriac might find relief (for the history of mental disorder is full of similar anomalies) even in the extremeness of the folly which I should read. Could I have judged, in− deed by the wild overstrained air of vivacity with which he hearkened, or apparently hearkened, to the words of the tale, I might have well congratulated myself upon the success of my design.

I had arrived at that well−known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the Trist, having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force. Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus: −−

"And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal, on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who, in sooth, was of an obstinate and maliceful turn, but, feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and, with blows, made quickly room in the plankings of the door for his gauntleted hand, and now pulling there− with sturdily, he so cracked, and ripped, and tore all asunder, that the noise of the dry and hollow−sound− ing wood alarummed and reverberated throughout the forest."

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment, paused; for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had de− ceived me) −− it appeared to me that, from some very remote portion of the mansion or of its vicinity, there came, indistinctly, to my ears, what might have been, in its exact similarity of character, the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described. It was, beyond doubt, the coincidence alone which had arrested my attention; for, amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still in− creasing storm, the sound, in itself, had nothing, surely, which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story.

"But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged and amazed to perceive no signal of the maliceful hermit; but, in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanor, and of a fiery tongue, which sate in guard before a palace of gold, with a floor of silver; and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass with this legend enwritten −− Who entereth herein, a conqueror hath bin, Who slayeth the dragon the shield he shall win. And Ethelred uplifted his mace, and struck upon the head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath, with a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard."

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement −− for there could be no doubt whatever that, in this instance, I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound −− the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up as the sound of the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed, as I certainly was, upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting, by any observation, the sensitive nervousness of my com− panion. I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question; although, assuredly, a strange alteration had, during the last few minutes, taken place in his demeanor. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair, so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber, and thus I could but partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring inaudibly. His head had dropped upon his breast −− yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide and rigid opening of the eye as I caught a glance of it in profile. The motion of his body, too, was at variance with this idea −− for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway. Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded: −−

"And now, the champion, having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchant− ment which was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valorously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the shield was upon the wall; which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the silver floor, with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound."

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips, than −− as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver −− I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic, and clangorous, yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely un− nerved, I started convulsively to my feet; but the measured rocking

movement of Usher was undis− turbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a more than stony rigidity. But, as I laid my hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his frame; a sickly smile quivered about his lips; and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over his person, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

"Not hear it? −− yes, I hear it, and have heard it. Long −− long −− long −− many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it −− yet I dared not −− oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am! −− I dared not −− I dared not speak! We have put her living in the tomb! Said I not that my senses were acute? I now tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them −− many, many days ago −− yet I dared not −− I dared not speak! And now −− to−night −− Ethelred −− ha! ha! −− the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death−cry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield −− say, rather, the rending of the coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault! Oh whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footsteps on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beating of her heart? Madman!" −− here he sprung violently to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul −− "Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!"

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell −− the huge antique pannels to which the speaker pointed, threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust −− but then without those doors there did stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher. There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold −− then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and in her horrible and now final death−agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors he had dreaded.

From that chamber, and from that mansion, I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Sud− denly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued −− for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood−red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely−discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken, as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened −− there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind −− the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight −− my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder −− there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters −− and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the "House of Usher."

THE DUC DE L'OMELETTE.

And stepped at once into a cooler clime.
Cowper.

Keats fell by a criticism. Who was it died of
The Andromache?1 Ignoble souls! −− De L'Ome−
lette perished of an ortolan. L'histoire en est brève
−− assist me Spirit of Apicius!

A golden cage bore the little winged wanderer, ena− mored, melting, indolent, to the Chaussée D'Antin, from its home in far Peru. From its queenly pos− sessor La Bellissima, to the Duc De L'Omelette, six peers of the empire conveyed the happy bird. It was "All for Love."

That night the Duc was to sup alone. In the privacy of his bureau he reclined languidly on that ottoman for which he sacrificed his loyalty in out− bidding his king −− the notorious ottoman of Cadêt.

He buries his face in the pillow −− the clock strikes! Unable to restrain his feelings, his Grace swallows an olive. At this moment the door gently opens to the sound of soft music, and lo! the most delicate of birds is before the most enamored of men! But what inexpressible dismay now overshadows the countenance of the Duc? −− " Horreur! −− chien! −− Baptiste! −− l'oiseau! ah, bon Dieu! cet oiseau modeste que tu as deshabillé de ses plumes, et que tu as servi sans papier!" It is superfluous to say more −− the Duc expired in a paroxysm of disgust. * * * * * *

"Ha! ha! ha!" −− said his Grace on the third day after his decease.

"He! he! he!" −− replied the Devil faintly, draw− ing himself up with an air of hauteur.

"Why, surely you are not serious" −− retorted De L'Omelette. "I have sinned −− c'est vrai −− but, my good sir, consider! −− you have no actual inten− tion of putting such −− such −− barbarous threats into execution."

"No what?" −− said his Majesty −− "come, sir, strip!"

"Strip, indeed! −− very pretty i' faith! −− no, sir, I shall not strip. Who are you, pray, that I, Duc De L'Omelette, Prince de Foie−Gras, just come of age, author of the `Mazurkiad,' and Member of the Academy, should divest myself at your bidding of the sweetest pantaloons ever made by Bourdon, the daintiest robe−de−chambre ever put together by Rom− bêrt −− to say nothing of the taking my hair out of paper −− not to mention the trouble I should have in drawing off my gloves?"

"Who am I? −− ah, true! I am Baal−Zebub, Prince of the Fly. I took thee just now from a rose−wood coffin inlaid with ivory. Thou wast curiously scented, and labelled as per invoice. Belial sent thee −− my Inspector of Cemeteries. The pantaloons, which thou sayest were made by Bourdon, are an excellent pair of linen drawers, and thy robe−de−chambre is a shroud of no scanty dimensions."

"Sir!" replied the Duc, "I am not to be insulted with impunity! −− Sir! I shall take the earliest op− portunity of avenging this insult! −− Sir! you shall hear from me! In the meantime au revoir!" −− and the Duc was bowing himself out of the Satanic presence, when he was interrupted and brought back by a gentleman in waiting. Hereupon his Grace rubbed his eyes, yawned, shrugged his shoulders, reflected. Having become satisfied of his identity, he took a bird's eye view of his whereabouts.

The apartment was superb. Even De L'Ome− lette pronounced it bien comme il faut. It was not very long, nor very broad, −− but its height −− ah, that was appalling! There was no ceiling −− cer− tainly none −− but a dense whirling mass of fiery− colored clouds. His Grace's brain reeled as he glanced upwards. From above, hung a chain of an unknown blood−red metal −− its upper end lost, like C −− , parmi les nues. From its nether extremity hung a large cresset. The Duc knew it to be a ruby −− but from it there poured a light so intense, so still, so terrible, Persia never worshipped such −− Gheber never imagined such −− Mussulman never dreamed of such when, drugged with opium, he has tottered to a bed of poppies, his back to the flowers, and his face to the god Apollo! The Duc muttered a slight oath, decidedly approbatory.

The corners of the room were rounded into niches. Three of these were filled with statues of gigantic proportions. Their beauty was Grecian, their de− formity Egyptian, their tout ensemble French. In the fourth niche the statue was veiled −− it was not colossal. But then there was a taper ankle, a sandalled foot. De L'Omelette laid his hand upon his heart, closed his eyes, raised them, and caught his Satanic Majesty −− in a blush.

But the paintings! −− Kupris! Astarte! Astoreth! −− a thousand and the same! And Rafaelle has beheld them! Yes, Rafaelle has been here; for did he not paint the −− ? and was he not consequently damned? The paintings! −− the paintings! O luxury! O love! −− who gazing on those forbidden beauties shall have eyes for the dainty devices of the golden frames that lie imbedded and asleep against those swelling walls of eider down?

But the Duc's heart is fainting within him. He is not, however, as you suppose, dizzy with magnifi− cence, nor drunk with the ecstatic breath of those innumerable censers. C'est vrai que de toutes ces choses il a pensé beaucoup −− mais! The Duc De L'Omelette is terror−stricken; for through the lurid vista which a single uncurtained window is afford− ing, lo! gleams the most ghastly of all fires!

Le pauvre Duc! He could not help imagining that the glorious, the voluptuous, the never−dying melodies which pervaded that hall, as they passed filtered and transmuted through the alchemy of the enchanted window−panes, were the wailings and the howlings of the hopeless and the damned! And there, too −− there −− upon that ottoman! −− who could he be? −− he, the petit−maitre −− no, the Deity −− who sat as if carved in marble, et qui sourit, with his pale countenance, si amerement. * * * * *

Mais il faut agir −− that is to say, a Frenchman never faints outright. Besides, his Grace hated a scene −− De L'Omelette is himself again. There were some foils upon a table −− some points also. The Duc had studied under B −− , il avait tué ses six hommes. Now, then, il peut s'echapper. He measures two points, and, with a grace inimitable, offers his Majesty the choice. Horreur! his Majesty does not fence!

Mais il joue! −− what a happy thought! But his Grace had always an excellent memory. He had dipped in the "Diable" of the Abbé Gualtier. There− in it is said "que le Diable n'ose pas refuser un jeu d'Ecarté."

But the chances −− the chances! True −− desperate: but not more desperate than the Duc. Besides, was he not in the secret? −− had he not skimmed over Père Le Brun? was he not a member of the Club Vingt−un? "Si je perds," said he, "je serai deux fois perdu, I shall be doubly damned −− voila tout! (Here his Grace shrugged his shoulders) Si je gagne je serai libre, −− que les cartes soient préparées! * * * * * *

His Grace was all care, all attention −− his Majesty all confidence. A spectator would have thought of Francis and Charles. His Grace thought of his game. His Majesty did not think −− he shuffled. The Duc cut.

The cards are dealt. The trump is turned −− it is −− it is −− the king! No −− it was the queen. His Majesty cursed her masculine habiliments. De L'Omelette laid his hand upon his heart.

They play. The Duc counts. The hand is out. His Majesty counts heavily, smiles, and is taking wine. The Duc slips a card.

"C'est à vous à faire" −− said his Majesty, cut− ting. His Grace bowed, dealt, and arose from the table en presentant le Roi.

His Majesty looked chagrined.

Had Alexander not been Alexander, he would have been Diogenes; and the Duc assured his Majesty in taking leave "que s'il n'etait pas De L'Omelette il n'aurait point d'objection d'etre le Diable."

1. Montfleury. The author of the Parnasse Réformé makes him thus express himself in the shades. "The man then who would know of what I died, let him not ask if it were of the fever, the dropsy, or the gout; but let him know that it was of The Andromache."

MS. FOUND IN A BOTTLE.

Of my country and of my family I have little to say. Ill usage and length of years have driven me from the one, and estranged me from the other. Hereditary wealth afforded me an education of no common order, and a contemplative turn of mind enabled me to methodize the stores which early study very diligently garnered up.

Beyond all things the works of the German moralists gave me great delight; not from any ill−advised admiration of their eloquent madness, but from the ease with which my habits of rigid thought enabled me to detect their falsities. I have often been reproached with the aridity of my genius −− a deficiency of imagination has been imputed to me as a crime −− and the Pyr− rhonism of my opinions has at all times rendered me notorious. Indeed a strong relish for physical philosophy has, I fear, tinctured my mind with a very common error of this age −− I mean the habit of referring occurrences, even the least susceptible of such reference, to the principles of that science. Upon the whole, no person could be less liable than myself to be led away from the severe precincts of truth by the ignes fatui of superstition. I have thought proper to premise thus much lest the incredi− ble tale I have to tell should be considered rather the raving of a crude imagination, than the positive ex− perience of a mind to which the reveries of fancy have been a dead letter and a nullity.

After many years spent in foreign travel, I sailed in the year 18 −− , from the port of Batavia, in the rich and populous island of Java, on a voyage to the Archipelago of the Sunda islands. I went as pas− senger −− having no other inducement than a kind of nervous restlessness which haunted me like a fiend.

Our vessel was a beautiful ship of about four hun− dred tons, copper−fastened, and built at Bombay of Malabar teak. She was freighted with cotton−wool and oil, from the Lachadive islands. We had also on board coir, jaggeree, ghee, cocoa−nuts, and a few cases of opium. The stowage was clumsily done, and the vessel consequently crank.

We got under way with a mere breath of wind, and for many days stood along the eastern coast of Java, without any other incident to beguile the monotony of our course than the occasional meeting with some of the small grabs of the Archipelago to which we were bound.

One evening, leaning over the taffrail, I observed a very singular, isolated cloud, to the N. W. It was remarkable, as well for its color, as from its being the first we had seen since our departure from Batavia. I watched it attentively until sunset, when it spread all at once to the eastward and westward, girting in the horizon with a narrow strip of vapor, and looking like a long line of low beach. My notice was soon afterwards attracted by the dusky− red appearance of the moon, and the peculiar cha− racter of the sea. The latter was undergoing a rapid change, and the water seemed more than usually transparent. Although I could distinctly see the bottom, yet, heaving the lead, I found the ship in fifteen fathoms. The air now became intolerably hot, and was loaded with spiral exhalations similar to those arising from heated iron. As night came on, every breath of wind died away, and a more entire calm it is impossible to conceive. The flame of a candle burned upon the poop without the least perceptible motion, and a long hair, held between the finger and thumb, hung without the possibility of detecting a vibration. However, as the captain said he could perceive no indication of danger, and as we were drifting in bodily to shore, he ordered the sails to be furled, and the anchor let go. No watch was set, and the crew, consisting principally of Malays, stretched themselves deliberately upon deck. I went below −− not without a full presentiment of evil. Indeed every appearance warranted me in ap− prehending a Simoom. I told the captain my fears −− but he paid no attention to what I said, and left me without deigning to give a reply. My uneasi− ness, however, prevented me from sleeping, and about midnight I went upon deck. As I placed my foot upon the upper step of the companion−ladder, I was startled with a loud, humming noise, like that oc− casioned by the rapid revolution of a mill−wheel, and before I could ascertain its meaning, I found the ship quivering to its centre. In the next instant, a wilder− ness of foam hurled us upon our beam−ends, and, rushing over us fore and aft, swept the entire decks from stem to stern.

The extreme fury of the blast proved in a great measure the salvation of the ship. Although com− pletely water−logged, yet, as all her masts had gone by the board, she rose, after a minute, heavily from the sea, and, staggering awhile beneath the immense pressure of the tempest, finally righted.

By what miracle I escaped destruction, it is im− possible to say. Stunned by the shock of the water, I found myself, upon recovery, jammed in between the stern−post and rudder. With great difficulty I gained my feet, and

looking dizzily around, was, at first, struck with the idea of our being among breakers, so terrific beyond the wildest imagination was the whirlpool of mountainous and foaming ocean within which we were engulfed. After a while, I heard the voice of an old Swede, who had shipped with us at the moment of our leaving port. I hallooed to him with all my strength, and presently he came reeling aft. We soon discovered that we were the sole survivors of the accident. All on deck, with the exception of ourselves, had been swept overboard, and the captain and mates must have perished as they slept, for the cabins were deluged with water. Without assistance, we could expect to do little for the security of the ship, and our exer− tions were at first paralyzed by the momentary ex− pectation of going down. Our cable had, of course, parted like pack−thread, at the first breath of the hurricane, or we should have been instantaneously overwhelmed. We scudded with frightful velocity before the sea, and the water made clear breaches over us. The frame−work of our stern was shattered excessively, and, in almost every respect, we had received considerable injury −− but to our extreme joy we found the pumps unchoked, and that we had made no great shifting of our ballast. The main fury of the Simoom had already blown over, and we ap− prehended little danger from the violence of the wind −− but we looked forward to its total cessation with dismay, well believing, that, in our shattered condi− tion, we should inevitably perish in the tremendous swell which would ensue. But this very just ap− prehension seemed by no means likely to be soon verified. For five entire days and nights −− during which our only subsistence was a small quantity of jaggeree, procured with great difficulty from the forecastle −− the hulk flew at a rate defying compu− tation, before rapidly succeeding flaws of wind, which, without equalling the first violence of the Simoom, were still more terrific than any tempest I had before encountered. Our course for the first four days was, with trifling variations, S. E. and by South; and we must have run down the coast of New Holland. On the fifth day the cold became extreme, although the wind had hauled round a point more to the northward. The sun arose with a sickly yellow lustre, and clambered a very few degrees above the horizon −− emitting no decisive light. There were no clouds whatever apparent, yet the wind was upon the increase, and blew with a fitful and unsteady fury. About noon, as nearly as we could guess, our attention was again arrested by the appearance of the sun. It gave out no light, properly so called, but a dull and sullen glow un− accompanied by any ray. Just before sinking with− in the turgid sea its central fires suddenly went out, as if hurriedly extinguished by some unaccountable power. It was a dim, silver−like rim, alone, as it rushed down the unfathomable ocean.

We waited in vain for the arrival of the sixth day −− that day to me has not arrived −− to the Swede, never did arrive. Thenceforward we were enshrouded in pitchy darkness, so that we could not have seen an object at twenty paces from the ship. Eternal night continued to envelop us, all unrelieved by the phos− phoric sea−brilliancy to which we had been accustomed in the tropics. We observed too, that, although the tempest continued to rage with unabated violence, there was no longer to be discovered the usual ap− pearance of surf, or foam, which had hitherto at− tended us. All around was horror, and thick gloom, and a black sweltering desert of ebony. Superstitious terror crept by degrees into the spirit of the old Swede, and my own soul was wrapped up in silent wonder. We neglected all care of the ship, as worse than useless, and securing ourselves as well as pos− sible to the stump of the mizen−mast, looked out bitterly into the world of ocean. We had no means of calculating time, nor could we form any guess of our situation. We were, however, well aware of having made farther to the southward than any pre− vious navigators, and felt extreme amazement at not meeting with the usual impediments of ice. In the meantime every moment threatened to be our last −− every mountainous billow hurried to overwhelm us. The swell surpassed anything I had ima− gined possible, and that we were not instantly buried is a miracle. My companion spoke of the lightness of our cargo, and reminded me of the ex− cellent qualities of our ship −− but I could not help feeling the utter hopelessness of hope itself, and pre− pared myself gloomily for that death which I thought nothing could defer beyond an hour, as, with every knot of way the ship made, the swelling of the black stupendous seas became more dismally appalling. At times we gasped for breath at an elevation be− yond the Albatross −− at times became dizzy with the velocity of our descent into some watery hell, where the air grew stagnant, and no sound disturbed the slumbers of the Kraken.

We were at the bottom of one of these abysses, when a quick scream from my companion broke fear− fully upon the night. "See! see!" −− cried he, shriek− ing in my ears, −− "Almighty God! see! see!" As he spoke, I became aware of a dull, sullen glare of red light which streamed down the sides of the vast chasm where we lay, and

threw a fitful brilliancy upon our deck. Casting my eyes upwards, I beheld a spectacle which froze the current of my blood. At a terrific height directly above us, and upon the very verge of the precipitous descent, hovered a gigantic ship of nearly four thousand tons. Although upreared upon the summit of a wave of more than a hundred times her own altitude, her ap− parent size still exceeded that of any ship of the line or East Indiaman in existence. Her huge hull was of a deep dingy black, unrelieved by any of the cus− tomary carvings of a ship. A single row of brass cannon protruded from her open ports, and dashed off from their polished surfaces the fires of innumer− able battle−lanterns, which swung to and fro about her rigging. But what mainly inspired us with hor− ror and astonishment, was that she bore up under a press of sail in the very teeth of that supernatural sea, and of that ungovernable hurricane. When we first discovered her, her stupendous bows were alone to be seen, as she rose up, like a demon of the deep, slowly from the dim and horrible gulf beyond her. For a moment of intense terror she paused upon the giddy pinnacle, as if in contemplation of her own sub− limity, then trembled and tottered, and −− came down.

At this instant, I know not what sudden self−pos− session came over my spirit. Staggering as far aft as I could, I awaited fearlessly the ruin that was to overwhelm. Our own vessel was at length ceasing from her struggles, and sinking with her head to the sea. The shock of the descending mass struck her, consequently, in that portion of her frame which was already under water, and the inevitable result was to hurl me with irresistible violence upon the rigging of the stranger.

As I fell, the ship hove in stays, and went about, and to the confusion ensuing I attributed my escape from the notice of the crew. With little difficulty I made my way unperceived to the main hatchway, which was partially open, and soon found an oppor− tunity of secreting myself in the hold. Why I did so I can hardly tell. A nameless and indefinite sense of awe, which at first sight of the navigators of the ship had taken hold of my mind, was perhaps the principle of my concealment. I was unwilling to trust myself with a race of people who had offered, to the cursory glance I had taken, so many points of vague novelty, doubt, and apprehension. I therefore thought proper to contrive a hiding−place in the hold. This I did by removing a small portion of the shifting−boards in such a manner as to afford me a convenient retreat between the huge timbers of the ship.

I had scarcely completed my work, when a foot− step in the hold forced me to make use of it. A man passed by my place of concealment with a feeble and unsteady gait. I could not see his face, but had an opportunity of observing his general appearance. There was about it an evidence of great age and infirmity. His knees tottered beneath a load of years, and his entire frame quivered under the bur− then. He muttered to himself, in a low broken tone, some words of a language which I could not under− stand, and groped in a corner among a pile of sin− gular−looking instruments, and decayed charts of navigation. His manner was a wild mixture of the peevishness of second childhood, and the solemn dignity of a god. He at length went on deck, and I saw him no more. * * * * * *

A feeling, for which I have no name, has taken possession of my soul −− a sensation which will admit of no analysis, to which the lessons of by−gone time are inadequate, and for which I fear futurity itself will offer me no key. To a mind constituted like my own the latter consideration is an evil. I shall never, −− I know that I shall never −− be satis− fied with regard to the nature of my conceptions. Yet it is not wonderful that these conceptions are indefinite, since they have their origin in sources so utterly novel. A new sense, a new entity is added to my soul.

It is long since I first trod the deck of this terrible ship, and the rays of my destiny are, I think, gathering to a focus. Incomprehensible men! Wrapped up in meditations of a kind which I cannot divine, they pass me by unnoticed. Concealment is utter folly on my part, for the people will not see. It was but just now that I passed directly before the eyes of the mate, −− it was no long while ago that I ventured into the captain's own private cabin, and took thence the materials with which I write, and have written. I shall from time to time continue this journal. It is true that I may not find an opportunity of transmitting it to the world, but I will not fail to make the endea− vor. At the last moment I will enclose the MS. in a bottle, and cast it within the sea.

An incident has occurred which has given me new room for meditation. Are such things the operations of ungoverned Chance? I had ventured upon deck and thrown myself down, without attracting any notice, among a pile of ratlin−stuff and old sails in the bottom of the yawl. While musing upon the singularity of my fate, I unwittingly daubed with a tar−brush the edges of a neatly−folded studding−sail which lay near me on a barrel. The studding−sail is now bent upon the ship, and the thoughtless touches of the brush are spread out into the word DIS− COVERY.

I have made many observations lately upon the structure of the vessel. Although well armed, she is not, I think, a ship of war. Her rigging, build, and general equipment, all negative a supposition of this kind. What she is not I can easily perceive, what she is I fear it is impossible to say. I know not how it is, but in scrutinizing her strange model and sin− gular cast of spars, her huge size and overgrown suits of canvass, her severely simple bow and anti− quated stern, there will occasionally flash across my mind a sensation of familiar things, and there is always mixed up with such indistinct shadows of recollection, an unaccountable memory of old foreign chronicles and ages long ago.

I have been looking at the timbers of the ship. She is built of a material to which I am a stranger. There is a peculiar character about the wood which strikes me as rendering it unfit for the purpose to which it has been applied. I mean its extreme porousness, considered independently of the worm− eaten condition which is a consequence of navigation in these seas, and apart from the rottenness attendant upon age. It will appear perhaps an observation somewhat over−curious, but this wood has every characteristic of Spanish oak, if Spanish oak were distended or swelled by any unnatural means.

In reading the above sentence a curious apothegm of an old weather−beaten Dutch navigator comes full upon my recollection. "It is as sure," he was wont to say, when any doubt was entertained of his veracity, "as sure as there is a sea where the ship itself will grow in bulk like the living body of the seaman."

About an hour ago, I made bold to thrust myself among a group of the crew. They paid me no manner of attention, and, although I stood in the very midst of them all, seemed utterly unconscious of my presence. Like the one I had at first seen in the hold, they all bore about them the marks of a hoary old age. Their knees trembled with infirmity, their shoulders were bent double with decrepitude, their shrivelled skins rattled in the wind, their voices were low, tremulous, and broken, their eyes glistened with the rheum of years, and their gray hairs streamed terribly in the tempest. Around them on every part of the deck lay scattered mathematical instruments of the most quaint and obsolete construction.

I mentioned some time ago the bending of a stud− ding−sail. From that period the ship, being thrown dead off the wind, has held her terrific course due south, with every rag of canvass packed upon her from her trucks to her lower−studding−sail booms, and rolling every moment her top−gallant yard−arms into the most appalling hell of water which it can enter into the mind of man to imagine. I have just left the deck, where I find it impossible to maintain a footing, although the crew seem to experience little inconvenience. It appears to me a miracle of miracles that our enormous bulk is not buried up at once and forever. We are surely doomed to hover continually upon the brink of Eternity, without taking a final plunge into the abyss. From billows a thousand times more stupendous than any I have ever seen, we glide away with the facility of the arrowy sea−gull; and the colossal waters rear their heads above us like demons of the deep, but like demons confined to simple threats and forbidden to destroy. I am led to attribute these frequent escapes to the only natural cause which can account for such effect. I must suppose the ship to be within the influence of some strong current, or impetuous under−tow.

I have seen the captain face to face, and in his own cabin −− but, as I expected, he paid me no attention. Although in his appearance there is, to a casual observer, nothing which might bespeak him more or less than man −− still a feeling of irrepressible reverence and awe mingled with the sensation of wonder with which I regarded him. In stature he is nearly my own height, that is, about five feet eight inches. He is of a well−knit and compact frame of body, neither robust nor remarkably otherwise. But it is the singularity of the expression which reigns upon the

face, it is the intense, the wonderful, the thrilling evidence of old age so utter, so ex− treme, which excites within my spirit a sense −− a sentiment ineffable. His forehead, although little wrinkled, seems to bear upon it the stamp of a myriad of years. His gray hairs are records of the past, and his grayer eyes are sybils of the future. The cabin floor was thickly strewn with strange, iron−clasped folios, and mouldering instruments of science, and obsolete long−forgotten charts. His head was bowed down upon his hands, and he pored with a fiery unquiet eye over a paper which I took to be a commission, and which, at all events, bore the signature of a monarch. He muttered to him− self, as did the first seaman whom I saw in the hold, some low peevish syllables of a foreign tongue, and although the speaker was close at my elbow, yet his voice seemed to reach my ears from the distance of a mile.

The ship and all in it are imbued with the spirit of Eld. The crew glide to and fro like the ghosts of buried centuries, their eyes have an eager and uneasy meaning, and when their figures fall athwart my path in the wild glare of the battle−latterns, I feel as I have never felt before, although I have been all my life a dealer in antiquities, and have imbibed the shadows of fallen columns at Balbec, and Tad− mor, and Persepolis, until my very soul has become a ruin.

When I look around me I feel ashamed of my former apprehensions. If I trembled at the blast which has hitherto attended us, shall I not stand aghast at a warring of wind and ocean, to convey any idea of which the words tornado and simoom are trivial and ineffective! All in the immediate vicinity of the ship is the blackness of eternal night, and a chaos of foamless water; but, about a league on either side of us, may be seen, indistinctly and at intervals, stupendous ramparts of ice, towering away into the desolate sky, and looking like the walls of the universe.

As I imagined, the ship proves to be in a current; if that appellation can properly be given to a tide which, howling and shrieking by the white ice, thunders on to the southward with a velocity like the headlong dashing of a cataract.

To conceive the horror of my sensations is, I presume, utterly impossible −− yet a curiosity to penetrate the mysteries of these awful regions pre− dominates even over my despair, and will reconcile me to the most hideous aspect of death. It is evi− dent that we are hurrying onwards to some excit− ing knowledge −− some never−to−be−imparted secret, whose attainment is destruction. Perhaps this cur− rent leads us to the southern pole itself −− it must be confessed that a supposition apparently so wild has every probability in its favor.

The crew pace the deck with unquiet and tremulous step, but there is upon their countenances an expres− sion more of the eagerness of hope than of the apathy of despair.

In the meantime the wind is still in our poop, and as we carry a crowd of canvass, the ship is at times lifted bodily from out the sea −− Oh, horror upon horror! the ice opens suddenly to the right, and to the left, and we are whirling dizzily, in immense con− centric circles, round and round the borders of a gigantic amphitheatre, the summit of whose walls is lost in the darkness and the distance. But little time will be left me to ponder upon my destiny −− the circles rapidly grow small −− we are plunging madly within the grasp of the whirlpool −− and amid a roaring, and bellowing, and shrieking of ocean and of tempest, the ship is quivering, oh God! and −− going down.

BON−BON

That Pierre Bon−Bon was a restaurateur of un− common qualifications, no man who, during the reign of −− , frequented the little Câfe in the cul− de−sac Le Febvre at Rouen, will, I imagine, feel himself at liberty to dispute. That Pierre Bon−Bon was, in an equal degree, skilled in the philosophy of that period is, I presume, still more especially un− deniable. His patés à la fois were beyond doubt immaculate −− but what pen can do justice to his essays sur la Nature −− his thoughts sur l'Ame −− his observations sur l'Esprit? If his omelettes −− if his

fricandeaux were inestimable, what littérateur of that day would not have given twice as much for an `Idée de Bon−Bon' as for all the trash of all the `Idées' of all the rest of the savants? Bon−Bon had ransacked libraries which no other man had ransacked −− had read more than any other would have entertained a notion of reading −− had under− stood more than any other would have conceived the possibility of understanding; and although, while he flourished, there were not wanting some authors at Rouen, to assert "that his dicta evinced neither the purity of the Academy, nor the depth of the Lyceum" −− although, mark me, his doctrines were by no means very generally comprehended, still it did not follow that they were difficult of compre− hension. It was, I think, on account of their entire self−evidency that many persons were led to consider them abstruse. It is to Bon−Bon −− but let this go no farther −− it is to Bon−Bon that Kant himself is mainly indebted for his metaphysics. The former was not indeed a Platonist, nor strictly speaking an Aristotelian −− nor did he, like the modern Leibnitz, waste those precious hours which might be employed in the invention of a fricassaée, or, facili gradu, the analysis of a sensation, in frivolous attempts at re− conciling the obstinate oils and waters of ethical discussion. Not at all. Bon−Bon was Ionic. Bon− Bon was equally Italic. He reasoned a priori. He reasoned also a posteriori. His ideas were innate −− or otherwise. He believed in George of Trebizond. He believed in Bossarion. Bon−Bon was emphati− cally a −− Bon−Bonist.

I have spoken of the philosopher in his capacity of restaurateur. I would not, however, have any friend of mine imagine that in fulfilling his hereditary duties in that line, our hero wanted a proper estima− tion of their dignity and importance. Far from it. It was impossible to say in which branch of his duplicate profession he took the greater pride. In his opinion the powers of the mind held intimate connection with the capabilities of the stomach. By this I do not mean to insinuate a charge of gluttony, or indeed any other serious charge to the prejudice of the metaphysician. If Pierre Bon−Bon had his failings −− and what great man has not a thousand? −− if Pierre Bon−Bon, I say, had his failings, they were failings of very little importance −− faults indeed which in other tempers have often been looked upon rather in the light of virtues. As regards one of these foibles, I should not have mentioned it in this history but for the remarkable prominency −− the extreme alto relievo −− in which it jutted out from the plane of his general disposition. He could never let slip an opportunity of making a bargain.

Not that he was avaricious −− no. It was by no means necessary to the satisfaction of the philo− sopher, that the bargain should be to his own proper advantage. Provided a trade could be effected −− a trade of any kind, upon any terms, or under any circumstances, a triumphant smile was seen for many days thereafter to enlighten his countenance, and a knowing wink of the eye to give evidence of his sagacity.

At any epoch it would not be very wonderful if a humor so peculiar as the one I have just mentioned, should elicit attention and remark. At the epoch of our narrative, had this peculiarity not attracted observation, there would have been room for wonder indeed. It was soon reported that upon all occasions of the kind, the smile of Bon−Bon was wont to differ widely from the downright grin with which that restaurateur would laugh at his own jokes, or wel− come an acquaintance. Hints were thrown out of an exciting nature −− stories were told of perilous bargains made in a hurry and repented of at leisure −− and instances were adduced of unaccountable capacities, vague longings, and unnatural inclina− tions implanted by the author of all evil for wise purposes of his own.

The philosopher had other weaknesses −− but they are scarcely worthy of our serious examination. For example, there are few men of extraordinary profundity who are found wanting in an inclination for the bottle. Whether this inclination be an excit− ing cause, or rather a valid proof, of such profundity, it is impossible to say. Bon−Bon, as far as I can learn, did not think the subject adapted to minute investi− gation −− nor do I. Yet in the indulgence of a propensity so truly classical, it is not to be supposed that the restaurateur would lose sight of that intui− tive discrimination which was wont to characterize, at one and the same time, his essais and his omelettes. With him Sauterne was to Medoc what Catullus was to Homer. He would sport with a syllogism in sipping St. Peray, but unravel an argument over Clos de Vougeot, and upset a theory in a torrent of Chambertin. In his seclusions the Vin de Bourgogne had its allotted hour, and there were appropriate moments for the Côtes du Rhone. Well had it been if the same quick sense of propriety had attended him in the peddling propensity to which I have formerly alluded −− but this was by no means the case. Indeed, to say the truth, that trait of mind in the philosophic

Bon−Bon did begin at length to as− sume a character of strange intensity and mysticism, and, however singular it may seem, appeared deeply tinctured with the grotesque diablerie of his favorite German studies.

To enter the little Café in the Cul−de−Sac Le Febvre was, at the period of our tale, to enter the sanctum of a man of genius. Bon−Bon was a man of genius. There was not a sous−cuisinier in Rouen, who could not have told you that Bon−Bon was a man of genius. His very cat knew it, and forbore to whisk her tail in the presence of the man of genius. His large water−dog was acquainted with the fact, and upon the approach of his master, be− trayed his sense of inferiority by a sanctity of deportment, a debasement of the ears, and a drop− ping of the lower jaw not altogether unworthy of a dog. It is, however, true that much of this habitual respect might have been attributed to the personal appearance of the metaphysician. A distinguished exterior will, I am constrained to say, have its weight even with a beast; and I am willing to allow much in the outward man of the restaurateur calculated to impress the imagination of the quadruped. There is a peculiar majesty about the atmosphere of the little great −− if I may be permitted so equivocal an expression −− which mere physical bulk alone will be found at all times inefficient in creating. If, how− ever, Bon−Bon was barely three feet in height, and if his head was diminutively small, still it was im− possible to behold the rotundity of his stomach without a sense of magnificence nearly bordering upon the sublime. In its size both dogs and men must have seen a type of his acquirements −− in its immensity a fitting habitation for his immortal soul.

I might here −− if it so pleased me −− dilate upon the matter of habiliment, and other mere circum− stances of the external metaphysician. I might hint that the hair of our hero was worn short, combed smoothly over his forehead, and surmounted by a conical−shaped white flannel cap and tassels −− that his pea−green jerkin was not after the fashion of those worn by the common class of restaurateurs at that day −− that the sleeves were something fuller than the reigning costume permitted −− that the cuffs were turned up, not as usual in that barbarous period, with cloth of the same quality and color as the garment, but faced in a more fanciful manner with the particolored velvet of Genoa −− that his slippers were of a bright purple, curiously filagreed, and might have been manufactured in Japan, but for the exquisite pointing of the toes, and the brilliant tints of the binding and embroidery −− that his breeches were of the yellow satin−like material called aimable −− that his sky−blue cloak, resembling in form a dressing−wrapper, and richly bestudded all over with crimson devices, floated cavalierly upon his shoulders like a mist of the morning −− and that his tout ensemble gave rise to the remarkable words of Benevenuta, the Improvisatrice of Florence, "that it was difficult to say whether Pierre Bon−Bon was indeed a bird of Paradise, or the rather a very Paradise of perfection."

I have said that "to enter the Café in the Cul−de− Sac Le Febvre was to enter the sanctum of a man of genius" −− but then it was only the man of genius who could duly estimate the merits of the sanctum. A sign consisting of a vast folio swung before the entrance. On one side of the volume was painted a bottle −− on the reverse a paté. On the back were visible in large letters the words Æuvres de Bon−Bon. Thus was delicately shadowed forth the two−fold occupation of the proprietor.

Upon stepping over the threshold the whole interior of the building presented itself to view. A long, low−pitched room, of antique construction, was indeed all the accommodation afforded by the Café. In a corner of the apartment stood the bed of the metaphysician. An array of curtains, together with a canopyà la Gréque, gave it an air at once classic and comfortable. In the corner diagonally opposite, appeared, in direct and friendly communion, the pro− perties of the kitchen and the bibliothéque. A dish of polemics stood peacefully upon the dresser. Here lay an oven−full of the latest ethics −− there a kettle of duodecimo melanges. Volumes of German morality were hand and glove with the gridiron −− a toast− ing fork might be discovered by the side of Eusebius −− Plato reclined at his ease in the frying pan −− and contemporary manuscripts were filed away upon the spit.

In other respects the Café de Bon−Bon might be said to differ little from the Cafés of the period. A gigantic fire−place yawned opposite the door. On the right of the fire−place an open cupboard displayed a formidable array of labelled bottles. There Mous− seux, Chambertin, St. George, Richbourg, Bordeaux, Margaux, Haubrion, Leonville, Medoc, Sauterne, Bârac, Preignac, Grave, Lafitte, and St. Peray, con− tended with many other names

of lesser celebrity for the honor of being quaffed. From the ceiling, suspended by a chain, swung a fantastic iron lamp, throwing a hazy light over the room, and relieving in some measure the placidity of the scene.

It was here, about twelve o'clock one night, dur− ing the severe winter of −− , that Pierre Bon−Bon, after having listened for some time to the comments of his neighbors upon his singular propensity −− that Pierre Bon−Bon, I say, having turned them all out of his house, locked the door upon them with a sacre Dieu, and betook himself in no very pacific mood to the comforts of a leather−bottomed arm−chair, and a fire of blazing faggots.

It was one of those terrific nights which are only met with once or twice during a century. The snow drifted down bodily in enormous masses, and the Café de Bon−Bon tottered to its very centre, with the floods of wind that, rushing through the crannies in the wall, and pouring impetuously down the chimney, shook awfully the curtains of the philosopher's bed, and disorganized the economy of his paté−pans and papers. The huge folio sign that swung without, exposed to the fury of the tempest, creaked ominously, and gave out a moaning sound from its stanchions of solid oak.

I have said that it was in no very placid temper the metaphysician drew up his chair to its customary station by the hearth. Many circumstances of a perplexing nature had occurred during the day, to disturb the serenity of his meditations. In attempt− ing des oeufs à la Princesse he had unfortunately perpetrated an omelette à la Reine −− the discovery of a principle in ethics had been frustrated by the overturning of a stew −− and last, not least, he had been thwarted in one of those admirable bargains which he at all times took such especial delight in bringing to a successful termination. But in the chafing of his mind at these unaccountable vicissi− tudes, there did not fail to be mingled some degree of that nervous anxiety which the fury of a boister− ous night is so well calculated to produce. Whist− ling to his more immediate vicinity the large black water−dog we have spoken of before, and settling himself uneasily in his chair, he could not help casting a wary and unquiet eye towards those distant recesses of the apartment whose inexorable shadows not even the red fire−light itself could more than partially succeed in overcoming. Having com− pleted a scrutiny whose exact purpose was perhaps unintelligible to himself, he drew closer to his seat a small table covered with books and papers, and soon became absorbed in the task of retouching a volumi− nous manuscript, intended for publication on the morrow.

"I am in no hurry, Monsieur Bon−Bon" −− whisper− ed a whining voice in the apartment.

"The devil!" −− ejaculated our hero, starting to his feet, overturning the table at his side, and staring around him in astonishment.

"Very true" −− calmly replied the voice.

"Very true! −− what is very true? −− how came you here?" −− vociferated the metaphysician, as his eye fell upon something which lay stretched at full length upon the bed.

"I was saying" −− said the intruder, without attend− ing to the interrogatories −− "I was saying that I am not at all pushed for time −− that the business upon which I took the liberty of calling is of no pressing importance −− in short that I can very well wait until you have finished your Exposition."

"My Exposition! −− there now! −− how do you know −− how came you to understand that I was writing an Exposition? −− good God!"

"Hush!" −− replied the figure in a shrill under tone: and, arising quickly from the bed, he made a single step towards our hero, while the iron lamp overhead swung convulsively back from his approach.

The philosopher's amazement did not prevent a narrow scrutiny of the stranger's dress and appear− ance. The outlines of a figure, exceedingly lean, but much above the common height, were rendered minutely distinct by

means of a faded suit of black cloth which fitted tight to the skin, but was otherwise cut very much in the style of a century ago. These garments had evidently been intended for a much shorter person than their present owner. His ankles and wrists were left naked for several inches. In his shoes, however, a pair of very brilliant buckles gave the lie to the extreme poverty implied by the other portions of his dress. His head was bare, and entirely bald, with the exception of the hinder part, from which depended a queue of considerable length. A pair of green spectacles, with side glasses, pro− tected his eyes from the influence of the light, and at the same time prevented our hero from ascertaining either their colour or their conformation. About the entire person there was no evidence of a shirt; but a white cravat, of filthy appearance, was tied with extreme precision around the throat, and the ends, hanging down formally side by side, gave, although I dare say unintentionally, the idea of an ecclesiastic. Indeed, many other points both in his appearance and demeanor might have very well sustained a conception of that nature. Over his left ear he carried, after the fashion of a modern clerk, an instrument resembling the stylus of the ancients. In a breast−pocket of his coat appeared conspicuously a small black volume fastened with clasps of steel. This book, whether accidentally or not, was so turned outwardly from the person as to discover the words "Rituel Catholique" in white letters upon the back. His entire physiognomy was interestingly saturnine −− even cadaverously pale. The forehead was lofty, and deeply furrowed with the ridges of contemplation. The corners of the mouth were drawn down into an expression of the most submissive humility. There was also a clasping of the hands, as he stepped towards our hero −− a deep sigh −− and altogether a look of such utter sanctity as could not have failed to be unequivocally prepossessing. Every shadow of anger faded from the countenance of the metaphy− sician, as, having completed a satisfactory survey of his visiter's person, he shook him cordially by the hand, and conducted him to a seat.

There would however be a radical error in attri− buting this instantaneous transition of feeling in the philosopher to any one of those causes which might naturally be supposed to have had an influence. In− deed Pierre Bon−Bon, from what I have been able to understand of his disposition, was of all men the least likely to be imposed upon by any speciousness of exterior deportment. It was impossible that so ac− curate an observer of men and things should have failed to discover, upon the moment, the real charac− ter of the personage who had thus intruded upon his hospitality. To say no more, the conformation of his visiter's feet was sufficiently remarkable −− there was a tremulous swelling in the hinder part of his breeches −− and the vibration of his coat tail was a palpable fact. Judge then with what feelings of satis− faction our hero found himself thrown thus at once into the society of a −− of a person for whom he had at all times entertained such unqualified respect. He was, however, too much of the diplomatist to let escape him any intimation of his suspicions, or rather −− I should say −− his certainty in regard to the true state of affairs. It was not his cue to appear at all conscious of the high honour he thus unexpectedly enjoyed, but by leading his guest into conversation, to elicit some important ethical ideas which might, in obtaining a place in his contemplated publication, enlighten the human race, and at the same time im− mortalize himself −− ideas which, I should have added, his visiter's great age, and well known proficiency in the science of morals, might very well have enabled him to afford.

Actuated by these enlightened views our hero bade the gentleman sit down, while he himself took occa− sion to throw some faggots upon the fire, and place upon the now re−established table some bottles of the powerful Vin de Mousseux. Having quickly com− pleted these operations, he drew his chair vis−a−vis to his companion's, and waited until he should open the conversation. But plans even the most skilfully matured are often thwarted in the outset of their application, and the restaurateur found himself entirely nonplused by the very first words of his visiter's speech.

"I see you know me, Bon−Bon," −− said he: −− "ha! ha! ha! −− he! he! he! −− hi! hi! hi! −− ho! ho! ho! −− hu! hu! hu!" −− and the devil, dropping at once the sanctity of his demeanor, opened to its fullest extent a mouth from ear to ear, so as to display a set of jagged and fang−like teeth, and throwing back his head, laughed long, loud, wickedly, and uproarious− ly, while the black dog, crouching down upon his haunches, joined lustily in the chorus, and the tabby cat, flying off at a tangent, stood up on end and shrieked in the farthest corner of the apartment.

Not so the philosopher: he was too much a man of the world either to laugh like the dog, or by shrieks to betray the indecorous trepidation of the cat. It must be confessed, however, that he felt a little astonishment to see the white letters which formed the words "Rituel Catholique" on the book in his guest's pocket, momently changing both their color and their import, and in a few seconds in place of the original title, the words Regitre des Condamnés blaze forth in characters of red. This startling cir− cumstance, when Bon−Bon replied to his visiter's remark, imparted to his manner an air of embarrass− ment which might not probably have otherwise been observable.

"Why, sir," −− said the philosopher −− "why, sir, to speak sincerely −− I believe you are −− upon my word −− the d −− dest −− that is to say I think −− I imagine −− I have some faint −− some very faint idea −− of the remarkable honor −− "

"Oh! −− ah! −− yes! −− very well!" −− interrupted his majesty −− "say no more −− I see how it is." And hereupon, taking off his green spectacles, he wiped the glasses carefully with the sleeve of his coat, and deposited them in his pocket.

If Bon−Bon had been astonished at the incident of the book, his amazement was now much increased by the spectacle which here presented itself to view. In raising his eyes, with a strong feeling of curiosity to ascertain the color of his guest's, he found them by no means black, as he had anticipated −− nor gray, as might have been imagined −− nor yet hazel nor blue −− nor indeed yellow, nor red −− nor purple −− nor white −− nor green −− nor any other color in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. In short, Pierre Bon−Bon not only saw plainly that his majesty had no eyes whatsoever, but could discover no indications of their having existed at any previous period; for the space where eyes should naturally have been, was, I am constrained to say, simply a dead level of cadaverous flesh.

It was not in the nature of the metaphysician to forbear making some inquiry into the sources of so strange a phenomenon, and to his surprise the reply of his majesty was at once prompt, dignified, and satisfactory.

"Eyes! −− my dear Bon−Bon, eyes! did you say? −− oh! ah! I perceive. The ridiculous prints, eh? which are in circulation, have given you a false idea of my personal appearance. Eyes!! −− true. Eyes, Pierre Bon−Bon, are very well in their proper place −− that, you would say, is the head −− right −− the head of a worm. To you likewise these optics are indispensable −− yet I will convince you that my vision is more penetrating than your own. There is a cat, I see, in the corner −− a pretty cat! −− look at her! −− observe her well. Now, Bon−Bon, do you behold the thoughts −− the thoughts, I say −− the ideas −− the reflections −− engendering in her pericranium? There it is now! −− you do not. She is thinking we admire the profundity of her mind. She has just concluded that I am the most distinguished of eccle− siastics, and that you are the most superfluous of metaphysicians. Thus you see I am not altogether blind: but to one of my profession the eyes you speak of would be merely an incumbrance, liable at any time to be put out by a toasting iron or a pitchfork. To you, I allow, these optics are indispensable. Endeavor, Bon−Bon, to use them well −− my vision is the soul."

Hereupon the guest helped himself to the wine upon the table, and pouring out a bumper for Bon−Bon, requested him to drink it without scruple, and make himself perfectly at home.

"A clever book that of yours, Pierre" −− resumed his majesty, tapping our friend knowingly upon the shoulder, as the latter put down his glass after a thorough compliance with his visiter's injunction. "A clever book that of yours, upon my honor. It's a work after my own heart. Your arrangement of matter, I think, however, might be improved, and many of your notions remind me of Aristotle. That philosopher was one of my most intimate acquaintances. I liked him as much for his terrible ill temper, as for his happy knack at making a blunder. There is only one solid truth in all that he has written, and for that I gave him the hint out of pure compassion for his absurdity. I suppose, Pierre Bon−Bon, you very well know to what divine moral truth I am alluding."

"Cannot say that I −− "

"Indeed! −− why I told Aristotle that by sneezing men expelled superfluous ideas through the pro− boscis."

"Which is −− hiccup! −− undoubtedly the case" −− said the metaphysician, while he poured out for him− self another bumper of Mousseux, and offered his snuff−box to the fingers of his visiter."

"There was Plato, too" −− continued his majesty, modestly declining the snuff−box and the compliment −− "there was Plato, too, for whom I, at one time, felt all the affection of a friend. You knew, Plato, Bon−Bon? −− ah! no, I beg a thousand pardons. He met me at Athens, one day, in the Parthenon, and told me he was distressed for an idea. I bade him write down that ' .' He said that he would do so, and went home, while I stepped over to the Pyramids. But my conscience smote me for the lie, and hastening back to Athens, I arrived behind the philosopher's chair as he was inditing the `.' Giving the gamma a fillip with my finger I turned it upside down. So the sentence now reads ' ,' and is, you perceive, the fundamental doctrine of his metaphysics."

"Were you ever at Rome?" −− asked the restaura− teur as he finished his second bottle of Mousseux, and drew from the closet a larger supply of Vin de Chambertin.

"But once, Monsieur Bon−Bon −− but once. There was a time" −− said the devil, as if reciting some pas− sage from a book −− `there was a time when occur− red an anarchy of five years during which the re− public, bereft of all its officers, had no magistracy besides the tribunes of the people, and these were not legally vested with any degree of executive power' −− at that time, Monsieur Bon−Bon −− at that time only I was in Rome, and I have no earthly acquaint− ance, consequently, with any of its philosophy."2

"What do you think of Epicurus? −− what do you think of −− hiccup! −− Epicurus?"

"What do I think of whom?" −− said the devil in astonishment −− "you cannot surely mean to find any fault with Epicurus! What do I think of Epi− curus! Do you mean me, sir? −− I am Epicurus. I am the same philosopher who wrote each of the three hundred treatises commemorated by Diogenes Laertes."

"That's a lie!" −− said the metaphysician, for the wine had gotten a little into his head.

"Very well! −− very well, sir! −− very well indeed, sir" −− said his majesty.

"That's a lie!" −− repeated the restaurateur dog− matically −− "that's a −− hiccup! −− lie!"

"Well, well! have it your own way" −− said the devil pacifically: and Bon−Bon, having beaten his ma− jesty at an argument, thought it his duty to conclude a second bottle of Chambertin.

"As I was saying" −− resumed the visiter −− "as I was observing a little while ago, there are some very oute notions in that book of yours, Monsieur Bon−Bon. What, for instance, do you mean by all that humbug about the soul? Pray, sir, what is the soul?"

"The −− hiccup! −− soul" −− replied the metaphy− sician, referring to his MS. −− "is undoubtedly" −−

"No, sir!"

"Indubitably" −−

"No, sir!"

"Indisputably" −−

"No, sir!"

"Evidently" −−

"No, sir!"

"Incontrovertibly" −−

"No, sir!"

"Hiccup!" −−

"No, sir!"

"And beyond all question a" −−

"No, sir! the soul is no such thing." (Here the philosopher finished his third bottle of Chambertin.)

"Then −− hic−cup! −− pray −− sir −− what −− what is it?"

"That is neither here nor there, Monsieur Bon− Bon," replied his majesty, musingly. "I have tasted −− that is to say I have known some very bad souls, and some too −− pretty good ones." Here the devil licked his lips, and, having unconsciously let fall his hand upon the volume in his pocket, was seized with a violent fit of sneezing.

His majesty continued.

"There was the soul of Cratinus −− passable: −− Aristophanes −− racy: −− Plato −− exquisite: −− not your Plato, but Plato the comic poet: your Plato would have turned the stomach of Cerberus −− faugh! Then let me see! there were Noevius, and Andronicus, and Plautus, and Terentius. Then there were Lucilius, and Catullus, and Naso, and Quintius Flaccus −− dear Quinty! as I called him when he sung a seculare for my amusement, while I toasted him in pure good humor on a fork. But they want flavor these Romans. One fat Greek is worth a dozen of them, and besides will keep, which cannot be said of a Quirite. Let us taste your Sauterne."

Bon−Bon had by this time made up his mind to the nil admirari, and endeavored to hand down the bottles in question. He was, however, conscious of a strange sound in the room like the wagging of a tail. Of this, although extremely indecent in his majesty, the philosopher took no notice −− simply kicking the black water−dog and requesting him to be quiet. The visiter continued.

"I found that Horace tasted very much like Aris− totle −− you know I am fond of variety. Terentius I could not have told from Menander. Naso, to my astonishment, was Nicander in disguise. Virgilius had a strong twang of Theocritus. Martial put me much in mind of Archilochus −− and Titus Livy was positively Polybius and none other."

"Hic −− cup!" −− here replied Bon−Bon, and his majesty proceeded.

"But if I have a penchant, Monsieur Bon−Bon, −− if I have a penchant, it is for a philosopher. Yet, let me tell you, sir, it is not every dev −− I mean it is not every gentleman who knows how to choose a philosopher. Long ones are not good; and the best, if not carefully shelled, are apt to be a little rancid on account of the gall."

"Shelled!!"

"I mean taken out of the carcass."

"What do you think of a −− hiccup! −− physician?"

"Don't mention them! −− ugh! ugh!" (Here his majesty retched violently.) "I never tasted but one −− that rascal Hippocrates! −− smelt of asafoetida −− ugh! ugh! ugh! −− caught a wretched cold wash− ing him in the Styx −− and after all he gave me the cholera morbus."

"The −− hiccup! −− wretch!" −− ejaculated Bon− Bon −− "the −− hic−cup! −− abortion of a pill−box!" −− and the philosopher dropped a tear.

"After all" −− continued the visiter −− "after all, if a dev −− if a gentleman wishes to live he must have more talents than one or two; and with us a fat face is an evidence of diplomacy."

"How so?"

"Why we are sometimes exceedingly pushed for provisions. You must know that in a climate so sultry as mine, it is frequently impossible to keep a spirit alive for more than two or three hours; and after death, unless pickled immediately, (and a pickled spirit is not good,) they will −− smell −− you understand, eh? Putrefaction is always to be ap− prehended when the spirits are consigned to us in the usual way."

"Hiccup! −− hiccup! −− good God! how do you manage?"

Here the iron lamp commenced swinging with re− doubled violence, and the devil half started from his seat −− however, with a slight sigh, he recovered his composure, merely saying to our hero in a low tone, "I tell you what, Pierre Bon−Bon, we must have no more swearing."

Bon−Bon swallowed another bumper, and his visiter continued.

"Why there are several ways of managing. The most of us starve: some put up with the pickle. For my part I purchase my spirits vivente corpore, in which case I find they keep very well."

"But the body! −− hiccup! −− the body!!!" −− vociferated the philosopher, as he finished a bottle of Sauterne.

"The body, the body −− well, what of the body? −− oh! ah! I perceive. Why, sir, the body is not at all affected by the transaction. I have made in− numerable purchases of the kind in my day, and the parties never experienced any inconvenience. There were Cain, and Nimrod, and Nero, and Caligula, and Dionysius, and Pisistratus, and −− and a thou− sand others, who never knew what it was to have a soul during the latter part of their lives; yet, sir, these men adorned society. Why is'nt there A −− , now, whom you know as well as I? Is he not in possession of all his faculties, mental and corporeal? Who writes a keener epigram? Who reasons more wittily? Who −− but, stay! I have his agreement in my pocket−book."

Thus saying, he produced a red leather wallet, and took from it a number of papers. Upon some of these Bon−Bon caught a glimpse of the letters MACHI..., MAZA..., RICH..., and the words CALIGULA and ELIZABETH. His ma− jesty selected a narrow slip of parchment, and from it read aloud the following words:

"In consideration of certain mental endowments which it is unnecessary to specify, and in farther consideration of one thousand louis d'or, I, being aged one year and one month, do hereby make over to the bearer of this agreement all my right, title, and appurtenance in the shadow called my soul." (Signed) A...3 (Here his majesty

repeated a name which I do not feel myself justifi− able in indicating more unequivocally.)

"A clever fellow that A..." −− resumed he; "but like you, Monsieur Bon−Bon, he was mistaken about the soul. The soul a shadow truly! −− no such nonsense, Monsieur Bon−Bon. The soul a shadow!! ha! ha! ha! −− he! he! he! −− hu! hu! hu! Only think of a fricasséed shadow!"

"Only think −− hiccup! −− of a fricasséed shadow!!" echoed our hero, whose faculties were becoming gloriously illuminated by the profundity of his ma− jesty's discourse.

"Only think of a −− hiccup! −− fricasséed shadow!!! Now, damme! −− hiccup! −− humph! −− if I would have been such a −− hiccup! −− nincompoop. My soul, Mr. −− humph!"

"Your soul, Monsieur Bon−Bon?"

"Yes, sir −− hiccup! −− my soul is" −−

"What, sir?"

"No shadow, damme!"

"Did not mean to say" −−

"Yes, sir, my soul is −− hiccup! −− humph! −− yes, sir."

"Did not intend to assert" −−

"My soul is −− hiccup! −− peculiarly qualified for −− hiccup! −− a" −−

"What, sir?"

"Stew."

"Ha!"

"Souflée."

"Eh?"

"Fricassée."

"Indeed!"

"Ragout or fricandeau −− and see here! −− I'll let you have it −− hiccup! −− a bargain."

"Could'nt think of such a thing," said his majesty calmly, at the same time arising from his seat. The metaphysician stared.

"Am supplied at present," said his majesty.

"Hiccup! −− e−h?" −− said the philosopher.

"Have no funds on hand."

"What?"

"Besides, very ungentlemanly in me" −−

"Sir!"

"To take advantage of" −−

"Hiccup!"

"Your present situation."

Here his majesty bowed and withdrew −− in what manner the philosopher could not precisely ascer− tain −− but in a well−concerted effort to discharge a bottle at "the villain," the slender chain was severed that depended from the ceiling, and the metaphysician prostrated by the downfall of the lamp. 2. Ils ecrivaient sur la Philosophie (Cicero, Lucretius, Seneca) mais c'etait la Philosophie Grécque. −− Condorcet. 3. Quære −− Arouet?

SHADOW. A FABLE.

Ye who read are still among the living, but I who write shall have long since gone my way into the region of shadows. For indeed strange things shall happen, and secret things be known, and many cen− turies shall pass away ere these memorials be seen of men. And when seen there will be some to dis− believe, and some to doubt, and yet a few who will find much to ponder upon in the characters here graven with a stylus of iron.

The year had been a year of terror, and of feel− ings more intense than terror for which there is no name upon the earth. For many prodigies and signs had taken place, and far and wide, over sea and land, the black wings of the Pestilence were spread abroad. To those, nevertheless, cunning in the stars, it was not unknown that the heavens wore an aspect of ill; and to me, the Greek Oinos, among others, it was evident that now had arrived the alternation of that seven hundred and ninety− fourth year when, at the entrance of Aries, the planet Jupiter is conjoined with the red ring of the terrible Saturnus. The peculiar spirit of the skies, if I mistake not greatly, made itself manifest, not only in the physical orb of the earth, but in the souls, imaginations, and meditations of mankind.

Over some flasks of the red Chian wine, within the walls of a noble hall, in a dim city called Ptole− mais, we sat, at night, a company of seven. And to our chamber there was no entrance save by a lofty door of brass: and the door was fashioned by the artizan Corinnos, and, being of rare workman− ship, was fastened from within. Black draperies, likewise, in the gloomy room, shut out from our view the moon, the lurid stars, and the peopleless streets −− but the boding and the memory of Evil, they would not be so excluded. There were things around us and about of which I can render no dis− tinct account −− things material and spiritual. Heavi− ness in the atmosphere −− a sense of suffocation −− anxiety −− and above all, that terrible state of ex− istence which the nervous experience when the senses are keenly living and awake, and meanwhile the powers of thought lie dormant. A dead weight hung upon us. It hung upon our limbs −− upon the household furniture −− upon the goblets from which we drank; and all things were depressed, and borne down thereby −− all things save only the flames of the seven iron lamps which illumined our revel. Uprearing themselves in tall slender lines of light, they thus remained burning all pallid and motion− less; and in the mirror which their lustre formed upon the round table of ebony at which we sat, each of us there assembled beheld the pallor of his own countenance, and the unquiet glare in the downcast eyes of his companions. Yet we laughed and were merry in our proper way −− which was hysterical; and sang the songs of Anacreon −− which are mad− ness; and drank deeply −− although the

purple wine reminded us of blood. For there was yet another tenant of our chamber in the person of young Zoilus. Dead, and at full length he lay, enshrouded −− the genius and the demon of the scene. Alas! he bore no portion in our mirth, save that his countenance, distorted with the plague, and his eyes in which Death had but half extinguished the fire of the pestilence, seemed to take such interest in our merri− ment as the dead may haply take in the merriment of those who are to die. But although I, Oinos, felt that the eyes of the departed were upon me, still I forced myself not to perceive the bitterness of their expression, and, gazing down steadily into the depths of the ebony mirror, sang with a loud and sonorous voice the songs of the son of Teios. But gradually my songs they ceased, and their echoes, rolling afar off among the sable draperies of the chamber, became weak, and indistinguishable, and so fainted away. And lo! from among those sable draperies where the sounds of the song departed, there came forth a dark and undefined shadow −− a shadow such as the moon, when low in heaven, might fashion from the figure of a man: but it was the shadow neither of man, nor of God, nor of any familiar thing. And quivering awhile among the draperies of the room, it at length rested in full view upon the surface of the door of brass. But the shadow was vague, and formless, and indefinitive, and was the shadow neither of man nor God −− neither God of Greece, nor God of Chaldæa, nor any Egyptian God. And the shadow rested upon the brazen doorway, and under the arch of the entabla− ture of the door, and moved not, nor spoke any word, but there became stationary and remained. And the door whereupon the shadow rested was, if I remember aright, over against the feet of the young Zoilus enshrouded. But we, the seven there as− sembled, having seen the shadow as it came out from among the draperies, dared not steadily behold it, but cast down our eyes, and gazed continually into the depths of the mirror of ebony. And at length I, Oinos, speaking some low words, demanded of the shadow its dwelling and its appellation. And the shadow answered, "I am SHADOW, and my dwelling is near to the Catacombs of Ptolemais, and hard by those dim plains of Helusion which border upon the foul Charonian canal." And then did we, the seven, start from our seats in horror, and stand trembling, and shuddering, and aghast: for the tones in the voice of the shadow were not the tones of any one being, but of a multitude of beings, and, varying in their cadences from syllable to syllable, fell duskily upon our ears in the well remembered and familiar accents of many thousand departed friends.

THE DEVIL IN THE BELFRY.

What o'clock is it?
Old Saying.

Every body knows, in a general way, that the finest place in the world is −− or, alas! was −− the Dutch borough of Vondervotteimittiss. Yet, as it lies some distance from any of the main roads, being in a somewhat out of the way situation, there are, per− haps, very few of my readers who have ever paid it a visit. For the benefit of those who have not, there− fore, it will be only proper that I should enter into some account of it. And this is, indeed, the more evident, as with the hope of enlisting public sympathy in behalf of the inhabitants, I design here to give a history of the calamitous events which have so lately occurred within the limits. No one who knows me will doubt that the duty thus self−imposed will be executed to the best of my ability, with all that rigid impartiality, all that cautious examination into facts, and diligent collation of authorities which should ever distinguish him who aspires to the title of historian.

By the united aid of medals, manuscripts, and inscriptions, I am enabled to say positively that the borough of Vondervotteimittiss has existed, from its origin, in precisely the same condition which it at present preserves. Of the date of this origin, how− ever, I grieve that I can only speak with that species of indefinite definitiveness which mathematicians are, at times, forced to put up with in certain algebraic formulæ. The date, I may thus say, in regard to the remoteness of its antiquity, cannot be less than any assignable quantity whatsoever.

Touching the derivation of the name Vondervot− teimittiss, I confess myself, with sorrow, equally at fault. Among a multitude of opinions upon this deli− cate point, some acute, some learned, some sufficiently the reverse, I am able to select nothing which ought to be considered satisfactory. Perhaps the idea of Grogswigg, nearly coincident with that of Krouta− plenttey, is to be cautiously preferred. It runs −− "Vondervotteimittiss:

Vonder, lege Donder: Vottei− mittiss, quasi und Bleitziz −− Bleitziz obsol: pro Blitzen." This derivation, to say the truth, is still countenanced by some traces of the electric fluid evident on the summit of the steeple of the House of the Town−Council. I do not choose, however, to commit myself on a theme of such importance, and must refer the reader desirous of further information to the "Oratiunculae de Rebus Praeter−Veteris" of Dundergutz. See, also, Blunderbuzzard "De Deri− vationibus," pp. 27 to 5010, Folio Gothic edit., Red and Black character, Catch−word and No Cypher −− wherein consult, also, marginal notes in the autograph of Stuffundpuff, with the Sub−Commentaries of Grunt− undguzzell.

Notwithstanding the obscurity which thus envelops the date of the foundation of Vondervotteimittiss, and the derivation of its name, there can be no doubt, as I said before, that it has always existed as we find it at this epoch. The oldest man in the borough can remember not the slightest difference in the appearance of any portion of it, and, indeed, the very suggestion of such a possibility is considered an insult. The site of the village is in a perfectly cir− cular valley, of about a quarter of a mile in circum− ference, and entirely surrounded by gentle hills, over whose summit the people have never yet ventured to pass. For this they assign the very good reason that they do not believe there is anything at all on the other side.

Round the skirts of the valley, (which is quite level, and paved throughout with flat tiles,) extends a continuous row of sixty little houses. These, having their backs on the hills, must look, of course, to the centre of the plain, which is just sixty yards from the front door of each dwelling. Every house has a small garden before it, with circular paths, a sun− dial, and twenty−four cabbages. The buildings themselves are all so precisely alike, that one can in no manner be distinguished from the other. Owing to their vast antiquity, the style of architecture is somewhat odd −− but is not for that reason the less strikingly picturesque. They are fashioned of hard− burned little bricks, red, with black ends, so that the walls look like chess−boards upon a great scale. The gables are turned to the front, and there are cornices as big as all the rest of the house over the eaves, and over the main doors. The windows are narrow and deep, with very tiny panes and a great deal of sash. On the roof is a vast quantity of tiles with long curly ears. The wood−work, throughout, is of a dark hue, and there is much carving about it, with but a trifling variety of pattern; for time out of mind the carvers of Vondervotteimittiss have never been able to carve more than two objects −− a time−piece and a cabbage. But these they do excellently well, and intersperse them with singular ingenuity wherever they find room for the chisel.

The dwellings are as much alike inside as out, and the furniture is all upon one plan. The floors are of square tiles, the tables and chairs of black− looking wood with thin crooked legs and puppy feet. The mantel−pieces are wide and high, and have not only time−pieces and cabbages sculptured over the front, but a real time−piece, which makes a prodi− gious tickling, on top in the middle, with a flower pot containing a cabbage standing on each extremity by way of outrider. Between each cabbage and the time−piece again, is a little china man having a big belly, with a great round hole in it, through which is seen the dial−plate of a watch.

The fire−places are large and deep, with fierce crooked−looking fire−dogs. There is constantly a rousing fire, and a huge pot over it full of sauer−kraut and pork, to which the good woman of the house is always busy in attending. She is a little fat old lady, with blue eyes and a red face, and wears a huge cap like a sugar−loaf, ornamented with purple and yellow ribbons. Her dress is of orange−colored linsey−woolsey made very full behind and very short in the waist; and indeed very short in other respects, not reaching below the middle of the calf of her leg. This is somewhat thick, and so are her ankles, but she has a fine pair of green stockings to cover them. Her shoes, of pink leather, are fastened each with a bunch of yellow ribbons puckered up in the shape of a cabbage. In her left hand she has a little heavy Dutch watch −− in her right she wields a ladle for the sauer−kraut and pork. By her side there stands a fat tabby cat, with a gilt toy repeater tied to its tail, which "the boys" have there fastened by way of a quiz.

The boys themselves are, all three of them, in the garden attending the pig. They are each two feet in height. They have three−cornered cocked hats, purple waistcoats reaching down to their thighs, buckskin knee−breeches, red woollen stockings, heavy shoes with big silver buckles, and long surtout coats with large buttons of

mother−of−pearl. Each, too, has a pipe in his mouth, and a dumpy little watch in his right hand. He takes a puff and a look, and then a look and a puff. The pig, which is corpulent and lazy, is occupied now in picking up the stray leaves that fall from the cabbages, and now in giving a kick behind at the gilt repeater which the urchins have also tied to his tail, in order to make him look as handsome as the cat.

Right at the front door, in a high−backed leather− bottomed armed chair, with crooked legs and puppy feet like the tables, is seated the old man of the house himself. He is an exceedingly puffy little old gentle− man, with big circular eyes and a huge double chin. His dress resembles that of the boys, and I need say nothing farther about it. All the difference is that his pipe is somewhat bigger than theirs, and he can make a greater smoke. Like them he has a watch, but he carries that watch in his pocket. To say the truth, he has something of more importance than a watch to attend to, and what that is I shall presently explain. He sits with his right leg upon his left knee, wears a grave countenance, and always keeps one of his eyes, at least, resolutely bent upon a cer− tain remarkable object in the centre of the plain.

This object is situated in the steeple of the House of the Town−Council. The Town−Council are all very little round intelligent men with big saucer eyes and fat double chins, and have their coats much longer and their shoe−buckles much bigger than the ordinary inhabitants of Vondervotteimittiss. Since my sojourn in the borough they have had several special meetings, and have adopted the three import− ant resolutions −−

"That it is wrong to alter the good old course of things" −−

"That there is nothing tolerable out of Vonder− votteimittiss

And "That we will stick by our clocks and our cabbages."

Above the session room of the Council is the steeple, and in the steeple is the belfry, where exists, and has existed time out of mind, the pride and won− der of the village −− the great clock of the borough of Vondervotteimittiss. And this is the object to which the eyes of all the old gentlemen are turned who sit in the leather−bottomed arm−chairs.

The great clock has seven faces, one in each of the seven sides of the steeple, so that it can be readily seen from all quarters. Its faces are large and white, and its hands heavy and black. There is a belfry− man whose sole duty is to attend it; but this duty is the most perfect of sinecures, for the clock of Von− dervotteimittiss was never yet known to have any− thing the matter with it. Until lately the bare sup− position of such a thing was considered heretical. From the remotest period of antiquity to which the archives have reference, the hours have been regu− larly struck by the big bell. And indeed the case is just the same with all the other clocks and watches in the borough. Never was such a place for keeping the true time. When the large clapper thought proper to say "twelve o'clock!" all its obedient fol− lowers opened their throats simultaneously, and responded like a very echo. In short, the good burghers were fond of their sauer−kraut, but then they were proud of their clocks.

All people who hold sinecure offices are held in more or less respect, and as the belfry−man of Von− dervotteimittiss has the most perfect of sinecures, he is the most perfectly respected of any man in the world. He is the chief dignitary of the borough, and the very pigs look up to him with a sentiment of reverence. His coat−tail is very far longer −− his pipe, his shoe−buckles, his eyes, and his belly, very far bigger than those of any old gentleman in the village −− and as to his chin, it is not only double but triple.

I have thus painted the happy estate of Vonder− votteimittiss −− alas! that so fair a picture should ever experience a reverse!

There has been long a saying among the wisest inhabitants that "no good can come from over the hills," and it really seemed that the words had in them something of the spirit of prophecy. It wanted five minutes of noon, on

the day before yesterday, when there appeared a very odd−looking object on the summit of the ridge to the eastward. Such an occurrence, of course, attracted universal attention, and every little old gentleman who sat in a leather− bottomed arm−chair turned one of his eyes with a stare of dismay upon the phenomenon, still keeping the other upon the clock in the steeple.

By the time that it wanted only three minutes of noon the droll object in question was clearly per− ceived to be a very diminutive foreign−looking young man. He descended the hills at a great rate, so that every body had soon a good look at him. He was really the most finnicky little personage that had ever been seen in Vondervotteimittiss. His countenance was of a dark snuff colour, and he had a long hooked nose, pea eyes, a wide mouth, and an excellent set of teeth, which latter he seemed anxious of display− ing, as he was grinning from ear to ear. What with mustaches and whiskers there was none of the rest of his face to be seen. His head was uncovered, and his hair neatly done up in papillotes. His dress was a tight−fitting swallow−tailed black coat (from one of whose pockets dangled a vast length of white handkerchief), black kerseymere knee−breeches, black silk stockings, and stumpy−looking pumps, with huge bunches of black satin ribbon for bows. Under one arm he carried a huge chapeau−de−bras, and under the other a fiddle nearly five times as big as himself. In his left hand was a gold snuff−box, from which as he capered down the hill, cutting all manner of fan− tastical steps, he took snuff incessantly with an air of the greatest possible self−satisfaction. God bless me! here was a sight for the eyes of the sober burghers of Vondervotteimittiss!

To speak plainly, the fellow had, in spite of his grinning, an audacious and sinister kind of face; and as he curvetted right into the village, the odd stumpy appearance of his pumps excited no little suspicion, and many a burgher who beheld him that day would have given a trifle for a peep beneath the white cambric handkerchief which hung so ob− trusively from the pocket of his swallow−tailed coat. But what mainly occasioned a righteous indignation was that the scoundrelly popinjay, while he cut a fandango here, and a whirligig there, did not seem to have the remotest idea in the world of such a thing as keeping time in his steps.

The good people of the borough had scarcely a chance, however, to get their eyes thoroughly open, when, just as it wanted half a minute of noon, the rascal bounced, as I say, right into the midst of them, gave a chazzez here and a balancez there, and then, after a pirouette and a pas−de−zephyr, pigeon−winged him− self right up into the belfry of the house of the Town− Council, where the wonder−stricken belfry−man sat smoking in a state of stupified dignity and dismay. But the little chap seized him at once by the nose, gave it a swing and a pull, clapped the big chapeau−de−bras upon his head, knocked it down over his eyes and mouth, and then, lifting up the big fiddle, beat him with it so long and so soundly, that what with the belfry− man being so fat, and the fiddle being so hollow, you would have sworn there was a regiment of double− bass drummers all beating the devil's tattoo up in the belfry of the steeple of Vondervotteimittiss.

There is no knowing to what desperate act of vengeance this unprincipled attack might have aroused the inhabitants, but for the important fact that it now wanted only half a second of noon. The bell was about to strike, and it was a matter of absolute and pre−eminent necessity that every body should look well at his watch. It was evident, how− ever, that just at this moment, the fellow in the steeple was doing something that he had no business to do with the clock. But as it now began to strike, nobody had any time to attend to his manoeuvres, for they had all to count the strokes of the bell as it sounded.

"One!" said the clock.

"Von!" echoed every little old gentleman in every leather−bottomed arm−chair in Vondervotteimittiss. "Von!" said his watch also; "von!" said the watch of his vrow, and "von!" said the watches of the boys, and the little gilt repeaters on the tails of the cat and the pig.

"Two!" continued the big bell; and

"Doo!" repeated all the repeaters.

"Three! Four! Five! Six! Seven! Eight! Nine! Ten!" said the bell.

"Dree! Vour! Fibe! Sax! Seben! Aight! Noin! Den!" answered the others.

"Eleven!" said the big one.

"Eleben!" assented the little fellows.

"Twelve!" said the bell.

"Dvelf!" they replied, perfectly satisfied, and dropping their voices.

"Und dvelf it iss!" said all the little old gentlemen, putting up their watches. But the big bell had not done with them yet.

"Thirteen!" said he.

"Der Teufel!" gasped the little old gentlemen, turning pale, dropping their pipes, and putting down all their right legs from over their left knees −−

"Der Teufel!" groaned they −− "Dirteen! Dir− teen!! −− Mein Gott, it is −− it is Dirteen o'clock!!"

What is the use of attempting to describe the terrible scene which ensued? All Vondervotteim− ittis flew at once into a lamentable state of uproar.

"Vot is cum'd to mein pelly?" roared all the boys −− "I've been an ongry for dis hour!"

"Vot is cum'd to mein kraut?" screamed all the vrows −− "It has been done to rags for dis hour!"

"Vot is cum'd to mein pipe?" swore all the little old gentlemen −− "Donder und Blitzen! it has been smoked out for dis hour!" −− and they filled them up again in a great rage, and sinking back in their arm− chairs, puffed away so fast and so fiercely that the whole valley was immediately filled with an impene− trable smoke.

Meantime the cabbages all turned very red in the face, and it seemed as if the old Nick himself had taken possession of everything in the shape of a time−piece. The clocks carved upon the furniture got to dancing as if bewitched, while those upon the mantel−pieces could scarcely contain themselves for fury, and kept such a continual striking of thirteen, and such a frisking and wriggling of their pendulums as it was really horrible to see. But, worse than all, neither the cats nor the pigs could put up any longer with the outrageous behavior of the little repeaters tied to their tails, and resented it by scamp− ering all over the place, scratching and poking, and squeaking and screeching, and caterwauling and squalling, and flying into the faces, and running under the petticoats, of the people, and creating altogether the most abominable din and confusion which it is possible for a reasonable person to con− ceive. And to make it if he could more abominable, the rascally little scape−grace in the steeple was evidently exerting himself to the utmost. Every now and then one might catch a glimpse of the scoundrel through the smoke. There he sat in the belfry upon the belly of the belfry−man, who was lying flat upon his back. In his teeth he held the bell−rope which he kept jerking about with his head, raising such a clatter that my ears ring again even to think of it. On his lap lay the big fiddle at which he was scraping out of all time and tune with both his hands, making a great show, the nincompoop! of playing Judy O'Flannagan and Paddy O'Rafferty.

Affairs being thus miserably situated, I left the place in disgust, and now appeal for aid to all lovers of good time and fine kraut. Let us proceed in a body to the borough, and restore the ancient order of things in Vondervotteimittiss by ejecting that little chap from the steeple.

LIGEIA.

And the will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth
the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a
great will pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man
doth not yield himself to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save
only through the weakness of his feeble will.

Joseph Glanvill.

I Cannot, for my soul, remember how, when, or even precisely where, I first became acquainted with the Lady Ligeia. Long years have since elapsed, and my memory is feeble through much suffering. Or, perhaps, I cannot now bring these points to mind, because, in truth, the character of my beloved, her rare learning, her singular yet placid cast of beauty, and the thrilling and enthralling eloquence of her low, musical language, made their way into my heart by paces so steadily and stealthily progressive, that they have been unnoticed and unknown. Yet I believe that I met her most frequently in some large, old, decaying city near the Rhine. Of her family −− I have surely heard her speak −− that they are of a remotely ancient date cannot be doubted. Ligeia! Buried in studies of a nature more than all else adapted to deaden impressions of the outward world, it is by that sweet word alone −− by Ligeia −− that I bring before mine eyes in fancy the image of her who is no more. And now, while I write, a recollection flashes upon me that I have never known the paternal name of her who was my friend and my betrothed, and who became the partner of my studies, and eventually the wife of my bosom. Was it a playful charge on the part of my Ligeia? or was it a test of my strength of affection that I should institute no inquiries upon this point? or was it rather a caprice of my own −− a wildly romantic offering on the shrine of the most passionate devotion? I but indistinctly recall the fact itself −− what wonder that I have utterly forgotten the circumstances which originated or attended it? And, indeed, if ever that spirit which is entitled Ro− mance −− if ever she, the wan, and the misty−winged Ashtophet of idolatrous Egypt, presided, as they tell, over marriages ill−omened, then most surely she pre− sided over mine.

There is one dear topic, however, on which my memory faileth me not. It is the person of Ligeia. In stature she was tall, somewhat slender, and in her latter days even emaciated. I would in vain attempt to portray the majesty, the quiet ease, of her de− meanor, or the incomprehensible lightness and elas− ticity of her footfall. She came and departed like a shadow. I was never made aware of her entrance into my closed study save by the dear music of her low sweet voice, as she placed her delicate hand upon my shoulder. In beauty of face no maiden ever equalled her. It was the radiance of an opium dream −− an airy and spirit−lifting vision more wildly divine than the phantasies which hovered about the slumber− ing souls of the daughters of Delos. Yet her features were not of that regular mould which we have been falsely taught to worship in the classical labors of the heathen. "There is no exquisite beauty," says Bacon, Lord Verülam, speaking truly of all the forms and genera of beauty, "without some strangeness in the proportions." Yet, although I saw that the fea− tures of Ligeia were not of classic regularity, although I perceived that her loveliness was indeed "exquisite," and felt that there was much of "strangeness" per− vading it, yet I have tried in vain to detect the irre− gularity, and to trace home my own perception of "the strange." I examined the contour of the lofty and pale forehead −− it was faultless −− how cold indeed that word when applied to a majesty so divine! −− the skin rivalling the purest ivory, the commanding extent and repose, the gentle prominence of the regions above the temples, and then the raven−black, the glossy, the luxuriant and naturally−curling tresses, setting forth the full force of the Homeric epithet, "hyacinthine!" I looked at the delicate outlines of the nose −− and nowhere but in the graceful medal− lions of the Hebrews had I beheld a similar perfection. There was the same luxurious smoothness of surface, the same scarcely perceptible

tendency to the aquiline, the same harmoniously curved nostril speaking the free spirit. I regarded the sweet mouth. Here was indeed the triumph of all things heavenly −− the magnificent turn of the short upper lip −− the soft, voluptuous slumber of the under −− the dimples which sported, and the color which spoke −− the teeth glanc− ing back, with a brilliancy almost startling, every ray of the holy light which fell upon them in her serene, and placid, yet most exultingly radiant of all smiles. I scrutinized the formation of the chin −− and here, too, I found the gentleness of breadth, the softness and the majesty, the fulness and the spiri− tuality, of the Greek, −− the contour which the god Apollo revealed but in a dream, to Cleomenes, the son of the Athenian. And then I peered into the large eyes of Ligeia.

For eyes we have no models in the remotely antique. It might have been, too, that in these eyes of my beloved lay the secret to which Lord Verülam alludes. They were, I must believe, far larger than the ordinary eyes of our race. They were even far fuller than the fullest of the Gazelle eyes of the tribe of the valley of Nourjahad. Yet it was only at in− tervals −− in moments of intense excitement −− that this peculiarity became more than slightly noticeable in Ligeia. And at such moments was her beauty −− in my heated fancy thus it appeared perhaps −− the beauty of beings either above or apart from the earth −− the beauty of the fabulous Houri of the Turk. The color of the orbs was the most brilliant of black, and far over them hung jetty lashes of great length. The brows, slightly irregular in outline, had the same hue. The "strangeness," however, which I found in the eyes was of a nature distinct from the formation, or the color, or the brilliancy of the features, and must, after all, be referred to the expression. Ah, word of no meaning! behind whose vast latitude of mere sound we intrench our ignorance of so much of the spiritual. The expression of the eyes of Ligeia! How, for long hours have I pondered upon it! How have I, through the whole of a midsummer night, struggled to fathom it! What was it −− that something more profound than the well of Democritus −− which lay far within the pupils of my beloved? What was it? I was possessed with a passion to discover. Those eyes! those large, those shining, those divine orbs! they became to me twin stars of Leda, and I to them devoutest of astrologers. Not for a moment was the unfathomable meaning of their glance, by day or by night, absent from my soul.

There is no point, among the many incomprehen− sible anomalies of the science of mind, more thril− lingly exciting than the fact −− never, I believe, noticed in the schools −− that in our endeavors to recall to memory something long forgotten we often find ourselves upon the very verge of remembrance without being able, in the end, to remember. And thus, how frequently, in my intense scrutiny of Ligeia's eyes, have I felt approaching the full know− ledge of the secret of their expression −− felt it approaching −− yet not quite be mine −− and so at length entirely depart. And (strange, oh strangest mystery of all!) I found, in the commonest objects of the universe, a circle of analogies to that expres− sion. I mean to say that, subsequently to the period when Ligeia's beauty passed into my spirit, there dwelling as in a shrine, I derived, from many exist− ences in the material world, a sentiment such as I felt always aroused within me by her large and luminous orbs. Yet not the more could I define that sentiment, or analyze, or even steadily view it. I recognized it, let me repeat, sometimes in the com− monest objects of the universe. It has flashed upon me in the survey of a rapidly−growing vine −− in the contemplation of a moth, a butterfly, a chrysalis, a stream of running water. I have felt it in the ocean, in the falling of a meteor. I have felt it in the glances of unusually aged people. And there are one or two stars in heaven −− (one especially, a star of the sixth magnitude, double and changeable, to be found near the large star in Lyra) in a telescopic scrutiny of which I have been made aware of the feeling. I have been filled with it by certain sounds from stringed instruments, and not unfrequently by passages from books. Among innumerable other instances, I well remember something in a volume of Joseph Glanvill, which (perhaps merely from its quaintness −− who shall say?) never failed to inspire me with the sentiment, −− "And the will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield him to the angels, nor unto death utterly, but only through the weakness of his feeble will."

Length of years, and subsequent reflection, have enabled me to trace, indeed, some remote connexion between this passage in the old English moralist and a portion of the character of Ligeia. An intensity in thought, action, or speech, was possibly, in her, a result, or at least an index, of that gigantic volition which, during our long

intercourse, failed to give other and more immediate evidence of its existence. Of all women whom I have ever known she, the outwardly calm, the ever−placid Ligeia, was the most violently a prey to the tumultuous vultures of stern passion. And of such passion I could form no estimate, save by the miraculous expansion of those eyes which at once so delighted and appalled me, by the almost magical melody, modulation, distinct− ness and placidity of her very low voice, and by the fierce energy (rendered doubly effective by contrast with her manner of utterance) of the words which she uttered.

I have spoken of the learning of Ligeia: it was immense −− such as I have never known in woman. In the classical tongues was she deeply proficient, and as far as my own acquaintance extended in re− gard to the modern dialects of Europe, I have never known her at fault. Indeed upon any theme of the most admired, because simply the most abstruse, of the boasted erudition of the academy, have I ever found Ligeia at fault? How singularly, how thril− lingly, this one point in the nature of my wife has forced itself, at this late period only, upon my atten− tion! I said her knowledge was such as I had never known in woman. Where breathes the man who, like her, has traversed, and successfully, all the wide areas of moral, natural, and mathematical science? I saw not then what I now clearly perceive, that the acquisitions of Ligeia were gigantic, were astound− ing −− yet I was sufficiently aware of her infinite supremacy to resign myself, with a child−like con− fidence, to her guidance through the chaotic world of metaphysical investigation at which I was most busily occupied during the earlier years of our marriage. With how vast a triumph −− with how vivid a delight −− with how much of all that is ethereal in hope −− did I feel, as she bent over me in studies but little sought for −− but less known −− that delicious vista by slow but perceptible degrees expanding before me, down whose long, gorgeous, and all untrodden path, I might at length pass on− ward to the goal of a wisdom too divinely precious not to be forbidden!

How poignant, then, must have been the grief with which, after some years, I beheld my well− grounded expectations take wings to themselves and flee away! Without Ligeia I was but as a child groping benighted. Her presence, her readings alone, rendered vividly luminous the many mysteries of the transcendentalism in which we were im− mersed. Letters, lambent and golden, grew duller than Saturnian lead, wanting the radiant lustre of her eyes. And now those eyes shone less and less frequently upon the pages over which I pored. Ligeia grew ill. The wild eye blazed with a too −− too glorious effulgence; the pale fingers became of the transparent waxen hue of the grave −− and the blue veins upon the lofty forehead swelled and sunk impetuously with the tides of the most gentle emo− tion. I saw that she must die −− and I struggled desperately in spirit with the grim Azrael. And the struggles of the passionate wife were, to my astonish− ment, even more energetic than my own. There had been much in her stern nature to impress me with the belief that, to her, death would have come without its terrors −− but not so. Words are im− potent to convey any just idea of the fierceness of resistance with which she wrestled with the dark shadow. I groaned in anguish at the pitiable spectacle. I would have soothed −− I would have reasoned; but in the intensity of her wild desire for life −− for life −− but for life, solace and reason were alike the uttermost of folly. Yet not for an instant, amid the most convulsive writhings of her fierce spirit, was shaken the external placidity of her de− meanor. Her voice grew more gentle −− grew more low −− yet I would not wish to dwell upon the wild meaning of the quietly−uttered words. My brain reeled as I hearkened, entranced, to a melody more than mortal −− to assumptions and aspirations which mortality had never before known.

That she loved me, I should not have doubted; and I might have been easily aware that, in a bosom such as hers, love would have reigned no ordinary passion. But in death only, was I fully impressed with the strength of her affection. For long hours, detaining my hand, would she pour out before me the over− flowings of a heart whose more than passionate devotion amounted to idolatry. How had I deserved to be so blessed by such confessions? −− how had I deserved to be so cursed with the removal of my beloved in the hour of her making them? But upon this subject I cannot bear to dilate. Let me say only, that in Ligeia's more than womanly abandon− ment to a love, alas! all unmerited, all unworthily bestowed, I at length recognised the principle of her longing with so wildly earnest a desire for the life which was now fleeing so rapidly away. It is this wild longing −− it is this eager vehemence of desire for life −− but for life −− that I have no power to portray −− no utterance capable of expressing. Me− thinks I again behold the terrific struggles of her lofty, her nearly idealized nature, with the might and the terror, and the majesty, of the great Shadow. But she perished. The giant will succumbed to a power

more stern. And I thought, as I gazed upon the corpse, of the wild passage in Joseph Glanvill: "The will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will, with its vigor? For God is but a great will pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield him to the angels, nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will."

She died −− and I, crushed into the very dust with sorrow, could no longer endure the lonely desolation of my dwelling in the dim and decaying city by the Rhine. I had no lack of what the world terms wealth −− Ligeia had brought me far more, very far more, than falls ordinarily to the lot of mortals. After a few months, therefore, of weary and aimless wandering, I purchased, and put in some repair, an abbey, which I shall not name, in one of the wildest and least frequented portions of fair England. The gloomy and dreary grandeur of the building, the almost savage aspect of the domain, the many melancholy and time−honored memories connected with both, had much in unison with the feelings of utter abandonment which had driven me into that remote and unsocial region of the country. Yet although the external abbey, with its verdant decay hanging about it, suffered but little alteration, I gave way, with a child−like perversity, and perchance with a faint hope of alleviating my sorrows, to a display of more than regal magnificence within. For such follies even in childhood I had imbibed a taste, and now they came back to me as if in the dotage of grief. Alas, I feel how much even of in− cipient madness might have been discovered in the gorgeous and fantastic draperies, in the solemn carvings of Egypt, in the wild cornices and furniture, in the bedlam patterns of the carpets of tufted gold! I had become a bounden slave in the trammels of opium, and my labors and my orders had taken a coloring from my dreams. But these absurdities I must not pause to detail. Let me speak only of that one chamber, ever accursed, whither, in a moment of mental alienation, I led from the altar as my bride −− as the successor of the unforgotten Ligeia −− the fair−haired and blue−eyed Lady Rowena Trevanion, of Tremaine.

There is not any individual portion of the archi− tecture and decoration of that bridal chamber which is not now visibly before me. Where were the souls of the haughty family of the bride, when, through thirst of gold, they permitted to pass the threshold of an apartment so bedecked, a maiden and a daughter so beloved? I have said that I minutely remember the details of the chamber −− yet I am sadly forgetful on topics of deep moment −− and here there was no system, no keeping, in the fantastic display, to take hold upon the memory. The room lay in a high turret of the castellated abbey, was pentagonal in shape, and of capacious size. Oc− cupying the whole southern face of the pentagon was the sole window −− an immense sheet of unbroken glass from Venice −− a single pane, and tinted of a leaden hue, so that the rays of either the sun or moon, passing through it, fell with a ghastly lustre upon the objects within. Over the upper portion of this huge window extended the open trellice−work of an aged vine which clambered up the massy walls of the turret. The ceiling, of gloomy−looking oak, was excessively lofty, vaulted, and elaborately fretted with the wildest and most grotesque specimens of a semi−Gothic, semi−Druidical device. From out the most central recess of this melancholy vaulting, de− pended, by a single chain of gold, with long links, a huge censer of the same metal, Saracenic in pattern, and with many perforations so contrived that there writhed in and out of them, as if endued with a serpent vitality, a continual succession of parti− colored fires. Some few ottomans and golden can− delabra of Eastern figure were in various stations about −− and there was the couch, too, the bridal couch, of an Indian model, and low, and sculptured of solid ebony, with a canopy above. In each of the angles of the chamber, stood on end a gigantic sarcophagus of black granite, from the tombs of the kings over against Luxor, with their aged lids full of immemorial sculpture. But in the draping of the apartment lay, alas! the chief phantasy of all. The lofty walls −− gigantic in height −− even unpropor− tionably so, were hung from summit to foot, in vast folds, with a heavy and massive looking tapestry −− tapestry of a material which was found alike as a carpet on the floor, as a covering for the ottomans and the ebony bed, as a canopy for the bed, and as the gorgeous volutes of the curtains which partially shaded the window. This material was the richest cloth of gold. It was spotted all over, at irregular intervals, with arabesque figures, of about a foot in diameter, and wrought upon the cloth in patterns of the most jetty black. But these figures partook of the true character of the arabesque only when re− garded from a single point of view. By a con− trivance now common, and indeed traceable to a very remote period of antiquity, they were made changeable in aspect. To one entering the room they bore the appearance of simple monstrosities; but, upon a farther advance, this appearance sud− denly departed; and, step by step, as the visiter moved his station in the

chamber, he saw himself surrounded by an endless succession of the ghastly forms which belong to the superstition of the North− man, or arise in the guilty slumbers of the monk. The phantasmagoric effect was vastly heightened by the artificial introduction of a strong continual current of wind behind the draperies −− giving a hideous and uneasy animation to the whole.

In halls such as these −− in a bridal chamber such as this −− I passed, with the Lady of Tremaine, the un− hallowed hours of the first month of our marriage −− passed them with but little disquietude. That my wife dreaded the fierce moodiness of my temper −− that she shunned me, and loved me but little −− I could not help perceiving −− but it gave me rather pleasure than otherwise. I loathed her with a hatred belonging more to demon than to man. My memory flew back, (oh, with what intensity of regret!) to Ligeia, the beloved, the beautiful, the entombed. I revelled in recollections of her purity, of her wisdom, of her lofty, her ethereal nature, of her passionate, her idolatrous love. Now, then, did my spirit fully and freely burn with more than all the fires of her own. In the excitement of my opium dreams (for I was habitually fettered in the iron shackles of the drug) I would call aloud upon her name, during the silence of the night, or among the sheltered recesses of the glens by day, as if, through the wild eagerness, the solemn passion, the consuming ardor of my longing for the departed Ligeia, I could restore the departed Ligeia to the pathway she had abandoned upon earth.

About the commencement of the second month of the marriage, the Lady Rowena was attacked with sudden illness from which her recovery was slow. The fever which consumed her rendered her nights uneasy, and, in her perturbed state of half−slumber, she spoke of sounds, and of motions, in and about the chamber of the turret, which had no origin save in the distemper of her fancy, or, perhaps, in the phantastic influences of the chamber itself. She became at length convalescent −− finally well. Yet but a brief period elapsed, ere a second more violent disorder again threw her upon a bed of suffering −− and from this attack her frame, at all times feeble, never altogether recovered. Her illnesses were, after this epoch, of alarming character, and of more alarming recurrence, defying alike the knowledge and the great exertions of her medical men. With the increase of the chronic disease which had thus, apparently, taken too sure hold upon her constitution to be eradicated by human means, I could not fail to observe a similar increase in the nervous irritation of her temperament, and in her excitability by trivial causes of fear. Indeed reason seemed fast tottering from her throne. She spoke again, and now more frequently and pertinaciously, of the sounds, of the slight sounds, and of the unusual motions among the tapestries, to which she had formerly alluded.

One night near the closing in of September, she pressed this distressing subject with more than usual emphasis upon my attention. She had just awakened from an unquiet slumber, and I had been watching, with feelings half of anxiety, half of a vague terror, the workings of her emaciated countenance. I sat by the side of her ebony bed, upon one of the otto− mans of India. She partly arose, and spoke, in an earnest low whisper, of sounds which she then heard, but which I could not hear, of motions which she then saw, but which I could not perceive. The wind was rushing hurriedly behind the tapestries, and I wished to show her (what, let me confess it, I could not all believe) that those faint, almost inarticu− late breathings, and the very gentle variations of the figures upon the wall, were but the natural effects of that customary rushing of the wind. But a deadly pallor, overspreading her face, had proved to me that my exertions to reassure her would be fruitless. She appeared to be fainting, and no attendants were within call. I remembered where was deposited a decanter of some light wine which had been ordered by her physicians, and hastened across the chamber to procure it. But, as I stepped beneath the light of the censer, two circumstances of a startling nature attracted my attention. I had felt that some palpable object had passed lightly by my person; and I saw that there lay a faint indefinite shadow upon the golden carpet, in the very middle of the rich lustre thrown from the censer. But I was wild with the excitement of an immoderate dose of opium, and heeded these things but little, nor spoke of them to Rowena. Finding the wine, I recrossed the cham− ber, and poured out a gobletful, which I held to the lips of the fainting lady. She had now partially recovered, however, and took, herself, the vessel, while I sank upon the ottoman near me, with my eyes rivetted upon her person. It was then that I became distinctly aware of a gentle foot−fall upon the carpet, and near the couch; and, in a second there− after, as Rowena was in the act of raising the wine to her lips, I saw, or may have dreamed that I saw, fall within the goblet, as if from some invisible spring in the atmosphere of the room, three or four large

drops of a brilliant and ruby−colored fluid. If this I saw −− not so Rowena. She swallowed the wine unhesitatingly, and I forbore to speak to her of a circumstance which must, after all, I considered, have been but the suggestion of a vivid imagination, rendered morbidly active by the terror of the lady, by the opium, and by the hour.

Yet −− I cannot conceal it from myself −− after this period, a rapid change for the worse took place in the disorder of my wife; so that, on the third subsequent night, the hands of her menials prepared her for the tomb, and on the fourth, I sat alone, with her shrouded body, in that fantastic chamber which had received her as my bride. Wild visions, opium engendered, flitted, shadow−like, before me. I gazed with unquiet eye upon the sarcophagi in the angles of the room, upon the varying figures of the drapery, and upon the writhing of the particolored fires in the censer overhead. My eyes then fell, as I called to mind the circumstances of a former night, to the spot beneath the glare of the censer where I had beheld the faint traces of the shadow. It was there, however, no longer, and, breathing with greater freedom, I turned my glances to the pallid and rigid figure upon the bed. Then rushed upon me a thou− sand memories of Ligeia −− and then came back upon my heart, with the turbulent violence of a flood, the whole of that unutterable wo with which I had regarded her thus enshrouded. The night waned; and still, with a bosom full of bitter thoughts of the one only and supremely beloved, I remained with mine eyes rivetted upon the body of Rowena.

It might have been midnight, or perhaps earlier, or later, for I had taken no note of time, when a sob, low, gentle, but very distinct, startled me from my revery. I felt that it came from the bed of ebony −− the bed of death. I listened in an agony of supersti− tious terror −− but there was no repetition of the sound; I strained my vision to detect any motion in the corpse, but there was not the slightest perceptible. Yet I could not have been deceived. I had heard the noise, however faint, and my whole soul was awakened within me, as I resolutely and perseveringly kept my attention rivetted upon the body. Many minutes elapsed before any circumstance occurred tending to throw light upon the mystery. At length it became evident that a slight, a very faint, and barely noticeable tinge of color had flushed up within the cheeks, and along the sunken small veins of the eyelids. Through a species of unutterable horror and awe, for which the language of mortality has no sufficiently energetic expression, I felt my brain reel, my heart cease to beat, my limbs grow rigid where I sat. Yet a sense of duty finally operated to restore my self−possession. I could no longer doubt that we had been precipitate in our preparations for interment −− that Rowena still lived. It was neces− sary that some immediate exertion be made; yet the turret was altogether apart from the portion of the abbey tenanted by the servants −− there were none within call, −− I had no means of summoning them to my aid without leaving the room for many min− utes −− and this I could not venture to do. I there− fore struggled alone in my endeavors to call back the spirit still hovering. In a short period it was certain, however, that a relapse had taken place; the color utterly disappeared from both eyelid and cheek, leaving a wanness even more than that of marble; the lips became doubly shrivelled and pinched up in the ghastly expression of death; a repulsive clammi− ness and coldness overspread rapidly the surface of the body; and all the usual rigorous stiffness immediately supervened. I fell back with a shudder upon the couch from which I had been so startlingly aroused, and again gave myself up to passionate waking visions of Ligeia.

An hour thus elapsed when, (could it be possible?) I was a second time aware of some vague sound is− suing from the region of the bed. I listened −− in extremity of horror. The sound came again −− it was a sigh. Rushing to the corpse, I saw −− distinctly saw −− a tremor upon the lips. In a minute after, they slightly relaxed, disclosing a bright line of the pearly teeth. Amazement now struggled in my bosom with the profound awe which had hitherto reigned therein alone. I felt that my vision grew dim, that my reason wandered, and it was only by a convulsive effort that I at length succeeded in nerving myself to the task which duty thus, once more, had pointed out. There was now a partial glow upon the forehead and upon the cheek and throat −− a perceptible warmth pervaded the whole frame −− there was even a slight pulsation at the heart. The lady lived; and with redoubled ardor I betook myself to the task of restoration. I chafed and bathed the temples and the hands, and used every exertion which experience, and no little medical reading, could sug− gest. But in vain. Suddenly, the color fled, the pulsation ceased, the lips resumed the expression of the dead, and, in an instant afterwards, the whole body took upon itself the icy chillness, the livid hue, the intense rigidity, the sunken outline, and each and all of the

loathsome peculiarities of that which has been, for many days, a tenant of the tomb.

And again I sunk into visions of Ligeia −− and again, (what marvel that I shudder while I write?) again there reached my ears a low sob from the re− gion of the ebony bed. But why shall I minutely detail the unspeakable horrors of that night? Why shall I pause to relate how, time after time, until near the period of the gray dawn, this hideous drama of revivification was repeated, and how each terrific relapse was only into a sterner and apparently more irredeemable death? Let me hurry to a conclusion.

The greater part of the fearful night had worn away, and the corpse of Rowena once again stirred −− and now more vigorously than hitherto, although arousing from a dissolution more appalling in its utter hopelessness than any. I had long ceased to struggle or to move, and remained sitting rigidly upon the ottoman, a helpless prey to a whirl of violent emotions, of which extreme awe was perhaps the least terrible, the least consuming. The corpse, I repeat, stirred, and now more vigorously than before. The hues of life flushed up with unwonted energy into the countenance −− the limbs relaxed −− and, save that the eyelids were yet pressed heavily together, and that the bandages and draperies of the grave still imparted their charnel character to the figure, I might have dreamed that Rowena had indeed shaken off, utterly, the fetters of Death. But if this idea was not, even then, altogether adopted, I could, at least, doubt no longer, when, arising from the bed, totter− ing, with feeble steps, with closed eyes, and with the manner of one bewildered in a dream, the Lady of Tremaine advanced bodily and palpably into the middle of the apartment.

I trembled not −− I stirred not −− for a crowd of unutterable fancies connected with the air, the de− meanor of the figure, rushing hurriedly through my brain, had paralyzed, had chilled me into stone. I stirred not −− but gazed upon the apparition. There was a mad disorder in my thoughts −− a tumult un− appeasable. Could it, indeed, be the living Rowena who confronted me? Why, why should I doubt it? The bandage lay heavily about the mouth −− but then it was the mouth of the breathing Lady of Tremaine. And the cheeks −− there were the roses as in her noon of life −− yes, these were indeed the fair cheeks of the living Lady of Tremaine. And the chin, with its dimples, as in health, was it not hers? −− but had she then grown taller since her malady? What inexpressible madness seized me with that thought? One bound, and I had reached her feet! Shrinking from my touch, she let fall from her head, unloosened, the ghastly cerements which had confined it, and there streamed forth, into the rushing atmosphere of the chamber, huge masses of long and dishevelled hair. It was blacker than the raven wings of the midnight! And now the eyes opened of the figure which stood before me. "Here then, at least," I shrieked aloud, "can I never −− can I never be mis− taken −− these are the full, and the black, and the wild eyes −− of the lady −− of the Lady Ligeia!"

KING PEST. A TALE CONTAINING AN ALLEGORY.

The gods do bear and well allow in kings
The things which they abhor in rascal roues.

Buckhurst's Tragedy of Ferrex and Porrex.

About twelve o'clock, one sultry night, in the month of August, and during the chivalrous reign of the third Edward, two seamen belonging to the crew of the "Free and Easy," a trading schooner plying between Sluys and the Thames, and then at anchor in that river, were much astonished to find themselves seated in the tap−room of an ale−house in the parish of St. Andrews, London −− which ale− house bore for sign the portraiture of a "Jolly Tar."

The room, it is needless to say, although ill−con− trived, smoke−blackened, low−pitched, and in every other respect agreeing with the general character of such places at the period −− was, nevertheless, in the opinion of the grotesque groups scattered here and there within it, sufficiently well adapted for its pur− pose.

Of these groups our two seamen formed, I think, the most interesting, if not the most conspicuous.

The one who appeared to be the elder, and whom his companion addressed by the characteristic ap− pellation of "Legs," was also much the most ill− favored, and, at the same time, much the taller of the two. He might have measured six feet nine inches, and an habitual stoop in the shoulders seemed to have been the necessary consequence of an al− titude so enormous. Superfluities in height were, however, more than accounted for by deficiencies in other respects. He was exceedingly, wofully, awfully thin; and might, as his associates asserted, have answered, when sober, for a pennant at the mast−head, or, when stiff with liquor, have served for a jib−boom. But these jests, and others of a similar nature, had evidently produced, at no time, any effect upon the leaden muscles of the tar. With high cheek−bones, a large hawk−nose, retreating chin, fallen under−jaw, and huge protruding white eyes, the expression of his countenance, although tinged with a species of dogged indifference to matters and things in general, was not the less utterly solemn and serious beyond all attempts at imitation or description.

The younger seaman was, in all outward ap− pearance, the antipodes of his companion. His stature could not have exceeded four feet. A pair of stumpy bow−legs supported his squat, unwieldy figure, while his unusually short and thick arms, with no ordinary fists at their extremities, swung off dangling from his sides like the fins of a sea−turtle. Small eyes, of no particular color, twinkled far back in his head. His nose remained buried in the mass of flesh which enveloped his round, full, and purple face; and his thick upper−lip rested upon the still thicker one beneath with an air of complacent self− satisfaction, much heightened by the owner's habit of licking them at intervals. He evidently regarded his tall ship−mate with a feeling half−wondrous, half− quizzical; and stared up occasionally in his face as the red setting sun stares up at the crags of Ben Nevis.

Various and eventful, however, had been the peregrinations of the worthy couple in and about the different tap−houses of the neighborhood during the earlier hours of the night. Funds even the most ample, are not always everlasting: and it was with empty pockets our friends had ventured upon the present hostelrie.

At the precise period, then, when this history pro− perly commences, Legs, and his fellow Hugh Tar− paulin, sat, each with both elbows resting upon the large oaken table in the middle of the floor, and with a hand upon either cheek. They were eyeing, from behind a huge flagon of unpaid−for. " humming− stuff," the portentous words "No Chalk," which to their indignation and astonishment were scored over the doorway by means of that very mineral whose presence they purported to deny. Not that the gift of decyphering written characters −− a gift among the commonalty of that day considered little less cabalistical than the art of inditing −− could, in strict justice, have been laid to the charge of either disciple of the sea; but there was, to say the truth, a certain twist in the formation of the letters −− an indescrib− able lee−lurch about the whole −− which foreboded, in the opinion of both seamen, a long run of dirty weather; and determined them at once, in the pithy words of Legs himself, to "pump ship, clew up all sail, and scud before the wind."

Having accordingly drank up what remained of the ale, and looped up the points of their short doublets, they finally made a bolt for the street. Although Tarpaulin rolled twice into the fire−place, mistaking it for the door, yet their escape was at length happily effected −− and half after twelve o'clock found our heroes ripe for mischief, and running for life down a dark alley in the direction of St. Andrew's Stair, hotly pursued by the landlord and landlady of the "Jolly Tar."

At the epoch of this eventful tale, and periodi− cally, for many years before and after, all England, but more especially the metropolis, resounded with the fearful cry of "Pest!" The city was in a great measure depopulated −− and in those horrible regions, in the vicinity of the Thames, where amid the dark, narrow, and filthy lanes and alleys, the Demon of Disease was supposed to have had his nativity, awe, terror, and superstition were alone to be found stalk− ing abroad.

By authority of the king such districts were placed under ban, and all persons forbidden, under pain of death, to intrude upon their dismal solitude. Yet neither the mandate of the monarch, nor the huge barriers erected at the entrances of the streets, nor the prospect of that loathsome death which, with almost absolute certainty, overwhelmed the wretch whom no peril could deter from the adventure, pre− vented the unfurnished and untenanted dwellings from being stripped, by the hand of nightly rapine, of every article, such as iron, brass, or lead−work, which could in any manner be turned to a profitable account.

Above all, it was usually found, upon the annual winter opening of the barriers, that locks, bolts, and secret cellars, had proved but slender protection to those rich stores of wines and liquors which, in con− sideration of the risk and trouble of removal, many of the numerous dealers having shops in the neighbor− hood had consented to trust, during the period of exile, to so insufficient a security.

But there were very few of the terror−stricken people who attributed these doings to the agency of human hands. Pest−spirits, Plague−goblins, and Fever−demons, were the popular imps of mischief; and tales so blood−chilling were hourly told, that the whole mass of forbidden buildings was, at length, enveloped in terror as in a shroud, and the plunderer himself was often scared away by the horrors his own depredations had created; leaving the entire vast circuit of prohibited district to gloom, silence, pestilence, and death.

It was by one of these terrific barriers already mentioned, and which indicated the region beyond to be under the Pest−ban, that, in scrambling down an alley, Legs and the worthy Hugh Tarpaulin found their progress suddenly impeded. To return was out of the question, and no time was to be lost, as their pursuers were close upon their heels. With thorough− bred seamen to clamber up the roughly fashioned plank−work was a trifle; and, maddened with the twofold excitement of exercise and liquor, they leaped unhesitatingly down within the enclosure, and holding on their drunken course with shouts and yellings, were soon bewildered in its noisome and intricate recesses.

Had they not, indeed, been intoxicated beyond all sense of human feelings, their reeling footsteps must have been palsied by the horrors of their situation. The air was damp, cold and misty. The paving−stones, loosened from their beds, lay in wild disorder amid the tall, rank grass, which sprang up hideously around the feet and ankles. Rubbish of fallen houses choked up the streets. The most fetid and poisonous smells every where prevailed −− and by the occasional aid of that ghastly and uncertain light which, even at midnight, never fails to emanate from a vapory and pestilential atmosphere, might be discerned lying in the by−paths and alleys, or rotting in the windowless habitations, the carcass of many a nocturnal plunderer arrested by the hand of the plague in the very per− petration of his robbery.

But it lay not in the power of images, or sensations, or impediments like these, to stay the course of men who, naturally brave, and at that time especially, brimful of courage and of "humming−stuff," would have reeled, as straight as their condition might have permitted, undauntedly into the very jaws of the arch−angel Death. Onward −− still onward stalked the gigantic Legs, making the desolate solemnity echo and re−echo with yells like the terrific war−whoop of the Indian: and onward −− still onward rolled the dumpy Tarpaulin, hanging on to the doublet of his more active companion, and far surpassing the latter's most strenuous exertions in the way of vocal music, by bull−roarings in basso, from the profundity of his stentorian lungs.

They had now evidently reached the strong hold of the pestilence. Their way at every step or plunge grew more noisome and more horrible −− the paths more narrow and more intricate. Huge stones and beams falling momently from the decaying roofs above them, gave evidence, by their sullen and heavy descent, of the vast height of the surrounding buildings, while actual exertion became necessary to force a passage through frequent heaps of putrid human corpses.4

Suddenly, as the seamen stumbled against the en− trance of a gigantic and ghastly−looking building, a yell more than usually shrill from the throat of the excited Legs, was replied to from within in a rapid succession of wild,

laughter−like, and fiendish shrieks. Nothing daunted at sounds which, of such a nature, at such a time, and in such a place, might have curdled the very blood in hearts less irrecoverably on fire, the drunken couple burst open the pannels of the door, and staggered into the midst of things with a volley of curses. It is not to be supposed, however, that the scene which here presented itself to the eyes of the gallant Legs and worthy Tarpaulin, produced at first sight any other effect upon their illuminated faculties than an overwhelming sensation of stupid astonishment.

The room within which they found themselves proved to be the shop of an undertaker −− but an open trap−door, in a corner of the floor near the entrance, looked down upon a long range of wine−cellars, whose depths the occasional sounds of bursting bottles proclaimed to be well stored with their appropriate contents. In the middle of the room stood a table −− in the centre of which again arose a huge tub of what appeared to be punch. Bottles of various wines and cordials, together with grotesque jugs, pitchers, and flagons of every shape and quality, were scattered profusely upon the board. Around it, upon coffin− tressels, was seated a company of six −− this company I will endeavor to delineate one by one.

Fronting the entrance, and elevated a little above his companions, sat a personage who appeared to be the president of the table. His stature was gaunt and tall, and Legs was confounded to behold in him a figure more emaciated than himself. His face was yellower than the yellowest saffron −− but no feature of his visage, excepting one alone, was sufficiently marked to merit a particular description. This one consisted in a forehead so unusually and hideously lofty, as to have the appearance of a bonnet or crown of flesh superseded upon the natural head. His mouth was puckered and dimpled into a singular expression of ghastly affability, and his eyes, as indeed the eyes of all at table, were glazed over with the fumes of intoxication. This gentleman was clothed from head to foot in a richly embroidered black silk−velvet pall wrapped negligently around his form after the fashion of a Spanish cloak. His head was stuck all full of tall sable hearse−plumes, which he nodded to and fro with a jaunty and knowing air, and, in his right hand, he held a huge human thigh−bone, with which he ap− peared to have been just knocking down some member of the company for a song.

Opposite him, and with her back to the door, was a lady of no whit the less extraordinary character. Although quite as tall as the person who has just been described, she had no right to complain of his unnatural emaciation. She was evidently in the last stage of a dropsy; and her figure resembled nearly in outline the shapeless proportions of the huge puncheon of October beer which stood, with the head driven in, close by her side, in a corner of the chamber. Her face was exceedingly round, red, and full −− and the same peculiarity, or rather want of peculiarity, attached itself to her countenance, which I before mentioned in the case of the president −− that is to say, only one feature of her face was sufficiently distinguished to need a separate characterization: indeed, the acute Tarpaulin immediately observed that the same remark might have applied to each individual person of the party; every one of whom seemed to possess a monopoly of some particular por− tion of physiognomy. With the lady in question this portion proved to be the mouth. Commencing at the right ear, it swept with a terrific chasm to the left −− the short pendants which she wore in either auricle continually bobbing into the aperture. She made, however, every exertion to keep her jaws closed and looked dignified, in a dress consisting of a newly starched and ironed shroud coming up close under her chin, with a crimped ruffle of cambric muslin.

At her right hand sat a diminutive young lady whom she appeared to patronise. This delicate little creature, in the trembling of her wasted fingers, in the livid hue of her lips, and in the slight hectic spot which tinged her otherwise leaden complexion, gave evident indications of a galloping consumption. An air of extreme haut ton, however, pervaded her whole appearance −− she wore, in a graceful and degagé manner, a large and beautiful winding−sheet of the finest India lawn −− her hair hung in ringlets over her neck −− a soft smile played about her mouth −− but her nose, extremely long, thin, sinuous, flexible, and pimpled, hung down far below her under lip, and in spite of the delicate manner in which she now and then moved it to one side or the other with her tongue, gave an expression rather doubtful to her countenance.

Over against her, and upon the left of the dropsical lady, was seated a little puffy, wheezing, and gouty old man, whose cheeks hung down upon the shoulders of their owner, like two huge bladders of Oporto wine. With his arms folded, and with one bandaged leg cocked up against the table, he seemed to think himself entitled to some consideration. He evidently prided himself much upon every inch of his personal appearance, but took more especial delight in calling attention to his gaudy−colored surcoat. This, to say the truth, must have cost no little money, and was made to fit him exceedingly well −− being fashioned from one of the curiously embroidered silken covers appertaining to those glorious escutcheons which, in England and elsewhere, are customarily hung up in some conspicuous place upon the dwellings of departed aristocracy.

Next to him, and at the right hand of the president, was a gentleman in long white hose and cotton drawers. His frame shook, in a ludicrous manner, with a fit of what Tarpaulin called "the horrors." His jaws, which had been newly shaved, were tightly tied up by a bandage of muslin; and his arms being fastened in a similar way at the wrists, prevented him from helping himself too freely to the liquors upon the table; a precaution rendered necessary, in the opinion of Legs, by the peculiarly sottish and wine− bibbing cast of his visage. A pair of prodigious ears, nevertheless, which it was no doubt found im− possible to confine, towered away into the atmo− sphere of the apartment, and were occasionally pricked up, or depressed, as the sounds of bursting bottles increased, or died away, in the cellars underneath.

Fronting him, sixthly and lastly, was situated a singularly stiff−looking personage, who, being afflicted with paralysis, must, to speak seriously, have felt very ill at ease in his unaccommodating habiliments. He was habited, somewhat uniquely, in a new and hand− some mahogany coffin. The top or head−piece of the coffin pressed upon the skull of the wearer, and extended over it in the fashion of a hood, giving to the entire face an air of indescribable interest. Arm− holes had been cut in the sides, for the sake not more of elegance than of convenience −− but the dress, nevertheless, prevented its proprietor from sitting as erect as his associates; and as he lay reclining against his tressel, at an angle of forty−five degrees, a pair of huge goggle eyes rolled up their awful whites towards the ceiling in absolute amazement at their own enormity.

Before each of the party lay a portion of a skull, which was used as a drinking cup. Overhead was suspended an enormous human skeleton, by means of a rope tied round one of the legs and fastened to a ring in the ceiling. The other limb, confined by no such fetter, stuck off from the body at right angles, causing the whole loose and rattling frame to dangle and twirl about in a singular manner, at the caprice of every occasional puff of wind which found its way into the apartment. In the cranium of this hideous thing lay a quantity of ignited and glowing charcoal, which threw a fitful but vivid light over the entire scene; while coffins, and other wares appertaining to the shop of an undertaker, were piled high up around the room, and against the windows, preventing any straggling ray from escap− ing into the street.

It has been before hinted that at sight of this ex− traordinary assembly, and of their still more extra− ordinary paraphernalia, our two seamen did not conduct themselves with that proper degree of decorum which might have been expected. Legs, having leant himself back against the wall, near which he happened to be standing, dropped his lower jaw still lower than usual, and spread open his eyes to their fullest extent: while Hugh Tarpaulin, stoop− ing down so as to bring his nose upon a level with the table, and spreading out a palm upon either knee, burst into a long, loud, and obstreperous roar of very ill−timed and immoderate laughter.

Without, however, taking offence at behavior so excessively rude, the tall president smiled very graciously upon the intruders −− nodded to them in a dignified manner with his head of sable plumes −− and, arising, took each by an arm, and led him to a seat which some others of the company had placed in the meantime for his accommodation. Legs to all this offered not the slightest resistance, but sat down as he was directed −− while the gallant Hugh, removing his coffin−tressel from its station near the head of the table, to the vicinity of the little consumptive lady in the winding−sheet, plumped down by her side in high glee, and, pouring out a skull of red wine, drank it off to their better ac− quaintance. But at this presumption the stiff gentle− man in the coffin seemed exceedingly nettled; and serious consequences might have ensued, had not the president, rapping upon the table

with his truncheon, diverted the attention of all present to the following speech:

"It becomes our duty upon the present happy occasion" −−

"Avast there!" −− interrupted Legs, looking very serious −− "avast there a bit, I say, and tell us who the devil ye all are, and what business ye have here, rigged off like the foul fiends, and swilling the snug `blue ruin' stowed away for the winter by my honest shipmate Will Wimble the undertaker!"

At this unpardonable piece of ill−breeding, all the original company half started to their feet, and uttered the same rapid succession of wild fiendish shrieks which had before caught the attention of the seamen. The president, however, was the first to recover his composure, and at length, turning to Legs with great dignity, recommenced:

"Most willingly will we gratify any reasonable curiosity on the part of guests so illustrious, unbidden though they be. Know then that in these dominions I am monarch, and here rule with undivided empire under the title of `King Pest the First.'

"This apartment which you no doubt profanely suppose to be the shop of Will Wimble the under− taker −− a man whom we know not, and whose plebeian appellation has never before this night thwarted our royal ears −− this apartment, I say, is the Dais−Chamber of our Palace, devoted to the councils of our kingdom, and to other sacred and lofty purposes.

"The noble lady who sits opposite is Queen Pest, and our Serene Consort. The other exalted person− ages whom you behold are all of our family, and wear the insignia of the blood royal under the re− spective titles of `His Grace the Arch Duke Pest− Iferous' −− `His Grace the Duke Pest−Ilential' −− `His Grace the Duke Tem−Pest' −− and `Her Serene Highness the Arch Duchess Ana−Pest.'

"As regards" −− continued he −− "your demand of the business upon which we sit here in council, we might be pardoned for replying that it concerns, and concerns alone, our own private and regal in− terest, and is in no manner important to any other than ourself. But in consideration of those rights to which as guests and strangers you may feel your− selves entitled, we will furthermore explain that we are here this night, prepared by deep research and accurate investigation, to examine, analyze, and thoroughly determine the indefinable spirit −− the in− comprehensible qualities and nare −− of those ines− timable treasures of the palate, the wines, ales, and liqueurs of this goodly metropolis: by so doing to advance not more our own designs than the true welfare of that unearthly sovereign whose reign is over us all −− whose dominions are unlimited −− and whose name is `Death.' "

"Whose name is Davy Jones!" −− ejaculated Tar− paulin, helping the lady by his side to a skull of liqueur, and pouring out a second for himself.

"Profane varlet!" −− said the president, now turn− ing his attention to the worthy Hugh −− "profane and execrable wretch! −− we have said, that in con− sideration of those rights which, even in thy filthy person, we feel no inclination to violate, we have condescended to make reply to your rude and un− seasonable inquiries. We, nevertheless, for your unhallowed intrusion upon our councils, believe it our duty to mulct you and your companion in each a gallon of Black Strap −− having imbibed which to the prosperity of our kingdom −− at a single draught −− and upon your bended knees −− you shall be forth− with free either to proceed upon your way, or remain and be admitted to the privileges of our table, according to your respective and individual pleasures."

"It would be a matter of utter unpossibility" −− replied Legs, whom the assumptions and dignity of King Pest the First had evidently inspired with some feelings of respect, and who arose and steadied him− self by the table as he spoke −− "it would, please your majesty, be a matter of utter unpossibility to stow away in my hold even one−fourth of that same liquor which your majesty has just mentioned. To say nothing of the stuffs placed on

board in the forenoon by way of ballast, and not to mention the various ales and liqueurs shipped this evening at different sea−ports, I am, at present, full up to the throat of `humming−stuff' taken in and duly paid for at the sign of the `Jolly Tar.' You will, therefore, please your majesty, be so good as take the will for the deed −− for by no manner of means either can I or will I swallow another drop −− least of all a drop of that villanous bilge−water that answers to the hail of `Black Strap.' "

"Belay that!" −− interrupted Tarpaulin, astonished not more at the length of his companion's speech than at the nature of his refusal −− "Belay that you lubber! −− and I say, Legs, none of your palaver! My hull is still light, although I confess you yourself seem to be a little top−heavy; and as for the matter of your share of the cargo, why rather than raise a squall I would find stowage−room for it myself, but" −−

"This proceeding" −− interposed the president −− "is by no means in accordance with the terms of the mulct or sentence, which is in its nature Median, and not to be altered or recalled. The conditions we have imposed must be fulfilled to the letter, and that without a moment's hesitation −− in failure of which fulfilment we decree that you do here be tied neck and heels together, and duly drowned as rebels in yon hogshead of October beer!"

"A sentence! −− a sentence! −− a righteous and just sentence! −− a glorious decree! −− a most worthy and upright, and holy condemnation!" −− shouted the Pest family altogether. The king elevated his forehead into innumerable wrinkles −− the gouty little old man puffed like a pair of bellows −− the lady of the wind− ing sheet waved her nose to and fro −− the gentle− man in the cotton drawers pricked up his ears −− she of the shroud gasped like a dying fish −− and he of the coffin looked stiff and rolled up his eyes.

"Ugh! ugh! ugh!" −− chuckled Tarpaulin with− out heeding the general excitation −− "ugh! ugh! ugh! −− ugh! ugh! ugh! ugh! −− ugh! ugh! ugh! I was saying," −− said he, "I was saying when Mr. King Pest poked in his marling−spike, that as for the matter of two or three gallons more or less Black Strap, it was a trifle to a tight sea−boat like myself not overstowed −− but when it comes to drinking the health of the Devil −− whom God assoilzie −− and going down upon my marrow bones to his ill−favored majesty there, whom I know, as well as I know myself to be a sinner, to be nobody in the whole world but Tim Hurlygurly, the stage− player −− why! its quite another guess sort of a thing, and utterly and altogether past my compre− hension."

He was not allowed to finish this speech in tran− quillity. At the name of Tim Hurlygurly the whole assembly leaped from their seats.

"Treason!" shouted his Majesty King Pest the First.

"Treason!" said the little man with the gout.

"Treason!" screamed the Arch Duchess Ana− Pest.

"Treason!" muttered the gentleman with his jaws tied up.

"Treason!" growled he of the coffin.

"Treason!" treason!" shrieked her majesty of the mouth; and, seizing by the hinder part of his breeches the unfortunate Tarpaulin, who had just commenced pouring out for himself a skull of liqueur, she lifted him high up into the air, and dropped him without ceremony into the huge open puncheon of his beloved ale. Bobbing up and down, for a few seconds, like an apple in a bowl of toddy, he, at length, finally disappeared amid the whirlpool of foam which, in the already effervescent liquor, his struggles easily succeeded in creating.

Not tamely however did the tall seaman behold the discomfiture of his companion. Jostling King Pest through the open trap, the valiant Legs slammed the door down upon him with an oath, and strode to− wards the centre of the

room. Here tearing down the huge skeleton which swung over the table, he laid it about him with so much energy and good will, that, as the last glimpses of light died away within the apartment, he succeeded in knocking out the brains of the little gentleman with the gout. Rushing then with all his force against the fatal hogshead full of October ale and Hugh Tarpaulin, he rolled it over and over in an instant. Out burst a deluge of liquor so fierce −− so impetuous −− so overwhelming −− that the room was flooded from wall to wall −− the loaded table was overturned −− the tressels were thrown upon their backs −− the tub of punch into the fire−place −− and the ladies into hysterics. Jugs, pitchers, and carboys mingled promiscuously in the melée, and wicker flagons encountered desperately with bottles of junk. Piles of death−furniture flound− ered about. Skulls floated en masse −− hearse−plumes nodded to escutcheons −− the man with the horrors was drowned upon the spot −− the little stiff gentleman sailed off in his coffin −− and the victorious Legs, seizing by the waist the fat lady in the shroud, scudded out into the street, followed under easy sail by the redoubtable Hugh Tarpaulin, who, having sneezed three or four times, panted and puffed after him with the Arch Duchess Ana−Pest. 4. The description here given, of the condition of the banned districts, at the period spoken of, is positively not exaggerated.

THE SIGNORA ZENOBIA.

I presume every body has heard of me. My name is the Signora Psyche Zenobia. This I know to be a fact. Nobody but my enemies ever calls me Suky Snobbs. I have been assured that Suky is but a vulgar corruption of Psyche, which is good Greek, and means "the soul" −− (that's me, I'm all soul) −− and sometimes "a butterfly," which latter meaning alludes to my appearance in my new crimson satin dress, with the sky−blue Arabian mantelet, and the trimmings of green agraffas, and the seven flounces of orange−colored auriculas. As for Snobbs −− any person who should look at me would be instantly aware that my name was'nt Snobbs. Miss Tabitha Turnip propagated that report through sheer envy. Tabitha Turnip indeed! Oh the little wretch! But what can we expect from a turnip? Wonder if she remembers the old adage about "blood out of a turnip, [Mem: put her in mind of it the first opportunity.] [Mem again −− pull her nose.] Where was I? Ah! I have been assured that Snobbs is a mere corruption of Zenobia, and that Zenobia was a queen (So am I. Dr. Moneypenny, always calls me the Queen of Hearts) and that Zenobia, as well as Psyche, is good Greek, and that my father was "a Greek," and that consequently I have a right to our original patronymic, which is Zenobia, and not by any means Snobbs. Nobody but Tabitha Turnip calls me Suky Snobbs. I am the Signora Psyche Zenobia.

As I said before, every body has heard of me. I am that very Signora Psyche Zenobia, so justly cele− brated as corresponding secretary to the " Phila− delphia, Regular−Exchange, Tea−Total, Young, Belles−Lettres, Universal, Experimental, Biblio− graphical Association to Civilize Humanity." Dr. Moneypenny made the title for us, and says he chose it because it sounded big like an empty rum−puncheon. (A vulgar man that sometimes −− but he's deep.) We all sign the initials of the society after our names, in the fashion of the R.S.A., Royal Society of Arts −− the S.D.U.K., Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, Dr. Moneypenny says that S stands for stale, and that D. U. K. spells duck, (but it don't,) and that S.D.U.K. stands for Stale Duck, and not for Lord Brougham's society −− but then Dr. Moneypenny is such a queer man that I am never sure when he is telling me the truth. At any rate we always add to our names the initials P.R.E.T.T.Y B.L.U.E.B.A.T.C.H. −− that is to say, Philadelphia Regular−Exchange, Tea−Total, Young, Belles−Lettres, Universal, Experimental, Bibliographical, Associa− tion, To, Civilize, Humanity −− one letter for each word, which is a decided improvement upon Lord Brougham. Dr. Moneypenny will have it that our initials give our true character −− but for my life I can't see what he means.

Notwithstanding the good offices of Dr. Money− penny, and the strenuous exertions of the association to get itself into notice, it met with no very great success until I joined it. The truth is, members in− dulged in too flippant a tone of discussion. The papers read every Saturday evening were character− ized less by depth than buffoonery. They were all whipped syllabub. There was no investigation of first causes, first principles. There was no investi− gation of anything at all. There was no attention paid to that great point the "fitness of things." In short, there was no fine writing like this. It was all low −− very! No profundity, no reading, no meta− physics −− nothing which

the learned call spirituality, and which the unlearned choose to stigmatise as cant. [Dr. M. says I ought to spell "cant" with a capital K −− but I know better.]

When I joined the society it was my endeavor to introduce a better style of thinking and writing, and all the world knows how well I have succeeded. We get up as good papers now in the P.R.E.T.T.Y. B.L.U.E.B.A.T.C.H. as any to be found even in Blackwood. I say, Blackwood, because I have been assured that the finest writing upon every subject, is to be discovered in the pages of that justly celebrated Magazine. We now take it for our model upon all themes, and are getting into rapid notice accordingly. And, after all, it's not so very difficult a matter to com− pose an article of the genuine Blackwood stamp, if one only goes properly about it. Of course I don't speak of the political articles. Every body knows how they are managed, since Dr. Moneypenny explained it. Mr. Blackwood has a pair of tailor's shears, and three apprentices who stand by him for orders. One hands him the "Times," another the "Examiner," and a third a "Gulley's New Compendium of Slang− Whang." Mr. B. merely cuts out and intersperses. It is soon done −− nothing but Examiner, Slang− Whang, and Times −− then Times, Slang−Whang, and Examiner −− and then Times, Examiner, and Slang− Whang.

But the chief merit of the Magazine lies in its miscellaneous articles; and the best of these come under the head of what Dr. Moneypenny calls the bizarreries (whatever that may mean) and what every body else calls the intensities. This is a species of writing which I have long known how to appreciate, although it is only since my late visit to Mr. Black− wood (deputed by the society) that I have been made aware of the exact method of composition. This method is very simple, but not so much so as the politics. Upon my calling at Mr. B.'s, and making known to him the wishes of the society, he received me with great civility, took me into his study, and gave me a clear explanation of the whole process.

"My dear madam," said he, evidently struck with my majestic appearance, for I had on the crimson satin, with the green agraffas, and orange−colored auriculas −− "My dear madam," said he, "sit down. The matter stands thus. In the first place, your writer of intensities must have very black ink, and a very big pen, with a very blunt nib. And, mark me, Miss Psyche Zenobia!" he continued, after a pause, with the most impressive energy and solemnity of manner, "mark me! −− that pen −− must −− never be mended! Herein, madam, lies the secret, the soul, of intensity. I assume it upon myself to say, that no individual, of however great genius, ever wrote with a good pen, understand me, a good article. You may take it for granted, madam, that when a manuscript can be read it is never worth reading. This is a leading principle in our faith, to which if you cannot readily assent, our conference is at an end."

He paused. But, of course, as I had no wish to put an end to the conference, I assented to a propo− sition so very obvious, and one, too, of whose truth I had all along been sufficiently aware. He seemed pleased, and went on with his instructions.

"It may appear invidious in me, Miss Psyche Zenobia, to refer you to any article, or set of articles, in the way of model or study; yet perhaps I may as well call your attention to a few cases. Let me see. There was `The Dead Alive,' a capital thing! −− the record of a gentleman's sensations when entombed before the breath was out of his body −− full of tact, taste, terror, sentiment, metaphysics, and erudition. You would have sworn that the writer had been born and brought up in a coffin. Then we had the `Confessions of an Opium−eater' −− fine, very fine! −− glorious imagination −− deep philosophy −− acute speculation −− plenty of fire and fury, and a good spicing of the decidedly unitelligible. That was a nice bit of flummery, and went down the throats of the people delightfully. They would have it that Coleridge wrote the paper −− but not so. It was composed by my pet baboon, Juniper, over a rummer of Hollands and water, hot, without sugar. [This I could scarcely have believed had it been any body but Mr. Blackwood, who assured me of it.] Then there was `The Involuntary Experimentalist,' all about a gentleman who got baked in an oven, and came out alive and well, although certainly done to a turn. And then there was `The Diary of a Late Physician,' where the merit lay in good rant, and indifferent Greek −− both of them taking things, with the public. And then there was `The Man in the Bell,' a paper by−the−bye, Miss Zenobia, which I cannot sufficiently recommend to your attention. It is the history of a young person who goes to sleep

under the clapper of a church bell, and is awakened by its tolling for a funeral. The sound drives him mad, and, accordingly, pulling out his tablets, he gives a record of his sensations. Sensations are the great things after all. Should you ever be drowned or hung, be sure and make a note of your sensations −− they will be worth to you ten guineas a sheet. If you wish to write forcibly, Miss Zenobia, pay minute attention to the sensations."

"That I certainly will, Mr. Blackwood," said I.

"Good!" he replied. "I see you are a pupil after my own heart. But I must put you au fait to the details necessary in composing what may be deno− minated a genuine Blackwood article of the sensation stamp −− the kind which you will understand me to say I consider the best for all purposes.

"The first thing requisite is to get yourself into such a scrape as no one ever got into before. The oven, for instance −− that was a good hit. But if you have no oven, or big bell, at hand, and if you cannot conveniently tumble out of a balloon, or be swallowed up in an earthquake, or get stuck fast in a chimney, you will have to be contented with simply imagining some similar misadventure. I should prefer, however, that you have the actual fact to bear you out. Nothing so well assists the fancy, as an experimental knowledge of the matter in hand. `Truth is strange,' you know, `stranger than fiction' −− besides being more to the purpose."

Here I assured him I had an excellent pair of garters, and would go and hang myself forthwith.

"Good!" he replied, "do so −− although hanging is somewhat hacknied. Perhaps you might do better. Take a dose of Morrison's pills, and then give us your sensations. However, my instructions will ap− ply equally well to any variety of misadventure, and in your way home you may easily get knocked in the head, or run over by an omnibus, or bitten by a mad dog, or drowned in a gutter. But, to proceed.

"Having determined upon your subject, you must next consider the tone, or manner, of your narration. There is the tone didactic, the tone enthusiastic, the tone sentimental, and the tone natural −− all common− place enough. But then there is the tone laconic, or curt, which has lately come much into use. It con− sists in short sentences. Somehow thus: Can't be too brief. Can't be too snappish. Always a full stop. And never a paragraph.

"Then there is the tone elevated, diffusive, and interjectional. Some of our best novelists patronize this tone. The words must be all in a whirl, like a humming−top, and make a noise very similar, which answeres remarkably well instead of meaning. This is the best of all possible styles where the writer is in too great a hurry to think.

"The tone mystic is also a good one −− but requires some skill in the handling. The beauty of this lies in a knowledge of innuendo. Hint all, and assert no− thing. If you desire to say `bread and butter,' do not by any means say it outright. You may say any− thing and everything approaching to `bread and butter.' You may hint at `buckwheat cake,' or you may even go as far as to insinuate `oatmeal por− ridge,' but, if `bread and butter' is your real meaning, be cautious, my dear Miss Psyche, not on any ac− count to say `bread and butter.'

I assured him that I would never say it again as long as I lived. He continued:

"There are various other tones of equal celebrity, but I shall only mention two more, the tone meta− physical, and the tone heterogeneous. In the former, the merit consists in seeing into the nature of affairs a very great deal farther than any body else. This second sight is very efficient when properly managed. A little reading of Coleridge's Table−Talk will carry you a great way. If you know any big words this is your chance for them. Talk of the Academy and the Lyceum, and say something about the Ionic and Italic schools, or about Bossarion, and Kant, and Schelling, and Fitche, and be sure you abuse a man called Locke, and bring in the words a priori and a posteriori. As for the tone heterogeneous, it is merely a judicious mixture, in equal proportions, of all the other tones in the world, and is consequently made up of everything deep, great, odd, piquant, perinent, and pretty.

"Let us suppose now you have determined upon your incidents and tone. The most important por− tion, in fact the soul of the whole business, is yet to be attended to −− I allude to the filling up. It is not to be supposed that a lady or gentleman either has been leading the life of a bookworm. And yet above all things is it necessary that your article have an air of erudition, or at least afford evidence of exten− sive general reading. Now I'll put you in the way of accomplishing this point. See here! (pulling down some three or four ordinary looking volumes, and opening them at random.) By casting your eye down almost any page of any book in the world, you will be able to perceive at once a host of little scraps of either learning or bel−esprit−ism which are the very thing for the spicing of a Blackwood article. You might as well note down a few while I read them to you. I shall make two divisions: first, Pi− quant Facts for the Manufacture of Similes; and second, Piquant Expressions to be introduced as occasion may require. Write now! −− " and I wrote as he dictated.

"Piquant Facts for Similes. `There were origi− nally but three muses −− Melete, Mneme, and Aoede −− meditation, memory, and singing.' You may make a great deal of that little fact if properly worked. You see it is not generally known, and looks recherché. You must be careful and give the thing with a down− right improviso air.

"Again. `The river Alpheus passed beneath the sea, and emerged without injury to the purity of its waters.' Rather stale that, to be sure, but, if pro− perly dressed and dished up, will look quite as fresh as ever.

"Here is something better. `The Persian Iris appears to some persons to possess a sweet and very powerful perfume, while to others it is perfectly scentless.' Fine that, and very delicate! Turn it about a little, and it will do wonders. We'll have something else in the botanical line. There's nothing goes down so well, especially with the help of a little Latin. Write!

" `The Epidendrum Flos Aeris, of Java, bears a very beautiful flower, and will live when pulled up by the roots. The natives suspend it by a cord from the ceiling, and enjoy its fragrance for years.' That's capital! That will do for the similes. Now for the Piquant expressions.

Piquant Expressions. `The venerable Chinese novel Ju−Kiao−Li.' Good! By introducing these few words with dexterity you will evince your intimate acquaintance with the language and literature of the Chinese. With the aid of this you may possibly get along without either Arabic, or Sanscrit, or Chickasaw. There is no passing muster, however, without French, Spanish, Italian, German, Latin, and Greek. I must look you out a little specimen of each. Any scrap will answer, because you must depend upon your own ingenuity to make it fit into your article. Now write!

" `Aussi tendre que Zaire' −− as tender as Zaire −− French. Alludes to the frequent repetition of the phrase, la tendre Zaire, in the French tragedy of that name. Properly introduced, will show not only your knowledge of the language, but your general reading and wit. You can say, for instance, that the chicken you were eating (write an article about being choked to death by a chicken−bone) was not altogether aussi tendre que Zaire. Write! `Van muerte tan escondida,

Que no te sienta venir, Porque el plazer del morir

No me torne a dar la vida.' That's Spanish −− from Miguel de Cervantes. `Come quickly O death! but be sure and don't let me see you coming, lest the pleasure I shall feel at your ap− pearance should unfortunately bring me back again to life.' This you may slip in quite à propos when you are struggling in the last agonies with the chicken−bone. Write! `I'l pover 'huomo che non s'en era accorto, Andava combattendo, e era morto.' That's Italian, you perceive −− from Ariosto. It means that a great hero, in the heat of combat, not perceiving that he had been fairly killed, continued to fight valiantly, dead as he was. The application of this to your own case is obvious −− for I trust, Miss Psyche, that you will not neglect to kick for at least an hour and a half after you have been choked to death by that chicken−bone. Please to write! `Und sterb'ich doch, so sterb'ich denn Durch sie −− durch

sie!' That's German −− from Schiller. `And if I die, at least I die −− for thee −− for thee!' Here it is clear that you are apostrophising the cause of your disaster, the chicken. Indeed what gentleman (or lady either) of sense, would'nt die, I should like to know, for a well fattened capon of the right Molucca breed, stuffed with capers and mushrooms, and served up in a salad−bowl, with orange−jellies en mosaiques. Write! (You can get them that way at Tortoni's,) write, if you please!

"Here is a nice little Latin phrase, and rare too, (one can't be too recherché or brief in one's Latin, it's getting so common.) Ignoratio elenchi. He has committed an ignoratio elenchi −− that is to say, he has understood the words of your proposition, but not the ideas. The man was a fool, you see. Some poor fellow whom you addressed while choking with that chicken−bone, and who therefore did'nt precisely understand what you were talking about. Throw the ignoratio elenchi in his teeth, and, at once, you have him annihilated. If he dares to reply, you can tell him from Lucan (here it is) that his speeches are mere anemonoe verborum, anemone words. The anemone, with great brillancy, has no smell. Or, if he begins to bluster, you may be down upon him with insomnia Jovis, reveries of Jupiter −− a phrase which Silius Italicus (see here!) applies to thoughts pompous and inflated. This will be sure and cut him to the heart. He can do nothing but roll over and die. Will you be kind enough to write.

"In Greek we must have something pretty from Demosthenes −− for example. . [Aner o pheogon kai palin makesetai.] There is a tolerably good translation of it in Hudi− bras −−

For he that flies may fight again,
Which he can never do that's slain.

In a Blackwood article nothing makes so fine a show as your Greek. The very letters have an air of profundity about them. Only observe, madam, the acute look of that Epsilon! That Phi ought cer− tainly to be a bishop! Was ever there a smarter fellow than that Omicron? Just twig that Tau! In short, there's nothing like Greek for a genuine sensa− tion−paper. In the present case your application is the most obvious thing in the world. Rap out the sentence, with a huge oath, and by way of ultimatum, at the good−for−nothing dunder−headed villain who couldn't understand your plain English in relation to the chicken−bone. He'll take the hint and be off, you may depend upon it."

These were all the instructions Mr.B. could afford me upon the topic in question, but I felt they would be entirely sufficient. I was, at length, able to write a genuine Blackwood article, and determined to do it forthwith. In taking leave of me, Mr. B. made a proposition for the purchase of the paper when written; but, as he could only offer me fifty guineas a sheet, I thought it better to let our society have it, than sacrifice it for so trivial a sum. Notwithstand− ing this niggardly spirit, however, the gentleman showed his consideration for me in all other respects, and indeed treated me with the greatest civility. His parting words made a deep impression upon my heart, and I hope I shall always remember them with gratitude.

"My dear Miss Zenobia," he said, while tears stood in his eyes, "is there anything else I can do to promote the success of your laudable undertaking? Let me reflect! It is just possible that you may not be able, as soon as convenient, to −− to −− get your− self drowned, or −− choked with a chicken−bone, or −− or hung, −− or −− bitten by a −− but stay! Now I think me of it, there are a couple of very excellent bull−dogs in the yard −− fine fellows, I assure you −− savage, and all that −− indeed just the thing for your money −− they'll have you eaten up, auriculas and all, in less than five minutes (here's my watch!) −− and then only think of the sensations! Here! I say −− Tom! −− Peter! −− Dick, you villain! −− let out those" −− but as I was really in a great hurry, and had not another moment to spare, I was reluctantly forced to expedite my departure, and accordingly took my leave at once −− somewhat more abruptly, I admit, than strict courtesy would have, otherwise, allowed.

It was my primary object, upon quitting Mr. Blackwood, to get into some immediate difficulty, pursuant to his advice, and with this view I spent a greater part of the day in wandering about Edinburgh, seeking for desperate adventures −− adventures ade− quate to the intensity of my feelings, and adapted to the vast character of the

article I intended to write. In this excursion I was attended by my negro−servant Pompey, and my little lap−dog Diana, whom I had brought with me from Philadelphia. It was not, however, until late in the afternoon that I fully suc− ceeded in my arduous undertaking. An important event then happened, of which the following Black− wood article, in the tone heterogeneous, is the sub− stance and result.

THE SCYTHE OF TIME.

It was a quiet and still afternoon when I strolled forth in the goodly city of Edina. The confusion and bustle in the streets were terrible. Men were talking. Women were screaming. Children were choking. Pigs were whistling. Carts they rattled. Bulls they bellowed. Cows they lowed. Horses they neighed. Cats they caterwauled. Dogs they danced. Danced! Could it then be possible? Danced! Alas! thought I, my dancing days are over! Thus it is ever. What a host of gloomy recollections will ever and anon be awakened in the mind of genius and imaginative contemplation, especially of a genius doomed to the everlasting, and eternal, and continual, and, as one might say, the continued −− yes, the continued and continuous, bitter, harassing, disturb− ing, and, if I may be allowed the expression, the very disturbing influence of the serene, and godlike, and heavenly, and exalting, and elevated, and purifying effect of what may be rightly termed the most envia− ble, the most truly enviable −− nay! the most benignly beautiful, the most deliciously ethereal, and, as it were, the most pretty (if I may use so bold an ex− pression) thing (pardon me, gentle reader!) in the world −− but I am led away by my feelings. In such a mind, I repeat, what a host of recollections are stirred up by a trifle! The dogs danced! I −− I could not! They frisked. I wept. They capered. I sobbed aloud. Touching circumstances! which cannot fail to bring to the recollection of the classical reader that exquisite passage in relation to the fitness of things which is to be found in the commencement of the third volume of that admirable and venerable Chinese novel, the Jo−Go−Slow.

In my solitary walk through the city I had two humble but faithful companions. Diana, my poodle! sweetest of creatures! She had a quantity of hair over her one eye, and a blue ribband tied fashionably around her neck. Diana was not more than five inches in height, but her head was somewhat bigger than her body, and her tail, being cut off exceedingly close, gave an air of injured innocence to the inter− esting animal which rendered her a favorite with all.

And Pompey, my negro! −− sweet Pompey! how shall I ever forget thee? I had taken Pompey's arm. He was three feet in height (I like to be particular) and about seventy, or perhaps eighty, years of age. He had bow−legs and was corpulent. His mouth should not be called small, nor his ears short. His teeth, however, were like pearl, and his large full eyes were deliciously white. Nature had endowed him with no neck, and had placed his ankles (as usual with that race) in the middle of the upper por− tion of the feet. He was clad with a striking simplicity. His sole garments were a stock of nine inches in height, and a nearly−new drab overcoat which had formerly been in the service of the tall, stately, and illustrious Dr. Moneypenny. It was a good overcoat. It was well cut. It was well made. The coat was nearly new. Pompey held it up out of the dirt with both hands.

There were three persons in our party, and two of them have already been the subject of remark. There was a third −− that third person was myself. I am the Signora Psyche Zenobia. I am not Suky Snobbs. My appearance is commanding. On the memorable occasion of which I speak I was habited in a crimson satin dress, with a sky−blue Arabian mantelet. And the dress had trimmings of green agraffas, and seven graceful flounces of the orange− colored auricula. I thus formed the third of the party. There was the poodle. There was Pompey. There was myself. We were three. Thus it is said there were originally but three Furies −− Melty, Nimmy and Hetty −− Meditation, Memory, and Singing.

Leaning upon the arm of the gallant Pompey, and attended at a respectful distance by Diana, I pro− ceeded down one of the populous and very pleasant streets of the now deserted Edina. On a sudden, there presented itself to view a church −− a Gothic cathedral −− vast, venerable, and with a tall steeple, which towered into the sky. What madness now possessed me? Why did I rush upon my fate? I was seized with an uncontrollable desire to ascend

the giddy pinnacle and thence survey the immense extent of the city. The door of the cathedral stood invitingly open. My destiny prevailed. I entered the ominous archway. Where then was my guardian angel? −− if indeed such angels there be. If! Dis− tressing monosyllable! what a world of mystery, and meaning, and doubt, and uncertainty is there involved in thy two letters! I entered the ominous archway! I entered; and, without injury to my orange−colored auriculas, I passed beneath the portal, and emerged within the vestibule! Thus it is said the immense river Alceus passed unscathed, and unwetted, beneath the sea.

I thought the staircases would never have an end. Round! Yes they went round and up, and round and up, and round and up, until I could not help surmising with the sagacious Pompey, upon whose supporting arm I leaned in all the confidence of early affection −− I could not help surmising that the upper end of the continuous spiral ladder had been acci− dentally, or perhaps designedly, removed. I paused for breath; and, in the meantime, an incident occur− red of too momentous a nature in a moral, and also in a metaphysical point of view, to be passed over without notice. It appeared to me −− indeed I was quite confident of the fact −− I could not be mistaken −− no! I had, for some moments, carefully and anx− iously observed the motions of my Diana −− I say that I could not be mistaken −− Diana smelt a rat! I called Pompey's attention to the subject, and he −− he agreed with me. There was then no longer any reasonable room for doubt. The rat had been smelled −− and by Diana. Heavens! shall I ever forget the intense excitement of that moment? Alas! what is the boasted intellect of man? The rat! −− it was there −− that is to say, it was somewhere. Diana smelled the rat. I −− I could not! Thus it is said the Prussian Isis has, for some persons, a sweet and very powerful perfume, while to others it is perfectly scentless.

The staircase had been surmounted, and there were now only three or four more upward steps in− tervening between us and the summit. We still ascended, and now only one step remained. One step! One little, little step! Upon one such little step in the great staircase of human life how vast a sum of human happiness or misery often depends! I thought of myself, and then of Pompey, and then of the mysterious and inexplicable destiny which sur− rounded us. I thought of Pompey! −− alas, I thought of love! I thought of the many false steps which have been taken, and may be taken again. I resolved to be more cautious, more reserved. I abandoned the arm of Pompey, and, without his assistance, sur− mounted the one remaining step, and gained the chamber of the belfry. I was followed immediately afterwards by my poodle. Pompey alone remained behind. I stood at the head of the staircase, and encouraged him to ascend. He stretched forth to me his hand, and unfortunately in so doing was forced to abandon his firm hold upon the overcoat. Will the gods never cease their persecution? The over− coat it dropped, and, with one of his feet, Pompey stepped upon the long and trailing skirt of the over− coat. He stumbled and fell −− this consequence was inevitable. He fell forwards, and, with his accursed head, striking me full in the −− in the breast, pre− cipitated me headlong, together with himself, upon the hard, the filthy, the detestable floor of the belfry. But my revenge was sure, sudden, and complete. Seizing him furiously by the wool with both hands, I tore out a vast quantity of the black, and crisp, and curling material, and tossed it from me with every manifestation of disdain. It fell among the ropes of the belfry and remained. Pompey arose, and said no word. But he regarded me piteously with his large eyes and −− sighed. Ye gods −− that sigh! It sunk into my heart. And the hair −− the wool! Could I have reached that wool I would have bathed it with my tears, in testimony of regret. But alas! it was now far beyond my grasp. As it dangled among the cordage of the bell, I fancied it still alive. I fancied that it stood on end with indignation. Thus the happy dandy Flos Aeris of Java, bears, it is said, a beautiful flower, which will live when pulled up by the roots. The natives suspend it by a cord from the ceiling and enjoy its fragrance for years.

Our quarrel was now made up, and we looked about the room for an aperture through which to sur− vey the city of Edina. Windows there were none. The sole light admitted into the gloomy chamber proceeded from a square opening, about a foot in diameter, at a height of about seven feet from the floor. Yet what will the energy of true genius not effect? I resolved to clamber up to this hole. A vast quantity of wheels, pinions, and other cabalistic− looking machinery stood opposite the hole, close to it; and through the hole there passed an iron rod from the machinery. Between the wheels and the wall where the hole lay, there was barely room for my body −− yet I was desperate, and determined to persevere. I called Pompey to my side.

"You perceive that aperture, Pompey. I wish to look through it. You will stand here just beneath the hole −− so. Now, hold out one of your hands, Pompey, and let me step upon it −− thus. Now, the other hand, Pompey, and with its aid I will get upon your shoulders."

He did everything I wished, and I found, upon getting up, that I could easily pass my head and neck through the aperture. The prospect was sublime. Nothing could be more magnificent. I merely paused a moment to bid Diana behave herself, and assure Pompey that I would be considerate and bear as lightly as possible upon his shoulders. I told him I would be tender of his feelings −− ossi tender que Zaire. Having done this justice to my faithful friend, I gave myself up with great zest and enthusiasm to the enjoyment of the scene which so obligingly spread itself out before my eyes.

Upon this subject, however, I shall forbear to dilate. I will not describe the city of Edinburgh. Every one has been to Edinburgh −− the classic Edina. I will confine myself to the momentous details of my own lamentable adventure. Having, in some measure, satisfied my curiosity in regard to the extent, situation, and general appearance of the city, I had leisure to survey the church in which I was, and the delicate architecture of the steeple. I observed that the aper− ture through which I had thrust my head was an opening in the dial−plate of a gigantic clock, and must have appeared, from the street, as a large key− hole, such as we see in the face of French watches. No doubt the true object was to admit the arm of an attendant, to adjust, when necessary, the hands of the clock from within. I observed also, with sur− prise, the immense size of these hands, the longest of which could not have been less than ten feet in length, and, where broadest, eight or nine inches in breadth. They were of solid steel apparently, and their edges appeared to be sharp. Having noticed these particulars, and some others, I again turned my eyes upon the glorious prospect below, and soon be− came absorbed in contemplation.

From this, after some minutes, I was aroused by the voice of Pompey, who declared he could stand it no longer, and requested that I would be so kind as to come down. This was unreasonable, and I told him so in a speech of some length. He replied, but with an evident misunderstanding of my ideas upon the subject. I accordingly grew angry, and told him in plain words that he was a fool, that he had committed an ignoramus e−clench−eye, that his notions were mere insommary Bovis, and his words little better than an enemy−werrybor'em. With this he appeared satisfied, and I resumed my contempla− tions.

It might have been half an hour after this alterca− tion, when, as I was deeply absorbed in the heavenly scenery beneath me, I was startled by something very cold which pressed with a gentle pressure upon the back of my neck. It is needless to say that I felt inexpressibly alarmed. I knew that Pompey was beneath my feet, and that Diana was sitting, accord− ing to my explicit directions, upon her hind−legs in the farthest corner of the room. What could it be? Alas! I but too soon discovered. Turning my head gently to one side, I perceived, to my extreme hor− ror, that the huge, glittering, scimetar−like minute− hand of the clock, had, in the course of its hourly revolution, descended upon my neck. There was, I knew, not a second to be lost. I pulled back at once −− but it was too late. There was no chance of forcing my head through the mouth of that terrible trap in which it was so fairly caught, and which grew narrower and narrower with a rapidity too horrible to be conceived. The agony of that moment is not to be imagined. I threw up my hands and endeavored with all my strength to force upwards the ponderous iron bar. I might as well have tried to lift the cathedral itself. Down, down, down it came, closer, and yet closer. I screamed to Pompey for aid; but he said that I had hurt his feelings by calling him "an ignorant old squint eye." I yelled to Diana; but she only said "bow−wow−wow," and that "I had told her on no account to stir from the corner." Thus I had no relief to expect from my associates.

Meantime the ponderous and terrific Scythe of Time (for I now discovered the literal import of that classical phrase) had not stopped, nor was likely to stop, in its career. Down and still down, it came. It had already buried its sharp edge a full inch in my flesh, and my sensations grew indistinct and confused. At one time I fancied myself in Philadelphia with the stately Dr. Moneypenny, at another in the back parlor of Mr. Blackwood receiving his invaluable instructions. And then again the sweet recollection of better and earlier times came over me, and I thought of that happy period when the world was not all a desert, and Pompey not altogether cruel.

The ticking of the machinery amused me. Amused me, I say, for my sensations now bordered upon perfect happiness, and the most trifling circumstances afforded me pleasure. The eternal click−clack, click− clack, click−clack, of the clock was the most melo− dious of music in my ears −− and occasionally even put me in mind of the grateful sermonic harangues of Dr. Morphine. Then there were the great figures upon the dial−plate −− how intelligent, how intellectual, they all looked! And presently they took to dancing the Mazurka, and I think it was the figure V who performed the most to my satisfaction. She was evidently a lady of breeding. None of your swag− gerers, and nothing at all indelicate in her motions. She did the pirouette to admiration −− whirling round upon her apex. I made an endeavor to hand her a chair, for I saw that she appeared fatigued with her exertions −− and it was not until then that I fully per− ceived my lamentable situation. Lamentable indeed! The bar had buried itself two inches in my neck. I was aroused to a sense of exquisite pain. I prayed for death, and, in the agony of the moment, could not help repeating those exquisite verses of the poet Miguel De Cervantes: Vanny Buren, tan escondida Query no to senty venny Pork and pleasure, delly morry Nommy, torny, darry, widdy!

But now a new horror presented itself, and one indeed sufficient to startle the strongest nerves. My eyes, from the cruel pressure of the machine, were absolutely starting from their sockets. While I was thinking how I should possibly manage without them, one actually tumbled out of my head, and, rolling down the steep side of the steeple, lodged in the rain gutter which ran along the eaves of the main building. The loss of the eye was not so much as the insolent air of independence and contempt with which it re− garded me after it was out. There it lay in the gutter just under my nose, and the airs it gave itself would have been ridiculous had they not been disgusting. Such a winking and blinking were never before seen. This behavior on the part of my eye in the gutter was not only irritating on account of its manifest insolence and shameful ingratitude, but was also ex− ceedingly inconvenient on account of the sympathy which always exists between two eyes of the same head, however far apart. I was forced, in a manner, to wink and blink, whether I would or not, in exact concert with the scoundrelly thing that lay just under my nose. I was presently relieved, however, by the dropping out of the other eye. In falling it took the same direction (possibly a concerted plot) as its fellow. Both rolled out of the gutter together, and in truth I was very glad to get rid of them.

The bar was now three inches and a half deep in my neck, and there was only a little bit of skin to cut through. My sensations were those of entire happiness, for I felt that in a few minutes, at farthest, I should be relieved from my disagreeable situation. And in this expectation I was not at all deceived. At twenty−five minutes past five in the afternoon pre− cisely, the huge minute−hand had proceeded suffi− ciently far on its terrible revolution to sever the small remainder of my neck. I was not sorry to see the head which had occasioned me so much embarrass− ment at length make a final separation from my body. It first rolled down the side of the steeple, then lodged for a few seconds in the gutter, and then made its way, with a plunge, into the middle of the street.

I will candidly confess that my feelings were now of the most singular, nay of the most mysterious, the most perplexing and incomprehensible character. My senses were here and there at one and the same moment. With my head I imagined, at one time, that I, the head, was the real Signora Psyche Zenobia −− at another I felt convinced that myself, the body, was the proper identity. To clear my ideas upon this topic I felt in my pocket for my snuff−box, but, upon getting it, and endeavoring to apply a pinch of its grateful contents in the ordinary manner, I be− came immediately aware of my peculiar deficiency, and threw the box at once down to my head. It took a pinch with great satisfaction, and smiled me an acknowledgment in return. Shortly afterwards it made me a speech, which I could hear but indis− tinctly without my ears. I gathered enough, how− ever, to know that it was astonished at my wishing to remain alive under such circumstances. In the concluding sentences it compared me to the hero in Ariosto, who, in the heat of combat, not perceiving that he was dead, continued to fight valiantly dead as he was. I remember that it used the precise words of the poet:

Il pover hommy che non sera corty
And have a combat tenty erry morty.

There was nothing now to prevent my getting down from my elevation, and I did so. What it was that Pompey saw so very peculiar in my appearance I have never yet been able to find out. The fellow opened his mouth from ear to ear, and shut his two eyes as if he was endeavoring to crack nuts be− tween the lids. Finally, throwing off his overcoat, he made one spring for the staircase and −− I never saw him again. I hurled after the scoundrel those vehement words of Demosthenes −−

Andrew O'Phlegethon, you really make haste to fly,

and then turned to the darling of my heart, to the curtailed, the one−eyed, the shaggy−haired Diana. Alas! what horrible vision affronted my eyes? Was that a rat I saw skulking into his hole? Are these the picked bones of the little angel who has been cruelly devoured by the monster? Ye Gods! and what do I behold? Is −− is that the departed spirit, the shade, the ghost of my beloved puppy, which I perceive sitting with a grace and face so melancholy, in the corner? Hearken! for she speaks, and, hea− vens! it is in the German of Schiller −−

"Unt stubby duk, so stubby dun
Duk she! duk she!"`

Alas! −− and are not her words too true?

And if I died at least I died
For thee −− for thee.
Sweet creature! she too has sacrificed herself in my behalf! Dogless, niggerless, headless, what now re− mains for the unhappy Signora Psyche Zenobia?
Alas −− nothing. I have done.

END OF VOL. I.