

**The cave of Hago-bar;**

**or**

**The fiend of 1878.**

**A story.**

**By**

**Rev. R. H. Crozier.**

**Asbury Park, N.J.  
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REV. R. H. CROZIER.

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# INTRODUCTION.

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NEAR BIG BLACK RIVER, Miss.,

August 1st, 1883.

Rev. R. H. CROZIER,

Sardis, Miss.

DEAR SIR:—

You will no doubt be surprised at receiving a letter from one who is an entire stranger to you. I will not, however, tax your time by an extended explanation of my purpose. Permit me to say, I have read all the books you have published, viz., "Confederate Spy," "Bloody Junto," "Fiery Trials," and "Araphel." The two last I especially admire. I think they are well calculated to do good, and they deserve a wide circulation. I would like to acknowledge my obligation to you for the spiritual benefit I have derived from them both. You have certainly made a "new departure," and deserve credit for making theological questions interesting by skillfully introducing them into works of thrilling romance. The idea is new, and could be successfully executed only by a minister of the gospel.

But, not to make my letter tiresome by long preliminaries, I will state that I have a proposition to make to you. You seem to think it necessary to have facts on which to build your stories. I do not know that you are correct in this; for if a work wholly of art can accomplish the object which you have in view—and which seems to be the illustration and enforcement of religious truths—why should you hesitate to employ pure fiction? But it would be out of place to discuss such a question here. If you prefer facts, however, I will say that I

have one of the strangest and most exciting stories, made up of *literal facts*, you have ever seen. This story proves the truth of the proverb, "Truth is stranger than fiction." You cannot imagine events of a more startling character. They almost pass the bounds of credulity. But the story in its present form is like a "diamond in the rough," and must be placed in the hands of a lapidary. I do not pretend to be an author. But at first I wrote the story with the intention of offering it to some newspaper to be published as a serial. I soon found out that our Southern journalists have not sufficient enterprise to purchase a MS. story from a Southern writer at anything like a fair valuation. I tried several of our leading papers in the South. Some would not even condescend to examine my MS., and some, who pronounced the story a good one, offered me a few dollars for it, which I refused, because it was no compensation for my labor. Others suggested that it should be re-written, and many parts entirely changed. I was rapidly becoming disgusted with the book business, when a friend said—

"Write to Mr. Crozier, and get him to touch up your story, or remodel it, if he thinks necessary, and let him make you a proposition as to its publication."

"I do not understand you," said I. "Do you mean let him pay me for my MS., and claim the authorship of the book?"

"Let that depend upon circumstances," said he. "If he pays you for the *facts* of your story, and clothes them in his own language, he certainly could claim the authorship. But, write to him, and find out what he thinks about it. That is the best plan."

I determined to follow his advice. Are you willing to examine my MS., and make me a proposition of some kind? If so, inform me, and I will send it at once.

Yours, truly,

Miss ELLEN B. CONSTANT.

SARDIS, Miss.,

August 5th, 1883.

DEAR MISS CONSTANT :—

Your letter of 1st instant just received. I thank you for your compliment, though it may be undeserved. I do not know that I could assign any good reason why I prefer *facts* as the basis of my stories. I believe it was Shylock, the Jew, who said that some men could not abide the squeaking of a pig, or the cry of a cat; and yet could give no reason for it. All I can say is, I prefer facts. You may send me the MS. spoken of in your letter, and if it suits my purpose I will make you some sort of offer for it.

Yours, truly,

R. H. CROZIER.

NEAR BIG BLACK RIVER, Miss.,

August 10th, 1883.

MY DEAR SIR :—

I send you the MS. by express. Please examine it at your earliest convenience, and inform me what you can do.

Yours, truly,

ELLEN B. CONSTANT.

SARDIS, Miss.,

August 22d, 1883.

DEAR MISS CONSTANT :—

I have read your MS. with care and pleasure. The facts—and you assure me they are facts—are certainly wonderful and startling. It will be difficult to make people believe that such occurrences ever took place in the South. But you are not to blame for that. I am under the impression that I can make

a readable book out of your story, but to answer my purpose it will have to be re-written from beginning to end. Many of the conversations can be allowed to remain just as you have written them; yet so many changes will have to be made that I will be the real author of the book. Will you consent to this? I will have to leave out the character designated as "Uncle Sam," and substitute a stronger one, under the name of "Uncle Pomp," with whom I am well acquainted. This is the only change which I would make in the plot. The next question is, how much remuneration will you demand for the facts of your story? Let me hear from you on this point.

Yours, truly,

R. H. CROZIER.

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NEAR BIG BLACK, Miss.,

August 27th, 1883.

DEAR SIR:—

Your last, bearing date 22d inst., came to hand. I have no desire whatever to appear before the world in the capacity of an author. It is not my profession, and never will be. But the facts given in my MS. are so remarkable that I think they ought to be published and preserved in permanent form.

I will state that much of the MS. was written under the roof of the chief character, "Bathie Beaumont," who is my own dear cousin. The substance of the conversations between him and other parties was detailed to me by himself, also the facts of his own eventful life. In many places I was compelled to draw on my imagination to preserve the connection of the story. I was acquainted with all the characters of the story who lived South. You can state that this story is *true*. You may claim the authorship of such a book as you may choose

to make out of it; but I think I ought to have some pecuniary compensation for my labor. I am the only daughter of a man who fell on the bloody field of Chickamauga, and at the expiration of the war I was left in destitute circumstances. I have had a hard scuffle with the world, to make a living. My father was the owner of more than a hundred negroes, but they were all set free, and the land had to be sold for debt, and I was thus left penniless. I have been a book agent, and will act again in that capacity for the book you may make out of my MS. Can you agree to give me a small amount as royalty on each copy of the book that may be sold? I shall not be exorbitant in my demands. I do not expect to receive any great amount from the enterprise; for my opinion is that only a limited number will be sold in the South, no matter how meritorious the work may be. It is a fact to be deeply regretted, that our own people care little for Southern literature. "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" They seem to think that Southern authors are not worth encouraging. It is strange to me that they will purchase Northern novels filled with abuse of the South. We have a few novelists who have written most excellent works, designed to do justice to our down-trodden people, but they are so poorly patronized I fear they will eventually be driven from the field. I regret this, and I blush for my own people, who seem to have so little appreciation of Southern talents. Foreign nations have a contempt for us as a literary people. They must have come to the conclusion that the hot sun of the "Sunny South" has scorched our brains so that we could not produce authors, if we would. How many good novelists have we in the South? You can count them on your fingers. How is this, and why is this? The question is, I think, easily answered—Southern books are not bought. The con-

sequence is, so far as I know, there is not a single writer in the South who makes authorship a profession. Certainly this speaks badly for our Southern country. But you know more about this than I do. I mention it to show that I will not be extravagant in my demands. Please let me know what royalty you are willing to give.

Yours, truly,

ELLEN B. CONSTANT.

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SARDIS, Miss.,

September 2d, 1883.

DEAR MISS CONSTANT:—

In reply to yours of 27th ult., I would say, that I fully agree with you in some of your assertions. But enough of this. If you can afford to take — cents a copy on each book sold, I will undertake the enterprise. This may appear a small amount to you, but if you only knew what a trivial *per cent.* I will realize, you would say, without hesitation, that it is all I can afford. If you deem it to your interest to accept this proposition, please have the kindness to reply immediately, that I may begin the work without delay.

Yours, truly,

R. H. CROZIER.

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NEAR BIG BLACK, Miss.,

September 7th, 1883.

DEAR SIR:—

I have carefully considered the proposition contained in yours of 2d inst., and, trusting to your honor, I accept. While the amount does appear small, I am satisfied, from what you say and what I have learned from other sources, it is all you can afford. I know that it costs more to publish a book in decent

form than people think. If you make no material changes in the outlines of the MS., I will vouch for the truth of the story, as wonderful as it may be. I heartily wish you a full measure of success in all your enterprises.

Yours, truly,

ELLEN B. CONSTANT.

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SARDIS, Miss.,

January 1st, 1885.

DEAR MISS CONSTANT:—

After more than a year of hard labor I have the pleasure of submitting my MS. for your approval or disapproval. You will perceive that I have made no changes in your plot, as I desired to adhere as closely as possible to facts. If you want any changes made, please state candidly and freely what they are. That justice may be done to both of us, I ask permission to publish, as a Preface, our correspondence in regard to the book.

Yours, truly,

R. H. CROZIER.

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NEAR BIG BLACK, Miss.,

January 12th, 1885.

DEAR SIR:—

I have just finished your MS., and must say I am delighted with it. I give it my unqualified approbation. I would not dot an "i" or cross a "t." It may now be called a *true story*. People have no excuse to read *trash* so long as they can find such pure, chaste, soul-elevating literature as "The Cave of Hegobar; or, the Fiend of 1878." If this book is not a success, it will not be your fault. You can make such use of my letters as you deem best.

Yours, truly,

ELLEN B. CONSTANT.



# HEGOBAR.

## CHAPTER I.

### A SCENE IN "DIXIE."

"Folly may be in youth :  
But many times 'tis mixed with grave discretion."

It was in the year 1856. Ceres was smiling upon the "Sunny South," and scattering blessings broadcast from Chesapeake Bay to the western boundaries of the Lone Star State. Not a cloud darkened the Southern horizon. The storm of desolation was brewing in the *far-away* North, but its ominous and sullen mutterings could not yet be heard "in Dixie." Events which were soon to shake the world to its centre were slumbering, like dormant vipers, in the womb of futurity. The South was peacefully and quietly pursuing the "even tenor of her way," not dreaming of the fearful avalanche which a slight political jar would precipitate upon her green hills and flowery vales. The people everywhere were diligently engaged in agricultural operations, and the pacific hum of industry was borne upon the breeze to the ears of the merchant in his counting room, and his heart was glad. In town and country there was peace, there was plenty, there was universal prosperity.

And now, gentle reader, let us have control of the reins of your imagination. We are standing on the banks of the Big Black river—a name which the traveler perceives is not a misnomer. To the west we behold lofty hills, which suddenly terminate at the water's edge; to the east we see one of those magnificent plantations

which were by no means uncommon in the State of Mississippi previous to the dark days of the bloody period between 1861 and 1865. A level expanse of black and rich soil extends from the stream for more than a mile, till it is abruptly arrested by high, rugged hills. Looking down the river from the point where we stand, our gaze is attracted by one of those old-fashioned Southern mansions, with its spacious halls, large, airy rooms, with great windows, to afford easy ingress to as much of the passing breeze as could possibly enter. It was built with reference more to comfort than display. The building stood in the midst of a capacious yard shaded with stately forest trees, and with others which had been transplanted and fostered by the hand of art. Gorgeous flowers of every imaginable hue bordered the walks, which had been laid off with geometrical taste and skill. At the distance of a quarter of a mile there is a long triple row of negro cabins, called "the quarter," rude in structure, but, nevertheless, sufficiently comfortable for beings born and bred in slavery, and consequently destitute of those refined tastes and nicer sensibilities which aspire to the highest possible conditions of existence. About fifty yards from this village of cabins there stood, in a conspicuous place, a structure of more imposing appearance than any of the huts, rendered so, however, more by contrast than reality. It was a very plain yet comfortable building, and known as the "overseer's house."

Since the "overseer" is a character that disappeared with the abolition of slavery, it may be allowable to make a remark concerning the office he held. In the South the negroes feared, hated, and yet held the overseer in contempt, because he was a *poor* man, and the negro despised a poor man. It was the province of the overseer to superintend the farm, to see to it that

the "hands" did not idle away their time and performed their daily tasks. Generally he carried a large *whip*, the symbol of his authority, and this formidable instrument was the terror of every negro on the plantation. No wonder; for if one of them was detected in idleness or any misdemeanor, down came the terrible lash. At the expiration of the day, if the overseer had any reason to believe that one of the "hands" had failed to discharge his duty—for instance, if he did not bring up as many pounds of cotton as he was accustomed to do—that awful whip was sure to leave bloody streaks upon his naked back. Some of these overseers were the most cruel and merciless men that could be found in all Christendom. However, to do justice, we do not think they ought to be held altogether responsible for the reputation which they acquired. Some of them were only externally ferocious, and their inhumanity was assumed for the purpose of securing discipline. "Overseeing" was their profession. They had their ambition to rise in their vocation, just like all other aspirants. If it was known that the professional overseer could easily control negroes, and manage the plantation so as to secure an abundant harvest, his services were in demand; he could command good wages. If the office was considered a degrading one, yet it was a comparatively easy position. The overseer's family, if he had one, lived on the plantation, at little or no expense. He had a good horse to ride, furnished by his employer, and he had negroes to wait on him. In fact, he exercised more authority than did the master himself, who generally left the overseer to do as he pleased. The overseer seemed to think it was his duty to get the greatest amount of labor possible out of the "hands," in order to sustain his reputation. For this purpose he was under the impression that he must inspire the negroes with a

wholesome fear and terror, by a resort to that dreaded "bull whip." No doubt, the heart of many an overseer ached when he looked at the black form writhing under the cutting blows of the whip and piteously begging for mercy, which he was well aware would not be extended; but the terrible-suffering extorted involuntary cries from one human soul to another for sympathy. For this we blame the master as much as the overseer. He ought to have given more attention to his own affairs, and have abolished the whip except in necessary instances. But the master put that instrument in the hands of the overseer, who thought, of course, it was his bounden duty to use it. It was the cursed greed of gain in the owner which instituted the *regime* of the bull whip. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that all masters and overseers were cruel. There was not that general mistreatment of the negroes about which Northern *philanthropists* raised such a hue and cry, and which led to the organization of the "Abolition party." Except in a few localities, there was nothing like the state of affairs which over-zealous abolitionists supposed to exist. The lachrymatory of Wm. L. Garrison was full to overflowing; yet the day is not far distant when the folly of having shed so many scalding tears over the supposed wrongs and cruelties practiced upon the Southern negroes will be seen. There is no reason now why any Southern writer should desire to misrepresent facts. Slavery no longer exists as a recognized institution. The North said it was a moral and political evil. They abolished it *vi et armis*, and they must be held responsible for the consequences. Let the institution, the great bone of contention, go. We of the South care not. But we do tell the truth when we affirm that it was a great misfortune that upon thousands and thousands of negroes was forced the boon of liberty—a word whose meaning

they did not understand. They had kind, Christian masters, were well clad and fed, and were not required to do any more labor than the white farmer had to perform. They were contented and happy, and enjoyed as much of the real essence of freedom as did the master, who had to manage for them and assume all cares and responsibilities. Any one of such negroes will tell you that liberty has proved to him a disadvantage and a curse. This large class of negroes knew not the meaning of the word care. They had their families, in regard to whom they never had to ask the question, wherewithal shall we be clothed and how shall we be fed? It was the master's business to provide for them in sickness and in health. Turned loose upon their own responsibilities, and left to manage for themselves, the poor things knew not what to do. The truth is, freedom has thus far proved a curse to the negro. Facts will fully sustain the assertion that the freedman is poorer than was the slave. The negroes are like sheep without a shepherd. What is to be their final political destiny no one can foresee. But we will have something more to say upon this subject in the progress of the present story.

The plantation which has been so briefly described was the property of Colonel Beaumont, in regard to whom it is unnecessary to say anything, as his part in our story is a very humble one. The affairs of his plantation were managed by an overseer, who was distinguished from his fellow-men by the somewhat common cognomen of Smith. This man belonged to the class of cruel overseers. Whether he was savage by nature we do not pretend to know. Colonel Beaumont was a fair type of the "southern gentleman" in ante-bellum days, and did not pay strict attention to the more minute details and affairs of his vast plantation, which was

several miles in extent, and was cultivated by about four hundred negroes. William Smith, his overseer, was a man of good executive abilities, and kept the place in splendid condition, and always had excellent crops. There was nothing, therefore, for the wealthy owner to do, except to look after the general interests of his place, such as procuring supplies and disposing of the crops when ready for market.

This overseer was the father of several children, one of whom was destined to play a strange part on the stage of human life. It was his daughter Mary, a singularly beautiful girl, especially when contrasted with her brothers and sisters, none of whom she favored. At the time we introduce her she was in her fourteenth year. Mary was one of those gentle beings, who seem too pure and too delicately organized for the rude shocks, and jars and disappointments of this lower world. There was a slight expression of melancholy in her face, joined with a meditative air, that seemed rather to give additional charms to her rare beauty. It may be thought strange that the cruelties of her father, practiced upon the unresisting negroes, awakened no sympathy in the heart of this sweet, tender child, who would not injure an insignificant insect that crawled at her feet. But she seemed to think that the negroes were like mules, and had to be punished for obstinacy. She had been accustomed all her life to seeing them whipped, and she thought it necessary. She was somewhat different in this respect from Colonel Beaumont's only son, whose name was Bathurst, and who was Mary's senior by two years. These two had been raised up together. Mrs. Beaumont could not endure the idea of sending her only child to a boarding school till he was fully prepared for college. Accordingly, the Colonel built a school-house in his own yard, and employed an excellent teacher.

Some of the neighbors patronized the school, which, by this means, numbered about twenty-five students. Bathie, as he was familiarly called, and Mary were classmates. She was a girl of unusually brilliant mind, and frequently explained the lessons to Bathie himself.

They played together at home, went fishing in the Big Black, and even hunted squirrels, and were thus reared together as brother and sister.

The first event of their history which can possess any interest for our reader occurred when the two were respectively sixteen and fourteen years of age.

One Saturday, early in the spring, they were seated on a log which projected a short distance into the river, and were watching their fishing hooks with great eagerness. They were not very far from the horse lot, one side of which was bounded by the river. Presently they were startled by a cry, as of one begging for mercy—

"O please, Mas' Smif! Mercy! mercy! I'll try ter catch him! Please, sir!" and similar piteous expressions broke the stillness. They could distinctly hear the crack of the "bull whip," as the lash fell upon the naked, quivering back.

"Mary," said Bathie, with a face red with indignation, "your father is a mean man. Listen how he is whipping that poor negro."

"The negro deserves it," replied Mary, with a deep blush spreading over her fair, young face. "My papa is not mean at all."

"I think he is," said Bathie, drawing his line out of the water, and throwing his fishing pole on the bank. "Good gracious! I believe it is Pomp. Let me by, please. I can't stand that. Let me pass."

"Come back," cried the girl, turning slightly pale. "Papa knows when he has whipped him enough. Don't go, Bathie."

"Mary, don't you believe Pomp is a human being?" he asked, still listening at the heart-rending cries.

"Certainly; but negroes have to be punished, or they will not work."

"There's no use of such whipping as that," exclaimed the boy, now thoroughly aroused. "I'm going to make your father stop it." And he started off on a run.

"Come back, Bathie. You'd better not provoke Papa."

"I'm not afraid of him. Pomp belongs to me, and your father shan't whip him."

Bathie bounded away at a speed which in a few moments brought him to the spot where a sickening scene was enacting. A negro man, of gigantic proportions, was tied to a post, and his swarthy back was crimsoned with blood. He was squirming and twisting around the post, in order to avoid, as much as possible, the terrible blows.

"O, Mas' Baffie," exclaimed the negro, in agony. "Please, sir, beg for me. I is almost dead. I can't stan' it, sah."

Bathie, with eyes flashing with rage, seizing an ax which was lying on the ground, ran up within a yard of the overseer, drawing back the instrument as if to strike. In tones quivering with rage he cried: "Strike him another lick, and I'll kill you."

The overseer paused, and looked at the furious boy in amazement.

"What do you mean, youngster?"

"I mean that you have whipped Pomp enough," said Bathie, firmly, and drawing out his pocket knife, severed the cords with which the huge negro was bound.

"Now, put on your shirt, Pomp."

"You put on that shirt, Pomp, till I tell you," cried

the overseer, whose evil passions were thoroughly aroused, "and it won't be good for you."

"Put it on, Pomp. I dare him to touch you." And Bathie again raised the ax, and turning to the overseer, said—

"Just strike him if you dare; and if I don't fell you to the earth, it will be because I haven't strength enough."

"Boy," cried Smith, almost bursting with rage, "stand back, and get out of my way, or I'll make you regret it. Pomp, get back to that post; I'm not done with you."

"Yes, but you are, though. I tell you, sir, you shall not strike him another lick. I warn you. Pomp, don't move a step; I'll stand between you and danger. I'll make my father discharge you this very night. You shan't stay on this place another day, if I can help it."

At this moment Mary came running up, breathless and pale—

"O Bathie," she cried, "would you strike my papa with that ax?"

"If he strikes Pomp again, I'll kill him. I don't care whose papa he is."

"Papa," she said, pleadingly, "let the negro alone; he belongs to Bathie."

"I'll report you to your father, young man," said Smith, evidently manifesting a disposition to yield. "I'll see if you are master on this place. If you are," making a bow of mock politeness, "I give you notice that I'll quit your service at once."

"I wish my father would discharge you. I intend to tell him what a cruel monster you are. I don't believe he knows it, or he wouldn't let you stay on the place."

"Come, young man, none of your impudence to me, or you'll force me to do something that I might regret."

"Ill say just what I please," cried the boy. "I defy you."

"Pomp," exclaimed the overseer, "I'm done with you. I turn you over to this new overseer. Do what he tells you."

"Overseer!" exclaimed Bathie, curling his lip with contempt. But he looked at Mary, and said no more.

Smith walked off to the residence of Colonel Beaumont, who had just ridden up as the overseer arrived.

"Bathie," said Mary, in tenderly reproachful tones, "were you going to strike my papa with that ax?"

"Certainly I was, if he had not let Pomp alone. It made me cry to look at the great welks on his back. I tell you, Mary, though I hate to say it, your father is more cruel than a dog. I don't see how you can stand it. He isn't like you at all. You don't approve of his beating the poor negroes as he does, do you?"

"I never thought about it, Bathie. But I know my papa wouldn't punish them if it were not necessary. He isn't cruel a bit."

"Pomp, are you much hurt?"

"Yes, Mas' Baffie, I ar. De Lo'd bress you, my back feels as if it ware transmogified into a cake ob jelly."

Pomp belonged to a class of negroes who are fond of high-sounding words, an astonishing number of which he had managed to collect, though he did not understand their correct pronunciation nor signification, and some of them appeared to be of his own manufacture. But Pomp was fluent in his own particular way.

"I don't bleve, sah, flesh and blood could a endored them axcrusiating agnies many minits longer. I warn't fur removed from invulsions when de good Lo'd saunt yo' presence to dis spot. It did seem to be a devine providunce, dat you should hev arrove soon as ye did.

But I is afeerd of dis intofeerunce, Mas' Baffie," shaking his head. "De finul consquenches may be all de wus fur dis po' nigger. Ye can't always be near to save me. I wish I ware back in ole Astoria (a fictitious name for one of the Southern States, which the intelligent reader will be able to discover as the story progresses) wid yo'r uncle. Don't ye call to mine," continued Pomp, with a grin, "what gloious times we used ter hab on de riber?"

"Yes, Pomp; and if we can't make some other arrangement, I'll try to get my father to send you back."

"Dat would be a great commodation, an' a faber dat I'd neber dismember in my pra'rs."

"Bathie," suddenly said Mary, who had been listening, with downcast looks, "do you intend to take this negro's part against my papa?"

"I am determined your papa shall never strike Pomp again as long as I live, if I can help it. He used to be my nurse, and went fishing with me. He is my friend; I don't care if he is black," said Bathie, with tears springing to his eyes; "and I'm going to protect him, if I have to fight to do it. I can't help who gets mad."

"Mas' Baffie," said the negro, with emotion, "yer own mudher don't have any more genuwine affection fur ye dan I duz. If ye ware in any kine o' danger, ye knows I'd gin my life to save your'n."

"Yes, I believe that, Pomp. Mary, let me tell you something. One day, when I was about ten years of age, Pomp and I went fishing in the Linden river, in Astoria. All at once a young, hungry panther sprang upon me. In an instant, before he had time to give me a scratch, Pomp grasped him by the throat, and such a fight they did have for life. Don't you see that scar

on his face, which the panther made? Pomp, at the risk of his life, killed him to save me. Now, Mary, after that, can you blame me for not wanting to see him whipped?"

"No, Bathie, I don't blame you. But I never heard of that before."

"Nobody else knows it. I never would tell it, because I was afraid my mother would not let me go back to Astoria; but I'll tell my father about it now. It was right mean of your papa to beat Pomp so. He shan't do it again."

"Bathie," said the girl, coloring, "I don't like to hear you talk about my papa in such a way. You seem to think more of a negro than you do of him."

"I have greater reason, if I do," said Bathie.

At this the girl could no longer restrain her feelings, and the tears flowed down her cheeks, the sight of which seemed to have a very softening effect upon Bathie's heart. "Mary," he said, in a subdued tone, "I didn't intend to hurt your feelings. Don't cry, please. That's a good girl. I'll try to like your papa, for your sake. I'll take back what I said, if you won't cry. I was mad, you know, and couldn't help saying what I did. Please forgive me. But your papa mustn't strike Pomp any more. You must tell him to let Pomp alone, won't you?"

"I will, Bathie, for your sake, though I expect Pomp deserved it. I know he did, or Papa wouldn't have punished him."

"I ombly begs pardon, Miss," quickly said the negro, "fur speakin' ob a word in my own infense. I don't think I did desarve whippin' becaze I couldn't cotch dat ar wile mule. Dat ware all de effence I done. It would a quired a dozen niggers to hab captervated dat ar mule. I liked to hab run myself clear out o' bref, an' den I

didn't proxmate more'n twenty yard ob 'im at no time. Now, 'fore de Lo'd, dat ware all ob my effence."

"Never mind now, Pomp," said Bathie, kindly, "go to your work. I'll see to it that you're not hurt. You shan't be whipped any more, if you behave yourself."

"De Lo'd bress you, Mas' Baffie; you knows I alluz do behave myself wid de priety dat am expected ob a nigger."

Having said this, Pomp took up the ax, and immediately began work in a part of the field near by.

While this conversation was going on between the two young people and Pomp, Mr. Smith was having an interview with Colonel Beaumont, who had dismounted and gone into the house. The overseer followed him, in a high rage. His dignity had been seriously affronted, and he had been forced to yield to a boy, in the presence of a negro.

"What is it, Mr. Smith?" asked the Colonel.

"Bathie has been interfering with my authority, sir," answered the overseer, sulkily. "I can't and I won't stand it. Either he or I must rule."

"Well, what is the matter?"

The overseer briefly related the circumstances which have been detailed, and in so doing represented Bathie's conduct in the worst possible light. According to his version of the affair, the boy had manifested no magnanimity, but rather encouraged insubordination and rebellion among the negroes. But Bathie, being an only child, and a really noble boy, the Colonel loved him with all his heart, and could not believe that he would be guilty of a dishonorable act.

"Bathie, you know, Mr. Smith," said the Colonel, apologetically, "thinks a great deal of Pomp. In fact, Pomp belongs to him."

"But you gave me control of the negro, did you not?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Do you intend, then, that your son shall tell me when I am to punish the negroes?" asked the overseer, swelling with dignity.

"Certainly not," answered the Colonel, coolly. "You say he drew an ax on you?"

"Yes, sir, he did; and I don't doubt he would've struck me with it."

"O, Bathie is a plucky boy," answered the Colonel, really feeling proud that his darling son had shown so much bravery in the affair, and had caused the savage overseer to yield; "but I must investigate the business."

"Do you doubt my word?" asked Mr. Smith, bristling with becoming irascibility. "It is just as I tell you."

"But it is fair, Mr. Smith, to give both parties a hearing. I want to see what defence of himself the boy can make. Where is he?"

"I left him in the horse lot with Pomp."

"Well, be so kind as to tell him to come here at once."

"I don't like the way you're treating this matter," exclaimed Smith, with dignified ire. "If that sixteen-year-old boy is to take your place and manage the plantation, I give you notice I'll quit your service. I'm not going to be governed by a child."

"What would you have me do, Mr. Smith?" asked the Colonel, with a frown.

"I think, sir, you ought to punish the boy, and in such a way that he'll not feel disposed to interfere with my affairs again."

"I shall do what I think is best," answered the Colonel, firmly. "If you please, have the goodness to tell Bathie to come here immediately. But if you don't

wish to do it, you are at liberty to quit my service whenever you desire."

But this the overseer did not desire. He was trying to carry his point by threatening to leave, being under the impression that he could not be dispensed with, as he had been in the Colonel's employ for the last ten years. But he soon discovered that Colonel Beaumont was not the man to be intimidated in this way—a discovery which had a tendency to cool the overseer's wrath. Without another word, he turned sulkily away, and sent a little negro to the boy, with a message to go to the house immediately. In a few moments Bathie was in the presence of his parent, not knowing what to expect.

"What have you been doing to Mr. Smith?" asked the Colonel.

"Nothing, Father, except to make him leave off beating Pomp, who didn't deserve it."

"How do you know he did not deserve it? Who made you a judge, sir?" asked the Colonel, in a tone of assumed severity, which Bathie construed as really a favorable indication.

"Nobody," said the boy, boldly; "but I couldn't stand to see Pomp beat, just because he couldn't catch a wild mule by himself. Smith is a cruel old dog," he exclaimed, with tears rushing to his eyes.

"What did you draw that ax on him for?"

"To make him stop whipping Pomp?"

"Did you intend to strike him?"

"I expect I would. I was so mad with him I could not've kept from it, if he hadn't stopped. You ought to've seen the great whelks he made on the negro's back. Pomp once saved my life, at the risk of his own, and I can't stand to see him beat."

Bathie then gave his father an account of his difficulty with the panther. The Colonel felt in his heart that

the boy was justifiable. He gazed at the fine open face, on whose every feature were enthroned honesty and truth, and he loved his son more than ever. Still he said—

“How do you expect negroes to be governed, if you interfere in this way?”

“Father, I fear you don’t know what a mean man Mr. Smith is. He whips the poor negroes most outrageously. If I were a man, he should never oversee for me.”

“I did not know he was so cruel,” said the Colonel. “The negroes never complained to me.”

“No, sir; they are afraid to. But you just watch him, and you’ll be convinced. I have more than once thought I ought to tell you, but I concluded that possibly you might know all about it. Several times I’ve seen him hang up a poor negro by the feet, and whip him till he was nearly dead.”

“I never knew that, Bathie.”

“It is the truth, Father.”

Colonel Beaumont was inwardly delighted at the conduct and spirit of this noble boy as he stood before him. Bathie possessed a magnificent *physique*, and a face indicative of a soul capable of lofty purposes. His father could not find it in his heart to speak a word of reproof. In truth, his conscience smote him for having allowed Smith such unlimited authority. He, therefore, determined to follow Bathie’s advice, and pay more attention to the overseer’s domestic administration.

“You have taught me one thing,” said the Colonel, reflectively. “I have not given my personal attention to the management of the negroes, as I ought to have done. I’ll try to do better in the future. But you must avoid difficulties with Smith. He might hurt you.”

"I'm not the least afraid of him, Father. He's a coward at heart."

"You may find yourself mistaken about that. At any rate, I do not want you to get into difficulties."

"I'll try not; but if he goes to whip Pomp again, I don't believe I can help interfering."

"Well, then, to keep you out of difficulties in that way, I'll tell you what I'll do. I will give the management of Pomp to you. You can do as you please, and Mr. Smith shall have nothing to do with him."

"O, thank you, Father," exclaimed Bathie, his bright face glowing with joy; "I'm so glad. I'll have no more difficulties with Smith."

Instantly Bathie sprang out of the door, and went in search of Pomp, whom he soon found.

"O Pomp, I've good news for you," he cried, as he came running up, almost out of breath.

"'Deed!" exclaimed Pomp, opening wide his great black eyes. "What mout be de natur ob de good news?"

"Father has given you up to be managed entirely by me. Smith is to have nothing more to do with you, and neither is anybody else but me. You fully belong to me, and no one shall ever whip you except me. You hear that?"

"Bress de Lo'd, I duz! Glory!" exclaimed the negro, clapping his rough, horny hands, and jumping up and dancing like a child at the sight of a new toy. "De Lo'd be prais'd fur eber! Dat am good news sho' 'nuff. I'se bin lab'rin' under de 'viction dat somefin' ob a fortchnate char'cter ware a gwine ter incur to dis nigger afore he died. Dis am de proxmation near'st ob kin to freedum, as I hearn de preacher say t'other day."

"But, Pomp," said Bathie, erecting himself with dignity, "you've got to mind me; do you hear?"

"O, yes, cart'nly, Mas' Baffie, I onderstans dat. I knows what obedience am widout de fiction ob dat cruel lash. I aint no mean an' obstrepus individual, as some am You knows dat."

"No, you're not mean, Uncle Pomp, for I'm going to call you uncle from now on; but you must n't get proud, you know, just because I'm a boy."

"I hez got as little ob de vice ob pride as de ole prophet Moses, who ware de leader ob de down-trodden an' befluscated chil'n of Izrel."

"But you're showing pride now," exclaimed Bathie, in a tone of vexation.

"How ar I, Mas' Baffie!"

"Why, by using those big words, which neither I nor any one else can understand."

"Whut big word is I made use on dat am beyant de bounds ob yo' larned imprehension?"

"Why, *befluscated*," cried Bathie, testily. "What sense is there in that?"

"Why, Mas' Baffie, don't git cantinkeros wid me," said Pomp, deprecatingly. "De word befluscated am a common one. It means 'bellious, dat am all. I imploy langwidge, too, Mas' Baffie, dat am nat'ral to my mine. I ar bound to elocute in de style what natur hab 'signed to me. Some folks, you am awar, hab no command ob langwidge; but I aint ob dat class. I ken no mo' help talkin' like I duz dan I ken change de nose on my face. My insources ob dictionry knowlidge seems ter be widout any bounds. De sentunces jes' flows out o' my mouf like de water out'n de spring, an' I uses de fust word dat incurs to my imprehension, an' which I thinks am not above de pusson wid who I ar 'municatin'. I alluz hab a eye ter dat. You habs abunance ob book knowlidge, an', in course, I ken't imploy a word whut you am unquainted wid. You am much wiser dan me."

"But some of your words do bewilder me, Uncle

Pomp," said Bathie, looking at him, and wondering how he could have acquired such an amazing stock of words.

"Well, den, in de futur, Mas' Baffie, I'll 'void de imployment ob any langwidge dat am incognized in common convisation, even if I hab to oppose de onspon-taneous 'spressions ob natur, whut am so very conveniunt to a individual gifted in de use ob de tongue."

After that day, it was understood that Pomp was to be exempted from the supervision of the overseer. Smith pouted for a few days, but consoled himself with the reflection that he would have no more difficulties with Bathie. There was another consideration which had a tendency to make him yield with as good a grace as possible. He really disliked Bathie for the affront offered to him; but he smothered his aversion with the thought, deep down in his heart, that there might be a very close relation between them at some future time. He could not but notice that this promising boy had a very great fondness for his beautiful daughter. Who knows what may happen? he thought. Why was not Mary worthy of him? She was as intellectual as he was, and he would give her a splendid education, if he possibly could. Would not her accomplishments and her remarkable beauty be an offset to the immense estate to which Bathie was heir? Bathie would desire no other dowry. Smith, thinking a marriage between the two "a consummation devoutly to be wished," resolved, therefore, to establish amicable relations between himself and Bathie as speedily as possible. He had no difficulty in accomplishing his wish and object, as Bathie possessed a charitable and forgiving disposition. After this, he did everything in his power to produce a mutual attachment between the young people. With one of the parties he certainly succeeded, as will be seen in the unfolding of our story.

## CHAPTER II.

### LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM.

"It were all one  
That I should love a bright particular star  
And think to wed it; he is so above me."

Bathie had another warm friend besides uncle Pomp. It was Mary Smith, whose sentiments were far more refined and deep than those of the slave. For the next two years after the quarrel between Bathie and her father, of which Pomp was the object, both attended the same school, and were in the same class. At the age of fifteen Mary began to manifest that coyness which springs from a bashful girl's first love. Till she was thirteen she played with Bathie without the least constraint and with the *naïveté* of a child, never once seeming to think that there was anything improper in joining Bathie in his fishing and hunting excursions. But as Mary approached the threshold of womanhood, it occurred to her that such rude field sports were not exactly suitable for a modest young lady. Besides, she wanted Bathie to regard her as something more than a child. She was old enough to receive attentions very different from those with which he had honored her. She would give him to understand that his familiar manner toward her must be changed. Accordingly, one day, when Bathie asked her to go squirrel hunting, she blushed, and modestly declined. After this, Bathie could never induce her to accompany him in any of his out-door sports. At the age of fifteen, she was compelled to admit the fact to herself that her heart had passed beyond her control, and deeply yearned after

Bathie, who was now a noble, generous, dashing youth of seventeen. The poor girl, at first, was often distressed at the thought that a great gulf yawned between them. Bathie was the descendant and heir of a wealthy and distinguished family, while she was only the daughter of a poor overseer, who could never hope to rise from his humble, obscure sphere. True, she knew that she was beautiful and intelligent; but often she thought that this advantage would be outweighed by her lack of social position. This thought vexed her, and caused her to be dissatisfied with her lot. Why should she be born in an humble sphere? Why should the mere lack of gold exclude her from the *beau monde*, which Bathie had the right to enter? Was she not equal, yea, far superior to the large majority of those silly young ladies who moved in what were called the first circles of society? If she only had wealth, could she not outshine any of the devotees of fashion? Was she not better educated than they were? Why could not Bathie see all this, and rise above those unjust and foolish prejudices of society which had no better foundation than mere conventionality? But would he do so? Would he consider her really worthy of him? Had her charms made no impression upon him? If so, she could not discover it from his words and conduct, for he continued to treat her with the same innocent, childish familiarity which had ever characterized their intercourse. Mary felt mortified with herself. It was useless, she thought, to entertain and cherish the high and sweet hopes which had gradually and furtively insinuated themselves into her guileless heart. Such hopes must be promptly crushed. So she began to avoid Bathie as much as possible, and to treat him with such coolness as to make him look at her in astonishment. What had he done

to give her offence? She would take no share in his sports nor converse with him, as she had once done, and he noticed that she would go off, instead of running to meet him, when she saw him coming to her house.

One day Bathie suddenly came upon her in the garden, when she tried to effect an egress, which she could not do, as there was only one gate. It was evident to him that she desired to avoid an interview.

"Mary," called Bathie, as she was about to turn into one of the walks that led away from him, "what makes you run away from me? Do you hate me? What have I done that you treat me so?"

"Nothing, Mr. Beaumont," she answered, turning round and looking him full in the face. Yet she blushed and looked silly as she uttered the laconic sentence.

"Mr Beaumont!" cried Bathie, with an outburst of laughter. "Why, Mary, I declare that is too ridiculous. O, that is a hint for me to call you Miss Smith, is it?"

"No, it is not," she said, gravely, "and you'll wound my feelings if you call me that."

"Well, you wound my feelings by calling me Mr. Beaumont."

"O, I beg your pardon," she said, in evident confusion, coloring and looking down. "What must I call you? You are almost a grown man, and I did not know that it would be proper for me to treat you as a boy."

"Nonsense!" he exclaimed, gazing in surprise at her blushing face. "Call me Bathie, as you have always done. I don't know what to make of you recently. What makes you shun me so?"

"Do you think I have shunned you?"

"Certainly you have, and you won't deny it. Now,

what is the matter? What have I done to deserve such treatment? Tell me."

"You have done nothing," she answered, with some of the old candor. "I do not hate you, by any means. But I cannot be a child always, you know."

"You want to act the young lady, do you?" asked Bathie, with a laugh.

"No, not that; but I mean I am too large a girl to go hunting with you in the forests. I am not now a child."

"Mary," said Bathie, laughing, "that is what the young fellow we read about in our French lesson the other day called *mauvaise honte*."

"No, it is not," she answered, with some show of slight vexation.

"Well, don't get mad about it. We will not be together much longer. I've come to tell you that I'm going to leave in a few days."

"Where are you going?" she asked, with a feeling of anxiety, which Bathie might easily have detected, if he had been an attentive physiognomist.

"To college."

"Where?"

"New York."

Mary stood with her head hanging down, and said not a word. It seemed that a great burden was crushing her into the earth. A dark shadow fell across her pathway, and she felt herself floating off, as it were, on a lonely sea, with all her hopes blighted like dead flowers at her feet. In spite of her efforts at self-control, the crystal drops rolled down her whitened cheek and fell to the earth.

"Why do you cry, Mary?" asked Bathie, innocently.

"O, Bathie!" she exclaimed, "poverty is such a burden and a curse. How I, too, should like to go to

college, where they have such intellectual treasures, but I cannot. It is enough to make me cry. You will have fine scholars to lead you in the paths of literature, and you will have free access to a magnificent library, while I will be left here on the banks of Big Black river, to grope in ignorance. It is a sin for one in my humble circumstances to have the aspirations I do. It is said that a little learning is a dangerous thing. Sometimes I wish I had none; then I would not be tantalized by the sight of the great ocean of knowledge, which I can now have no hope of ever approaching. I would give anything for the opportunities you will enjoy. Now, can you understand why I cry? Bathie, sometimes I wish I had never been born."

There was a silence for several moments. Bathie was deeply pained, for his sympathies were easily aroused. He looked down upon the ground, and appeared to be in a profound study. But suddenly his face assumed a joyous, radiant expression.

"I have it now, Mary!" he exclaimed. "I have just thought of it. You shall go to college."

"How can I go, Bathie?" she asked, sorrowfully. "You know my father can hardly support the family, much less send me to college."

"It shall not cost him a cent," quickly exclaimed Bathie. "I will foot the bills myself."

"Why, Bathie," cried the girl, transported with delight, "you don't know what it costs to go to a boarding school."

"I don't care what it costs," said Bathie, with energy. "Father says he will give me five hundred dollars a year for pocket-change. That will pay your expenses for a year. He will give me more if I ask him. I know he will."

"O, Bathie," asked the girl, her heart throbbing

with wild emotion, "would you really give up all your pocket-change for my sake?"

"Certainly, with the greatest pleasure. I would much rather spend it in that way, so that it will do some good, than in mere foolishness. You shall not lack for opportunities. You shall go to college and graduate, and when you come back you will marry some nice fellow and be happy."

"Bathie, you are so noble and generous," said the girl, in a sorrowful tone. "I wish I could go to college, but it is impossible."

"It is not impossible," cried Bathie, with eagerness. "Have I not just shown you how you can go?"

"But that would not look right, Bathie."

"Who needs know anything about it? You are as my sister, Mary, and I will be a brother to you, and pay all the expenses of your education. It will be such a pleasure to me. While you are at school we will carry on a correspondence."

"That would be so nice, wouldn't it, if it could only be so?" cried Mary, in childish glee, and all aglow at the very thought.

"If you say the word, it shall be so," answered Bathie, with emphasis. "Do you think you could make five hundred dollars a year do?"

"Certainly; that would be more than enough. But I cannot think of letting you do this."

"Now, Mary, don't be foolish. Lay aside that *mauvaise honte*, which don't become you at all. If you refuse, I will feel like getting mad with you. There is nothing improper in it, and nobody shall ever know it, unless you tell it. I want you to have a splendid education, and now you have the chance to get it."

What was it in this last sentence that made the girl's heart beat so violently? He wanted her to be educated.

Why? Was it not that she might be his equal in the capacity of a wife? Why, then, should she not be indebted to him for her education? And if she refused his kind offer, might she not be in danger of losing him? On the contrary, if she returned home a brilliant scholar, would she not be a fit companion for any one, no matter how high might be his social position? Could she fail to captivate Bathie with her personal and intellectual charms? And would he not feel under some obligation to propose a marriage, after he had taken her under his care and adopted her as his protégé?

Such questions flashed rapidly through her mind as she stood before him, absorbed in reflections which would have startled Bathie, had he known what they were. But he did not suspect the existence of Mary's affection, and the thought of ever marrying her had not entered his mind. He loved her only as a sister.

"What do you say, Mary? Will you go?"

"I don't know what my parents will say," she answered, slowly. "I will have to gain their consent, you know."

"Will you consult them at once?"

"I will, to-night. Come back to-morrow, and I will acquaint you with their decision."

That very evening, after supper, Mary had a consultation with her parents in regard to this important matter. What was her surprise when her father met the proposition with the most determined opposition.

"Why, Papa, don't you want me to be educated?"

"Not in that way," he answered, with some gruffness. "You are no beggar, to be sent to school by other people, especially by a boy, and a bad boy, too."

"Papa, I don't see," said Mary, timidly, "how you can say he is a bad boy."

"You didn't see him draw an ax on me, and threaten to kill me, I suppose?"

"That was two or three years ago, Papa, and he was very much provoked, or he would not have done so. But I thought you had forgiven him for that. I am sure he has no hard feelings toward you."

"Anyhow, I can never forget the insult. It hurts my pride to think of his sending you to school and paying your board."

"I can never go, then," said Mary, with tears gathering in her eyes.

"You have no use for a college education, anyhow," said Mr. Smith. "It will only make you proud and discontented. You can never go into the society of fine folks. I was once foolish enough to think so, and that the boy might marry you; but I have come to a different conclusion. If he would marry you after you are educated, I'd have no objection to the plan. But he don't propose that, does he?"

"Why no, Papa, of course not. I do not suppose he has ever thought of such a thing."

"Then say no more about it."

At this point Mrs. Smith, who had been listening attentively, spoke up.

"You are a little too fast, Mr. Smith," said she. "Can't you see that if Mary is thoroughly educated, she can easily support herself. You know a college education must be a great advantage to any one. It will enable Mary to go into good society, and to marry to advantage. I don't see why she shouldn't be good enough for Bathie, himself. Why do you want to keep the poor girl in the backwoods, when she has a chance to make something of herself? What is five hundred dollars a year to Bathie? I do think he is a kind-hearted, good boy, or he never would have made such a

proposition. Besides, you don't know what his intentions are. When Mary is well-educated, she'll be good enough for him or anybody else. Don't let your foolish pride destroy the girl's prospects."

"Are you willin'," said Mr. Smith, "for that boy to educate your daughter, and have people talking about it all over the country?"

"As to that," answered Mary, with timidity, "Bathie says he will never mention it to any one. People will never know anything about it, unless we tell it."

"After thinking it all over," said Mrs. Smith, "I'm in favor of acceptin' the offer. I can't see any harm to come out of it, and it will be the very makin' of Mary."

Really, Mr. Smith did not have as much pride as he pretended, and he was not very hard to persuade to give his consent to the measure, though at first he stoutly resisted. He only needed somebody like his wife to oppose him with one or two good arguments.

"Well," he said, after Mrs. Smith had offered a few more remarks to show what great advantages would accrue to their daughter from a collegiate education, "well, have your own way about it. But I want you to remember that I opposed it. I'm afraid it'll put some foolish notions into the girl's head."

"What sort of foolish notions?" asked Mary.

"Why, don't set your megs too high, and expect to marry Bathie, or some other big, rich feller. That'll be the danger. You'll want to get out of your circle, and the gran' folks will be disposed to insult you."

Nothing more was said on the subject, and Mary retired to her couch with her cup of happiness overflowing. That night she dreamed she was in college, turning over the leaves of a book. Occasionally she

would take out a letter from Bathie, which abounded in sentences replete with warm protestations of affection. These rosy dreams produced a strange sense of happiness when she arose the next morning, and recalled the impressions which Morpheus had left upon her memory. She felt as if she had returned from a visit to fairyland. It was, therefore, with a beaming countenance she met Bathie, when he called, according to agreement.

"I have good news for you this morning," said Bathie, after they had talked a short time upon other subjects.

"What is it?"

"You must tell me, first, whether your parents have consented for you to go to college."

"Papa opposed it very violently at first," said Mary, who did not want Bathie to think that her parents were over-anxious to avail themselves of his kind offer.

"But he finally yielded, did he?"

"Under protest."

"Why should he be so opposed to it?"

"O, he says he is not such a beggar, that his children must be educated at other people's expense."

"Mary, I wish you would not take that view of it. Just consider me your brother, and say no more about beggars, and obligations, and that sort of thing. I told my father last night that I wanted a thousand dollars a year while at college, and he agreed to give it to me. Now, I want you to take as much of it as you think necessary, and get ready for college right off."

"I don't know how much it will require, Bathie. I shall not be extravagant."

"You must go in good style, though."

Mrs. Smith was called in to decide the matter.

"We hate to impose on you, Bathie ——."

“Stop talking that way, Mrs. Smith. We want you to decide a business matter. Will five hundred dollars a year pay Mary’s expenses at college?”

“Certainly it will, but ——.”

“Say no more, then,” exclaimed Bathie. “She shall have six hundred. I will bring it to-morrow. She must begin to get ready at once. Good-day. I must be going.”

And Bathie walked off so rapidly that neither Mrs. Smith nor Mary had time to thank him.

If these two young people, whose hearts were beating with high hopes, could have foreseen what the fates had in store for them, they would have drawn back in horror and dismay. It is fortunate for us that an impenetrable veil intervenes between us and the future. The contemplation of misfortunes and calamities destined to overtake us, unaccompanied by any of those consolations which shall attend them, would fill us with terror and despair, and we would have no heart to tread the thorny path marked out for us. If we could catch only one single, flashing glance at future events, the clouds would appear so vast and dark and overwhelming, we would no doubt fail to discover the silver lining with which every one is fringed. But there is a great law of compensation, which seems to obtain throughout the universe. All forces of every kind, like water, seek an equilibrium. Among them there is never-ceasing agitation and antagonism. Good strives with evil; light with darkness. Misfortunes are counterbalanced, or, at least, palliated by unforeseen alleviations which arise out of circumstances that have no direct connection with them. But if we were permitted to look into the future, we would be more disposed to consider the dark than the bright side of the picture. Hence, if those two young people, while mak-

ing preparations for their departure to the "Pierian spring," and talking over their little plans, could have caught a brief glimpse of the slumbering years on the other side of the future's veil, they would have turned deathly pale, and gazed into each other's faces in speechless anguish. Mary, especially, would have looked up to the heavens, and exclaimed with Simeon, "Lord, let thy servant now depart in peace."

But we must not anticipate, nor must our readers allow themselves to indulge in conjectures, which will most certainly come to nought.

In due time both Bathie and Mary started together, to different schools. Bathie's destination was Columbia College, and Mary's was Wesleyan College, in Cincinnati, Ohio. When they parted, Bathie said—

"It is understood that we are to write every week."

"Yes, if you desire it."

"You speak as if it might be a task. Will you write merely to please me?"

"It will be a very great pleasure, Bathie."

"Good-by, Mary," extending his hand.

"Good-by, Bathie," shaking the offered hand.

## CHAPTER III.

### DAMON AND PYTHIAS.

“ We still have slept together,  
Rose at an instant, learn'd, play'd, ate together.”

It was once a prevalent notion in the South that Northern educational institutions were far superior to those of our “sunny land.” But there was no foundation for any such belief; nevertheless it obtained, and the consequence was, many of the wealthier classes sent their sons and daughters North to be educated. We admitted, and do now admit, that some of the Northern universities and colleges, like Yale and Harvard, were older than any on the equatorial side of Mason and Dixon's line. But in the quarrel of Brutus and Cassius it was very important to show that there was a difference between the words “older” and “better.” We cannot, and will not, admit that Northern institutions are *better* than Southern institutions. Strict truth will not allow us to grant such an assumption. But this impression, so unjust and injurious to the South, will explain why Col. Beaumont sent his son to Columbia College, N. Y., which, after all, in the extent of its *curriculum* is not superior to the University of Mississippi or Virginia. Bathie was afraid to leave Uncle Pomp to the tender mercies of the overseer, so he decided to take the negro with him as his *valet de chambre*. When he arrived at college, his servant created some surprise among the Northern students. It would be no violation of truth to say that they envied the wealthy young Southerner, who could afford such an expensive luxury. But Pomp soon became a general favorite with the boys. Some-

times they would ask him if he intended to go back home with his master.

"You are free, now, Uncle Pomp," said one, "to go where you please. Just say the word, and we will see that you have your freedom."

"Gem'men," answered Pomp, with his customary dignity, "let's jes consider de carcumstances ob de case a little. Freedom may be a very good thing to dem as has de cumpetency to manage it. But of whut use ken it be to a humun in my sitation, and ob my mental 'pacities. Spos'en I wuz to enounce my on-dependance ob Mars Baffie, whar duz I stan? Who am agwine to pay de spences ob my board? Whar, am de gem'men as would furnish me wid de necry warin oparel?"

"Why, you can work, Uncle Pomp, and be free. Do you care nothing for liberty?"

"A good 'eal 'pends 'pon whut am de signication ob librtty. De librtty you speaks on in dis case would only poot me to work. I hez more freedom now dan I would hev ware I to run away an sot up fur myself. I ken go, howsomeber, any day I chooses ter. Mas Baffie told me dat. Sez he, whiles we ware a journy'en to dis place—sez 'ee, 'Uncle Pomp, you am free in New Ork. Wheneber you takes a notion to leave me, jes lem'me know, an I'll give you money to start on.' Sez I, 'Mas Baffie, I is got no sich foolish opinyun as dat.' You obsarve, gem'men, I hez no trouble an' inconvenience now. Mas Baffie, he pays de board an' all de cloze, an' all I hez to do is to black his boots, make fires, an' atten' to his cloze, an' dat am no labor at all. Now, whut more easier time could I hab, if I ware free? Who wants freedom ef dar am no advantiges an' convenences in it? Spos'en I ware to be onprostatated by de han' ob desease, whut would become ob me?"

"Suppose you were to get sick now, Uncle Pomp; what would become of you?"

"Bress yo soul, sah, Mas Baffie hisself would tend to me. He would hab de doctor, an' pay fur de medikul 'tention, an' all dat, an' I would hab nuffin to do but ter git well. I is done thought all about dis question, 'an argified it from de beginnin' to de end, an' I is done come to de 'clusion dat freedom would be ob no use to me."

"But, Uncle Pomp, if you were free you could have plenty of money to spend. A great Brobdingnag like you could make plenty of it."

Uncle Pomp never liked to acknowledge that he did not understand the meaning of a sentence, whose signification depended upon any single word in it. Before he would do that, he would make an answer at a venture. Without hesitation, he said—

"I neber followed dat trade."

"What trade, Uncle Pomp?" asked the student, looking at him in surprise.

"Bobbin' nags," answered Pomp, promptly. "I neber was in de libry stable business."

The students, who were listening at the conversation, on hearing this ludicrous mistake, burst into uproarious laughter. After the merriment had subsided, the cause of which Pomp did not understand, he said, in his dignified way—

"De truf am, I wouldn't hab us much money as I duz now. I duzn't hab use fur much money, anyways. Mas Baffie gibs it to me whenever I hez any ra'al use fur it. He neber denies me anything I hez desires fur, which am in de bounds ob reasun. Gem'men," continued Pomp, with animation, "I'd sot myself down fur a fool, ef I ware ter try to be free."

"But, Uncle Pomp, how can you bear the thought

of belonging to a master who whips you whenever he pleases?"

"As to dat, gem'men, de whippin' dat I gits wouldn't make a chile cry. How could it, when Mas Baffie neber struck me in his life."

"Suppose he were to take a notion to whip you while you are here, would you submit?"

"O, yes, sah, I'd admit to it wid de fear o' God before my eyes. De scripiter says, 'sarvents obey yer masters.' I knows very well Mas Baffie am not agwine ter strike me onless I descrbs it, an' in dat case I oughtn't ter objec."

"So, you would suffer that boy, compared with whom you are a Hercules, to give you a cowhiding, if he wanted to?"

"Dar am no peril ob his wantin' to do dat, ye see," said Pomp, with a broad grin. "Dat ar 'if' comes in very well, for Mas Baffie neber finks of layin' de cowhide, nor no udder kind ob hide, cross dese shoulders. I tell you, gem'mens"—with a knowing shake of his head—"ye don't onderstan' dis fing at all. Mas Baffie am de bes' fren' I is got on de earf. Ef I ware to leave 'im, I'd hab nobody to go ter, an' I duzn't onderstan' de laws ob 'conomy, so I couldn't manage my own affairs. O, no, bress de Lo'd, I is satisfied whar I ar'."

"Do you really mean, Uncle Pomp, that you prefer slavery to freedom?"

"Ondoutly, gem'mens, I prefers de kind ob slabry to which I is subjek, to de kind ob freedom dat only brings de privlige ob workin' hard an' gittin little fur it."

"It is no use to talk to you about freedom, Uncle Pomp. You have no ambition and no aspiration to be anything but a waiting boy for a master, who kicks and cuffs you whenever he pleases."

“Dat am about de stent ob my ambition. I finks I knows whut am to my interest.”

After a few conversations of this kind, the boys said no more to him about freedom.

It would not be at all interesting to our readers to enter into the particulars of Bathie's collegiate life. It was like that of any student who faithfully applies himself to mathematics and the classics. Day after day he slowly turned the pages of Horace, Juvenal, and other classical authors that are usually found in the college curriculum. Bathie had entered the Junior class, and, consequently, had but two years to remain at college. He was true to his promise in regard to his correspondence with Mary Smith, and every Saturday he wrote her a letter. They were such, however, as any brother might be expected to pen to a sister. These letters constituted the greatest pleasures of Mary's life. She could repeat them from memory; for, if the truth must be told, she studied them with as much diligence as she did her lessons, which she by no means neglected, for she stood first in her class, and held her position without difficulty. It was against the rules of the college to correspond with a young man; but, at Mary's suggestion, Mr. Smith wrote a letter to the president of the institution expressly stipulating that she should have permission to correspond with Bathurst Beaumont. Accordingly, Bathie's letters were delivered to her unread. She broke the seal with a blushing eagerness which would have betrayed her tender secret to an observer who might have discovered her, as she crept into some hidden recess of the college buildings. She followed the lines slowly, and paused at the end of every sentence, in order to prolong her pleasure as much as possible. The truth was, she was looking for one single word which would have set the seal to her happiness—the solitary word, *love*. The

letters were fraught with expressions of fraternal kindness and with warm-hearted wishes for her happiness and success; but the important, thrilling, soul-stirring word was nowhere to be found, though she searched for it, as if it were trying to play "hide and seek" in the multitude of pen marks. Finding that it was not visible, she dived beneath the surface, and examined every sentence with the most rigid scrutiny, thinking that, possibly, it might have taken refuge under the cover of some ambiguous expression. But all her critical acumen was exercised in vain. There was not a clause that could by any fair process of ratiocination be construed into anything even approximating the tender sentiment. Poor Mary was grievously disappointed. How her aching heart longed to pour its abundant wealth of love and lavish its rich treasures of pure affection upon this youth, who had not a suspicion that he was the object of such idolatry; but she must keep as silent as death upon the subject. She was restrained by the conventionalities of society, and compelled to conceal those deep yearnings after love which control woman's inner life. Woman feels her dependence upon man. She is like a delicate vine reaching out its tendrils, seeking for support. It must have something to which to cling. She was placed here to love and be loved. Without love her life is a checreless blank—a Sahara of the heart. Mary felt this, and experienced the bitterness of unrequited affection before she reached the threshold of womanhood. How dreary would be existence without Bathie! Yet how could she cherish the hope that their paths through life would be anything but divergent! How cautious her maidenly modesty caused her to be, when she answered his letters, some of which bore the stains of tears, that she might not betray herself. Her letters, though polite and sisterly, were dictated by a heart on fire. If Bathie

had only written the one word, *love*, it would have put into a state of lively operation a volcano of affection. But, under the circumstances, Mary could only write replies that were chilling to her own heart. Alas! many a woman has had to pass through the same bitter and chilling experience.

Mary and Bathie kept up their correspondence till nearly the close of the term, when he informed her that he would spend his vacation, or at least a portion of it, with his chum. The last sentence will make it necessary to introduce other persons who are to occupy a place in our story.

On the first day of his arrival at college Bathie formed the acquaintance of a youth, about his own age, from the central portion of the State of Pennsylvania, who bore the name of Clarence De Lancy. The two boys appeared to be drawn toward each other, on their first introduction, by some secret bond of sympathy, which we must leave to psychologists to explain, and in an hour they were fast friends. They at once agreed to room together, since they were in the same class. Their friendship soon ripened into an attachment as strong as the tie existing between David and Jonathan, or that other pair, celebrated in ancient times under the names of Damon and Pythias. They were always together.

About six weeks before the expiration of the session, Clarence one day said—

“I want you to spend your vacation with me. I think you will find it more pleasant than the ‘sunny South.’ We can have a nice time—splendid fishing. We live on the banks of a beautiful lake. Come, old fellow, say yes.”

“I will do so, if my father will consent.”

“Write to him this very day, and let me add a P. S. to your letter.”

"All right," said Bathie.

Accordingly, Bathie wrote to his parent at once, and in a few days received a reply. As Col. Beaumont never refused Bathie anything within the bounds of reason, he assented readily to the proposed visit.

"Hurrah!" exclaimed Clarence, when the contents of the letter were made known, "now won't we have a jolly time!"

"I hope so," replied Bathie.

"I know we will," exclaimed Clarence. "I can make it lively for you."

That very evening on which Bathie received paternal permission to make the visit, the following letter was written by Clarence:—

"MY DEAR SISTER:—

"I want to inform you that my Mæcenus, Bathie Beaumont, whom I have mentioned in several of my letters to you, has concluded to spend vacation with me. I know you will be charmed with him. He is as wealthy as a nabob. His father has a large cotton plantation, and owns several hundred slaves, and Bathie is his only child. Here is a splendid chance for you, and I want you to do your best to capture him. With your beauty and accomplishments you can do so if you want to. I know you will fall in love with him as soon as you see him, for Bathie is no common youth, I can assure you. I never saw a finer-looking fellow. He is a dashing, whole-souled, chivalrous Southerner, and I am satisfied you will be smitten at first sight. I write thus early, that you may make no arrangement to spend your vacation away from home. You must be at home, by all means, this summer. You will graduate this term, and I am glad to hear, with distinction, though you do not lead your class. You must bring all your

charms into play, and capture my unsuspecting friend, who does not know that such a creature as you exists. I will say no more about it at present.

“ Yours, &c.,

“ CLARENCE.”

Of course, such a letter from a beloved brother was well calculated to decidedly prepossess a susceptible, romantic girl, as Genie De Lancy was, in favor of the wealthy Southern youth. A few days before the reception of her brother's letter, Genie had asked her own classmate and room-mate to spend a few weeks of the vacation with her, and the invitation had been accepted. In answering her brother's letter Genie stated this fact, but mentioned no name.

Bathie did not know that his chum had determined to have him for a brother-in-law, and knew nothing about the family of his friend.

Such was the condition of affairs when the session came to an end.

## CHAPTER IV.

### CONFUSION AND TROUBLE.

“Oh, it is hard to put the heart,  
Alone and desolate, away ;  
To curl the lip in pride, and part  
With the kind thoughts of yesterday.”

The life of very few individuals is one continued series of happy scenes. Pandora's box of woes has been distributed among the human race without regard to particular classes. It is the lot of none to enjoy unalloyed pleasures, and it is the lot of none to suffer unmitigated miseries. Good and evil are scattered broadcast throughout all ranks of human society, and neither falls exclusively upon the same person. Possibly the period of childhood and youth is freest from those cares which are such a source of annoyance and trouble when one emerges into the responsibilities of social relations forced upon him by the exigencies of society. This was true in the experience of Bathie Beaumont. He had never known what it was to have an ungratified want, notwithstanding the fact that he possessed a most self-denying nature, as has already been demonstrated. He was such a favored child of fortune that to the most of his associates he was an object of envy. He had never felt the burden of a single care, nor had he ever bestowed a thought upon domestic economy.

Down to the time of the visit to his friend, Clarence De Lancy, he had enjoyed only such pleasures as a boy relishes. But a new pleasure awaited him. He had now reached the threshold of young manhood, when the dispositions which are considered as belonging to riper

years begin to come forth from their lethargy. He had reached an age at which he could aspire, without deserving ridicule, to something higher than mere puerile friendships. Bathie was destined soon to attain that experience in the undergoing of which a person is simultaneously happy and miserable—a paradox which the memory of almost any individual will abundantly verify. Who does not remember this Elysian period when the burning love of youth is aroused? It is at this time the heart vibrates with an energy and inexpressible vehemence which can never be, we are safe in saying, felt again.

The two young men arrived at the De Lancy mansion in the evening, a little after twilight. They at once went to the parlor, where the family was in waiting to receive them. Bathie remained a little in the rear, till Clarence could exchange kisses with his own family, and then advanced to be introduced. After this Genie asked the two youths to allow her to present them to her room-mate. Clarence was first presented, while Bathie looked on in amazement. Could he be dreaming?

“Good heavens!” he exclaimed; “is it you, Mary Smith?”

“Certainly it is,” she answered, “but I did not expect to find you here,” shaking hands.

“Why, it seems,” said Clarence, in surprise, “you are old acquaintances. But it is a rather remarkable coincidence that you should meet so unexpectedly. How is it, Genie? You can explain it.”

“I see nothing to explain,” replied Genie. “Mary was my room-mate. We are friends, and I asked her to spend her vacation with me.”

“And Bathie,” said Clarence, “is my room-mate. We are friends, and I asked him to spend his vacation with me. It is quite simple, when the egg is broken,

and it somehow reminds me of Shakspeare's 'Comedy of Errors.'"

"I do not see what there is in the present meeting," said Genie, with a laugh, "to remind you of that."

"Some people, you know," answered Clarence, slyly, "have greater powers of discovering resemblances than others. But no matter about that. I hope we'll all have a jolly time. You and Miss Smith, Bathie, I suppose, are from the same neighborhood, and are very intimate friends, from the way you addressed her."

"Yes; we do not live far apart, and were playfellows and schoolmates."

Mary seemed to be considerably embarrassed, and after the introduction, manifested no disposition to take any part in the conversation. Possibly she caught a glimpse of the shadows of coming events; or possibly it was the first pang of jealousy which was benumbing her tongue and sending a chill through her heart. For she saw Bathie look at Genie in an earnest way—a peculiar sort of way, which at once alarmed her. For a moment she adroitly watched both parties. She saw them, as their eyes met, and they acted just as she had herself. She believed she could read Bathie's thoughts in his face, and she was not mistaken; at least, in regard to the general subject of his thoughts. For Bathie was asking himself the question what it was that made Genie so decidedly interesting on their first meeting. Was it her beauty? But was not Mary equally beautiful when he compared them? But Bathie did not pause long to analyze his feelings. He could no more tell what it was that drew him to this beautiful girl than he could why a rock thrown upward should descend to the earth. He could say it was attraction, and there the investigation would end.

Mary and Genie soon went out of the parlor to pre-

pare for supper. They had arrived two or three days before the young men. As soon as they had gone out, Bathie said :—

“Clarence, you never told me you had a sister. Why was that?”

“No; you never asked me, did you? I’m not the man to volunteer information concerning my own family, especially the females. Besides, she is so ugly, I did not care to mention her.”

“Ugly!” exclaimed Bathie, opening his eyes in surprise. “You don’t mean it?”

“Why don’t I? Do you think she is pretty?”

“She is decidedly so,” replied Bathie, trying to look and feel indifferent.

“Now, come, Bathie, don’t fall in love with Genie too quick. Let me tell you, you’ll meet with opposition if you try it,” said Clarence, breaking into a loud laugh.

“I suppose it would be useless,” said Bathie, with greater seriousness than he intended. “A young lady like her would laugh at such a country bumpkin as I am.”

“O, as to that, she hardly considers herself a young lady. She is not as old as you are, by several years.”

“Is that so?” exclaimed Bathie, so earnestly that it made Clarence laugh.

“Undoubtedly,” cried Clarence, in a tone of much earnestness, imitating Bathie as much as he could. “But tell me, don’t you think this Miss Smith is quite handsome? I wish she had some other name, though. The Smiths are so common that if they were gathered into one country, there would be a powerful nation of them. To call a young lady Mary Smith gives you no more information than saying ‘that girl.’ Why couldn’t she have a different name?”

“Her name may be changed, you know.”

“To Mary Beaumont?” said Clarence. “Yes, that will do much better.”

“Why not Mary DeLancy?” said Bathie. “That would be still more romantic. Yours is an aristocratic name.”

“Yes, and we are an aristocratic family,” said Clarence, in such a way that Bathie could not tell whether he was in earnest or not. “But come, let us go to supper.”

After supper Mary and Genie both favored the young men with music. It was easy for Clarence to discover that Mary was a performer superior to his sister, and he began to pay her more attention. When he had once drawn her into conversation, he found her really brilliant, and he began to suspect that probably it was already understood that her name might be changed to Beaumont.

But let us notice Bathie a moment. He had often heard music; but to-night he thought that Genie drew from the instrument the sweetest strains to which he had ever listened. What made the difference between her playing and that of Mary Smith? He could not tell, but there was something in Genie’s music which awakened responsive chords in his heart, and thrilled all his inner being. He had never been the subject of such strange sensations before.

But while he was in this state of exalted ecstasy, the strains of Genie’s music shot like rough-edged daggers through poor Mary’s heart. Occasionally she would stealthily glance at Bathie’s face, glowing with joy, and betraying the intensity of his emotion. As he was rising on the wings of fancy, and floating and basking in the rose-tinted clouds of young love’s elysium, she felt herself sinking down into the black deep of despair. She could see the idol which Cupid was enthroning in Bathie’s heart, and felt herself expelled forever. Sitting there in the bright radiance of the parlor lamps, listening to the

sweet melodies of music; yet the cold billows of hopelessness were rolling over her shivering soul.

"That piece, Miss Smith," said Clarence, as his sister ceased playing, "seems to make you rather sorrowful."

"What makes you think so?" she asked, making an effort to rouse herself.

"Merely the expression of your face."

"We may be deceived by such a criterion."

"Yes: but still it is a good index to the soul."

"It is, if we have not self-control."

"Mary has naturally a sad face," said Bathie. "I have known her from a child."

Clarence and his sister exchanged glances, and a new subject was introduced.

That night, as would be reasonable to suppose, Bathie dreamed about Genie. His dreams were different from any he had ever had previously. Genie did not appear, in these nocturnal vagaries of the unrestrained imagination, as a mere playfellow, strolling by the river's side in search of birds' nests, or angling in the stream. He had often had such dreams in reference to Mary Smith. But Genie appeared entirely in a new light, and flitted like a nymph about the halls of the elegant mansion, and then running to the door to look for his coming, and he was extremely happy.

The next morning Bathie felt as if he very much desired to see the fair creature by the light of the sun. At the breakfast table they met, and Bathie experienced another sensation which was new to him, and that was embarrassment. He found that in the presence of Genie he was at a loss for words to express his ideas, if he really had any ideas. He would have made a greater booby of himself than he did, had it not been for the young lady. She was vivacious, self-possessed, and rattled away with her small talk in a manner which completed the conquest

of Bathie's heart. She did all in her power to make Bathie feel at ease. He was provoked and deeply mortified at himself. He could not talk to the young lady, and when she looked at him, his eyes immediately fell, and to hide his unnatural awkwardness, which, this morning, seemed to cling to him with the tenacity of a leech, he resorted to the shallow subterfuge of trying to make it appear that he was deeply interested in the contents of his plate. But in spite of his efforts to maintain self-possession, he committed blunders which greatly increased his embarrassment.

"You have been reared entirely in the 'sunny South,' have you, Mr. Beaumont?" asked Genie, with one of her most bewitching smiles.

"I never was out —". The sentence was not finished, for the embarrassed youth at that instant turned over his cup of coffee, which caused him to pause and look quite foolish.

"Never mind, Bathie," quietly exclaimed Clarence, "accidents will happen."

Scarcely were the words finished before Clarence upset his own plate, spilling the contents upon the floor. He had done this, in the goodness of his heart, to relieve his friend. "There now, see what I've done," he cried. "Ma," he continued, "you must not expect us college boys to act like Chesterfield."

"I don't expect you to be like him," answered Genie, with a laugh. "You remind me more of Diogenes."

"Every Genius, you know," said Clarence, "is eccentric. There was the celebrated Dr. Johnson, whose life was written by that dude of a Boswell. You know he was one of the most awkward men that ever did live."

"You think you are a Dr. Johnson, do you?"

"Well, I didn't know but that there might be some resemblance between us. But, changing the subject a

little, what do you all say to going fishing to-day? Would you and Miss Smith like to go, Genie?"

"I suppose so, if we won't be in your way."

"O, we can tolerate you a few hours," replied Clarence, "if you won't talk too much. You will not need uncle Pomp, Bathie: you told me he used to row for you."

"No; I can row very well myself," replied Bathie, who wanted no one in the boat but Genie.

The mention of Uncle Pomp's name gave the conversation a turn which was very unexpected. Mrs. De Lancy was a most rabid abolitionist, and the very sight of a slave owner aroused her violent temper.

"Is your father a slaveholder?" she asked.

"Yes ma'am," replied Bathie, innocently.

"How many of the poor creatures does he own?"

Bathie looked at her in some surprise, and said—

"You mean negroes?"

"Certainly."

"Really, I don't know the exact number. I think, though, about four hundred."

"I suppose, then, he has one of those diabolical overseers to follow the poor wretches and give them the lash?"

It was well that all eyes were for the moment turned toward Bathie. Mary colored deeply, and felt as if she would like to sink through the floor and disappear from sight. She had never told Genie that her father belonged to the class which Mrs. De Lancy appeared to detest. She was believed by the family to be the daughter of some wealthy Southerner, on Genie's representation. To hear her own father denounced as some sort of inhuman monster, it may easily be imagined produced anything but a pleasant sensation. What would this proud family think, when they should learn

who she was? She looked at Bathie appealingly, and saw that his face was crimsoned, though she could not interpret its expression. Would he expose her? She awaited his reply in tremulous suspense.

"My father," said Bathie, "has an overseer; but he is not diabolical."

"You need not offer an apology for him," answered Mrs. DeLancy, "for they are all alike. I have seen them. If there is any vocation that deserves the execrations of mankind, it is that of the overseer. O, I have a holy horror of these men, who are hired to drive helpless negroes, as if they were a herd of cattle. I cannot imagine how any woman could give her heart to an abominable overseer. I'd rather take shelter under the canopy of heaven, in the height of a storm, than trust myself in such a den of vipers as their families must be. What is the matter, Miss Mary?"

"I am sick," gasped the overseer's daughter. "Please excuse me," rising from her chair, tottering out of the room, followed by Genie. Going to her room, she threw herself upon the bed, and buried her face in the pillows.

"O, Mary, what is it?" asked Genie, kindly. "Can I do anything for you?"

"No," she managed to say, "leave me alone a little while, please. I will recover presently."

Let us return with Genie to the dining-room.

As she entered, her mother asked:—

"Do you think slavery is right?"

Mrs. De Lancy was a strong-minded woman, who spoke with an emphasis on this subject which was startling to Bathie. He was thrown into confusion, not knowing whether the fair Genie entertained her mother's sentiments or not. He looked at Mrs. De Lancy in innocent surprise, and replied, in a hesitating manner—

"I don't know, ma'am. I really never thought much about it."

"What!" she exclaimed, "never thought about as great a sin as slavery is, against God and man! How would you like for some man stronger than you are to take possession of you, and claim you as his property, and make you work for him—yes, work with the whip over you from morning till night?"

"I don't suppose I would like it at all," replied Bathie, almost trembling, and quickly glancing at Genie. But at this juncture, Clarence, who was not disposed to hear any lengthy discussion of the subject, came to the rescue of his embarrassed friend.

"Mother," he said, "I don't believe we understand the nature of the negro. I never saw a human being more contented with his lot than Uncle Pomp. The boys tried, as Bathie knows, to get the old fellow to leave his master and enjoy his freedom; but their persuasions were all in vain. Pomp, who has the strength of a Theseus, thinks as much of Bathie as his own mother does."

"Will you give me permission," quickly asked Mrs. De Lancy, "to persuade the negro to leave you?"

"Certainly, ma'am," answered Bathie, glad of a loophole of escape from a controversy.

"You promise you will not think hard of me if the negro refuses to go back with you?"

"Yes, ma'am, I promise you."

"Very well," said the lady, with a smile, at the prospect of giving liberty to at least one human being; "when you start back, you'll find yourself minus a servant."

"You never made a greater mistake in your life, Ma," said Clarence.

"I will show you," she replied. "I cannot believe

that a man with a soul and heart in him can prefer slavery to freedom."

"Now, Ma," said Clarence, "let us compromise on that, and not discuss this subject any more while Bathie is with us. Facts are worth more than theories. You have an opportunity to subject your theory to a practical test. Say no more to Bathie about it."

Half an hour after breakfast, Genie returned to Mary, whom she found sitting up.

"Are you better now, dear Mary?"

"O yes, I am as well as ever," replied Mary, trying to appear cheerful. "It was only a momentary attack."

"Well, get ready then. We are going to fish."

Poor Mary was in hopes that she would have an opportunity of speaking privately with Bathie, and was soon ready to start. It was arranged that she should go in a boat with Clarence, and Genie with Bathie. She determined to shake off her wretched feelings, and in a little time she was engaged in a lively conversation with her escort. Bathie, also, once in the boat, felt that he was in his element, and very soon fully recovered his self-possession. In a little time he found that he could converse with Genie without the least embarrassment, and the more he talked, the more hopelessly enamored he became. With her bright, soft blue eyes and roguish smile, she wound herself around the youth's heart till the fluttering thing was like a fly caught in the meshes of the cunning spider's web. Every moment he was becoming more and more entangled. Presently Genie said:

"You must not mind what Mamma said this morning about slavery, Mr. Beaumont."

"Before you say anything more," interrupted the young man, "let me beg you not to call me Mr. Beaumont. It plagues me. I am not accustomed to it."

"We are hardly well enough acquainted," said Genie, with a slight blush, "for me to call you anything else. We never met till yesterday."

"That makes no difference. Call me Bathie, as Mary Smith does. If you don't, you'll cause me to make a simpleton of myself."

"Well," said the young lady, pleasantly, "rather than you should do that, I'll call you Mr. Bathie. Then, Mr. Bathie," continued Genie, with a laugh that thrilled the youth's whole being, "you see I do not want you to fall out with my dear Mamma. She is a decided abolitionist, and talks about slavery with considerable warmth of feeling."

"Yes," replied Bathie, "but do you agree with your good Mamma? Do you think slaveholders are such awful people?"

"Judging by yourself, I do not. But Mamma has told us that slave owners are very sinful beings, and an overseer she utterly detests."

"But do you have the same opinion?"

"I know nothing about overseers," she answered, surprised at the searching look which Bathie bestowed on her. "Mamma says they are inhuman monsters."

Bathie changed the subject.

That evening, Bathie and Mary made it convenient to walk alone on the banks of the beautiful lake. Mary suddenly paused, and looking the young man full in the face, said—

"Bathie, do you think I am a hypocrite?"

"Certainly not. Why do you ask?"

"Because," she answered, in a tremulous tone, "I have never informed Genie who I am. She never asked me directly, but I suppose I ought to have told her. You saw what a castigation I received this morning by not doing so."

"It was unjust, Mary."

"So it was; but it made me sick to hear my poor father denounced as a brute. I expected to have a pleasant time here; but now it is impossible. I will tell them who I am, and then I shall go home. In the goodness of your heart, you, too, have kept my origin a secret; but tell them all about it, if you wish. I do not want them to think I am a hypocrite."

"I am truly sorry this has happened," replied Bathie, in a kind tone, "but don't grieve over it. You are as good as any of them."

"I know I am, Bathie, in some respects. I do not feel degraded on account of my humble origin. But my self respect cannot ward off their contempt, when they know who I am. I cannot stay here, though, any longer. I feel it would be an imposition on them."

"Why not remain?" asked Bathie. "You need not say anything about the matter."

"No, no, Bathie, that will not do," she said, impatiently. "I have found out their opinion, and I fear that even Genie's friendship for me is based upon a false foundation. She supposes, of course, that my rank is equal to hers; but when she discovers that it is not true, she will hate me."

"If I thought so," said Bathie, quickly, "I would leave, too."

"No; I would not have you do that on my account. I suppose it is right that there should be divisions in society. You belong to their class, but I do not."

"I do not believe in any such senseless distinctions," replied Bathie. "While there must be divisions in society, they ought to be based on moral worth and merit, and not on foolish conventionalities, such as the fictitious circumstance of wealth."

"But they are not, Bathie, even in this democratic

country, as they call it, and I must accept the situation which the accident of birth has allotted to me."

They talked on in this way for some length of time, and returned to the house. Bathie did not oppose the resolution Mary had formed, of going home at once, and he debated the question whether the affront to her did not require his own immediate departure. But before coming to a decision, he determined to see in what manner Genie would receive the information in regard to Mary's origin. Before they reached the house it was agreed as to how this information should be communicated.

That evening all again, including Mrs. De Lancy, were assembled in the parlor. When it was time to retire, Mary stood in the middle of the room, and said—

"Wait a moment. I have something to say to all of you before we retire."

She paused, as if to brace herself for an effort. A deep crimson suffused her handsome face, and her voice quivered as she spoke:—

"Mrs. De Lancy, I am very much obliged for your kindness to me during the hours I have been under your roof; but I now give you notice that I shall no longer trespass upon your hospitality. Without knowing it, this morning, you uttered trenchant words which entered my very soul like hot iron. In ignorance, you insulted me grossly in your own house, by likening me to a viper. I forgive you, but in the morning I must leave your house."

All present, except Bathie, looked at her in wonder and amazement.

"What in the world do you mean?" exclaimed Mrs. De Lancy.

"I mean that I am the daughter of an overseer—a class you denounced as brutes."

"I did not know," said Mrs. De Lancy, deeply mortified, "you were such."

"And not knowing it, you gave utterance to your honest opinion."

"I am extremely sorry," said Mrs. De Lancy, "that I spoke so hastily. The only apology I can offer is, I make an exception in your favor."

"You can make no apology, Mrs. De Lancy, and I ask none. Genie," turning to that young lady, whom Bathie was watching as closely as circumstances would allow, "I do not want you to think that I have acted the hypocrite with you. You never asked me a question about my family, and I did not really know that overseers were held in such abhorrence by anybody, or I would candidly have told you who I was."

"O, Mary, my dear friend," exclaimed Genie, throwing her arms around the girl's neck, "what you have told us cannot destroy my friendship for you. I love you as well as I ever did. Don't go off home in this way. I am sure Mamma don't want you to go."

"No," said Mrs. De Lancy. "Stay, my dear child, and I will make all the amends I possibly can. I am sorry I said what I did."

"Now, Ma," said Clarence, "your tongue has got you into a scrape, as I always expected it would. Let's just laugh out of it, and never say anything more about it. What do you say, Miss Mary? Give the word, and I'll start the laugh. That beats crying."

"It is no laughing matter with me," replied Mary. "I cannot stay under a roof where I am regarded as a viper. Genie, our friendship in the past has been sweet ——"

"And it shall continue to be," interrupted Genie. "Believe me when I tell you that I think none the less of you for what you've told us."

“I do believe you, dear Genie.”

The two girls stood in the middle of the room, and wept in each other's arms. This little scene sank deep into Bathie's heart, and at once decided, not only the question of his remaining with his friend, but his whole future destiny. O, if those persons in that parlor on that night could have flashed the light of the Present into the blackness of the hidden Future, and lit up for a moment the scenes which were but just below the horizon of actuality, all would have agreed that it were far better had they never met in this life.

The DeLancys did all they could to induce the insulted Mary to remain. But she firmly and mildly refused, and the next morning, after a sorrowful parting, she boarded the train, and in due time reached home.

“I'm sorry she would go,” said Clarence, “but nothing else would satisfy her, and after all, I can't blame her.”

Bathie made no reply. He was in the condition of those who are simultaneously glad and sorry.

## CHAPTER V.

### A PRACTICAL JOKE.

“That man that hath a tongue, I say is no man,  
If with his tongue he cannot win a woman.”

We have not time to give the daily history of the young people after Mary's sudden and sad departure. Discovering that Genie was not like her mother in disposition, Bathie promptly made up his mind to spend the entire vacation with his friend. Every day he was in the company of the being he worshiped, and every day he became more and more infatuated. Yet he had never dared to open his mouth upon the subject which shaped all his thoughts, and colored his whole existence.

The weeks of the vacation had rapidly rolled away, and it was now nearly time to return to college. He had only three more days to remain, and then he must bid adieu, at least for a while, to the object of his idolatry. He had spent many, many happy hours in her society. They had rowed together upon the placid bosom of the lake; they had promenaded in the yard, among the flowers, by the silvery light of the moon; Bathie had stood by the piano, entranced as Genie sent forth strains of ravishing music. How could he bear to leave her soul-thrilling presence? He had been as one in a delightful dream; and still he had not spoken a word to the young lady in reference to the consuming affection which penetrated every fibre of his being. Often he had felt like it; but he could never get his organs of speech to perform their proper functions when he would approach that delicate subject. But how could he re-

turn to school without acquainting her with the fact that her constant presence would be indispensable to his temporal happiness? It made him tremble, like Belshazzar gazing at *Mene, tekel, upharsin*, to think of going through the fiery ordeal of making a *déclaration d'amour*. He had no experience whatever in such delicate affairs. Besides, Bathie did not feel that he was a man, and it would be a year before he could receive his Bachelor's degree. But his internal being was on fire, and he desired anxiously to be relieved of torturing suspense.

He dreaded to leave Genie without ascertaining how he stood in her estimation. While he was off at school, poring over the pages of Sophocles and Tacitus, another suitor might step in and—the very thought made his heart burn with that passion which caused the black Othello to murder the faithful Desdemona. Under these circumstances, Bathie became so melancholy that he attracted the attention of Clarence, who thought he had divined the cause. Clarence, with an eye to the interest of his beloved sister, and impelled by his great friendship for Bathie, determined to bring matters to an issue. So, one morning, he said—

“Bathie, what is the matter with you? I never saw you look so dejected?”

Bathie blushed over every visible part of his body, under the smiling gaze of his friend.

“You have the appearance of a man,” continued the cunning Clarence, “of a man who might be afflicted with some heart disease. Put out your tongue and let me see if I can make a diagnosis of your case. I intend to study physic, and I may as well experiment with you.”

“None of your jokes this morning, Clarence, if you please. I am in no humor for it.”

“Well, if it is anything serious,” said Clarence,

kindly, "I'll be as sober as a judge. Can I be of any service?"

"I don't know that you can. But I have never kept anything of importance secret from you, and I tell you now, I am miserable."

"Goodness!" exclaimed Clarence, "what is it?"

"I think I have already betrayed myself; but to prevent your teasing me I will inform you that I love your sister."

"So I thought, Bathie," replied Clarence, coolly. "You betrayed yourself the next day after your arrival. But why are you miserable? Genie has not jilted you, has she?"

"No," said Bathie, slowly, "but you know," he continued, in a tone that excited his friend's risibility, "I am an awkward fellow."

"Bathie, so far as I am concerned, I would be delighted to have the tie between us strengthened. If you really love Genie, why not tell her, and be done with it?"

"I can't get my foolish mouth off—that is one reason," said Bathie, in a dogged way, that made Clarence laugh.

"And that is the reason you are miserable, is it?"

"Yes, that is one reason."

"Give us another."

"Well, did you not say there would be opposition?"

"Hold a minute, Bathie. Let me put myself in the attitude of a thinker. I will lay my head on the table, just so. Now, keep silence."

Bathie smiled, but said nothing. In two or three minutes Clarence raised up, and with a merry twinkle of the eyes, which Bathie did not observe, he said, seriously,

"Let us go to the parlor; I have something to show you," quickly rising.

Bathie, not the least suspicious, at once entered the parlor, which was unoccupied.

"Now, excuse me a moment, and I will return with the article I want to show you."

Immediately he quitted the room, and was out only two or three minutes. When he re-entered he was leading Genie by the hand, who was not aware of the practical joke her brother was perpetrating. He paused with Genie when within two paces of Bathie, and said, rapidly—

"Genie, my friend Bathie is dead in love with you, but is ashamed to tell you—*quod sufficit.*" Instantly he darted out of the room, leaving his sister in utter confusion, and his prospective brother-in-law in an equally pitiable state. The young lady, at once comprehending the practical joke, was the first to recover self-possession. She became suddenly indignant, and said, with considerable spirit—

"Mr. Beaumont, I was not aware of my brother's intentions. He did not even tell me you were in here, or I should not have come. As it seems to be one of my brother's jokes, if you will excuse me I will at once retire."

"Please, don't go," cried Bathie, eagerly. "It may be a joke with Clarence, but not with me. He told you the truth. I don't know how to make love, Miss Genie. You are the only one I ever loved in all my life. I don't know what more to say, nor what more I ought to say. I am nothing, you know, but an awkward school-boy."

"You do seem to be greatly confused," said Genie, with smiles and blushes, "and so am I. But I want you to distinctly understand that I am no party to this joke of my brother's. I solemnly aver that I knew nothing about it."

"Your embarrassment is sufficient proof of that," replied Bathie. "But it does not matter about Clarence's joke. He has done me a great favor, though. Now you

know all, what is your answer? Shall I go back to school heart-broken, or not?"

"Not if I can prevent it," she answered, in a low, tremulous tone, which caused Bathie's heart to leap seemingly into his throat, and greatly obstruct his utterance. There was an embarrassing pause for a moment, which was brought to a termination by Bathie:—

"When my school-days are over, will you go South with me, as my own darling wife?"

Another brief pause.

"Yes," came forth from the rosy lips, as soft and gentle as the May morning breeze. It was enough. The contract was sealed, and was witnessed only by the invisible beings of another world. Why dwell upon the "old story," which has been a beautiful and happy reality in the lives of so many of earth's sons and daughters? Cynics may sneer at it, and those who are passing into the imbecilities of age may laugh at it, as one of the follies of youth; but no doubt the period of courtship is one of the brightest oases in the great Sahara of human life. It is one of those sacred spots to which memory delights to return. Let us not, then, make sport of the young who, like Bathie and Genie, can reveal the tender secret only in awkwardness, confusion and embarrassment, for it is an unmistakable indication of purity of heart and honesty of purpose. On such courtships the angels smile.

For about an hour they sat on the sofa, and conversed in such a *sotto voce* that their words could not be heard. How long they might have remained in this Elysian *tete-a-tete*, we have no means of ascertaining, since they were startled by a footfall at the door. Quickly turning their heads, they beheld Clarence, laughing most heartily. Presently advancing, he stood before them, and said—

"Well, it is all right, I see. You understand each other, do you?"

Bathie merely bowed.

"I thought I would interrupt you, in order to give you a piece of disagreeable information. It is an old saying, that 'the course of true love never did run smooth,' and I fear that your case will add another verification to the proverb."

"How is that?" asked Bathie.

"You know I told you there would be opposition; but I had no idea it would be so determined. I have come to warn you."

"What do you mean?" asked Bathie.

"I mean, in a word, if I must plunge *in medias res*, that I just now intimated to my dear mother that the present interesting affair was in its incipency, thinking that possibly she might make only a mild show of resistance, but, to my disappointment, she boldly declared it should never take place with her consent."

"What is the ground of her opposition?" asked Bathie.

"Well, you know that my mother is a hot-headed abolitionist?"

"Yes, I am aware of that."

"When you first came, you remember, she asked your permission to persuade Uncle Pomp to forsake you and claim his freedom?"

"Yes, distinctly."

"Well, she has faithfully tried the experiment of persuasion for several weeks. I have overheard her talking with Pomp more than once, and their conversation was really amusing. Sometimes she would become vexed with the negro, and call him a creature of no spirit. In grandiloquent style she drew a picture of the horrors of slavery, and tried in this way to arouse his

sympathy for his suffering brethren. But Pomp, in that pompous way of his, would tell her that he wouldn't know what to do with freedom, and that he already had more than he could use. My dear mother has been completely whipped out. She says that you have somehow bewitched the negro, and she compared you to those savage cannibals who captured Sinbad the sailor and his companions, and gave them some sort of weed to eat which destroyed their reason."

At this all three broke into a laugh.

"Miss Genie!" suddenly exclaimed Bathie, "what do you think of these horrid slaveholders? I have never heard you express yourself."

"For your sake, you know," she said, smiling, "I must believe slavery is right."

"But, if," said Bathie, seriously, "you do not think it is right, I hope you will not say it is."

"Emerson, in one of his essays," replied Genie, "says it is hard for us to escape from our ancestors. We cannot easily rid ourselves of the influence which our parents exercise over us. Mamma has always taught us that slavery is wrong. It is her hobby. But, judging from your servant, if all are treated as he is, I cannot find any objection to it."

"But," replied Bathie, "they are not all treated as Pomp is. On many plantations the negroes are very much abused. I am, though, no zealous advocate of the institution, and if it were abolished, I should not care."

"Do you think it is wrong?" asked Genie.

"To tell the truth," answered Bathie, "I have never thought much about it. But I am willing to gratify your mother by setting Pomp free; yet I know he will not leave me, and I have not the heart to drive him off."

"I don't blame him," said Clarence. "He is in a better condition than if he were free, and he has sense enough to know it. But really I do think my mother is fanatical on the subject. If I had a hundred or so of the blacks, I should not be in favor of emancipation at all. \* For I cannot believe they are fit for the enjoyment of freedom. But I did not come here to talk about slavery. I came to warn you. I don't know what is best for you to do. Ma will oppose your union to the bitter end. I am anxious for it, Bathie," continued the lively Clarence, with a laugh, "for you are the only boy I ever saw whom I'd be willing to have for a brother."

"You are very matter-of-fact," said Genie, blushing, "and talk about the affair as if it were a mere piece of business."

"O, I mean business," said Clarence.

"Would it satisfy your mother," interrupted Bathie, "if I would agree to emancipate all the negroes to whom I may fall heir?"

"Bathie," said Clarence, gazing earnestly at him, "would you do that to win Genie?"

"Certainly I would, and would not regard it as any great sacrifice, either."

This, as might be expected, caused the young girl's face to assume a crimson hue, which made her appear only the more lovely.

"You shall not make any such sacrifice as that," said Clarence, energetically. "You can get her on easier terms."

"Are you selling me?" asked Genie, laughingly.

"Never mind," said Clarence, "we are talking business now. I'll tell you what: we'll go back to college, Bathie, and when you get your diploma, next year, if my mother will not give her consent, then let us elope with the girl. What do you say?"

"I am willing," answered Bathie.

"You are like Barkis, then," answered Clarence.

"And will you be like Pegotty?" said Clarence, turning to Genie.

"How is that?" asked Genie, with a laugh.

"Why, be as 'willin' as Barkis.'"

"I suppose so," she answered. "I will humor the joke."

And thus the matter was humorously settled.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE DARK CLOUD RISES.

“The cannons have their bowels full of wrath,  
And ready mounted are they, to spit forth  
Their iron indignation 'gainst your walls.”

It was early in the Fall of 1860 that Bathie and Clarence returned to college. 1860 will ever be a memorable year in the history of these United States. The dark cloud of internecine war was rapidly rolling up to the visible horizon. Political excitement ran high. The first sullen mutterings of the storm which had been so long brewing could be heard. The questions which had for many years agitated the North and the South were now to be settled by the sword. The nation was plethoric, and in a human sense, blood-letting was necessary.

There were four candidates in the field for the office of President, and Abraham Lincoln was elected. We do not propose to bring political questions into this story, further than necessary; but we must be allowed to remark that Mr. Lincoln was not the bad man that many Southern people took him to be. His private character was above reproach. We cannot but admire the honest simplicity of his nature and the goodness of his heart. It was with difficulty he could refuse a request. We say, without hesitation, that he would have made an excellent Magistrate for both sections, if he had been allowed the opportunity to try it. Being a conservative man, and one of comprehensive and liberal views, he would not have made any attempt to interfere with the “peculiar institution” of the South. But this

interference was something which the South feared. She could not tolerate any officer who sympathized with the Abolition party.

Future generations can probably never understand how hateful the word "Abolitionist" struck upon the tympanum of the Southern ear. It was a synonym for injustice, oppression and robbery. In the Southern dictionary the Abolitionist was one who had the disposition, and cherished the ultimate purpose, to despoil the South of a species of property guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. No sooner, therefore, had Mr. Lincoln been declared Chief Magistrate of the "glorious union" than the leaders of the Southern political sentiment took alarm. The time had evidently come to test the great and important question of State sovereignty. Promptly in December, 1860, South Carolina passed the ordinance of Secession. Next Mississippi followed, in January; and ere long all the Southern States had wheeled into line, and suddenly a new empire, called the Confederacy, appeared in the galaxy of nations, which some pious people, effervescing with a superabundance of righteous zeal, likened unto the "stone cut out of the mountain"; and some predicted that the Mississippi Valley would become the great apocalyptic Armageddon, which would terminate the reign of evil, and introduce the Millenium.

At Fort Sumter the first gun was fired.

Bathie remained at college till the end of the term, which was in the middle of the Summer of 1861, and received his degree. On the next day after Commencement, Clarence said to him—

"What course will you pursue? Which side will you join, in the war?"

"I am sorry, Clarence, that this fratricidal strife has been precipitated upon the country. I do not believe

secession was the proper remedy ; but don't you think my allegiance is due to my own State ? ”

“ I hardly know whether it is or not ; yet I candidly confess that I should dislike to take up arms against my native State. ”

“ How, then, can I fight against Mississippi ? ”

“ You can't do it, my friend. But, changing the subject, what will you do about your marriage ? ”

“ I have been corresponding with Genie, and she is inclined to postpone it awhile, unless I will agree to come North and live. ”

“ And what is your decision ? ”

“ Why, I think Genie is a little unreasonable. What can I do in the North ? All my interests are in the South. Besides, I can't abandon my State. I have too much pride and patriotism for that. You, yourself, would not have me to act dishonorably and cowardly. ”

“ No, Bathie, I agree with you. If Genie will not go with you, you will have to postpone the marriage till the war is over, and, ” he continued solemnly, “ the Lord only knows when that will be. I regret, however, that we will be on opposite sides. ”

A pause followed, during which both appeared to be in deep and sad reflection.

“ I say, Bathie ! ” suddenly exclaimed Clarence, “ suppose we should at some time meet face to face on the battle-field, would you shoot me, or what ? ”

“ Not for any consideration would I injure a hair of your head, my dear friend. How could you ask such a question ? ”

“ We know not what change may come over the spirit of our dreams. Wrought upon by the heat and fury of battle, we don't know what we might do. ”

“ I know very well, Clarence, that I can never be

induced to take your life, unless in necessary self-defence. You know what I mean by that."

"Yes; that means, I am trying to kill you."

"Yes."

"Now, Bathie, let us enter into a solemn contract that we will never try to kill each other in honorable war."

"With all my heart."

That day these two friends parted. When Bathie reached his native State, the war fever was high, and from every direction men were hurrying to the various places of *rendezvous*. Fire-arms brought enormous prices. People were acting as if they expected to fight in their own yards. Blacksmiths manufactured huge knives, and nearly every company that left home was thus prepared to cut the enemy's throat as soon as he was seen. Bathie was at once inspired with the spirit of the universal enthusiasm, which, we may here say, was, after all, rather superficial. But war was a novelty, and nobody dreaded it. To the young men, it was to be a romantic frolic, fraught with fun and glory. They expected to return home soon, to receive the warm congratulations of an independent people, and be rewarded with the sweet smiles of "the girls they had left behind them." The people of the South made the fearful mistake of supposing that one Southern man was a full match for five men from the North. Accordingly, at first, rich and poor entered into it with glowing zeal, believing that after a few battles, the Northern soldiers would be glad to betake themselves to their homes and leave the triumphant South to the enjoyment of her independence. Those who had any misgiving, did not dare to express their doubts. They would have been regarded as manifesting cowardice. It was thought by many that after the brief storm should pass away, the South would enter upon a career of unprecedented

prosperity. Then it would be an honor to have fought for the independence of the Confederacy. Men rejoiced at the prospect of receiving wounds—an unmistakable indication of military gallantry, which would forever be an unchallenged passport into the highest circles of society. Many expected, without difficulty, to walk into important offices on one leg, and to affix an official seal with one hand. Ambition was aroused among all the young men throughout the whole country. No youth dared to remain at home during these exciting times, when the tocsin of war was sounding from every hill-top. He would have been laughed to scorn by the women and children.

Bathie at once set to work to raise a cavalry company. His father furnished, at his own expense, many of the volunteers in his son's company with excellent horses, and it was not long before Bathie was in command of one of the finest companies in the Confederate States, all eager for the fray.

We have not time to follow him through all the scenes and vicissitudes which marked his career, even if the nature of our story would permit us to do so. One of his most daring and fearful exploits will be mentioned in a future chapter.

1861 rolled away, and 1862 was ushered in and was numbered with the past, and still the clouds hung menacingly over all the land.

During this time, Bathie managed, somehow, to send several letters to Genie, and to receive answers. In the last epistle which she received he urged her to come South and be his own forever. With what success his vehement entreaties were rewarded will be seen before our story progresses much further. In the next chapter we must relate an incident which, though it concerns other persons, was destined long afterwards to change the current of Bathie's history.

## CHAPTER VII.

### A NEW ACQUAINTANCE IN AN AWFUL SITUATION.

“ Where cattle pastur'd late, now scatter'd lies  
With carcasses and arms th' ensanguin'd field  
Deserted.”

As we are by no means writing a history of the war of Secession, but are detailing only a few incidents necessary to a full understanding of this story, we must omit all military events down to the merry month of May, 1864. Pemberton had brought all the forces he could possibly spare from Vicksburg, in order to meet Grant, whose movements will be noticed with a greater degree of particularity in a subsequent chapter. On the morning of the 16th of May there was a sudden commotion around the bivouac fires, as can be testified to by the author of these lines, who was present. The army was about five miles from Big Black, on the eastern side. Judging from the confusion which prevailed for a short time, we were under the impression that the commanding General was surprised. The troops were hastily drawn up in battle-array, and stood waiting all the morning, in the hot sunshine, and without water, for the enemy to make the attack. It was about the middle of the afternoon before the battle was fought, the main point of attack being Champion Hill. Without going into particulars, we merely make the statement that before the sun sank below the horizon the Confederates were defeated, and all, except Loring's Division, in full retreat toward Vicksburg. However, they halted at Big Black, and the next morning, early, the firing of cannon announced to those at a considerable distance that another

battle had begun. The result is known to the world. Pemberton, without another halt, took shelter in the defiant forts of Vicksburg; and here we leave him for the present.

It was the next day after the fight on Big Black river, and the sun was pouring down his unobstructed rays upon one of those sickening scenes that always follow in the wake of a hotly-contested battle. A few squads of soldiers, detailed from the Federal army, were gathering up the gory bodies of those who had fallen in the action, and were casting them into hastily prepared graves. Into these quickly-dug, shallow trenches friend and foe were indiscriminately thrown, and covered with the "clods of the valley"—there to remain till called forth on the resurrection morn. This is one of the saddest spectacles which the battle-field affords. The living have no time to pay respect to the dead. The corpses are taken up just as they have fallen, and without any preparation whatever, are carelessly, and often rudely, cast into the shallow trenches. Not a tear is shed. The work is performed by strangers, for the private soldier knows but few outside of his own company; and he has no more respect for the slain than if they were dead dogs. The havocs of death are broader than human sympathies. What is one poor corpse among hundreds and thousands? How can strangers, anxious to complete this horrid work of interment, stop to shed a tear over or to pity one whom they never saw before? They, indeed, scarcely glance at him. Instead of crying, they are laughing and joking, and some are drinking that fiery beverage which most military men love.

One of the squads on the field of Big Black presently reached a young officer dressed in the "Rebel" uniform. They take hold of him to carry him to the trenches. There is a groan, and the young man opens his eyes, and stares at them in a bewildered manner.

"What are you doing?" he asks, in a feeble voice.

"We're burying the dead," was the reply.

"I am not dead, am I?" he inquired, putting his hand up, and rubbing his forehead.

"You ain't far from it, it seems," said one.

"Boys," he said, confusedly, "do not bury me till the breath leaves me. I do not understand this exactly. Has there been a heavy fight?"

"Yes."

"Who gained the victory?"

"We did," was the reply. "Your folks have all retreated to Vicksburg."

There was another groan, and the officer closed his eyes. But looking at the Federal soldiers, presently he said—

"How long since the battle? I remember a terrible discharge of artillery, and then in a moment a heavy volley of musketry, and immediately after I seemed to fall into a deep sleep. How long have I lain here?"

"The battle was fought yesterday," answered one. "I presume you have been here twenty-four hours. But where are you wounded? Let's see what we can do for you."

"My leg feels sore."

"Yes, and your head is wounded. Your leg is broken just above the ankle," continued the man, making a hasty examination.

"Give me some water, please. My canteen is empty. I am feverish and quite thirsty."

One of the men took the canteen, and going to the river, which was only a few steps off, returned, and presented it to the officer, who, seizing it, drank eagerly, and appeared to be considerably refreshed.

"I don't know what we can do with you," remarked one of the soldiers. "Every ambulance is gone."

You're at the extreme end of the line, and are the last man. You have been left here for dead. What must we do?"

"If it be as you say," replied the young man, "you can do nothing. How far is it to the road?"

"More than half a mile."

"I see a house down the river, about a mile off," said another of the soldiers. "If you could manage to reach doubtless you could get help."

"I cannot walk, though," replied the officer, pulling himself up by means of a bush.

The soldiers then held a consultation as to what disposition they should make of their wounded prisoner.

Charles Langdon (for such was the officer's name) perceiving their perplexity, said—

"Boys, from what you tell me, you can do nothing for me. Your duties are now ended, and, of course, you must return to your command. If you will cut two sticks which will answer for crutches, I will try to make my way to that house across the field."

The soldiers very readily accepted this proposition as a happy solution of the difficulty, so far as they were concerned. Langdon made it because he had a horror of going to Johnson's Island, and he was willing to take considerable risks in order to escape "duress vile." He supposed, though the matter was not mentioned, that the soldiers would notify the medical authorities, so that an ambulance could be sent back for him. But Langdon had formed his plan of escape.

Accordingly, at his suggestion, two forked sticks were cut down with pocket-knives, a blanket, of which there were many lying on the ground, was torn into strips and wrapped around the forked end of the sticks, and Langdon found himself in possession of a pair of tolerably comfortable crutches. On closer examination

it was ascertained that his limb was not broken, as at first supposed, though a piece of the bone had been carried off by the ball, which made an ugly but not a dangerous wound. However, Langdon could not put his foot to the ground.

The Federal soldiers, after doing all they could for him, left him to take care of himself. At once he set off as rapidly as he could, down a path that led to a house to which the soldiers had directed his attention. At first he traveled as fast as a person would go in a moderate walk. But it was not long before he began to feel the effects of fatigue, and by the time he had reached the dwelling which was his immediate objective point, he was very much exhausted. When he finally rapped on the door, there was no response, except the echo in the hall. The place had been deserted the day before, and the inmates had fled, horror-stricken.

Langdon was most grievously disappointed. Believing there was no one at home, he pushed open the door, which was unlocked, went into the parlor, and fell upon a sofa in order to rest, and think what was best to be done. His wound was becoming exceedingly painful. It would not do to remain here, he thought, as he could form no idea when the owner would return. Besides, if the Federals should send back an ambulance, it would be directed to this house. He thought, since the next dwelling was further from the battle field, it would be more likely to be inhabited. He determined, therefore, to push on further down the river, as it would be useless to retrace his steps. Again he started, and had not proceeded far before he discovered another dwelling seemingly about two miles distant. It was at the opposite side of a wide plantation. At his rate of travel it required two hours for him to reach this place. He felt himself growing faint and sick. Every step was made

in pain. It was with a feeling, therefore, of relief he hobbled up to the front gate, and moved wearily along the gravel walk to the house. To his inexpressible disappointment, he saw not a single human being, and heard not a sound except that made by a few fowls and an old dog, that barked feebly, and then went up to the pale man on crutches, glad to see even a stranger. Langdon rapped on the door, but there was no answer. This place was not only abandoned, but it had been ravaged and despoiled. Everything about was in confusion. Langdon thought he would be compelled to go into camp here till he could be relieved by the owner or some of the neighbors, and he began to look around to see what he could find to sustain the physical man. He went to the meat house and the pantry and the safe, but not a morsel of food could he discover. Who was the author of this confusion and devastation? As we are not writing a history, we shall not undertake to answer the question. We state only such facts as concern our story.

What could Langdon now do? It would be ruinous to return. He was several miles from the battle-ground, and nothing could be gained by returning, except the possibility of falling in with some one traveling the highway. It would be best, he concluded, to go on in the direction in which he had started. Under this impression, he again started forward, pursuing the paths and roads which led from one plantation to another. The day was sultry, and Langdon was growing weaker under the hot sunbeams, which poured down upon him from the clear, blue sky. It was some distance to another plantation, but Langdon could see an opening through the tall trees, and he rightly conjectured that there was a field not far off. Again he was trudging along his weary way. In half an hour he had reached

another large plantation. Though he could see no dwelling, yet he thought he could descry something like smoke curling up amid a clump of trees. There was a path running through the middle of a vast field which presented to the eye a wide expanse of young corn as high as one's shoulders. The owner had ceased to plant cotton. Langdon followed the path as fast as he could possibly travel. His strength was now rapidly declining. He had exhausted the water in his canteen, and did not dare to go to the river, which appeared to be more than half a mile off, to replenish it. It would be losing too much precious time. His lips felt parched, and his tongue was beginning to cleave to the roof of his mouth. Every few steps he anxiously looked forward to the clump of trees. Presently he heard a dog bark in that direction, and this inspired him with fresh courage and fortitude. His armpits were extremely chafed and tender, and his wound was burning like fire. A ball had also grazed his head, and it was this which prostrated him senseless to the earth. He hobbled on, trembling in every limb, and with perspiration streaming from every pore. He asked himself how much longer it would be possible to endure such excruciating pain and intense agony. Must he not in a few moments drop dead, from sheer exhaustion? He paused a moment, and earnestly invoked Divine aid. Then he moved on, for when he stopped he seemed to be burning up. "Oh, God! save me!" he tried to say aloud, but his lips were glued together. He looked forward, and thought he discovered the top of a building through the branches of the trees. He was only a few hundred yards off, and must he give up and die when help might be so near? His brain seemed to be in a whirl, as he dragged himself along, and his vision was growing dim. The world was turning round. In this state he reached

the grove, which was a large yard. There was a mist before his eyes ; but he felt sure that he saw a house, and he perceived the outlines of a human form. He could not move another step. Gathering up all his strength, he uttered a wild wail, reeled—the world was involved in darkness—he fell to the earth and he knew no more.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE RESCUE.

"The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,  
Sat by his fire and talk'd the night away."

"Look, Papa!" exclaimed Mary Smith, excitedly. Her attention had been attracted by the strange outcry, and she saw the man, as he reeled and fell. The thought flashed through her mind that it might be Bathie, and it caused her face to turn pale.

"What is it?" asked Mr. Smith, who was sawing a barrel, the noise of which had prevented his hearing Langdon's last wailing cry.

"Come, Papa, look at the man!" she quickly exclaimed, and immediately started off briskly to the spot where Langdon lay, in a state of unconsciousness. She soon reached the prostrate form, and was glad and sorry that it was not Bathie. In a moment more Mr. Smith was at her side, who, at a glance, took in the situation.

"It is a soldier," he remarked, "from the fight on yesterday. He has fainted. Run to the house and get some brandy and water."

While Mary was gone, Smith called two or three negro men from the horse-lot, for the purpose of removing the fallen man without delay. Taking a blanket, they laid the body upon it and bore it to the house. Smith sprinkled cool water in the patient's face, and forced a little diluted brandy down his throat, which presently had the effect of partially arousing him. After the lapse of a short time he was restored to consciousness. The first object he beheld was Mary, standing by

his bedside, fanning him, and looking at him with an expression of unfeigned commiseration.

"Water!" he said, in a whisper.

A dipperful was handed him, from which Langdon drained the last drop.

"Some more, please," he whispered.

"Not now," answered Mary. "You shall have more presently."

Langdon gazed into her face so earnestly that Mary turned her head. Then he groaned, fell back upon his pillow, and was soon asleep. Smith took occasion to dress his wound while Langdon was held fast in the embrace of "nature's sweet restorer."

"Let him alone now, till he wakes, and then I guess he'll be all right," said Mr. Smith.

It was after dark before Langdon again opened his eyes. He felt like another man, though he could not move his limbs without pain.

"Fair lady," he said to Mary, who had been fanning him for two hours, "will you have the kindness to tell me where I am?"

"You are on the plantation of Col. Beaumont," said Mary, in low, soft tones, that somehow sent a thrill through the soldier's frame. "You have been here several hours."

"How did I get here?"

"I heard your awful scream, and saw you fall. Of course, we immediately went to your assistance, and brought you to the house. But would you not like to eat something?"

"Yes, indeed," answered Langdon, "for I am half famished. Some water first, if you please."

Mary gave it, then went out of the room, but soon returned, followed by a servant, bearing a tray on which were several smoking dishes.

"I thought you would be hungry when you should awake, so I had something prepared for you."

"May the Lord bless you for your kindness," remarked Langdon, as he made a vigorous attack upon the edibles.

"If I can be of no further service," said Mary, "I will retire."

"Not yet, please," said Langdon, "I feel that I can sit up, and I would like to talk to you."

"My father," replied Mary, "says that sleep will be the best medicine for you."

"But, fair doctress, you see I am not sleepy. Talk will do me good, too. I do not like to dispute the correctness of your prescription, but I cannot follow it now. One has to wait till he can obtain permission of Morpheus."

"True," said Mary, "but the petition of one in your condition, to him, would not be in vain."

"But I should be pleased to know whose hospitality I am now enjoying, and to whom I now have the honor of speaking. You are the daughter of Col. Beaumont, I presume?"

"No, sir," said Mary, with a tinge of sadness in her voice, and looking him squarely in the face. "I am the daughter of his overseer, and my name is Mary Smith."

A slight shade of disappointment passed over his handsome features. Mary, with the quick, keen intuition of woman, noticed it, but whether she really divined the cause or not, she felt so little interest, outside of ordinary sympathy with human suffering, in this handsome young soldier, that it would have made little difference with her what might be his opinion of her social position. She knew very little of the conventionalities of fashionable society, and she could not see why an overseer's daughter, if worthy and intelligent, should not be as highly respected as the President's daughter. Why

should they not be equal? At any rate, Bathie had never treated her otherwise than if she had been the peer of the proudest lady of the land. So long as this was the case, she cared little for the opinions of such people as Mrs. De Lancy.

Bathie had not informed her of his engagement to Genie De Lancy, but he had alluded to the young lady herself in several of his letters; and whenever he did so, Mary discovered that the bare thought of his marrying another pierced her heart like a blunt-pointed knife. He loved her as a sister, but with Mary mere sisterly affection was an impossibility. No sister, if he had had one, could ever have lavished upon him such undying love as gushed forth from the very depths of her being. Some women love thus, and when they do, and discover that they have little grounds for hope of compensation, their sufferings and disappointment are too intense to be portrayed by human words. Old people who have lost all the ardor of youth, including almost the memory of it, and people "righteous overmuch," who can see nothing but evil in any work of fiction and romance, may be disposed to sneer at descriptions of the holiest feelings of the young; but even in what they call "love-sick novels," there is scarcely a character so overdrawn, that, with some slight modification, does not find a parallel, or counterpart, on the arena of actual life. It is certainly not wrong to portray the sacred emotions, hopes, and aspirations of the young in affairs of the heart; let the cynical, if they will, manifest contempt for these things. We would in these pages attempt to elevate and refine the character of the young by showing the beauty of that pure, chaste, holy love which God implanted in the human breast for the accomplishment of the wisest purposes.

We do not hold up poor Mary Smith as an excep-

tional character. There are hundreds like her. What distress, suspense, and anguish she suffered in the early period of her life can never be known. Bathie was now "in the war," and Mary watched its progress with keener interest on his account. The great issues involved in the dreadful contest were not half so absorbing as the one issue of her love. When news of a battle in which Bathie's command was engaged, was received, she was in a state of distressing suspense till she learned that he was safe. He was almost the sole object of her meditations by day, and he gave direction and shape to her dreams by night. A young woman with such intense feelings, especially under the circumstances which surrounded Mary, truly deserves commiseration. It would be saying little to assert that such a one would prove a rare jewel to the man who thus absorbs her whole mental being. If there is reciprocity of sentiment, as there was not in this case, then marriage would, indeed, make them "one flesh."

With such feelings Mary cared little for Langdon's opinion, when she informed him that she was the daughter of an overseer. Probably she may have felt a little contempt for him, as she observed his disappointment, as she interpreted it. However, it was only a passing shade, which, more rapidly than a dissolving view, changed into surprise; for she certainly did not have the inelegant airs and manners which he had generally noticed in the daughters of overseers.

"It is due you that I should inform you," said Langdon, "who your unfortunate guest is."

"It matters not," said Mary, indifferently. "You are a wounded soldier, whom it is our bounden duty to relieve, to the extent of our ability."

"You really do not care, then, to know my name?" asked Langdon.

“Except as a matter of convenience,” she replied, in the same careless tone, “it can make no difference. We might have occasion to call you by name sometimes.”

“For your convenience, then,” said Langdon, “I will force the information upon you, that my name is Charles Langdon.”

To this she merely bowed. After some further general conversation, Mary retired.

## CHAPTER IX.

### CONSEQUENCES OF THE RESCUE.

"I cannot love him,  
Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble—  
A gracious person; but I cannot love him."

In a few days, Langdon, under the care of such a fair physician as Mary, began rapidly to improve. But he could not fail to observe the expression of melancholy in her face, which he thought was rather unnatural to one so young. Her look of sadness impressed him with the thought that she was the prey of some secret sorrow. He had watched her as closely as etiquette would permit, and the discovery of this peculiarity had a tendency to perplex him. Had she been thus early intensely disappointed in some *affaire de cœur*? That thought proved rather disagreeable, for the truth was, Langdon felt a deep interest in this beautiful flower on the banks of Big Black, "wasting its sweetness on the desert air." Nor did he attempt to deceive himself with the notion that his interest in the fair maid grew out of a mere temporary admiration. He well knew the symptoms of the "tender passion" in its purity, and admitted to his consciousness that she had, by her amiability, elegance of manners and elevating conversation, made a lasting impression upon his heart. At first, the thought of her humble, obscure origin was a little revolting to his pride, but he soon discovered in her character so many noble traits that they outweighed lowliness of birth.

If both parties had been mutually attracted, Langdon would have rejoiced at his situation and have been delighted with his pleasing captivity; but he could not

detect the slightest indication of a return of his newly-awakened affection. When she met his gaze, there was no timid dropping of the eyes, and no tell-tale blushes. If he looked earnestly into her face to detect any symptom of incipient love, he was rewarded with only a look of innocent surprise. She manifested no desire whatever to be in his presence. She waited on him faithfully and tenderly as long as his condition made it necessary, and then appeared to lose all interest in him. So soon as he was able to be up, she went no more to his room, except when he specially requested it. From all these little circumstances Langdon easily perceived that he had not inspired her even with sentiments of warm friendship. It was evident to himself that he would have to be more demonstrative. He determined that, if possible, he would win this timid country girl, who, in their brief acquaintance, had shown indications of intellectual culture far beyond what he had expected. On the third day of his confinement, Mary, one morning, said to him—

“Would you not like something to read? A good book might help you to kill the time.”

“Do you read for that purpose?” asked Langdon, with a laugh.

“No, sir; I never read anything, except with a view to improve my mind. But I thought that, in your condition, the time might hang heavily on your hands.”

“What books have you?” asked Langdon, with interest.

“I have quite a number of histories,” she modestly answered, “all the English and American poets, the British essayists, and a number of the classical authors—text-books, though.”

“Are you a graduate?” he asked, with increasing interest.

“Yes, sir.”

"From what school?"

She gave the name.

"That is one of the best institutions in the North," said Langdon, in surprise.

"I believe it compares well with others, sir."

"Do you read light literature?"

"Yes, sir. I have Scott's novels and some others of the standard authors."

"Have you any of Dickens' works?"

"Only one volume. I never could read Dickens' novels with any relish, judging from the one I managed to wade through."

"What objection have you to Dickens?"

"Well, sir, he seems to be wanting in reverence for sacred things. I cannot admire anything which does not have some tendency to refine the sensibilities and ennoble the character."

"You differ widely from the reading public," said Langdon. "It is a serious undertaking to oppose the judgment of the world."

"I do not pretend to be a critic," answered Mary. "I am speaking only of what pleases my own taste. Dickens may be a great writer, but he is not my ideal of a true author of fiction."

"I agree with you," said Langdon. "But how did you manage to accumulate so many books away out here, so far from any town?"

"Do you think that only city people ought to have good libraries? But, to tell the truth, a schoolmate gave nearly all these books to me," she said, turning her head, that she might hide the treacherous blush which she feared would mount her face.

"Indeed!" and Langdon fell to thinking.

"What shall I bring you to read?" presently inquired Mary.

"I do not believe I care to read anything just now," slowly answered Langdon. "I feel more like talking. I am lonesome—*ennui*, you know. Will you please sit down and chat with me a little while?"

"Certainly, if it will afford you any pleasure," said Mary, who had risen to go.

"You have very little curiosity, Miss Mary," began Langdon. "You have never asked me a question about myself, and never even called my name, have you?"

"There has been no occasion for it," she said, with a smile. "I am sure I would call your name, if it were necessary."

"You do not know who I am, though!"

"I can tell, from your uniform, that you are some kind of officer in the service of the Confederacy."

"I presume," said Langdon, "that I am not the sort of officer you take me to be; for, though I am in the garb of a soldier, I am a man of peace, and it is my duty to make peace. Do you understand?"

"I cannot say that I do."

"I am Chaplain, then, — of — Regiment of Mississippi Volunteers."

"That is, you preach to the soldiers."

"Exactly. I hope you are religious."

"I try to be, sir," she answered, with deep seriousness, "but I know I am far from the standard I would like to attain."

"I have no doubt you are better than I am," said Langdon, "therefore, I shall not preach you a sermon."

"O, I hope, sir, you are better than I am. I should dislike to think otherwise."

"Well, never mind about that now. I cannot think you are in need of spiritual advice. But I need advice myself."

Mary looked at him in surprise.

"I think you can advise me, too," said Langdon.

"I, sir?"

"Certainly. You are the very one."

"I am but a poor counsellor on any subject," she answered. "I have no experience, having been reared on the banks of Big Black."

"Nevertheless, I think you can advise me. You have been raised up here, far removed from the vain frivolities and hypocrisies of so-called fashionable society. You know nothing of the deceitful arts practiced by those in high life, as they are pleased to call it. I have been accustomed to fashionable society."

"I am very simple in regard to all that," answered Mary, with a smile, "perhaps more simple than I would like to be. No one wants to be considered a sylvan bumpkin, or a rural dude, as a—a-friend of mine says." It seemed that Mary could not mention any thought or subject, even remotely connected with Bathie, without confusion and embarrassment.

"I have learned to love the honest bumpkin much better than the polished hypocrite. I was reared in fashionable society, as I said just now, and I know something of its follies and arts of deception. But I am wandering from the subject on which, I trust, you will not hesitate to advise me."

"I have not the presumption to think for a moment that I can give you counsel."

"I beg leave to differ from you."

"Have it your own way, then," said Mary, with a little laugh, "and make me *per force* a Delphic oracle. Probably I may confuse you with a few sibylline leaves. What is the subject on which I am to advise?"

"I suppose you have studied Psychology? But whether you have or not, there are some things with

which you are acquainted, who have had experience in the affairs of the heart."

"You are presuming a little too much," said Mary, trying to smile.

"Never mind," said Langdon, "hear me. I know a beautiful lady, intelligent, refined and elegant—in a word, endowed with such graces that I cannot resist her charms. I am held fast in the golden fetters of Cupid. She does not know it, nor, I suppose, does she even suspect it, and I am afraid to tell her."

Mary felt some interest in what he was saying. His experience was certainly similar to her own, and she wished for light herself on this delicate subject. Langdon paused, and fixed his eyes upon her, but he perceived that she did not understand, or at least pretended that she did not.

"Would you reveal it to her," he presently asked, "if you were in my place?"

"Why not? Of what are you afraid?"

"Well, I am in suspense now, but if I tell her this delicate secret, and she should not favor my suit, I will be deprived of even the small pleasure of suspense. That, you know, is better than blank despair."

"I should think," said Mary, timidly, "it would depend upon the nature of the person, whether suspense is preferable to certainty."

"Please elaborate your remark a little. I cannot say that I understand you clearly."

"I suppose," she answered, "there are persons, the termination of whose suspense would not be the beginning of despair. Instead of yielding to a feeling of that sort, they would strive against it, and probably overcome it, and would thus be in a happier condition than that of suspense. You can determine, of course, whether you have that kind of a disposition or not."

"There is sound philosophy implied in what you say," replied Langdon, with deliberation. "But we do not know ourselves. We cannot tell what we would do under given circumstances till we are actually tried. I do not, therefore, know whether I would sink into the lowest depths of despair, or not, if my suspense should end in a manner unfavorable to my wishes. But in these times of uncertainty, I have an idea of putting an end to my suspense, because it will soon become intolerable. It will not require long to do so."

"No," said Mary, carelessly, "I suppose you can easily write to the lady."

"I will not even have to write," replied Langdon, gazing earnestly and searchingly into her face. But Mary returned the look, as if she supposed his thoughts, in a brief fit of abstraction, were fixed upon some fair one at a distance. She said only—

"So much the better for you."

"You are hard to take a hint," said Langdon, with abruptness.

"I do not understand you," she answered, bestowing upon him a bewildered look.

"If you cannot guess a very plain riddle, Miss Mary, I will have to solve it for you. You are the lady to whom I allude."

Langdon watched her eagerly. She was taken by surprise, for the reason that her thoughts were mostly with another person. O, if Bathie had only made such a declaration, how she would have trembled with joy. But such language, coming from a stranger, at first produced only surprise. She opened her eyes wide, and stared at the speaker in a manner indicative of a lack of full realization of the force of his words, and said, in a low tone—

"You astonish me!"

"Why should it be so astonishing?" he asked, in disappointment. "Could you not read in my face what I have said? But do not answer if you are amazed and confused. That would be unjust to both of us. Do not end my suspense till you have taken time for reflection. Permit me to say, though, that I loved you the very first moment I saw your face. You know nothing about me except what I have told you; that is true. But my high and holy calling forbids all deception. Yet, as to my moral and social standing, I can, and will, give you satisfactory reference. I am a native of this State; born in Lafayette County, and educated at the University of Virginia. I assure you, you can raise no objection on moral or social grounds."

"But you know nothing about me," remarked Mary, quietly.

"You have told me as much as I want to know. I ask only your heart and hand."

Mary had never heard such words before. She knew not what it was to be loved, but she knew what it was to love, with her whole mind, soul and strength. Certainly she could not think less of the young chaplain for expressing himself as he had just done; for he had paid her the highest and sincerest compliment man can offer a woman.

"I know," continued Langdon, after a pause of brief duration, "this declaration is sudden, and probably unexpected."

"It certainly is," said Mary, gently. "I had no idea you were thinking of me, except as a nurse or waiting-maid."

"Will you permit me to propound a single question, which I hope you will have the goodness to answer? I dare not ask any other to-day, for I am in no condition to bear any very great disappointment."

“Let me hear the question,” said Mary, shrinkingly, for she dreaded it, “and I will answer, if I think proper.”

“In justice to me,” said Langdon, “you ought to answer. Tell me if this is the first declaration you have ever heard addressed to you?”

“It is,” promptly replied the young lady, who could answer sincerely such a question, without surrendering the secret which lay enshrined deep in the chambers of her heart.

“Let us drop the subject for to-day,” said he, with a brightening face. “I hope you will reflect seriously upon my proposal, and give me a favorable answer before I rejoin my regiment, which I must do in a short time.”

This was a wise proposition, for Langdon’s peace of mind ; for if he had insisted upon an immediate answer, Mary would have promptly rejected his suit. During their conversation she had been thinking of Bathie, and she thought it almost treachery to listen to such language as had been uttered by Langdon. Did not her heart belong to him ? Were not all her thoughts about him ? What would he think if he knew that she had quietly listened to a proposal from an entire stranger ?

After she left Langdon that morning, to attend to domestic affairs, these questions passed through her mind ; but immediately the reflection rose among her secret meditations, like some dark shadow, that the relation between herself and Bathie was not of such a character as to provoke his jealousy at what had occurred. Indeed, it was a bitter suspicion, that if he were present now and should have no objection to Langdon’s social standing, in all probability he would approve of the proposal. It was a thought of anguish that Bathie might be glad to see her the wife of another. Like the rest of her sex, she thought she must marry at some time.

Why then, she timidly and tremblingly asked, let slip what might be a good opportunity? This stranger was handsome, well-educated and respectable, or he would not be a minister. Might she not lead a useful and happy life as the helpmate of a clergyman?

Mary proposed such questions to herself, and reflected over the matter as much as its importance deserved; yet she could not resign all hopes of Bathie. Since he had left Genie in the far-away North, she did not know but that he might yet be heart-free; and so long as this was the case she determined not to be entangled or embarrassed with any engagement that might interfere with her prospects in that direction. The uncertainties by which she was surrounded at last induced poor Mary to play a part of very doubtful propriety. Indeed, we have used language too mild, for her course must be condemned, as it was lacking in candor and sincerity. We do not pretend to justify her, but merely state the facts.

Langdon, for several days, said nothing directly on the subject which lay uppermost in his mind. During this time he watched the object of his deep affection with as much scrutiny as the laws of propriety would allow; but if she had changed since he made his proposal, he could not discover it. She could meet him without confusion or blushing, and could converse without the least embarrassment.

At last Langdon had no excuse for remaining longer. He must return to his command. Therefore, he determined to learn his fate without further delay.

"Miss Mary," he said, one evening, "I dare not stay here more than another day. I would have gone before now had I not been detained by the hope of accomplishing my object. You have had ample time to reflect upon my proposal. Are you not ready to answer?"



"I certainly feel flattered," she replied, slowly, "but I think the proposal premature. You must remember that our acquaintance is very limited."

"What is it you fear?" he asked, feeling encouraged that his suit was not rejected outright. "I will honestly give you any information in reference to myself that you may desire. I tell you plainly that I have no great amount of this world's goods. If I get through the war, I will still be a minister; and I sincerely believe that you will make such a wife as I want. You cannot object on account of my family relations; and I want you to be perfectly satisfied before you entrust your happiness to my keeping. I would not deceive you in anything."

"I have no fear of that," replied Mary; "nor am I weighing such considerations as those to which you allude. I have no doubt that your social position is far superior to mine, for in that regard I have nothing to boast of. You know that I am the daughter of a poor overseer, with no prospects."

"And you are not ashamed of your position?"

"I am not ashamed of it; but I am aware of its disadvantages when I contrast my condition with that of persons who know not what it is to feel the need of wealth?"

"Do you have any disposition to make a display in fashionable society?"

"Not in the least."

"I thought," said Langdon, "I could not be mistaken in your disposition. If, then, you can honor my deep love with reciprocity, I beg you, be mine."

"I do not wish to take such a step as that now," answered Mary, shaking her head.

"I will leave it to you, of course, to appoint the time. When would suit you?"

"I do not want to make any promises."

"Why not, unless you reject me entirely?"

Mary was silent. Perhaps conscience was reproaching her for her duplicity. She could not ignore the fact that her very hesitation and her general manner had made the impression on Langdon's mind that he was the possessor of her heart. How could she tell him the whole truth? She had not in any of their conversations alluded to Bathie, and Langdon had not a suspicion that her heart was preoccupied. Was she not doing wrong? But what else could she do? When it should be demonstrated beyond all dispute that Bathie cared not for her, except as a sister, why should she not wed the young minister, and make the most of life? But it was revolting to her moral sensibilities to practice deception. All this flashed through her mind while Langdon awaited her answer.

"Tell me plainly," exclaimed Langdon, "do you reject my suit?"

"No," replied Mary, in a low, tremulous tone, which the young man misconstrued.

"What is your wish, then?" he eagerly asked.

"I scarcely know what. The times are too uncertain to take the step now."

"After the war ends, may I claim you?"

"That depends upon circumstances. I told you that I do not want to make any promises. Let us wait till the war ends."

"Will you correspond with me, in the meantime?" asked Langdon, rather despondingly.

"Yes," said Mary, after a momentary pause. "I can see no objection to that, if you will keep it secret from your comrades."

"Your letters," said Langdon, emphatically, "shall be regarded by me as too sacred to be gazed upon by

other eyes than my own. If you wish, you can write under a pseudonym, so that if, by any accident, they should fall into other hands, the fair author cannot be identified. Will you not exchange rings with me?"

"I would rather not," said Mary, with a smile. "That looks too much like a real engagement."

"If you won't do this," said the disappointed, but persistent, young man, "I have one more request, which I beg you not to refuse."

"What is it?"

"Let us exchange pictures. I want to wear yours next to my heart. It will be cheering to me in the hours of lonesomeness and trial. Camp-life is very monotonous. Frequently there are many hours when we have nothing in the world to do but sit down and fold our hands. We have nothing to read. At such times it will be a pleasure to me to gaze upon your image and think of the future. One thought, you know, is associated with another. Just the act of looking upon your beautiful picture will awaken good thoughts that might otherwise lie dormant. Thus your compliance with my request will prove not only a source of pleasure, but of usefulness. Now, please do not refuse!"

"It would, no doubt, be cruel in me," replied Mary, smiling, "to withhold from you the source of such a simple pleasure. So I will comply with your request."

"Thank you, dearest!" exclaimed Langdon, earnestly. "You will make me a better man. I will be stimulated in the performance of my duties by thinking of you."

As he talked eagerly in this style, Mary listened in pleased and sad silence. She could not but feel twinges of conscience at the thought of her deception. She perceived that Langdon had unqualified faith in her sincerity.

He attributed, she thought, her seeming timidity to

modesty and prudence, when, in fact, her indisposition to commit herself arose from pure fraudulence. The feeling of guilt caused blushes to steal over her fair face, and Langdon very naturally attributed such indications to modest affection for himself.

The next day she allowed him to depart with his heart throbbing with the delusive consciousness that he was loved. Poor Mary was so overcome by the thought of her insincerity that she went off and wept bitterly.

When Langdon reached his command, he waited but a day or two before he wrote a letter to Mary, according to agreement. He waited patiently for an answer, but, to his intense disappointment, he received none. We will proceed to give the reason why the young lady did not write.

## CHAPTER X.

### VICKSBURG.

“Who dies in vain  
Upon his country's war-fields, and within  
The shadow of her altars?”

Vicksburg! who does not remember the hilled city, crimsoned with the blood of heroes? It was here, both inside and outside the fortifications, deeds of daring were performed which will never occupy a single page of human history. The true history of a war has never been written, and it never will be. Individual adventures, notwithstanding that some are more wonderful and startling than the brilliant conceptions of Romance or the wild creations of Fancy, are entirely ignored or absorbed in the grander evolutions of the division and corps. The iron pen of history is too large and unwieldy to put upon record personal prowess, except in the case of the military magnate. The exploits of a single private soldier bear to the records of the army scarcely the insignificant relation of a solitary drop of water to the ocean. He may slay his hundreds in battle; his example of firmness and courage may be the true cause of victory; yet all this goes to make up the “biography of the regiment,” as a distinguished chieftain calls it, in which he is regarded as a mere cipher. His deed may possibly be an ephemeral notice in a local newspaper, or may constitute the topic of conversation for a day among his personal friends. Permanent history has no place for the perpetuation of his merit. Many a poor soldier sleeps in the ensanguined soil of Vicksburg who richly deserves a statue of marble to preserve his hard-earned

fame. This assertion embraces the "blue" and the "gray." No feeling of mere sectional animosity shall find vent in acrimonious words to disfigure the pages of the present story. It does not come within our province to determine who is to be censured for the inauguration of the War of Secession. The responsibility for beginning it must be settled by the proper authority. We must, however, make a brief statement of a few facts in regard to the siege of Vicksburg, with which our story is closely connected.

The downfall of Vicksburg was, in our opinion, the subversion of the Confederate States. The control of the "father of waters" practically and effectually severed the Confederacy. Each portion of the country, after this severance of the South's main artery, was compelled to look after its own interest. There could no longer be open communication between the eastern and western divisions. But, notwithstanding this calamity, which was so disheartening, and which constituted such just grounds of despondency, and which many foresaw must finally culminate in the complete overthrow of the Confederate government, the contest was still vigorously prosecuted.

The contention for Vicksburg was desperate, as it was the last Confederate stronghold on the Mississippi river. The Federal military authorities, early in the war, perceived the importance of obtaining control of this river, which penetrated into the very heart of the seceded States. Therefore, as soon as possible, they began to make the most vigorous and obstinate efforts to achieve a result that would make them "master of the situation."

A few words will explain in what manner they succeeded in the accomplishment of their purpose.

In the Spring of 1862 the Confederates were forced to evacuate Columbus, Ky. In April, Island 10 was

captured by the Northern forces, and on the 6th of June they entered Memphis, Tenn., without resistance. Nor were the Union troops idle below Vicksburg; for, early in April, a powerful squadron, under the command of a man who was unanimously dubbed "Beast" Butler, and who acquired an eternity of horrid fame, and Admiral Farragut, proceeded from the Gulf of Mexico up to New Orleans, and commenced a furious bombardment on its forts. They soon captured that ill-starred place, whose inhabitants were insulted, robbed and subjected to a systematic course of cruelty, condemned by every law of civilized warfare. For this the "Beast" was mainly, perhaps solely, responsible. Thus, above and below, the doomed "city of the hills," with its impregnable fortifications, was threatened by indefatigable foes, determined upon its capture.

In the first months of the year 1863 it was resolved by the military authorities of Washington that Vicksburg should be taken, at all hazards. They were provoked by Gen. Pemberton's stubborn and successful resistance. Accordingly, they at first endeavored to reduce the place by bombardment from the river; but the natural and artificial fortifications were too strong for this method of attack. They next attempted to change the course of the mighty Mississippi river, by cutting a channel across the parabolic curve in the stream at the point of which stood the little city, partially hidden among high hills, which bristled with many huge and formidable siege pieces. But this project, which at first seemed plausible to a man ignorant of the laws of natural philosophy, proved signally abortive. These successive failures at last forced the conviction that the defiant stronghold could be taken only by land forces approaching from the rear. Acting upon this conviction, Grant, on the 30th of April, crossed the river at Bruinsburg, and the next

day defeated a small force of Confederates at Port Gibson, which slight calamity was immediately followed by the evacuation of Grand Gulf. The Union army then at once swept around to the rear of Vicksburg. With the battle on Big Black, no more resistance was offered till Grant was within shelling distance of the city.

Pemberton, who appreciated the great importance of Vicksburg in a military aspect, formed the heroic resolution to hold out as long as possible, in the hope that something would be done for his relief. But, to his painful disappointment, nothing was done. Whether it was really practicable to have rescued him from his perilous situation, is a question which the nature of our story does not require us to decide. But we must take the liberty of saying there was sufficient time to have made at least an effort to save an army of nearly 30,000 brave men, who were cut off from communication from all other points. Day and night, from front and rear, from land and water, shot and shell poured into the little city, and yet there were few casualties. It was a mere waste of powder and lead. The citizens soon became accustomed to these iron showers, and women and children walked along the streets as though there were not a foe in a hundred miles. The army held out for forty-seven days and nights. While Grant was leisurely shelling Vicksburg, what was the state of affairs only a few miles away? Why was it that Gen. Johnston, who was near enough to hear the cannonading, made not even the semblance of a feint to divert the attention of the enemy, and thus, as stern old Blucher said on the bloody field of Waterloo, give Pemberton's army "time to breathe?"

The war clouds have long since rolled away, and we can calmly look back at the situation. We have it from reliable history that Gen. Johnston, at Canton, had

under his command an army of 24,000 men, some of them picked troops from the East. The militia might also have been called out, and the combined forces of Pemberton and Johnston could have been increased to an army very nearly equal to that of Grant. Does it not appear that Grant might have been forced to raise the siege, with an army of 24,000 opposing him in the rear, and 28,000 in his front? Could not his supplies have been totally cut off? It is, we believe, now generally conceded that if Stonewall Jackson or Lee had been in Johnston's shoes, Pemberton's army would have been saved, even if Grant could not have been driven back to his gunboats, from the mere difficulty of obtaining commissary supplies. Taking a retrospective view, it seems that an effort might have been made to disturb the enemy's communication with his base of supplies. But nothing of the sort ever was attempted, except on a very small scale, by an obscure subaltern officer, Capt. Bathie Beaumont, whose remarkable history has forced into this volume the present brief chapter on Vicksburg.

In justice to Gen. Johnston we must say that he sent a messenger to Pemberton, stating that about the 7th of July an attempt would be made for his relief; but this messenger did not arrive till it was too late. Pemberton surrendered on a day famous in American history—the 4th of July. For this he was severely rebuked and denounced. Some persons were so mortified and enraged that they did not hesitate to accuse the unfortunate General of treachery. It was loudly asked why he selected this particular day, so dear and sacred to the Southern heart on account of its associations with the struggle for liberty in 1776? When he perceived that surrender was inevitable, why did he not lay down his arms on the 2d or 3d, or hold out to the 5th, and thus have somewhat diminished the glory of the enemy's

triumph? The whole Southern people felt that they had been insulted by one of their commanders, and the consequence was, language of a very profane type was freely applied to Pemberton. What Pemberton's reasons were, we know not, if he ever gave any. But we regard it as unfortunate that defeat fell to the lot of any of the Southern armies on this particular day. Once it was a gala day throughout the length and breadth of the land. Grand barbecues were popular. Orators made flaming speeches, and there was universal rejoicing. All this has passed away. Whether the 4th of July will ever again be celebrated in the South, we know not.

## CHAPTER XI.

### AN AWFUL DISASTER.

“Amaz’d he stands, nor voice nor body stirs;  
Words had no passage, tears no issue found.”

Human happiness or unhappiness depends upon circumstances so trivial, considered in themselves, that we are filled with astonishment when we review the scenes of our own irrecoverable past. Eliminating special providence from the features which regulate destiny, our lives appear as a tissue of accidents. It is a fact, which cannot be disputed, that they are only to a limited extent directed by our own will. Looking back, we will be convinced that we have not accomplished what we intended. Our programme may have been carefully made out, but in the execution there has been signal failure. We find that very little, insignificant things have turned our course and disarranged our plans. “There is but a step between me and death,” said David, once, in a critical period of his life. Oftentimes one single step would save an individual’s life, and oftentimes a deviation from his course of one inch would cause his death.

These few observations have been suggested by an event which occurred during the siege of Vicksburg, and which changed the apparent destiny of many human beings. A moment of time, an inch of space, would have averted a terrible misfortune, and a train of circumstances quite different from those we are now recording would have followed. But that moment of time, which made no impression upon millions of lives, contained the germs of events that have developed into the present volume.

It was one bright evening, early in June, 1863. All that long, hot day the bombardment from river and land had been carried on with savage vigor and ferocity. The day before the enemy had made an assault, but had been driven back in utter discomfiture and with considerable loss. The Northern soldiers seemed to be enraged by their defeat, and, judging from their conduct, they were thirsting for revenge. So, at an early hour the next morning, shot and shell were pouring into the city, and fell in every direction, seemingly as thick as a shower of hail-stones. The atmosphere was filled with these fearful messengers of death. It would have occurred to a spectator in the distance, or to one even hearing the terrible noise of the cannonading, that the projectiles, coming with such velocity, and exploding in such rapid succession, were doing the most astounding execution; but if the spectator had been in the town itself, he would soon have come to a different conclusion. The truth was, this noisy demonstration of hostility was but an extravagant, useless expenditure of the munitions of war. It is a military proverb that it requires a soldier's weight in lead to kill him in the day of battle. But we may say, with safety, that this proportion was far too small during the memorable siege of Vicksburg. Tons of iron hurtled through the air without drawing a single drop of blood. The shells really did little damage, owing to the peculiar topography of the place, or, as many pious people believed, to the direct protection of the Father of Mercies. The furious bombardment did not prevent people from transacting such business as usually occupies the attention of the inhabitants of a city. They went on buying and selling, marrying and giving in marriage, as if in time of the most profound peace.

Accordingly, that bright evening in June there was

to be a marriage. At 9 o'clock the invited parties were assembled in an elegant residence belonging to one of the citizens, and which was not beyond the range of the enemy's guns, but it had thus far escaped injury. There were not a great many persons present, as there was to be only a marriage, unaccompanied by those festivities which generally make the bride's place of abode very attractive to such as are fond of "good cheer."

The couple soon to be joined in the sacred bonds of wedlock were Capt. Beaumont and Genie De Lancy. The bridegroom was now a splendid type of the finest variety of the human species. The varieties among men, though they do not attract so much attention, yet are as strongly marked as the differences among animals of the equine genus. Bathie's faultless figure and commanding appearance were sufficient to distinguish him, in any concourse of his fellow-beings, as belonging to the highest order of men. Dressed in the Confederate uniform, with its polished buttons arranged in two glistening rows upon his breast; a form tall, stout, straight as an arrow, hazel eyes mild and sparkling and full of intelligence, hair as sable as the raven, Bathie looked every inch a soldier. His complexion was somewhat marred by exposure to all kinds of weather, and though his face was beardless, yet the deficiencies of youth were at least partially atoned for by a certain air of manliness which is generally the result of the growth of years. Bathie, like others of the small class to which he belonged, seemed to have overleaped one of the periods into which human life is divided. He was a child, and then he was a man. On this evening he was unusually gay, which was perfectly natural, under the circumstances. In this respect, however, he offered a marked contrast to Genie, whose beautiful face wore an air of melancholy strangely inharmonious with other surroundings. To say that this

young lady was beautiful, would be a compliment which can be applied to any girl of ordinary attractions. To describe her accurately, we need a word of greater force and comprehensiveness than the term beautiful. Arrayed in pure white, with a wreath of snowy blossoms encircling her head, whose heavy golden hair needed no additions from art, she reminded one of those beings to whom, without irreverence, the term "angelic" might be applied. She was more than beautiful. No picture could have done her justice. There was something in her expression which it was impossible to transfer to canvas; also a delicacy of complexion which no paint could imitate. There are many persons who appear to better advantage in a gilt frame, or even upon a piece of polished pasteboard, than in their own undisguised naturalness; others are always injured by the transfer. The photographer's art conceals beauties as well as blemishes. Genie belonged to the indescribable class. A shade of sorrow or disappointment, on her face would assume a gravity which on the countenance of most people would pass almost unnoticed. She had that rare type of face which would at once give expression to impulses and emotions that on a common countenance would leave no trace of an impression. In most young ladies a smile is destitute of all meaning; but in the smile of Genie there was significance.

When Bathie went into the room from which he was to lead Genie forth into the parlor, to become his wife, he noticed the shade of melancholy to which allusion has been made. In other persons it would hardly have been observed. What was the matter? Why was she not blushing and smiling? Could the soul look through the prison of flesh, and contemplate the future? Was it the thought of the dark uncertainties of the times? Do not people sometimes have premonitions of events

which cast their shadows before, especially events that are fraught with calamity? At any rate, superstitious people so believe.

"Genie, dearest," said Bathie, affectionately, "what is it that makes you look so sad? Is the expression of your face an index to your feelings?"

"I know not why I have such feelings," she responded, in a desponding tone, "but I confess I feel as if I were in the shadow of some terrible misfortune. I am bewildered. I feel as if a great burden, a suffocating incubus were pressing me down."

"Is it the prospect of so soon becoming mine that has such a distressing effect? Do you regret the step you have taken? If so, it is not too late to recede?"

"I have sacrificed much for you," she said, sorrowfully. "Do you want me to recede?"

"By no means, unless you desire it."

"I do not desire it, then," she said. "You know I have left my family and country, and encountered dangers, for you."

"Yes," said Bathie, pleasantly, "you shall tell me all about how you got through the lines, as soon as the ceremony is performed. But I want to tell you, my own darling, you shall never have reason to repent of what you have done, if the burning love of a heart that pulsates only for you will be any compensation. Come, cheer up."

"O, this cruel war between brothers!" she exclaimed, with much energy; "how I wish it were ended. You will soon leave, perhaps?"

"Is it that which distresses you?"

"I cannot say that it is. I do not know what makes me have such strange feelings."

"Come," said Bathie, "let us go to the parlor, and we will talk about it afterwards."

"I am ready," she answered.

Immediately they slowly advanced to the parlor, and stopping about the centre, stood facing the minister. The company stood up, and all eyes were turned toward the couple, except those of poor Mary Smith. We shall make no attempt to portray her feelings, as she beheld her last hope crushed into the dust. Such emotions as her's are beyond the power of words.

It is proper here to state that in two or three days after Langdon left, the Federals made a raid to the plantation of Col. Beaumont, and left it in such a condition that no human being could live on it. Mr. Smith succeeded in making them believe he was a good "Union" man, and obtained permission to carry his family into Vicksburg, intimating that he could make himself useful to the Northern troops. Bathie met Mary on the streets one day, and on the day that Genie arrived, invited her to the marriage. Her removal into the city explains why she made no reply to Langdon's letter, which a Confederate soldier had carried into her neighborhood.

And there she stood, in the parlor, broken-hearted. The ceremony commenced. Let us turn our eyes for a moment to the Federal lines.

O, gunner, in the distance, change the aim of thy piece only the fractional part, yea, the tenth of an inch! It is a purposeless aim. Thou knowest not where thy dreadful missile of death will fall. Stern man of war though thou be, thou hast no desire to cause unnecessary suffering and misery. Thou surely would'st not break up the most lovely social relations in their very incipiency, in a spirit of wantonness! Thou hast not come to this sunny land to destroy the sweet hopes and bright anticipations of those about to enter into that state which the heaven-sanctioned Book pronounces honorable.

Pause for an instant, O bloody gunner, and consider the irreparable damage thy objectless aim may cause. If thou could'st gaze at that bright scene in the parlor, and behold those young faces, wearing that air of seriousness which prevails during the performance of the solemn marriage ceremony, that open-mouthed cannon would surely be turned in another direction. Only pause for just one short moment, gunner, and the result will be different. But thou can'st not see through the darkness. In a few seconds thou wilt be the author of a calamity which, if known to thee, would fill thy soul with horror. Alas ! alas !

The gunner steps back and jerks a string attached to the fuse. There is an earth-shaking explosion. The shell goes whizzing and hissing through the air, true to the cannoner's random aim. The gunner pays no further attention to it. In a few seconds the awful messenger of death reaches the residence which is the scene of bridal gayeties. It suddenly and rudely enters through the upper portion of the high parlor window, strikes in the corner of the room, makes a horrible rent in the floor, and *ricochets* down the hill on which the dwelling is situated, and then bursts into a thousand little fragments. But look in its awful wake. The bridal party was startled and amazed. The minister had just completed the ceremony, and offered up a brief prayer. The two were pronounced husband and wife. Before the silence could be broken, the shell had entered and passed on, and Genie, without a word or groan, dropped heavily to the floor.\*

Bathie, pale as death, stoops down and lifts her up, and friends look horror-stricken. She has fainted, is

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\* This awful disaster was similar to one which occurred in Charleston, S. C.

the thought which first rushes into their minds. She is laid on a sofa, and earnest and rapid efforts are made to restore her to consciousness. An army surgeon, a personal friend of Bathie's, who was present, makes a hasty examination. Turning to Bathie he said, in a low tone—

“It is useless to try to restore her. Life is certainly extinct.”

It was true. The shell, without inflicting external injury, or leaving the slightest trace of visible damage, passed sufficiently near her head to produce instant death. It seemed almost miraculous that no one else in the room received any physical injury; but it was true. We say “physical;” for a mental wound was inflicted upon one of the party, more severe than the pangs of death. Men have been known to sit still, without uttering a groan, while the surgeon's knife and saw severed a limb. It is a fact, that delicate females have endured the most excruciating agonies under the ravages of some loathsome and horrible disease, without a word of complaint escaping their lips. These things sorely test human fortitude. But there are mental tortures which nothing on earth can relieve. Some sudden calamity, like an angry billow, unexpectedly strikes the heart. There is a great, stunning, bewildering shock, and the mind recoils, for a moment, under the overwhelming blow. The mad wave passes on, and the full extent of the damage is estimated. The physical organism has not sufficient capacity to express the emotions of the deeply-disturbed soul. Reason totters and staggers; the bruised heart sinks down. The fountain of tears, which is often a source of relief to the throbbing pangs of grief, seems to be dried up, or hermetically sealed. All the avenues through which ordinarily the tumid feelings can find vent are absolutely closed.

Bathie stood for a moment, like one transfixed, gazing in speechless horror at the prostrate form of his wife. He was confused, stunned, dazed, and seemed to be in a deep study, as if he did not clearly comprehend the disaster. It was difficult to make a reality of this terribly sudden change of destiny. Under such unexpected circumstances, his mind could not at once estimate the whole extent of his misfortune.

There was deep, solemn, awful silence. All present turned their eyes from the corpse to Bathie, as he stood like a statue, gazing, gazing, gazing fixedly and stupidly at the motionless form. Presently there was a change.

## CHAPTER XII.

### A FEARFUL VOW.

“I am burn'd up with inflaming wrath ;  
A rage whose heat hath this condition,  
That nothing can allay—nothing but blood.”

Suddenly Bathie turned round, stood in the middle of the room, and straightened his form to its full height. A change passed over his face, and the pallor was momentarily superseded by a flash of red. His proud figure dilated under the swelling pressure of some strange emotion, and his eyes fairly flashed. His friends gazed at him in wonder. Raising his trembling right hand, he exclaimed, in a hoarse, startling voice—

“God being my Judge, if there is any God, I will avenge her. LIVES for that *one* life. Their blood shall flow like water. I will swim in it. Heretofore I have been fighting for my country, in accordance with the laws of civilized warfare; but henceforth I fight for vengeance. Patriotism is gone. It is swallowed up in the word vengeance. O, Genie, Genie, my sweet bride of only a short moment, must I give thee up? They have plundered my inheritance, but to rob me of thee, a thousand times dearer than all earthly treasure, is more than I can bear!”

He sank down by the sofa, and threw his arms around the beautiful corpse. Imprinting a kiss on the yet warm lips, he said—

“They have destroyed thy young life, my darling, but I will make them regret it. Vengeance! vengeance! shall be my watchword. Farewell, sweet wife. I have nothing now to live for, but to avenge thy death. O,

if their blood could bring thee back to life, it should flow like yonder river."

Presently he rose up. His youthful face became calm, but stern, and his lips were firmly compressed.

"Vengeance, and nothing but vengeance," he muttered, in a low tone.

At this moment the first lieutenant of his company advanced, and extending his hand, said—

"I'll follow you, and stand by you, Captain."

"Thank you, Lieutenant," answered Bathie, "but I give you to understand that I am a changed man. I can never again be what I have been. If you follow me, I warn you that you will go into danger. I shall take my life in my hand and go where none but the desperate will be inclined to follow. I care nothing for life now, except to wreak vengeance upon my enemies. I must have their blood, and no small quantity of it, either."

"You are wrong, Capt. Beaumont," said the minister, in a solemn, but kind, tone. "Vengeance belongeth to the Lord."

"If there is any Lord," quickly exclaimed Bathie, "I will execute vengeance for Him. Men who would commit such a deed as this must die, and die they shall."

"Now, come, my young friend," said the minister, earnestly, "be reasonable. The whole Federal army is not responsible for this awful calamity. Besides, you cannot think it was intentional —."

At this very moment another shell fell within twenty feet of the house and exploded. All present paused. They knew not at what moment the house might be struck again. A few more missiles exploded near the building and the gunner must have changed the direction of his piece, for the bridal party were disturbed no more.

"There!" cried Bathie. "You see whether it was

intentional or not. It was a deliberately concocted plan to fire on this house."

"How could it have been?" asked the minister.

"Why, they have spies in the city," cried Bathie. "They, no doubt, heard me tell some of my friends that I was to be married to-night at this place and at a certain hour. They thought they would have sport at my expense; but it will cost them something. Good God!" he cried, clasping his hands, "only to think that she came through dangers, hundreds of miles, for my sake, only to be intentionally and wantonly murdered—it is maddening. I will never know what perils she encountered for me."

"Capt. Beaumont," said the minister, "I cannot agree with you that this misfortune was intended. It was merely accidental that they got the range of this house. Do not, therefore, I beg you, be rash. Do nothing more than duty requires, and that will be vengeance enough. Leave the matter of vengeance in God's hands."

All will admit that the counsel of the minister was eminently proper and wise; but it was lost on Bathie. He firmly believed that the enemy had done this in mere wantonness. His crushed heart was on fire, and his brain was in a whirl. His thoughts and purposes suddenly narrowed down and condensed into the one object of vengeance. Beyond this he had no aim and no desire. His whole nature seemed to be suddenly transformed into that of a merciless and ferocious savage, and his intellectual being changed into a wild, bloodthirsty, lawless spirit, whose only cry was: "Revenge!"

"Sir!" said Bathie to the minister, grinding his teeth, "you are casting your words to the idle winds. They have no effect on me. This foul murder, so contrary to all the laws of civilized warfare, has expelled from my nature all that is human. I have suddenly taken a

disease like lycanthropy. I am now—yes, I feel it in my soul, if I have any soul—a Bengal tiger. I look like a human being, I suppose. I am in possession of speech and reason, but I tell you, sir, everything like mercy and pity for my enemies is gone.”

“I think you are greatly mistaken, my young friend,” replied the minister. “I know what your feelings must be; but when you recover from the first shock, you will be yourself again. You must not have such bitter feelings toward your enemies. I think you are doing them injustice. It was a mere accidental shot, which they would deeply regret if they knew the terrible effects that followed. It is not a murder, in the sense you mean, and I beg you to recall the fearful vow you have made. It is sinful. You must be resigned to God’s will.”

“Sir!” exclaimed Bathie, wildly, “I doubt the existence of any God; and if you try to make me believe that your God actually willed such a thing as this, I bid Him defiance. I want no such God to rule over me. If He permitted it even, when He had it in His power to prevent it, I charge Him with malice and cruelty and an utter disregard of the happiness of human beings. Do not tell me, then, that this foul and shameful murder is God’s will, unless you want me to hate Him.”

“O!” said the minister, deprecatingly, and raising both his hands in horror, “pause, I beseech you. I am utterly shocked to hear such language. God does all things for the best. We may not see it now, but I believe the day will come when all these dark providences, so mysterious and incomprehensible, will be made plain, and then we will see that God was wiser than we. Calm yourself, and think, and pray the Lord to give you grace, that you may endure this misfortune in peace.”

“Talk not to me of peace,” exclaimed Bathie, clenching his hands, “nor any human virtue. I tell you I am nothing but an educated savage. I have all the instincts and impulses of a savage. I feel absolutely thirsty for human blood. I am burning up inwardly. This appetite must be satiated with blood. I can almost hear her voice, calling on me to avenge her. I must go. If I stay here, I feel as if I would be shattered to pieces. I feel waves of fire rolling along my veins. Only blood can quench it.”

“My dear young friend,” said the minister, who now began to fear that Bathie’s mind was affected, “if you allow this savage spirit which seems to have entered your heart to control you, I take the liberty to warn you. True, you may slay many of your fellow-men in an unlawful way, in the pursuit of vengeance, and you may shed blood till you can wade in it; but, if you live, the time will come when you will repent of what you have done in the lawless pursuit of revenge. You may, for a while, imprison your conscience and stifle its voice so that you cannot hear its pleading tones; but be assured it will break the bonds with which you fetter it, and it will at last make itself felt. You cannot destroy it. For the sake, then, of your own peace and happiness in this world, and especially in the world to come, I beg you, reconsider and recall the rash vow you have so hastily made, and ask God to expel the sinful spirit of which you seem to be possessed.”

“As the old Norseman said, ‘I believe neither in idols nor demons. I put my sole trust in my own strength of body and soul.’ You talk superstitiously. I have nothing to do with spirits. But if one has taken possession of me, and will give me any aid, so much the better. If the Spirit will invigorate my arm with super-human strength, I will thank Him, be He either good or

evil. O, I burn to begin my work. I cannot stay here longer. Great God! the throne of my reason is tottering!"

Immediately he left the room, took his hat from the rack in the hall, and had reached the first step of the flight leading from the gallery to the walk, when he heard a light footfall behind him. Turning his head, he saw Mary Smith. She had not yet said a word. Can we censure her, if hope again suddenly sprang up from the ashes of another's happiness? Why might she not in the course of time fill the place so unexpectedly and awfully left vacant by the death of Genie? The thought crept into her mind, in spite of her effort to expel it as a hideous demon.

"Bathie," she said, almost in a whisper, and then her utterance was choked. She hastily drew out her handkerchief, hid her face, and wept, as if she were broken-hearted.

"O, Mary, Mary, my sweet sister!" he said, in a voice of anguish, "I am crushed."

"I pity you, and sympathize with you," she said, as soon as she could articulate; "but I come to beg you not to be rash. You have just spoken some awful words—rebellious words against our kind Heavenly Father. It made me shudder to hear you talk so."

"For your sake I will not repeat them," replied Bathie, trying to calm himself; "but, Mary, you cannot conceive what I am suffering."

"Yes, I know it is sorely trying," she answered, "and only God can comfort you. I do not know how to console you; but if you will go to the Lord, in faith, he will enable you to bear the burden, if he does'nt remove it."

"Mary, it is a waste of your breath to talk to me in this way. I am in no frame of mind to think about God now."

"I will not urge it upon you, if it is so disagreeable. Where are you going? I am so afraid that you will do something desperate, and uselessly sacrifice your life."

"No; I shall be careful of my life, in order to wreak vengeance upon my enemies."

"I fear you are wrong, Bathie. The Federals did not fire that shot with the intention of injuring you in particular."

"They did it deliberately, for the purpose of sport, I suppose. I will be that charitable. I will not affirm that it was done through pure diabolical malice; but if I live, they shall pay for their fun."

"I think it was an accidental shot."

"I can never believe that," exclaimed Bathie, in a husky voice. "They did it purposely; I care not by what spirit they were animated. But it is useless to talk about it. I must go now. I do not know when we will meet again. So, my dear sister, good-bye."

He took her hand, pressed it to his lips, and rushing down the steps, was soon hastening along the streets, with the evil passions which belong to human nature surging like boiling-hot waves through his heart. Presently he paused and stood as rigid as a statue, listening at the bombardment. He could see the small streaks of light left in the wake of the shells as they whizzed through the air. Every explosion which he heard reminded him of his own irreparable loss, and seemed to increase the callousness of his soul. He looked up to the stars glittering overhead, and recalled the words of warning so solemnly uttered by the minister.

"Oh, God!" he cried, earnestly, "if there is any God, now answer me. I will put Thee to the test. If Thou art omniscient, Thou knowest the thoughts of my heart. I have sworn vengeance against the murderers of my wife. Am I wrong? If so, speak out boldly, that I

may not be in doubt. If Thou wilt not speak in audible tones I shall take it for granted that Thou hast no existence, or that Thou approvest of my purpose. If Thou wilt not answer me, I shall proceed to execute my purpose. What is the use of this eternal silence? If Thou art the God who made those stars, and framed the organs of speech in man, surely Thou Thyself canst speak. Why should'st Thou not give one of thy creatures an audible warning when he needs it? I am disposed to doubt Thy existence. Why not convince me, and end my suspense? It is said in the Bible that Thou did'st once, long ago, speak to men. Why can'st Thou not do so again? Speak out, and give me direction. I give Thee warning. If Thou wilt not speak when Thou can'st do so, I will spill the blood of my enemies without scruple, and will throw the whole responsibility on Thee. In that day of Judgment, which ministers make the subject of terrifying discourses, if Thou wilt not at this moment speak to me, I will rise up on that awful occasion and tell Thee to Thy face that Thou would'st not warn me, when I so urgently entreated. I wait two minutes, and if I hear no response I will bid farewell to Thee forever."

The half-crazed man paused, looked up to the bright stars, and listened intently for an answer.

All was silent away up there in the heavens.

The minutes which this impious mortal dared to allot to Deity expired.

"I thought there was no God. If there is, He certainly would have made some response to one of His suffering, doubtful creatures. But I have fairly tested the matter, and I shall trouble myself no more about it."

Presently he raised his hands, and his lips worked nervously, and the gentle breeze springing up at that

moment bore off into the night air the single word "*vengeance.*"

How deep and dark is the depravity of the human heart. Here was a puny man, with intellect trembling almost on the verge of insanity, bidding defiance to his Maker. In his desperation, however, he had given utterance to a wish which has often been expressed, both in anger and humility. Men have often and often demanded ocular demonstration of God's existence. They are not satisfied with the proofs which have been furnished. It is strange that any human being, endowed with reason, who can arrive at conclusions by processes of logical induction, and has the ability to discern the connection between cause and effect, will allow himself to take refuge in comfortless atheism. How can one look at the glorious orb of day, dispensing light and heat, and thus scattering rich blessings of inestimable value around the globe, by giving life, health and strength to the children of men? How can he look at the mild moon, exhibiting her silver disc from hemisphere to hemisphere, thus relieving the gloom of night; and the myriads of stars, sparkling like brilliant gems, and assisting to dispel the darkness—how can he contemplate this splendid panorama, and fail to discover a wise Designer, an intelligent Creator? Yet despite these powerful and overwhelming demonstrations, which ought to exclude every doubt, men say, like the fool, "there is no God." They are not fools in an intellectual point of view; for men have denied the existence of a Divine personality who have explored the very depths of the universe, and grasped the laws of nature. Show them a steamboat, with its ingenious engine and all its appliances for convenience and comfort, and tell them it sprang up in the water by chance, or that it was evolved by some natural process from a weed, and they would

receive the suggestion with scorn. In this they would readily admit that design proves a designer, and that an effect must have an adequate cause. They would unhesitatingly pronounce one a fool who would pretend to believe that a *piano-forte* is the outgrowth of chance. But tell them that the entire universe, of course including man himself, with his wonderful organization, is the result of blind forces working together without thought or purpose, and some accept the proposition, and write learned volumes to sustain their absurd theory. Why should they have so much confidence in this process of reasoning in the one case and not in the other? What makes the difference? The Geologist, in his peregrinations, picks up an arrow-head. It has a definite shape, which at once shows evidence of design, and he immediately concludes that it is the work of a human hand. No sort of reasoning to the contrary can convince him. Still this same scientist affects to believe that the sun, moon and stars came into being without the aid of any thinking Intelligence. Men desire to hear the voice of God, and to see him. Many a one has offered up the substance of Bathie's impious petition. A certain great philosopher, who wrote a work on the sufficiency of the light of Nature to teach man his duty, states that he prayed to the Divine Being to inform him if the book contained the truth; and thus his very prayer subverted his own theory. Because, if the light of Nature is sufficient, why should he desire a communication from God? At any rate, all classes of men have eagerly sought such communications. They entirely forget that the Scriptural law is, "we walk by faith, not by sight." They overlook what the Lord himself hath said: "No man can see my face and live." A sight of the Divine majesty in his transcendent glory would produce instant death. This was understood by the heathen nations of

ancient times. We learn from mythology that Semele entreated the mighty Jove to visit her in his own proper person. He complied with her request, and the consequence was, she was overpowered by the dazzling majesty of the god, and instantly expired. Happy is the man who can be satisfied with the evidences which the Supreme Being has seen fit to give. The Bible is sufficient. It bears upon its pages the seal of Divine inspiration. Its hundreds of prophecies ought to convince any reasonable man that it is not a mere human production. Prophecy is history written in advance. Who could write it, except God? But whatever objections may be urged against it, it contains the only evidence of its supernatural origin that the Lord has vouchsafed to give. If men reject it because they cannot have the supplementary testimony of their own senses, they must abide by the consequences.

Bathie Beaumont petulantly and angrily rejected the Bible. We will now follow him in his wild, bloody and appalling career, and see what a life is, undirected by Divine wisdom.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### NEMESIS.

“His lip doth work with inward mutterings,  
And his fixed eye is riveted fearfully  
On something that no other sight can spy.”

In a room of a certain house in Vicksburg, which it is not necessary to describe, an officer was slowly promenading up and down the floor, seeming to be in profound thought. He was a man of about fifty years of age. It was Gen. John C. Pemberton, a native of Pennsylvania. War casts up to the surface of prominence men who, when peace is declared, are again enveloped in the darkness of obscurity, and the world hears from them no more. It leaves in its scorched and bloody wake but few heroes whose names are destined to survive the terrible shock and arouse admiration in the minds of future generations. Every vestige of them disappears from history, except, probably, their names, which happen to be associated with some great and important battle. Thus it was with Gen. Pemberton. There was a time once, when, for a few days, his name was on every lip throughout the civilized world. The eyes of the nations were turned upon the besieged city of Vicksburg, and when it was asked who was the commander of the brave men that stood half-famished in the trenches for forty-seven days and nights, the answer was, Gen. Pemberton. Had it not been for this fact, his name would not appear upon a single page of the present volume. After the surrender of the city, Pemberton drops from the scenes of the war, like a mere pebble cast into the ocean. A very few words in regard to him will end his career in our story.

It was at a late hour of the night, but the General was restless. Occasionally he would go into an adjoining room, where there were several of his aids, and dictate an order or two, and then go back to his private apartment. Presently there was a tap on his door, and Pemberton's adjutant announced that Capt. Beaumont was anxious to see him.

"Admit him," said the General.

In a moment there stood before him a wild-looking man, upon whom the General gazed with surprise.

"Why," said he, "Capt. Beaumont, I thought you were to be married to-night."

"And so I have been," answered Bathie, with a husky intonation and a strange look that caused Pemberton to bestow upon him a still more searching gaze.

"Well," said the General, "I must say that you are acting very queerly for a bridegroom. Why have you left your bride?"

"General, she is lying dead, in her bridal robes."

"How does that happen?" asked the General, in astonishment.

Bathie rapidly related the event which had transpired but two or three hours before, and then added, in a strange manner—

"But I have married another."

"I do not understand you."

"Her name is Nemesis," replied Bathie. "To her I shall devote the remainder of my life."

"I deeply sympathize with you," said Pemberton, speaking kindly. "Certainly it is a great misfortune. But my time is precious. What can I do for you? You must have some object in view in coming to me at this late hour."

"Yes, sir; I have come to ask a favor at your hands. I ascertained that you had not retired, or I should not

have troubled you to-night. General, I must have revenge. I am thirsting for the blood of my enemies. They deliberately murdered my bride of a moment, and they shall suffer for it."

"From your account of the matter," said Pemberton, "I cannot agree with you."

"I am bound to believe it, General."

"Well, how can I aid you?" asked Pemberton, a little impatiently.

"Excuse me for trespassing upon your time. You know that I have a fine company of men, all well mounted?"

"Yes, I know that."

"Well, it seems we can be of little service here, as cavalry, and I think I can be of more use outside of the city."

"But you are not on the outside."

"No, sir, but if you will give me permission to take my company, I will soon be out."

"How can you manage that?"

"I will cut my way through the enemy. I know a point up the river where I can do it with very little risk. Once out, I will try and make it very hot in the enemy's rear."

"How?"

"I am satisfied, sir, they are foraging all over the country back of the city, and are plundering and robbing our people."

"But if Gen. Johnston cannot protect the people with an army, I do not see how you are to do it with one company."

"I know I can annoy the enemy in the rear, even with one company," exclaimed Bathie, with great earnestness.

"Why can I not attack their foraging parties?"

"I suppose you might do something of the kind on

a small scale," said the General, "but it would have no effect upon Grant's army. But," continued Pemberton, thoughtfully, "you might serve me in another way, if you can get through the enemy's lines."

"You may rest assured that I will go through, if you give me permission."

"Very well; you can try it. I want to send a communication to Gen. Johnston, and I want you to see him in person, and give him all the information he may desire, in regard to the situation here. I may not write as fully as may be necessary. Besides, there are some things which I must not commit to paper, lest the letter should fall into the enemy's hand."

"How will it fall into his hands, General?"

"Why, you may be captured."

"Never, sir, never," cried Bathie. "You need not have any fear on that score."

"The chances of war are very uncertain, young man," answered the General, "and I will take the safe side. I do not want the enemy to know what my intentions are. I shall write only a few lines to Johnston, and refer him to you for full particulars, with which I will acquaint you. When can you be ready to start, do you think?"

"To-morrow night."

"You think there is no doubt about your succeeding in the attempt?" asked the General, fastening his eyes upon Bathie's haggard face.

"I have not a doubt of it, General. I know a place, as I told you, near the river, where I can easily go through the lines. It is scarcely guarded at all. There is a small pathway which I am satisfied the enemy have not discovered. It winds among the hills, and cannot be seen from their position, and it terminates before it reaches their lines."

“Why should they have left that place so unguarded?” asked Pemberton.

“On account of its proximity to the gunboats, I suppose.”

“That may be so,” replied the General. “Well, call to-morrow, and I will give you my instructions, with my letter to Johnston.”

Thus ended this midnight interview, which was of too little importance to secure even a brief line on the pages of history.

Bathie being utterly unable to sleep on that night when he was made a bridegroom and a widower in the same moment, and feeling a restlessness which nothing but physical activity could alleviate, went to an artillery company, the Hudson Battery, from Panola county, Mississippi, and asked one of the gunners to let him have the management of the piece. This request being granted by the Lieutenant commanding a section, Bathie had the satisfaction of pouring shells into the enemy's lines for several hours. He was exhausted, but he could not sleep. The soldiers were wearied out, and the firing gradually ceased, till not the boom of a single cannon could be heard. The warriors lay down to rest in the trenches, and all was still and silent, except along the line of guards, where the measured tread of the sentinel produced echoes too feeble to make any impression upon the nerves of wearied human beings. Bathie walked up and down the deserted streets for awhile; and then he would stop for a moment, and sit down upon the door-steps of some storehouse. He could not keep still. There was no repose for him. You have noticed the waves of the ocean when lashed by the furious winds, rolling and dashing, one after another. Imagine something like this in the human breast. Suppose the human emotions to be a tangible, liquid substance, like the chaotic sea of fire

which constituted this earth anterior to the Silurian formation, whose glowing, restless waves tossed and dashed over each other madly and wildly in the first efforts of nature to bring order out of confusion, and we may form a proper conception of Bathie's state of mind; for the wild storm in his whole mental being resembled that process. The dark soul within trembled under a great burden that seemed to be crushing him. His heart was torn with anguish, as he thought of the fair one upon whose lips the enemy had not permitted him to imprint a single kiss. He could not call tears to his relief. If they could have flowed, he felt that they would be as hardened drops of glass. It seemed to Bathie himself that his thoughts, desires and purposes had all concentrated into one mighty curse. His very affection for his lost one had turned into hatred for his enemies. The tempest in his soul drove him along, and he could find no peace except in motion. He must keep moving, moving, moving, or he felt that he would suffocate. He was like Noah's dove flying over the world of waters, that could find no rest for the sole of her foot. All this may appear as extravagant hyperbole to those across whose path no shadow has ever fallen; but they can understand and appreciate it who have been borne down by some great, overwhelming misfortune.

Toward the dawn of the morning Bathie was seen rapidly walking in the direction of his company's quarters. The men had arisen, and he had them to fall into line, and made a short speech to them. He gave it as his opinion that Pemberton could not hold out much longer unless he should be relieved by Johnston, and that was a rather doubtful dependence. He then informed them of the result of his interview with the Commanding General. "Now," said Bathie, "I want to know how many of you are willing to follow me, and

cut through the enemy's lines. Once out, we will be independent, and go where we please. All who are willing to make the attempt step three paces to the front. Those of you who want to remain here, and in all probability become prisoners of war, remain standing where you are."

Bathie was well satisfied as to the effect the word "prisoner" would have on his men. They all had a horror of Northern prisons, for very obvious reasons. We do not, by any means, assert that Northern were any worse than Southern prisons. Both were bad enough. But Southern soldiers were not accustomed to the rigors of Northern winters. Many a one had lost his life from exposure to the chilling blasts which swept from the Arctic regions. It was impossible, under the circumstances, to procure sufficient clothing. Men, in times of war, must expect hardships. Enlightened nations are as merciless as they dare to be. It is probably the fear of retaliation which makes them even as humane as they are. The captor to-day knows not but that to-morrow he may be the captured. This uncertainty has a tendency to curb the bitter feeling of animosity which is the legitimate offspring of war. Hence it is an unwise policy to mistreat and abuse captured soldiers. Yet a certain degree of hardship and suffering is expected in the prisons. Men will not make feasts for their enemies. He who falls into the hands of his foe, must dismiss the thought that he will be "clothed in fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day."

Therefore, Bathie was not at all surprised when every man in his company promptly made three steps to the front, thus signifying their willingness to follow wherever he might lead. Besides the motive which has just been mentioned, there was another which operated very powerfully with them. Soldiers like to be independent

of the main army. Every man in the Confederate army would have preferred to belong to an independent company. It was an easier life. The independent soldier could procure better rations, from the fact that he could forage to a greater distance and visit communities which had not been ravaged by the military commissariat. Bathie's company was highly elated at the prospect of this comparative liberty. They could go home oftener, since their application for leave of absence did not have to go through that long, *red-tape* channel which terminates only with the Commander-in-Chief.

A small funeral procession wended its way to the cemetery, and the corpse of Genie De Lancy was lowered down into the dark, narrow prison of the grave, nevermore to be disturbed till the last trump shall startle both quick and dead. Bathie was the chief mourner, though outwardly he mourned not. He heard the clods falling into the grave, and knew they would hide forever from his sight one whom he had loved with all the ardor of his soul; but not a tear trickled down his cheek. He was denied this common luxury of grief. He felt as if his nerves had been transformed into steel and his heart to adamant. There he stood, near the grave, with his arms folded across his breast, gazing fixedly at the ground. Presently the last handful of earth was thrown upon the little hillock which marked the last resting-place of poor Genie De Lancy. Bathie advanced to the head of the grave, raised his right hand, and exclaimed—

“Hear me, Earth and Heavens, *I shall never take another prisoner!*”

He turned upon his heel, and immediately went to Pemberton's headquarters, received his instructions and a letter to Gen. Johnston, and then went to his own

company, to make preparations for his departure from the city. He tried to sleep for a short time, but the effort was in vain. He felt fatigued, and would close his eyes, but just as he was on the point of losing consciousness, the image of his beautiful bride falling to the floor would flash up, and he would be as wide awake as ever. In this restless manner he lay upon his couch till 10 o'clock that night. Then he rose and ordered his command to prepare for marching. In half an hour all were ready, and they slowly moved toward the river. Turning into a path, they followed it till they reached the top of a hill which was between the two armies. They were not far from the enemy's sentinels. With as little noise as possible, Bathie formed his company into line, and descended the hill and gave the order to "Charge!"

The sentinels, as Bathie anticipated, fired off their pieces and retired in double-quick time. When they reached the main line there was so much confusion that the enemy made no attempt to resist, but broke, and fled up their own trenches, and thus suffered the company to pass through without injury. Bathie was satisfied he would not be pursued till daylight, if at all. Accordingly, he traveled all night, in the direction of Canton. When day dawned he was within two or three miles of Big Black river. Several of his men were well acquainted with the country, and under their pilotage Bathie pushed on to the river. This he crossed, and came into the main highway on the other side. He had not proceeded far before he surprised a solitary cavalry soldier wearing the blue uniform. The man was so astounded that he offered no resistance and made no effort to escape.

"What are you doing here?" asked Bathie.

"What should I be doing but my duty?" said the soldier, disposed to be impudent.

"Yes," said Bathie, "and I know how to do my duty."

Instantly he drew a cavalry pistol, pulled back the hammer, and was evidently preparing to shoot. The Federal soldier turned pale.

"Will you murder a prisoner?" he asked, in a trembling tone.

"Answer my questions," exclaimed Bathie, "or you will be alive no longer than it will require to send a ball through your brain."

"What are your questions?" quickly cried the man. "I will answer, if you'll give me time. I answered the only one you asked me."

"I demand to know what you are doing here. You know very well what I mean."

"I am a vidette; that's all."

"Where is your command?"

The fellow hesitated.

"If you answer any of my questions falsely," exclaimed Bathie, with sternness, "you will lose your life. I command you instantly to tell me what I asked."

"You asked me where is my command, didn't you?"

"You know I did."

"Is it right for a man to betray his companions?" asked the soldier, with a sickly smile.

"I am in no humor to be trifled with," said Bathie, raising his cocked pistol. "Get out of the way there, Brinn. I will leave one corpse for his companions to bury."

"Hold!" cried the man. "I will answer, if you won't shoot. Give me time."

"Since you have hesitated I shall make no promises. I do not care whether you answer or not. I would as soon have the pleasure of killing you as eliciting information that may be of no service."

"My command is at the river," said the man. "Don't shoot me. I'm telling the truth."

"How many are there?" demanded Bathie.

"About forty."

"No more than that?"

"No more. They are at the bridge, and if you will go on them suddenly, you can capture all of them."

"Captain," spoke up the first lieutenant, "that fellow is telling falsehoods. He wants to lead you into a snare."

"If he tries that," said Bathie, with flashing eyes, "he will never try it again. Lieutenant, go, with half a dozen men, and reconnoitre. We will find out the truth."

The officer obeyed. He was gone about an hour, and returned at a gallop, reporting that he had seen two regiments drawn up in line, and that their heads were in this direction. "I did not know anything about them," exclaimed the captured soldier. "There are only about forty in my party. I was sent on ahead to see if the way was clear."

"Do you pretend to say you knew nothing about those two regiments?" demanded Bathie.

"We passed a regiment on the other side of the river," replied the soldier, "but I did not know what they were doing."

"You are just adding falsehood to falsehood," exclaimed Bathie, fiercely. "It is useless to bandy words with you."

Instantly the report of a pistol was heard, and the soldier, rolling from his saddle, expired, without a groan.

"That is the first victim, Genie," said Bathie, talking to himself in a low tone; "but it shall not be the last one, unless I lose my own life. His blood does not begin to atone for thine."

"Captain," cried the lieutenant, "we have not a moment to lose, unless you intend to fight. I doubt not the Federals will soon be upon us. Let us do something."

"I am not ready to fight them yet," said Bathie. "We will go on to Canton first."

Immediately they moved off at a brisk trot. In a few hours they came to the Confederate videttes, and Bathie slackened his speed. As they were moving leisurely along, the first lieutenant said to Bathie—

"I doubt the wisdom of your policy in killing that soldier. I saw no use of it. Besides he was our prisoner."

"We are not prepared for taking care of prisoners," said Bathie, dryly. "But even if we were, that fellow deserved death. Why could he not have told the truth? You said yourself you thought he was trying to get us into a difficulty."

"I believed that he was; and yet, after all, he might have told the truth. Anyhow, I am sorry you killed him. It is an ugly piece of business, and may get us into trouble."

"Lieutenant," said Bathie, in a sad voice, "you saw *her* fall, only a few hours since. You saw it all. Did you not voluntarily come forward, and promise to follow me in my pursuit of vengeance!"

"Yes; but I thought you would be reasonable. I did not expect to murder men in cold blood."

"You are not responsible for what has been done," replied Bathie.

"Do you expect to continue that sort of warfare?"

"I do not know what I may do," replied Bathie; "but if you do not wish to follow me, you can resign at once."

"No," quickly exclaimed the lieutenant. "I have no such notion as that."

“Then, let us drop the subject,” said Bathie.

The command pushed on, and in due time reached Canton, where Bathie reported to Gen. Johnston. They had a long interview, after which Bathie left headquarters. He rested a day or two at Canton, and then started back towards Big Black river. We will soon hear from him again.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### A DESPERATE ENCOUNTER.

"I am in blood ;  
Stept in so far, that, should I wade no more,  
Returning were as tedious as go o'er."

The real horrors of war cannot be fully appreciated, except by those who have had the misfortune to witness them. The student of history reads, with feelings of interest, the glowing description of great battles. His imagination may be sufficiently powerful to transport him to some lofty elevation, from which he can with safety, behold the general evolutions of two grand armies. He sees the gleam of their arms in the sunshine, and hears the roar of the cannon and the rattle of musketry. After a while he sees one of the parties flying from the field in confusion and disorder. A great victory is gained; and this is all he knows. There the curtain drops, and hides from his view the most revolting scenes of war, and there the pen of the historian falls, as if the wake of battle and the far-off consequences were of no interest.

Victor Hugo's description of the battle of Waterloo is as fine a composition as we ever read. He carries us to the very spot, and by means of the letter A, gives us a clear, but succinct map of the battle ground—an explanation which leaves an ineffaceable impression on the memory. We see the soldiers, on the morning of the 18th of June, rise from their dripping beds in the wheat field. They manœuvre till between ten and eleven o'clock, and then the first cannon fires, and the French advance in splendid order to the awful combat. For

several hours the storm rages, and no one can foresee the termination. In the afternoon, we see the cavalry charge up the hill, and we hear the dreadful clatter of the horses' feet. Up and up they go, like two enormous steel lizards, crawling up the ascent in fury and desperation. Presently we see them rolling into the ditch till it is filled to the brink with a mass of writhing, struggling men and horses, and our hair stands on end. We are still more horrified by those feeble cries, issuing at the dead hour of midnight from the old well into which three hundred human bodies had been hastily cast, for want of a more suitable grave. The English gained a "glorious" victory, which has embalmed the name of Wellington forever on the pages of history. But we do not pause to think that all England and France were filled with mourning and lamentation. Many a heart-broken mother and wife shed scalding tears for the son and husband, whose voices were hushed forever. These scenes, transpiring far away from the bloody field, are the *unwritten horrors of war*.

History, which deals only with the great and striking features of war, gives no account of the many terrible tragedies that occur in some obscure corner of the field, and are known only to the immediate actors. The compiler of martial records concerns himself only with broad generalities, and details only the meagre outlines of battles. The history of a war is to the reality what the skeleton is to the body with flesh. To enter into all the sickening details of a single battle would make the historian's work too voluminous for ordinary purposes, even if he were in possession of such details. As he can relate only the evolutions of whole armies, and not of regiments and companies, some of the most awful scenes that have ever occurred on the arena of human activity will never be known till that great day when

every deed of every individual must stand out in letters of fire before the gaze of the assembled universe. The commanders of armies may be personally opposed to rapine and private murder, but they cannot prevent such horrid crimes. All the worst passions of the soldiers are aroused when they are exposed to the corrupting influences of war. The effusion of human blood appears to benumb all their moral sensibilities. Their sense of justice and mercy seems to be obliterated, or, at least, temporarily paralyzed by the foul, godless spirit of plunder. Hence many of them scruple at no deed of shame that holds out the prospect of reward. They have been known to seize upon innocent non-combatants, who were suspected of having treasures concealed, and put them to the most barbarous and cruel tortures, in order to force the unhappy victims to disclose the place where their gold and silver lay buried. We may form some conception of the sufferings of the helpless victims, when we are told that their feet have been baked over slow fires, and that they have been hung up by the thumbs, and more frequently by the neck, and tortured and frightened in every other conceivable way, to extort the knowledge of the spot where their valuables were hidden. Both parties to the contest do these things when they have opportunity, and one is no more to be censured than the other. If either can show a clear record in this matter we may feel certain that they lacked opportunities for displaying the evil tendencies of their nature. None can enter the plea, "not guilty."

The foregoing observations are preliminary to one of those shocking scenes which are comparatively too trivial to command a passing notice from the historian's pen.

Bathie, as we have seen, deliberately murdered one man, for which there was no necessity. We cannot condemn the atrocious crime in terms strong enough. But

this flagitious act, instead of producing any feeling of uneasiness or remorse in his breast, appeared only to aggravate his thirst for the blood of his enemies. As he himself had expressed it, he was transformed into a furious, hungry tiger. However, it must be borne in mind that he was no robber, animated by the love of gold. No man in the army had a more thorough contempt for mere plunder than he. He was simply a monomaniac. His purposes, thoughts, desires, aspirations, all converged to one point; all the energies of his being coalesced and terminated in a burning focus expressed by the one word—*revenge*. We have mentioned this fact more than once, in order to impress upon the minds of our readers that Bathie's nature had suddenly changed, and he did not even resemble the noble being he once was. Our readers have a knowledge of the mainspring that controlled his conduct, and they will, therefore, know by what standard to judge him. After leaving Canton, he eagerly and indefatigably sought opportunities to gratify what had now become his ruling passion. Acting under general instructions from Pemberton, he determined to annoy the enemy in every possible way, in the rear. It was the practice of the enemy to send out foraging parties, who were to bring into camp whatever they could find that would be of any service to man or beast. By such measures the defenceless people, out as far from Vicksburg as the enemy dared to go, had been plundered and ruined. They were left to starve. It has been years ago since all this happened, and we ought, if possible, to wipe out such unpleasant facts from our memories. Yes, for the sake of peace, and for the interests of religion, let us endeavor to forgive and forget.

Bathie made it his particular business to look after these foraging parties; and many a one did he surprise

in the very act of robbing defenceless people. They were fortunate who escaped. That which gave his command unenviable notoriety was, they never took any prisoners. Bathie would not suffer his enemies to surrender. He preferred to destroy them with their arms in their hands. He contended that they had no right to make such excursions into the country, and that stripping the land of food was equivalent to making war upon women and children. Therefore, he said, they were no better than highway robbers, and deserved death. These foraging parties did not go out with the expectation of fighting, and generally were more disposed to retreat than to engage in active hostilities. For this reason they frequently fell an easy prey into the hands of Bathie's company, who had strict orders never to cease firing so long as an enemy sat up in his saddle or stood upon his feet, unless otherwise ordered by himself. They might cry out for "quarter," but it mattered not. Bathie paid no more attention to their entreaties than if they had been vipers. He deliberately shot them down with their hands uplifted and arms lying on the ground. His own men were often horrified at his awful deeds, and some ventured to remonstrate. He would reply: "All is fair in war. This is no child's play. War means bloodshed. These fellows are no better than highway robbers. They are taking bread from the mouths of our women and children, and such men are not worthy to live. Besides, what is the use of taking prisoners. You turn your enemy loose to fight you again. Take his life while you can, and he is forever *hors du combat*."

"Do you want a war of extermination?" they asked.

"I believe it would be the best policy our government could adopt, never to take prisoners. Our people would then rise up in their might, put forth all their

strength, and in a few months would drive the enemy from our borders. If this were the policy, Pemberton's army would cut its way out of Vicksburg in two hours. No enemy could stand before them. I fear our people are not sufficiently united to achieve success in this war. I would not care if the enemy should raise the black flag. It would be the best thing that could happen to us. If they would only do that, there would soon be a million of armed men in the field; and then it would not take four weeks to gain our independence."

"But suppose you should be captured yourself, Captain, how would you like to be put to death?"

"I shall never be captured," replied Bathie, gravely, "as long as I can raise my hand. I care not for myself. They are welcome to my poor life as soon as they can take it. I intend to do everything in my power to force the enemy to hoist the black flag. Whenever they do it, we are safe. If all who are able to bear arms would turn out, and fight with desperation, which they would have to do in case of a war of extermination, the world could not conquer the South. There are enough idle men within a hundred miles of Vicksburg to take Grant's whole army. On his march from Jackson, he ought to have been fired at from every stump and tree and bush, and he would soon have betaken himself back to his gunboats. But the truth is, our people are tired of the war, and would be willing to accept peace on almost any terms. So far as I am concerned, I want no peace; and I shall never either ask or give quarter."

It was soon understood that Bathie's policy was to take no prisoners. We condemn it, in most emphatic terms. Very few Southern people at the time approved of his course; and it soon led to consequences which Bathie himself had reason to deplore.

We come now to a dark scene, which placed him forever beyond the pale of civilized warfare, and brought him into disgraceful notoriety.

One day a wagon train was making its slow way from a point twenty or thirty miles below Vicksburg, under the escort of a company of cavalry and one of infantry. Bathie determined to destroy this train. For this purpose he dismounted his men, and left the horses at the foot of a hill, some little distance from the road, so that they could neither be seen nor heard. Placing his company in ambush, he waited till the enemy were in the desired position, and then poured a destructive volley into their ranks. The Federal soldiers were marching along in tolerably good order, in front of the wagons; but they were thrown into utter, inextricable confusion by the suddenness of the attack. Dropping their guns, Bathie and his men, with pistols and sabres, rushed upon the remnant of the confused and astounded guard. The wagoners, together with most of the cavalymen, took to flight, leaving their teams in the road. But an obstinate hand-to-hand fight ensued, which was terrible beyond description. Bathie fought with the energy of a madman. Nothing could withstand the spirit of vengeance that burned in his heart. But such battles cannot endure for any great length of time. Nearly half the Federals had been killed at the first fire. The rest fought with true bravery, till, seeing they must be overpowered by superior numbers, they cried out for quarter, and ceased from any further efforts at self-protection. But this only made matters worse; for Bathie and his men paid no attention to their cry. The leader of the Federals, who was a tall, well-built man, stood his ground with the firmness and courage of a Spartan. Bathie presently made toward him, with drawn sabre, and with eyes flashing and glaring like those of some

enraged wild beast. When within four paces of his foe, what was his surprise to hear his name pronounced—

“Bathie! Bathie!”

Instantly Bathie lowered his uplifted sabre.

“Good heavens! Clarence, is it you?” exclaimed Bathie, turning as pale as death.

They gazed at each other for a moment without uttering a word. The work of death was progressing.

“For God’s sake, Bathie, if you have any influence with this command, stop this carnage. I see you are an officer. Don’t you see my men are offering to surrender? They have thrown down their arms. Stop it!”

But Bathie paid no more attention to these words than if he had not heard them. He merely gazed at De Lancy, and appeared to be in doubt. Clarence looked at Bathie in the most profound amazement.

“In the name of God, Bathie, will you suffer my men to be murdered in cold blood?”

But there was no use in asking the question. The last one had fallen, and De Lancy stood alone.

“Bathie,” said Clarence, in a voice of anguish, “is it possible you are the commander of this company?”

“I am.”

“And you stood here and saw my men murdered, when you could have prevented it? Is it possible you have come to this? Kill me, then, if this is your way of waging war. I never could have believed it, Bathie, if I had not seen it with my own eyes, that you could be guilty of such atrocity and infamy. You are a murderer, Bathie. Complete your horrid work by taking my life. I alone, of all my company, stand upon my feet. There lies my young brother, slain by your hand. O, strike me down. I know you want my blood. Take it. I am ready. Why should I want to live?”

Bathie sheathed his sabre, and in a strange, tremulous voice, said—

“Did I not tell you that if I ever met you on the battle-field, I would not injure a hair of your head? I do not want your life.”

“I release you from your obligation,” cried De Lancy. “Kill me! kill me! I do not want to survive this calamity, brought on by your hand, too. I exclaim, with Cæsar, ‘*et tu Brute.*’ It is enough. I am ready to die. There lies my little brother, who did not really belong to the army, murdered by your hand.”

“I did not know he was your brother,” said Bathie. “I am sorry I did it.”

“Sorry!” cried Clarence. “How could you be sorry when you struck the little fellow, after he appealed to you to spare his life. Surely you are not Bathie Beaumont. My senses deceive me. Tell me, are you really he?”

“I am.”

“It is enough, then. Draw your sabre, and shed my blood. Place me with my noble comrades, lying all around, weltering in their own hearts’ blood; and all this done by one whom I once loved as a brother. Good heavens! it is too much. Kill me, and end my grief.”

“I shall do no such thing, Clarence. Let us shake hands, and be friends.”

De Lancy folded his arms across his breast, and exclaimed, sternly—

“Come no nearer. I cannot shake the hand which is stained with my brother’s blood. You can take my life, but not my hand.”

“Clarence, will you hear my apology?”

“I do not want to hear it,” exclaimed Clarence, indignantly. “I saw with my own eyes.”

“You refuse to hear my explanation?”

"I do not want to hear anything from such a brute and coward as you are."

"You are the only being on earth from whom I would take that," said Bathie, in a subdued tone. "I admit, Clarence, that you have just cause to be angry. I am sorry I have met you, under such circumstances. But if you desire to be avenged, you shall have the opportunity. I have been driven to desperation by your people, and you will not hear me. I care nothing for life. Load your pistol, and if my life will atone for your brother's, shoot me. To convince you I am no coward, I will calmly look you in the face while you do it."

"I would scorn to do such a thing," exclaimed Clarence, with a proud curl of the lip. "I am no merciless cut-throat, as you are. I took you once to be the very soul of honor; but you have deceived me, and turned out to be a savage monster."

"Do not provoke me too far, Clarence," said Bathie, as his face crimsoned, "or it may not be possible to control myself. I am not disposed to deal harshly with you. I am not your personal foe."

"Do what you will," cried De Lancy, "I will tell you to your face, you are no friend of mine. You have this day severed the last tie between us. I scorn to ask life at your hands. You are a heartless savage, a cut-throat villain. I cannot find an epithet that suits you. There is not a word in human language that can properly describe you."

"Stop your abuse," said Bathie. "Such language in your present condition is anything but becoming. I have told you that I do not want your blood. Do not force me to spill it, by your undeserved reproaches."

"Spill it, if you wish," cried De Lancy, proudly straightening himself up. "That will serve to crown

your cowardly conduct—conduct that stamps your name with everlasting infamy. Take my life, if you will; but I will tell you to your face, that you have performed a deed dark enough to make the very fiends blush. You have disgraced yourself forever. Look there at my poor brother, who fell upon his knees before you, and asked you to spare his life. You did that.”

“I told you,” said Bathie, in quivering tones, “I did not know it was your brother.”

“You knew it was a human being,” exclaimed Clarence, angrily, “but you murdered him as if he were no more than a dog. Look at those brave men stretched upon the ground.”

“Yes, but this is war,” said Bathie. “Men who take up arms, and invade a neighbor’s country, must expect to be killed. You have left your country, and come South to plunder my people, and commit outrages too horrible to be mentioned. You have rifled their homes, driven our women and children to the wilderness, and, in many instances, burned their dwellings to ashes, and you expect us to tamely submit to such things, do you?”

“No, sir, I expect no such thing. Your people have undertaken to break up the government which our forefathers died to establish. You provoked the war by firing the first gun. You insulted the old flag under which we have lived peacefully and prosperously ever since the Revolution of 1776. You shed the first blood.”

“Clarence De Lancy,” said Bathie, in a firm, cold tone, “you are talking the veriest nonsense. You well know that the government was a federal compact, formed by the States in their sovereign capacity. The contract into which they entered was not eternal. When one of the parties became dissatisfied, from whatever cause, they have the right to secede, and reclaim the powers which

they only temporarily surrendered. You have no right to resort to the sword in order to force us back into a distasteful union. Yet you have armed yourselves, and come to our doors to rob us of our property. Under these circumstances, can you blame us for offering the most stubborn resistance?"

"It is no time now to discuss political questions," answered Clarence. "Whatever defence you may make, the plain fact is, you are guilty of rebellion. War is upon us, and we are expected to conduct it according to the recognized laws. This you have not done, but you have murdered these poor men, contrary to the spirit of all the laws of civilized warfare."

"Look at some of my men," answered Bathie, impatiently. "If they are not killed, they are wounded. You tried to kill them."

"What sort of flimsy justification is this?" cried De Lancy, in a derisive tone. "Your men did not ask for quarter. I would lose my self respect, were I to strike a fallen foe, as you have done."

"What is the use of this?" said Bathie. "You do not know what my personal wrongs are. I have had enough to arouse me to desperation. Your sister —"

"Do not mention her name, if you please. I do not want to hear it pass your lips. I once expected to embrace you as a brother, but that can never be. When she hears of this day's work, what can she think? Do you suppose she can have any but feelings of horror and detestation for the man who struck down her helpless brother?"

"I want to tell you that she —"

"Tell me nothing about her. I will not listen to you. I will stop my ears."

"You had better let me explain, or you may yet regret it," said Bathie.

"I want no explanations," quickly cried De Lancy. "Never mention her name again. I will have to tell her what a savage brute you are."

"Stop this abuse," exclaimed Bathie, with rising anger. "You are the only man on the face of the earth from whom I would take it. You know not what you are saying. Your men around Vicksburg have done me an irreparable injury, for which nothing can atone but blood. But you refuse to hear me. Have it your own way, then. I have suffered you to apply language to me which would have cost any other man his life. I forgive you. Yet it is better that we separate at once. I leave it to you, whether we part as friends or foes."

"After what I have said," replied De Lancy, with sternness, "I do not see how you can ask such a question. I would feel that I was doing violence to my manhood and to every principle of honor, and insulting my poor brother's memory, if I should call you my friend. You refuse to take my life according to my request. You want me to forgive you, I suppose?"

"Just as you please," said Bathie, indifferently.

"Then, I can never do it," replied Clarence. "If it is your will that we part alive, let it be clearly understood we are enemies forever."

"So be it," replied Bathie, slowly.

"The next time we meet upon the battle-field," said Clarence, "I shall know what to expect."

"I will never harm a hair of your head," replied Bathie, calmly, "unless you force me to it. I warn you, though, I will never suffer myself to be taken prisoner."

"I candidly inform you," said Clarence, "that after what I have seen with my own eyes, I am bound to have you proclaimed an outlaw."

"Do as you please."

"A reward will be offered for you, dead or alive."

"Who wins the reward will exhibit only my dead body," replied Bathie, in such a strange tone, and with such a look that De Lancy gazed at his *quondam* friend in amazement.

"I want it fairly understood," continued Clarence, "that if you are captured, you must not expect me to use my influence in your behalf."

"If you were only slightly acquainted with what is in here," answered Bathie, placing his hand over his heart, "you would not throw out such a hint. If there is any God, I call him to witness that I shall never surrender so long as I can raise my little finger. I have raised the black flag, and you may inform your friends, if you wish, so that they may keep out of my way. I hope we may never meet again till your feelings toward me change. I have no more to say. As I have reason to think you would not reciprocate a *good-bye*, I shall not use the word."

"I cannot utter a falsehood," said De Lancy.

"Very well; let us part." Saying this, Bathie gathered up his wounded, and went off, leaving De Lancy alone upon the field, the only one of his command who had received no personal injury.

Such a scene as the foregoing would necessarily make a deep impression upon the mind of any thinking being. Does it not seem that Bathie's feelings ought to have been softened, and the spirit of revenge calmed? He had killed his wife's brother, and forever estranged the friend of his college days. But what was the actual effect? His thoughts grew darker, and his soul more gloomy. It appeared to shrink back in horror and disgust, as if ashamed to dwell in such a loathsome prison of human flesh. Conscience shriveled up and hardened

into a rock. He had crossed the Rubicon which separates humanity from the darkest character into which crime can transform a mortal being. Bathie felt, as he turned from that bloody field, as if he had passed over a great gulf, and was now in a different region, *alone*. In that region all was dead silence and thick darkness. His better feelings, emotions, and impulses, all took flight, and nothing was left but the hideous demon of Revenge. He had leaped beyond the domain of social principles, and he had no disposition to retrace his steps. He saw a great stream of boiling, glowing blood, which isolated him from his fellow men. He must go on. The demon within cried louder for vengeance. The appetite for blood grew more savage and ravenous. The gloomy man was burning up, and it appeared that nothing could quench his raging thirst but the liquid current that gave life to his fellow men. The soul uttered one low cry of agony, and dropped out of sight—he knew not where. Was there a God, who would one day call him to account? Bathie would not suffer himself to discuss the question. He looked up at the stars, as they shone down upon him, when he lay on his rude bed, in the forest; but he thought not of the passage in the Divine Oracles which says, “the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth forth his handiwork.” He made no effort to sleep till he was exhausted. He would stand guard night after night, taking no repose, till he could go no longer. Motion seemed to be as necessary to him as food. He must keep moving, moving, moving, like the Wandering Jew. The only thing which afforded him pleasure was the excitement of battle. The clash of sabres, the pop of pistols, the rattle of rifles, the groans of the wounded, the sight of blood—these were the things which were as meat and drink. O, what can man become, when he

forgets his Maker, and fears nothing! Bathie was, as we have seen, once a noble, self-sacrificing boy. The time was when he could not have been made to believe that he would murder men as if they were wild animals.

One day his first Lieutenant said—

“Captain, haven’t you killed enough prisoners?”

“I will kill them,” said Bathie, “as long as I can find them. Let them get back to their own homes, if they do not want to be killed. What business have they here?”

“But, then, ought we not to pay some regard to the laws of civilized war?”

“I am fighting on my own responsibility. It is a personal affair with me. If they do not like my mode of fighting, let them keep out of my way. I shall kill every one upon whom I can lay my hands.”

It was useless to remonstrate with him. He had gone too far, he felt, to stop.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE SUDDEN COLLAPSE.

“This is all true as it is strange ;  
Nay, it is ten times true ; for truth is truth  
To the end of reckoning.”

In seeking for the causes of the sudden downfall of the late Confederate States the devout student of history will not ignore supernatural influences. “Man proposes, but God disposes”—a proverb which has ever been true, and ever will be. When we read the Old Testament we perceive plainly and indisputably that the Lord rules in the affairs of the nations. It is declared in the Psalms that promotion cometh neither from the East nor from the West, but God putteth down one and setteth up another. God’s hand directs the current of human history. It is He that controls wars and makes peace. Therefore, the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Jehovah can conquer by few or many, and He often achieves grand purposes with means which short-sighted man would pronounce inadequate. But His ways are not as our ways, and His thoughts are not as our thoughts.

Many persons of undoubted piety once firmly believed that God favored the uprising of a great Southern Empire for the purpose of perpetuating slavery in the form in which it existed prior to 1861 ; but the wish was father to the belief. We cannot tell what the divine purposes are until they are unfolded to view. The time had come, in the providences of the Omniscient Mind, for the abolition of slavery. The fact was, a great slaveholding aristocracy had sprung up in the South,

which paid homage to the black Baal of Africa. The affections of the Southern people were wedded to their "peculiar institution." But the time had certainly arrived when, according to the inexorable decree of Heaven, this worshiped institution must be submerged in the dark and treacherous Serbonis of war. It had accomplished the object which the Divine Mind had in view, and it must now be displaced and superseded by a new order of things. Slavery could not have been abolished without the intervention of the bloody sword. It was to be swept away with the besom of War, only, however, to reappear in another form. Whether the Negro has really been benefited by the change is a question which will bear discussion. Time alone can decide it. The assertion may be boldly made, that one portion of the human race must serve the other. Whether this be the law of God, or not, the very relations between Capital and Labor and Strength and Weakness will force, in spite of all pseudo-philanthropic conventionalities, the larger part of mankind into servitude, call it by what name we may. The South has learned some severe lessons, and her people have been compelled to lose their legal property at the point of the bayonet; but, after all, the North has succeeded only in altering the conditions under which the "Sons of Ham" shall serve their masters. In fact, it is only the theory of slavery that has been changed. The Negro, so long as he sojourns in the South, must accept the position of servant to the real owners of the soil; all the bayonets of the North cannot prevent it. God has spoken plainly on the subject, and proclaimed His will in emphatic terms, and the opposition of men is all in vain. It required four long, terrible years of bloodshed to effect what has resulted from the war, and then God determined that the conflict should end.

From a human standpoint, however, the contest owed its termination to causes which were purely natural, and such as are usual. The skeptic sees nothing in the affair that would tend to create even a suspicion that it was under divine control. Unexpectedly to a great many people, the Confederate States suddenly and rapidly collapsed. If the student of history should desire to know the true cause of the calamity, we attribute it, without hesitation, to the general *demoralization* of the Southern armies in the latter part of 1864. In no spirit of brag-gadocio, we challenge all history to produce a prouder military record than that made by the soldiers of the South. The young Confederacy entered the contest destitute of the munitions of war. Everything was in an unsettled condition. The rebellious States were compelled to organize a General Government almost amid the crash of arms. The sympathies of the world were with their antagonists, and it was with the utmost difficulty that military supplies could be procured, owing to the stringency of the blockade. On nearly every battlefield the Southern soldiers were in a fearful minority—sometimes outnumbered in the proportion of two or three to one. The North had the whole world from which to draw recruits, to fill up the depleted ranks of her armies. With such unlimited resources the Northern people were justifiable in the expectation, that in a few months the poorly-equipped “rebel” armies would be completely overpowered and crushed by the mere momentum of superior numbers. But at the first battle of Manassas they were utterly astounded at the obstinacy and adamantine firmness with which the “ragged rebels” stood their ground, and drove back the tide of invasion. Like a tremendous wave of the sea the Grand Army struck upon a Gibraltar, and recoiled upon itself. Many of the Northern people, discouraged by so many defeats and

disasters, were disposed, more than once, to recognize the right of "peaceable secession." But this was not to be; it was written otherwise in the Great Books. In them it was penned by the finger of the All-Wise, *the Confederacy must fall*. It can hardly be disputed, that she developed the best generals the world ever saw. Napoleon Bonaparte, with a better nature, supposing the doctrine of transmigration of souls to be true, reappeared in the awkward frame of Stonewall Jackson—the man of iron nerves, whose equanimity no disaster could disturb. It seemed that so long as he lived and breathed, the young Confederacy could not die. Jackson fell; and we believe it is not saying too much to affirm that in his tomb was buried the independence of the Confederate States. He was the great pivot upon which turned the destiny of the war, and his death was the beginning of the end. From that day territory after territory was given up to the enemy, and the black belt of desolation gradually enlarged.

In the winter of 1864 General Hood made his raid to Nashville, Tenn., and in a few days retreated with a shattered, disheartened, disorganized army. That disaster put an end to the horrid drama in the territory between the Father of Waters and Virginia. It was now the disheartened soldiers began to leave the ranks. The military authorities called it "desertion;" but the soldiers called it "going home." They were not "whipped out," and never could have been, had the *two hundred and fifty thousand*, who, according to President Davis' statement, "deserted," remained at their post. But let us do the soldiers justice, and look at the subject from their point of view. Toward the close of 1864 they easily perceived that the end was near, and they did not care to sacrifice their lives in prolonging a hopeless, use-

less contest. They were not demoralized by fear, but by despair of final success.

Another question here arises which will compel us to go deeper into the causes of the sudden collapse of the Confederate States. What was the real nature of the "lost cause" for which our brave soldiers spilled their blood for four weary years? Let us ascertain the remote causes of their general demoralization. When we look back over the battle-ground, after the smoke and dust have blown away, and the real truth is known, we are astonished that they fought with such fury and obstinacy. Look at the facts in the case. The war was waged, disguise the truth as some may, for the perpetuation of slavery. The right of Secession was a mere abstract question. It was not that for which we were fighting, except as an incidental issue. It was the Negro, as all will admit, that caused the right of Secession to be practically claimed. Now, the great bulk of our armies was constituted of men who never owned any slaves, and never expected to do so. What interest, then, had they in the war? They were not fighting for liberty, as were our forefathers in 1776. For no one can claim that they had been oppressed by grievous taxation, or in any other way; nor was any oppression anticipated. They were not fighting for the protection of their homes and families. For, as a general thing, the soldiers' families within the Federal lines were not mistreated. If the Northern soldiers had come with the torch in one hand, burning houses indiscriminately; had they made a universal practice of insulting and abusing women and children, there would have been such a furious uprising of the Southern people that the Federal hosts would have been driven back like chaff before the winds, and hardly one would have been left to carry the news of the destruction to their friends. While the

conduct of the Northern troops was uncivil enough, yet it was not so rude as to arouse general indignation and hate. What motive was there, then, to stimulate the zeal and arouse the enthusiasm of the poor men of the Southern armies? Really none but personal pride and the dread of public opinion. No able-bodied man, under the age of forty-five, could remain at home without drawing upon himself the loud and bitter execrations of his neighbors.

It will be seen, then, that notwithstanding the seeming unanimity of our people, there was a lack of thorough union among them at the very commencement of hostilities. It is well known that many of our best citizens did not regard secession as the proper remedy for existing evils. They were in favor of waiting till the Federal government should commit some overt act that would justify a withdrawal from the Union. They gave in to the secession movement with great reluctance, and only yielded at all, because they conceived their allegiance to be due to the State in which they lived. They did not think there was sufficient cause to justify a disruption of the government. It was sometimes remarked by the soldiers, "that we broke up the Union on suspicion."

Under these circumstances—considering that the war was waged for the perpetuation of the South's "peculiar institution"—and that the great body of our soldiers had no particular interest in the institution—yea, would be in a better condition by its abolition—is it not wonderful that they fought with such desperation?

When reduced down to the plain truth, it amounted to this: the many were carrying on the war for the preservation of the Negro property of the few. Eliminating slavery from the discussion, no reason can be assigned why the Southern States should have seceded.

They certainly did not withdraw merely to assert the abstract principle of State sovereignty ; nor did they do so because of any oppression ; but it was because it was feared that Mr. Lincoln would interfere, in some way, with slavery. Men are selfish beings, and do not like to make sacrifices where they have no personal interest ; yet the most of our soldiers, without any such interest, actuated mainly by individual pride, fought with a persistency and energy that surprised their enemies ; and they kept up the contest till they saw the ship sinking, when they deliberately walked out. We deny that they "deserted" in the usual and proper sense of that word. They would have fought the man that would have dared to apply the term to them.

We have briefly made the foregoing statement, because we believe it has been made nowhere else, and because we protest against having it said, or thought, that we were actually "whipped out." Wellington declared that the army with which he fought the battle of Waterloo was the "meanest" he had ever commanded. That was an insult to the noble men who defeated one of the finest armies the French ever brought into the field. We shall vigorously protest against having it written down in history that the South had a "mean" army anywhere in her territory. The Southern soldiers were gentlemen, and men of intelligence and courage and delicate sensibilities, who could as easily perceive the fast approaching end as the highest officer. Some of our Generals endeavored to make their escape from the country when they saw the ruin. The private soldiers did not wish to be captured, and they went home to escape their enemies, as well as a useless death in the "last ditch." If all had remained, there is no doubt that victory would have perched upon the Southern banners. Why, then, did they not remain? We wish to emphasize and impress

the answer, which is a summary of previous statements. First, they saw that slavery was a doomed institution, no matter how the war should end; and, omitting slavery, what was there to necessitate a continuation of the contest? Nothing but an abstraction. Second, they never felt aggrieved or outraged by any oppression on the part of the United States government, which would have thoroughly united them. Third, the Federals professed to be waging the war for the restoration of the Union, and not conquest. The great body of our soldiers had no objection to the Union. Indeed, many of our people ardently loved the old flag; and this class furnished a Vice President for the United States, even on the Republican ticket.

Under such disadvantages the South went into the conflict. If the Federal armies had invaded her territory for the purpose of conquest, plunder or oppression, they would have met a wall of fire upon the very border which they never could have crossed. The Southern soldiers knew very well that as soon as hostilities should cease, the revolted States would have to be restored to their former position, or the whole general government would be destroyed. Then, what had the non-slaveholding population to lose by surrendering their arms? Not a thing.

All these considerations were enough to demoralize the wearied, blood-sprinkled soldiers, many of whose families were suffering for the necessaries of life. Confederate money had become worthless, and in consequence, the soldier's wages contributed nothing to the support of his family. Yet in the face of all the difficulties which we have mentioned, they acted as heroes till the shadow of the final catastrophe fell upon them, and produced a demoralization which nothing, short of Omnipotence, could check.

We believe we have given the true cause of the sudden collapse of the Confederate States. Whether we have failed or not, we are actuated only by the desire to reach the plain, simple truth. We suppose Mr. Davis' statement, that two hundred and fifty thousand men had left the ranks, will go down to future generations. It ought to be known why they did so; and we have briefly attempted to give the reasons, as an act of justice to our Southern soldiers.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### A MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE.

“ Away he flew, with all his speed,  
On the back of his faithful steed ;  
‘ Adieu, my foe ! ’ he loudly cried,  
Then plung’d beneath the rolling tide.”

In the war of Secession there were many soldiers who stood to their post, fighting manfully to the very last hour. They felt keenly the disgrace of defeat, and remained on the field till they reluctantly received an honorable discharge. Among those who felt real grief at the final catastrophe was Bathie Beaumont. He had good personal reasons for desiring the continuance of the struggle till the independence of the Confederacy should be recognized. We will not closely follow his career after that day on which he destroyed the command of his friend and relative by marriage. This company De Lancy had commanded from the beginning of the war. It was composed of his friends and neighbors, whom he loved. When he saw them all lying upon the ground dead or mortally wounded (the most being dead), was it not natural he should hate the man by whose hand the unlawful destruction had been wrought? Whether it was right or wrong, all his friendship for Bathie was turned into the most bitter hatred. At once he reported the outrage, and it was not long before a reward of \$50,000 was offered for Bathie, dead or alive. He and his company were declared outlaws. This was what Bathie desired. It afforded him an excuse, plausible to his own mind, for the commission of his horrid deeds. When the war ended he had committed many atrocious

crimes, too revolting and sickening to be mentioned in detail. He was so daring that his name became a terror to the enemy. The consequence was, that he acquired notoriety far and wide, and his name was a synonym for death, in the minds of those against whom he fought. They soon learned that to fall into the hands of Beaumont implied certain destruction. As our reader has already been informed, he took no prisoners, and De Lancy was the only one he had ever suffered to escape.

Bathie read the proclamation, declaring him and his company outlaws, to his command, with a beaming face. Of course, this offer of a large reward made Bathie's company peculiarly dangerous. They never would be taken prisoners. They knew that to be captured was death. When they were hemmed in they would cut their way out with such determination and fury, that the opposing forces preferred to open the way, and let them escape. It must not be supposed that the Confederate Government approved of Bathie's conduct. He was outlawed by his own government, also; but this amounted to a nullity. Some of the Confederate generals, while they could not recognize his as a lawful command, nevertheless used him as a scout. They could not find any one else as useful and efficient; for he was always ready to go upon the most perilous service. They remonstrated with him, but he maintained the most profound silence in regard to what he did. His own people did not want to capture him, and he was notified to keep out of their reach. Many of them heard with delight of Bathie's awful exploits. A few thousands of such men would have gained the independence of the Confederate States.

When Bathie learned that Gens. Lee and Johnston had surrendered, he knew there was no peace for him. To lay down his arms with the expectation of being

paroled, or of taking the oath of allegiance, was not to be entertained for a moment. He was well aware that his conduct had placed him forever beyond the limits of official mercy. In reflecting upon what measures he would take for his own safety, he left all considerations based upon the clemency of the United States Government entirely out of his calculations. He thought, at once, that the most practical way to secure his life, and dwell in peace, would be to quit the United States. But he well knew that to attempt to escape while Federal soldiers were in every State would be certain to issue in his capture. He must find some hiding place, which would conceal him till the country should become more quiet. It did not require any great amount of deliberation to enable him to come to a conclusion.

During the last days of the war Bathie had operated with his command West of the Mississippi river. Such indefatigable efforts had been made in the State of Mississippi for his arrest that he found it necessary to change his base. His deeds had become so terrible that the enemy determined to capture him at all hazards. A regiment of cavalry was ordered to pursue him, and return with him and his company, dead or alive. \$50,000 had been offered for Bathie. The reward, apart from other considerations, was sufficient to stimulate the pursuers to extraordinary diligence. Bathie soon perceived the intention of his enemies, and as he could not hold his ground against such fearful odds, he thought it advisable to transfer the scene of his operations to a field where he was not so well known. Accordingly, one night his command crossed the Father of Waters in a flat-boat. This was about the 1st of January, 1865. But Bathie had gained a wider notoriety than he was aware of. It was ascertained that he had crossed the Mississippi, and the Federal forces were on the lookout

for him everywhere. Nevertheless, Bathie determined to do something more than fight on the defensive, and it was not long before he made his presence in unsuspecting places a terrific reality.

But at last, receiving reliable intelligence of the surrender of Gen. Lee, he made his way to the neighborhood of an uncle who lived on the bank of a beautiful river, which we will call the Linden. Having his programme made out, he concluded to disband his company. Accordingly, about the middle of May, one morning his men were formed into line, and Bathie, riding to the front, took off his hat, paused for a moment, and said—

“My brothers-in-arms! I am satisfied that the war is ended. There is no doubt that Lee and Johnston have surrendered. The days of the Confederacy are numbered, and our cause is lost. This is a stunning fact, which we must recognize. The struggle can be protracted no longer. Under these circumstances, no course is left us but to disband, and seek safety as well as we can. You have done your duty nobly, like men; and you have nothing with which to reproach yourselves. If others had stood to their post, and shown the bravery which you have, the Confederacy, long before this, would have taken a proud place in the galaxy of nations. But it is useless to repine. There is no remedy for the past. We have lost all. You know our history. I, for one, am proud of it. I have spilled blood till my once raging thirst for vengeance is fully satiated. But whether we are satisfied or not, the contest must end, so far as you are concerned. You can go to your homes and enjoy the fruits of such a peace as may be made. But, as you must be aware, there can be no peace for me. I would not think for a moment of trusting myself in the hands of my enemies. Surrender, for me, signifies death. I never expect to surrender.”

"But, Captain," cried one of the soldiers, "we cannot disband and leave you alone. Besides, what are we to do if we disband? We will be captured."

"I shall not leave you in danger," replied Bathie. "You can easily make your escape, and I will tell you how. Each of you obeyed my orders when we made a raid into the town of —, and you, therefore, have a suit of citizen's clothing. For some weeks I have been anticipating this day. All you have to do is to destroy your uniforms, hide your arms, and don your citizens' suits. In the character of peaceable citizens you can, in time, get to your homes. My suggestion is this: we are not to disband, and all leave at once. Some must leave to-day, in different directions, and some to-night. Go boldly into the country, and hire out to the farmers till you can safely go home. By day after to-morrow morning the last one of you must be gone."

"Then what will become of you?" asked one.

"Never mind me. I will remain here till you are all gone. You may depend upon it I will escape. I have a plan of my own."

"Why can we not go with you?" asked another. "Because that would only put your lives in jeopardy. I will have to execute my plan alone. If any of you were to go with me, it would probably cause my plan to fail. Besides, you cannot stay with me always. We must separate, and the sooner we do so the better for us all."

Bathie's suggestion was adopted, and each soldier dressed himself in citizen's clothing before leaving the camp. As they came up to bid their brave leader a long farewell the tears would glisten in the eyes of some of them; but though Bathie spoke kindly, and warmly returned the grasp of their hands, he was outwardly calm and unmoved, and even looked stern. This was

his habitual expression, however, except in the midst of the fray. Then his features were lit up with such a glowing fury that he resembled some beautiful demon or fallen angel of light. On his face there was depicted such a determination to conquer that his men were imbued with his wild spirit, and fought with an energy born of desperation. Occasionally, as the men would bid him adieu, this expression seemed to be a little more intense. He appeared to be taking an introspective view. As he shook hands he said, without the least manifestation of emotion—

“Good-bye. May you live long and be prosperous.”

In this way they separated, till, on the morning of the 17th of May, Bathie was left alone. From all we can learn the men who followed him through the war made their way in safety to their homes; at least, we have never heard of the arrest of one of them.

When the last man was out of sight Bathie deliberately examined his pistols and buckled them around his waist, under his citizen's coat. Taking his sabre, which had done such fearful execution, he concealed it in a hollow sweet-gum tree. Mounting his horse he struck out through the pathless forest, and in two hours he reached the house of his uncle, who met him at the gate.

“How do you do, Bathie?” exclaimed Mr. Constant. “I am very glad to see you; but I understand we've lost all. The bottom has dropped out of the Confederacy.”

“No doubt of it, Uncle Dan,” said Bathie, as they shook hands. “The war is over, and we are a defeated people.”

“But, my boy, what will you do with yourself? I feel uneasy for you. Are you afraid to get down and come in?”

“No, Uncle, I dare not dismount. I am going to a

hiding place somewhere. I should not feel safe out of my saddle just at present."

"It won't do for you to surrender."

"That is not to be thought of," replied Bathie. "I must get out of the way till the storm blows over. I am satisfied the whole country will be strictly searched. That reward of \$50,000 will set many an avaricious hound on my track. De Lancy himself is not far off."

"Of course, then, you must hide, and quick, too. You know where to go?"

"Yes," replied Bathie, speaking in a low tone, and looking cautiously around, as if afraid of being overheard, "unless it is known."

"All right," said Mr. Constant, in the same tone. "Nobody knows it but you, and me and Pomp. Are you afraid to trust him?"

"O, no. I would trust Uncle Pomp with anything. Is he here now? I sent him several days ago."

"Yes he is here."

"What will I do for food?" asked Bathie.

"There is no difficulty in regard to that. All you have to do is to look around you. Do you want Pomp to go with you?"

"Yes, for awhile, at least."

"When will you start?"

Bathie did not have time to answer, for at that moment Uncle Pomp came running in great haste and excitement, and gave the startling information that a company of soldiers, dressed in blue, were approaching from the rear of the field.

"Are you sure, Uncle Pomp?" asked Bathie.

"O, goodness gracious, Mas Baffie, don't stop to explavicate. Fly, like a bird, or you'll be captervated. Dey am in hot possuit of you. You knows whar to go. I is afeard to speak de word, less de winds mout bear it

to de enemy. I'll come to ye. De good Lod! yonder dey am. O, Mas Baffie, fly, run, git out ob de way. Don't you behole 'em? Is ye gwine ter sit dar an' be captervated?"

"I am not afraid of them, Uncle Pomp."

"But de odds am all agin ye. You can't fight dat whole company. Bress de Lod! I is gwine ter git away from here."

By this time the Federals were within two hundred yards of the house, and had discovered Bathie, who sat on his horse, calmly looking at them, as if awaiting their approach. When the party had advanced a little nearer Bathie cried out, in a loud voice—

"Halt!"

As he expected, the whole party paused.

"Who are you?" exclaimed the leader, in a well-known voice.

"De Lancy, come no nearer," cried Bathie.

"You are the man I want. Surrender."

"Not here," shouted Bathie. "Follow me, and I will show you something."

Having said this, Bathie darted off with the swiftness of an arrow. He was disappointed, however, in this manœuvre, for he expected the party would fear an ambushade. But to his surprise, they immediately dashed after him in hot pursuit. It seems they had somehow learned that he was alone. Then began a race for life. The pursuers had determined to take him alive. Yet, to intimidate him, they fired several shots, to which Bathie paid not the slightest attention. Another thing which astonished Bathie was that his pursuers were gaining on him. Without slackening his speed he slightly turned in his saddle, and fired several shots, but without effect. On and on they rushed, nothing being heard but the clatter, clatter, clatter of the horses' feet.

Bathie and his steed were straining every nerve, the animal seeming to understand the necessity of speed.

The road lay along the bank of the river, and was perfectly straight for more than a mile, and then the stream made a sudden turn and flowed on for a quarter of a mile, then gradually curved and came back to the road at a distance of not more than a hundred yards from the first point of deflection, thus forming a parabola, or, in plainer language, an ox-bow. To the amazement of his pursuers, Bathie suddenly left the road and turned into the bend. It appeared now that his capture was inevitable. But yet he went dashing onward till his progress was abruptly arrested by the river at the extreme point of the bend. What could he mean? The pursuers were under the impression that he would make an effort to swim the stream. But they were greatly mistaken; for Bathie quickly dismounted, and when they were within twenty yards of him he exclaimed—  
“Good-bye, Clarence.”

Instantly he plunged into the stream. In a few seconds the pursuers were on the very spot from which he had jumped, with guns to their shoulders, ready to shoot so soon as he should rise to the surface, but he did not rise. The land projected into the river, in the form of a small peninsula, to such a distance that from its termination they could see up and down the stream for a hundred yards or more. On either side were high bluffs, rugged and perpendicular, which no human being, it seemed, could possibly ascend; and they were unbroken, except at the narrow place where the pursuers were then standing. Ten minutes expired, but the pursued could be seen nowhere.

“He is drowned,” at last said one of the party. “No man could stay under water that long.”

“No,” said De Lancy, “he is not drowned. He did

not act like a man bent on the commission of suicide. Why should he come to this particular spot to drown himself? If that had been his intention it seems to me he would have jumped off the bluff. No he is not drowned."

"Well, where is he, then? He has not crossed over the river."

"No," replied De Lancy, "he has not done that, either. We would have seen him."

After a pause of several moments Clarence said: "My opinion is, he has concealed himself somewhere under the bluffs, and intends to come out at night, and make his escape. But we will have him yet. We are too close to him now to let him get away."

"Yes," said one of the men, "his scalp is worth \$50,000, and we must have him, especially when we've almost got our hands on him."

"Lieutenant," said De Lancy, turning to the officer, "take a dozen men, go back to old man Constant's—I think that is the name—and get a skiff. We must have this fellow. Bring the old man with you. I have use for him."

Accordingly, the lieutenant returned and found Mr. Constant at home. When he came out the lieutenant said—

"You are the uncle of Captain Beaumont?"

"I am."

"That was Beaumont whom we chased awhile ago, wasn't it?"

"Yes."

"Can you tell me where he is?"

"How in the world should I know? You have seen him since I have."

"You know where that first bend in the river is, don't you?"

"Certainly, I do."

"Well, right there Beaumont jumped into the river, and we've not seen him since."

"Good heavens!" cried Mr. Constant, in well-feigned surprise, "I am afraid the poor boy is drowned. You have forced him to destroy himself; for he has always declared that he would never be taken alive. He saw that you would capture him, and he rushed into the river, and drowned himself."

"Bosh!" the officer said, contemptuously. "You do n't believe that."

"Maybe he swam the river, then, and got away," said Mr. Constant, showing considerable anxiety. "Could n't he have done that?"

"No, sir, he could n't, because we would have seen him."

"Then he must be drowned," said Mr. Constant, in a tone indicating grief. "Poor boy! it is no more than I expected."

"We ought to hang you for harboring him," said the lieutenant, angrily.

"You would do me great injustice, then," meekly replied Mr. Constant, "for you ought to know that he has not been in this State till recently. He has not been in my house since he came West. True, he has stopped at the gate several times; but I do n't see how you can call that harboring. Indeed, he has kept away from my house on purpose to keep any one from accusing me of such a thing. He would not ask for anything to eat, nor even take a drink of water."

"That may be so, or it may not be," said the lieutenant, who was convinced, by Mr. Constant's earnest manner, that he was telling the truth. "But, no matter. Hav'n't you got a skiff?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, get it and take it down to that first bend. We want you, too."

"Certainly," said Mr. Constant, "I intended to go, anyhow. I want to give the poor boy a decent burial, if it is possible to find the body."

"I will go with you in the boat," said the officer, "and see that you act fairly."

"Certainly," said Mr. Constant. "I will be glad to have your company, and to help me look for the body, if that is what you want."

Accordingly, Mr. Constant led the way to the skiff, apparently without the least reluctance, and he and the officer were soon gliding down the river. In a little time they were with the rest of the party at the bend. Immediately the search began. All up and down the river to a considerable distance the banks were closely inspected, but no place was discovered where a human being could possibly hide. Must they give up the search as hopeless? But what more could they do? While they were discussing the matter, one of the company, a small, wiry man, said—

"Captain, I can dive like a duck. I believe I'll jump in right where Beaumont did, and see if I can't find out something."

"Well, try it, if you want to."

"All right. I can go where any other man can."

After making the necessary preparation, the man sprang in and dived downward. His comrades gathered around, and waited for his reappearance. A moment passed, and the surface of the water was unbroken. Another passed, and the men became alarmed. Presently one of them exclaimed—

"Great Jove! he's been gone five minutes! No man can hold his breath that long."

Not a word more was spoken. All were anxiously

looking at the water, with the most intense eagerness. Ten minutes rolled away, and the missing man did not return. His comrades gazed inquiringly into each other's faces.

"What in the world can have become of him?"

No one could imagine.

"See here, old man," cried Clarence to Mr. Constant, "there is something strange about this place; what is it?"

"I do not know," replied Mr. Constant.

"But you certainly do. You have been living here long enough to know."

"It may be," said Mr. Constant, "that there is something like a suck down under the water. There are such things, you know."

They waited half an hour longer.

"We'll never see poor Strong any more," said one of the company, "that's certain. This place is surely bewitched."

Many opinions were advanced in regard to the matter, but all at last came to the conclusion that it was a mystery which they could not solve. No one else in the company was willing to dive where Strong disappeared; for it was evident that whoever did that never came back again. Presently the first lieutenant requested the captain to walk a short distance from the company. When they were out of hearing, he said—

"Captain, it is my opinion that old man Constant knows where Beaumont is. I have been watching him closely. He seemed uneasy when Strong made that dive, but in ten minutes he seemed to be relieved. He don't act at all as if he thought Beaumont was drowned. I have a plan I'd like to try."

"What is it?"

"You take the company, and go out of sight and

hearing, as if we had given up the search, and leave three or four men here. We'll keep perfectly quiet till night, and then I will make the old man call Beaumont, and tell him we're all gone. If Beaumont hears, he will come from his hiding place."

"That is a good idea," said Clarence, "and we will try it."

Then they called Mr. Constant.

"Old man," said the lieutenant, "we believe that you know where Beaumont is, if you'd only tell."

"How can a man tell what he don't know?"

"I am going to experiment with you," said the officer, "to test your sincerity. Have you any objections to it?"

"That depends on the nature of the experiment."

"It is just this," said the lieutenant. "You are to remain here till night, and when everything is quiet, you are to call Beaumont, and tell him we are all gone, and to come out. Do you object to that?"

"Not in the least."

"Will you do it honestly and earnestly?"

"I will call till you are satisfied."

"That is all I ask."

Immediately De Lancy withdrew his command, except four or five men left in the bend with the lieutenant. As soon as it was dark, the officer and Mr. Constant got into the skiff, and rowed a short distance up the river.

"Now, call," whispered the lieutenant.

At once Mr. Constant exclaimed, in a voice which echoed and reverberated up and down the stream—

"O, Beaumont, they are all gone; come out."

Then, turning to the officer, he said—

"Will that suit you?"

"Look here," said the lieutenant, "none of your tricks. If you deceive me it won't be good for you. Are you in the habit of calling your nephew by his surname?"

"Very well," answered Mr. Constant, "I will call him by any name you want. If he hears, he will come as quick for one as the other."

"Call him by his given name, then. Now, don't talk to me. Act as if you were alone."

They moved further up, and Mr. Constant called—

"O, Bathie, come out; they're all gone."

And he kept this up till the officer was satisfied. Then they went down stream, Mr. Constant calling as often as he was desired, but the result was the same. This was kept up for several nights in succession, but all in vain. The *ruse* was a failure.

"Well," said De Lancy to his lieutenant, "we will have to give it up for the present. But I will have him yet, if he is in the world. There is something very mysterious about it. Strong's body ought to have come to the surface by now, if he was drowned."

"He is certainly dead," answered the lieutenant, "or he would have come back to us."

"I do not see what more we can do," said Clarence. "It is useless to stay here. We will have to watch for him."

"What will we do about Strong?"

"Nothing. What can we do?"

The command then left, seeming to have given up the search as hopeless.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### HEGOBAR.

“ Oh! conscience! conscience! man's most faithful friend,  
Him can'st thou comfort, ease, relieve, defend;  
But if he will thy friendly checks forego,  
Thou art, oh! woe for me, his deadliest foe.”

We suppose our kind reader to be endowed with a reasonable degree of curiosity. If he had none of that amiable virtue he would not find himself this far advanced in the intricacies of the present story. We feel that we flatter the reader by attributing curiosity to his intellectual being; because it is this propensity which has brought so many hidden things to light. Indeed, it underlies all the great inventions of art and the most remarkable discoveries of science. We have no reference to that prurient disposition which prompts so many people to pry into the little domestic affairs of their neighbors. This is contemptible. But there is in persons of great intellects a disposition to know, to learn, to investigate, in order to become wise. This is the sort of inquisitiveness which we suppose belongs to the mind of our reader. He will, therefore, unless he is destitute of the noble attribute of curiosity, most earnestly desire to be informed where Bathie really went to, when he plunged into the Linden river and disappeared from human sight. We will tell him.

Diving down for three or four feet, he went under the bluff, made a few strokes and rose to the surface, then swam eight or ten feet, when he found himself on *terra firma*. To perform this exploit required about one minute. Bathie was now in the cave of Hegobar—a

name which will be explained further on; or, at least, we will give all the information in regard to it of which we are in possession.

Bathie felt his way in the pitchy darkness for a few yards and struck a match, by the light of which he found a candle. This large cavern he had explored when a boy, and no one knew of its existence but himself, Uncle Pomp and Mr. Coustant. He was well acquainted with its topography. In the chamber where he was standing his uncle had stored away a considerable quantity of provisions and all his valuable effects. During the war the old gentleman himself was several times forced to take refuge in this secure retreat.

Nature here had performed some curious and wonderful work. The whole cavern was so constructed that the observer could not but be impressed with the thought that the hand of art was concerned in it. There were several chambers in it, so perfect that they seemed to have been carved by the hand of man. Who knows but that this really was done several thousand years ago, when men had such strange dwelling places? Or, possibly in modern times, the work may have been performed by North American Indians. There were long, spacious halls, so regular that, had it not been for some broken places, which the human indwellers would surely have repaired and improved, the visitor would have thought it incredible that nature alone could have formed it. However, there were no relics of human beings of any sort. But we shall not discuss the question whether all this was the exclusive performance of nature. Without taxing our reader's patience with a tedious description, we will say the whole cave seemed expressly designed for a subterranean dwelling. In addition to what has already been said, there were other features which emphasized this idea. A stream of clear,

cold water rippled and murmured along through it, and emptied itself twenty or thirty feet from the submarine mouth where Bathie had entered. That nothing might be lacking to the comfort and convenience of the person or persons, few or many, who might choose to take up an abode here, nature had kindly provided a bed of anthracite, of whose dimensions Bathie could form no correct estimate. It was on account of this coal that the existence of the cave had been kept such a secret. Mr. Constant desired to purchase the land on which the cave was situated; but, for reasons which we have not time to explain, it could not be sold in twenty years to come. He, therefore, impressed upon Bathie and Uncle Pomp the necessity of strict secrecy. Bathie now felt that, so far as fuel and water were concerned, he could stand a siege for life, if his enemies chose to watch that long.

He had an inexhaustible supply.

There were known to the trio who had discovered the cave three entrances. One has already been briefly described. Another was in the upper arm of the bend, about two hundred yards from the entrance under water. It was in the rocky bluff, some twenty-five or thirty feet above the level of the river at low water mark, and could be reached without great effort by rude stone steps, whose irregularity in gradation proved that they had been formed by the hand of nature. The mouth could not be seen till you were in it, as it was immediately behind a huge rock. When the visitor desired to enter he had to mount this rock, which sloped, at an angle of about forty-five degrees, to the mouth. This entrance was wide and tall enough to admit a person of medium size, by stooping. At the foot of the bluff a long, narrow ledge of rock ran up the river, at the very water's edge, to the distance of half a mile, and terminated abruptly at the mouth of a ravine. Without a boat of

some sort, down this ravine and ledge was the only way of reaching this mouth of the cavern.

The third known entrance was at the foot of the hill, or, more properly speaking, the mountain in which the cave was situated, at the distance of probably three-quarters of a mile from the submarine mouth. The opening, however, was rather small to be entered with anything like comfort. Still it could have been done had it not been for a remarkable phenomenon, which had often been observed by visitors. It was generally known as the "Blow Cave," from the fact that a very strong current of air was constantly pouring out. No one could enter, or at least, would enter, for two reasons: first, no light could endure the draught, and nobody cared to venture into such a place of total darkness; the second reason was, the air was so nauseating that a person could not breathe it for any great length of time without becoming deathly sick. For these reasons, though this mouth was known to many persons, it had never been entered. The explanation of the "blowing" was to be found in the fact that the cave was ventilated by the air entering in, probably at the mouth of the little stream, or some other unknown inlet, and hastening on through the winding halls, collecting the gases which arose from the coal and other mineral substances, and then rushing out through the aforesaid opening. This was the conclusion to which Bathie came by noticing that when he kindled a fire, the smoke was borne off in that direction.

If we were writing a history of the State in which this remarkable cavern was situated, we might describe other features of it which would prove interesting to all persons of a geological turn of mind; and we might speak of the beautiful stalactites pending from the rugged ceiling, and glittering like diamonds in the

presence of light; but it must be remembered that we are following the progress of a human CONSCIENCE from its downfall to its resurrection. Bathie, like every other human being, had an external and an internal life. It is by means of the former that we desire to give prominence to the latter. If any of our readers think only of his difficulties and his hair-breadth escapes, they will miss one of the chief purposes of our story.

The first chamber which Bathie reached was about twenty feet wide and thirty long. A single look at the further end discovered flour, meal, meat and other articles of food, in considerable abundance. Sometimes Mr. Constant had to conceal himself from his enemies; so he had carried into the cave the necessary culinary furniture. Bathie found that he was in possession of all the physical comforts a reasonable fugitive could desire.

Leaving our reader to imagine the kind of outer existence Bathie spent in his lonely dwelling, whose silence was disturbed only by the gentle rippling of the little stream, we must now remove the veil, so far as it can be done from intangible things, and observe his interior life.

The excitement of war had now come to an end, and the restless spirit within could pause. While the conflict was in active progress Bathie led such a life of constant motion he had little time for reflection. He was rarely still, flying from one place to another, striking the enemy an unexpected blow, and retreating in hot haste, pursued by a superior force. He had contracted the habit of dropping into sleep as soon as his command stopped at night. Besides, he made the effort to banish all thought from his mind, so far as it could be done, in regard to his gory deeds. He would not suffer his men to talk about his exploits in his presence. His was a career of blood which he desired to leave in a forgotten past, cov-

ered with an impenetrable veil of oblivion, just so soon as it became a fixed, unalterable reality. He felt that his course could not endure the light of sober reflection. Sometimes it all appeared to him as a horrible dream. But he would neither think nor talk about it. While the war was going on, and he would feel the symptoms of melancholy and *ennui*, he could seek the society of his fellow-men, and thus, to some extent at least, he could drive back thought by social intercourse. Besides, he could move about in and enjoy the cheerful, exhilarating light of day. But now he was absolutely alone. The print of a human foot on the sand frightened Robinson Crusoe, when wandering about his lonely island; a human voice would have startled Bathie. The darkness was that of Cimmeria. Not a single ray of the sun, or of a star, could penetrate to his black prison, whose darkness was so intense that the artificial light of a candle or lamp seemed to be in a violent struggle in order to prevent extinguishment. In twenty-four hours after his arrival the thought occurred to Bathie that his situation was rather unpleasant. He had been refreshed by a long and deep sleep, and was wide awake. His occupation was gone, and his mind waked up from its inactivity. He could plan no more military raids, and was now forced to reflect. Thought, like Banquo's ghost, would not down at his bidding. The scenes through which he had passed began to roll up before him like a living panorama. In spite of himself his battles were fought over. He would have forced them into oblivion, but he could not. Conscience, which he had imprisoned during the war, and kept in the background, now reasserted its rights, and in the most emphatic terms demanded a hearing. Like some terrible giant, it came to the front, and began to perform those functions assigned to it by the Almighty Father. Con-

science is one of the most fearful powers that belongs to the inner man. Many books have been written concerning its nature. Some authors have flatly denied the existence of such a faculty, affirming that it is merely the moral education of the mind. But without entering into a metaphysical discussion, which might be a severe tax on our reader's patience, we do insist upon the fact that it does become a mighty, controlling power in the inner man. If it is not a man's friend, then it is a bitter, uncompromising foe. Clad in the spotless ermine of a judge, it sits upon the bench in solemn dignity, and pronounces sentence, from which there is no appeal. It is the medium of communication between God and man. This monitor is an incorruptible judge; for it cannot be cajoled; nor can it be bribed into giving false judgment. Bathie discovered this very soon, to his great annoyance. It was in vain that he endeavored to persuade himself that he was justifiable in what he had done. The judge within could not be satisfied by sophistry. In the deep silence of his subterranean abode his memory would go back to the many victims he had slain. Frequently they would seem to start up before him with all the vividness and distinctness of a reality, dropping their arms in the attitude of imploring mercy. A long procession would pass before him, and presently it would become an army of living skeletons, turning upon him their sightless, empty sockets, and grinning with bleached teeth. Again, some of his victims would stand perfectly still, gazing at him reproachfully, with fearfully staring eyes, and suddenly blood in fiery-red streams would spurt from their mouths. Sometimes he could see the ground covered with writhing beings, and he could hear their horrid groans. Sometimes he would see them, clad in gory uniforms, in full flight, looking back at him with faces expressive of terror and dismay.

One day Bathie's feelings were so deeply aroused by these apparitions that he cried aloud, in a voice that startled himself: "It was in war."

Conscience immediately replied—

"If it was in war, you had no right to destroy helpless prisoners. You are a murderer."

"Surely," said Bathie, in soliloquy, "some demon, if there is such a thing, must have urged me on in my career of blood. I have slain scores of men who never did me any harm. No doubt I have killed many men who would have wept with me over my misfortune. They were not responsible for my calamity. Yet I have struck them down without mercy." After a moment he continued: "But, after all, they were the declared enemies of my country. Did I not have the right to slay them?"

"No!" thundered Conscience, "not in the way you did. They had surrendered and were powerless. You are a murderer."

This accusation, coming up from the very depths of the soul, from the innermost recesses of the moral man, was often so clear and loud that Bathie would start up from his sleep, and look around wildly, as if he expected to behold the accuser in his chamber. Frequently he imagined he heard the voice of De Lancy; and then he would see him just as he appeared on that fatal day, but bound to the corpse of his murdered brother. O! the visions springing from introspection were terrible. Bathie reasoned with himself in solemn soliloquy—

"Did the accidental killing of his bride of a moment justify the effusion of any of the blood which stained his hands? What had he gained? How could his dark deeds benefit her? Where was she? Was not death the final end of man? If so, what had he gained beyond the gratification of his most ignoble passions?"

Had he not blunted the better feelings, the nobler impulses, the finer sensibilities of his nature? What was he but a hardened misanthrope? In his mad, foolish pursuit of revenge he had, with his own hands, slain his wife's own brother. Ought not that to have brought him to his senses, by demonstrating the folly of seeking vengeance by murdering innocent people?"

Such questions would come stealing into his mind, but they afforded no relief. The awful visions would not cease. At times even the image of his bride would rise up, pointing her finger at him menacingly, and gazing into his face reproachfully; and this was the most awful, heart-chilling of all his visions. It made him almost wish for death.

In three or four days after his entrance into the cave Bathie found his self-imprisonment extremely disagreeable. This involuntary self-introspection was revolting; yet his surroundings made it unavoidable. He had to look within, and analyze his thoughts and emotions. You have seen the little bird fluttering around a serpent, drawn into the jaws of death by a strange sort of fascination, which philosophers have never been able to satisfactorily explain? No doubt the poor little warbler apprehends the awful danger; but it is *charmed*, and resistance seems to be unavailing. Bathie's own mental experience seemed to possess a horrible attraction for him. There was no escape from reflection. His reminiscences assumed visible shape. He knew that these horrible apparitions were but projections from within, thrown upon the walls of imagination, just as pictures of the magic lantern are formed upon the brilliantly illuminated canvas; but what of that? They were drawn in true perspective, and looked life-like, and had as much effect for a moment as if they had been living creatures. Bathie was vexed at himself. Why should

he feel alarmed? Had he not faced death a thousand times? Would he now shrink from a contest with his enemies? Was he afraid to die? Not on the field of battle, where he could be stimulated by the sight of the foe, and hear the report of firearms. But how, if he should be arrested? What kind of an appearance would he present on the scaffold? He shuddered and grasped his pistol. "I will never be taken," he muttered.

A week passed away, and then another voice was heard in the cave.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### A SAD MISUNDERSTANDING.

“Why should we kill the best of passions—love?  
It aids the hero, bids ambition rise.”

Before we follow up the event hinted at in the preceding chapter, we must return to some old acquaintances, whose history is, we think, worth knowing. There is something in the experience of every emotional life which makes that life interesting. People, old and young, are fond of what cynics call “love stories.” Some affect to treat with scorn what they denominate “love-sick stories,” and yet they slyly read such stories with a relish. Are they to be blamed for it? Is it a sin to love? On the contrary, we affirm that it is not only one of the most interesting, but one of the most useful passions that belongs to the human heart. It is the great bond which holds human society together. It is this upon which human happiness is mostly based. It is this which makes happy homes. Without it human beings would sink almost to the level of beasts. There is deep significance in those lines of the poet—

“The world was sad! the garden was a wild!  
And man, the hermit, sighed, till woman smiled.”

Yes, let old, growling Diogenes sneer, but the smile of woman thrills the heart, arouses a noble ambition, elevates the moral sensibilities, stimulates man's dormant energies, and makes him love peace, law and order. And thus civil government itself depends, to a very great extent, upon that very affection between the sexes which some phlegmatic persons seem to despise. A love story, therefore, unless it is of the silly sort, designed

only to amuse silly people, is worth the writing and the reading. A thing which God has implanted in the human heart for the accomplishment of great and wise purposes, is not to be sneered at, nor treated as a light matter. While we do not wish the present to be called a *love-sick* story, yet we admit that it is a story in which men and women love, just as they do in actual life. No other apology is necessary.

The last time we saw Mary Smith was on that fatal night, in Vicksburg, which witnessed the downfall of one hope and the uprising of another.

Langdon wrote to her more than once during the war, but, for reasons with which our reader is acquainted, received no reply. When peace was at last made he wrote again, and they carried on a correspondence for some time. The young chaplain's epistles were full of the most ardent expressions of love. In her replies Mary was extremely cautious. Langdon, on receiving her cool and polite letters, which were carefully composed, was frequently inclined to despair of ever eliciting from her anything more than a mere avowal of friendship. It was painfully evident to him that she employed not a word or syllable that could, by a strict construction, be tortured into a disclosure of any very tender sentiment toward himself. At times he was annoyed at his ill success, and was tempted to abandon his suit. Who was she, anyhow? he would ask himself, in his fits of vexation. Nothing but a poor overseer's daughter. Was she worthy of him? Could she fill the station which the minister's wife must occupy? It was chilling to his pride to think of her humble origin. But, on the other hand, his heart asked, why was she not equal to the wealthiest lady in the land? Ought the mere calling of her father destroy her individual respectability? Mary was beautiful, amiable, well educated. What

more could he ask? There was no aristocracy in this glorious land to frown upon those who could boast of no long line of illustrious ancestry. Why should she be ostracised, then, for the mere accident of birth? After such reasoning, prompted by self-interest, he would come to the conclusion to persevere. He felt himself drawn so strongly to the modest Mary that it would have been difficult not to have followed the leadings of his heart. If he had known the young lady's heart history, the probability is he would have given up in despair. But she was so severely silent upon the subject of her delicate secret, that no one suspected the depth of her devotion to Bathie. It is just to her to say that she had often called into requisition all the powers of her nature to enable her to overcome her hopeless attachment.

When Bathie walked into the parlor that fearful night with Genie, looking sad and pale, Mary was thoroughly convinced that he had never for a moment thought of her, except as a sister. But when poor Genie's young life was instantly crushed out, the thought crept into Mary's heart, like a sinful thing, which she endeavored to thrust out, that her prospects were better than they had ever been. How could she keep back the thought? The young heart does not easily give up its first love; though we think it is rather a poetical fancy that any person is so constituted that he cannot love but once. What the real foundation of this affection is, no philosopher can tell. Why does a man prefer one woman to another; and *vice versa*, why does a woman prefer one man to another? The parties affected cannot tell what it is that mutually attracts them. Since we cannot correctly analyze this feeling, and since it is not dependent upon a volition, it would be a little strange that there is only one person in the world for whom we can have the peculiar affection. The

chief reason why Mary poured out the whole wealth of her heart upon Bathie was that she had, in the years of greatest susceptibility, associated with him more intimately than any other. But whether reasons can be given or not, it was certain that she loved Bathie with an intensity which it seemed to her grew out of an affection which could exist but once. No doubt it was a fanciful idea, which almost every young person entertains. But be that as it may, she had a new ground for hope. Bathie was a *widower*. Why might he not transfer his affection to her when he should recover from the first shock, and time should dull the edge of his grief? It appeared to her that such pure, fervent affection as hers ought to meet with a better return. Why could not Bathie give her his heart? O, if she could only see him! But this deep, earnest wish could not be gratified. She did not see him again during the war, and, of course, she knew nothing in regard to his residence in the cave.

Langdon did not have an opportunity of seeing her while the war was in progress. But in three or four months after the termination of the contest he determined to pay her a visit, as her letters were so unsatisfactory. Mr. Smith imagined that he had so many enemies among the negroes, he did not think it altogether consistent with safety to return to the Beaumont plantation. So, in the city of Vicksburg, Mary was living in a rather small, dingy house, where her parents were trying to make a livelihood by keeping boarders. Here Mary seemed to be out of place. She was not in harmony with the surroundings. She was qualified to adorn a higher sphere, and deserved a better destiny. At least, this was the first thought which occurred to Langdon when they met. The very humbleness of her situation led him to hope that she might be induced to

favor his suit. Langdon, when he saw her again, was more enamored than ever, for Mary had now attained to the full bloom of womanhood, and was the very personification of health. His very senses were intoxicated. But in her manner toward him she manifested neither pleasure nor sorrow. She was merely polite.

"I am very much obliged to you," said Langdon, in the course of their conversation, "for answering my letters; but I wanted to see you, and I could not resist the temptation to make this visit."

"You are under no obligation to me at all," she replied, "if my poor letters have afforded you the least pleasure."

"They have been a great source of pleasure; but you might have made it greater."

"How could I?"

"By expressing a reciprocity of sentiment."

"You would not have me write anything but the truth, would you?"

"Certainly not; but I was in hopes that my repeated declarations of undying affection might have touched a responsive chord in your heart. Tell me, candidly, have I utterly failed to inspire you with a feeling warmer than friendship?"

"Mr. Langdon," said Mary, pityingly, "you deserve a better return of affection than I am able to make. Seek some other who is more worthy of you. I am not qualified to fill the station which a clergyman's wife must."

"I think you are greatly mistaken in that," replied Langdon, speaking earnestly. "What do you think is required of a minister's wife?"

"I think she ought to be very pious."

"Certainly; but is it not your duty to be pious in any station of life?"

"I suppose it is; but the wife of a clergyman, it seems to me, ought to be very exemplary. She should be even enthusiastic in her husband's work, and not given to worldly pleasures, and she should be contented with a lowly lot in life, and have no craving for fashion and display."

"Since," said Langdon, "you understand so well what ought to be the character of a preacher's wife, I do not see why you are not capable of filling the station yourself, and with credit to yourself. If you were in sympathy with the gay, giddy throng that flit about in fashionable circles as mere gaudy butterflies, having no higher object in view than that summer animal, I should never have sought your hand. But, besides, while your estimate of the preacher's wife is correct, it is not absolutely necessary that you should come up to your own ideal. I do not expect perfection in any one. If you reach the average standard, I ask no more."

"I am not certain I can do that."

"O, you must not underrate yourself so," replied Langdon. "Only be mine, and I assure you I will never complain on account of your lack of qualifications. I soon will enter upon my ministerial duties among a people who are kind and appreciative. I know they will welcome you with such cordiality that you will love them. I have a nice little home there, but I cannot live alone. I am continually thinking of you. I beg you put an end to my suspense by appointing the day when I can call you by the sacred name of wife, and it shall be my endeavor to anticipate your wishes, and to make your life so pleasant that you will ever celebrate the anniversary of our marriage with joy."

Poor Mary listened with feelings of solemnity to these earnest words, and she pondered them with deep seriousness. Langdon was the only one that had ever ad-

dressed such language to her. If such words had only been spoken by Bathie, how her heart would have leaped for joy, and responded with eagerness. But where was Bathie? She knew not. Even if she had known, what difference could it make? Could she indulge the hope that he would ever address her as Langdon had done? Why not, then, accept Langdon? It would be taking a high step in the social sphere. The life she was now leading was distasteful. What could she promise herself in her present condition? Nothing but hardship and labor. Why could she not be happy with Langdon? He was a highly educated, Christian gentleman, and attractive in person. Why not, then, accept his suit?

When she contemplated the subject from this standpoint, practical judgment urged her to dismiss her rosy dreams, and decide at once in Langdon's favor. But the image of Bathie would suddenly flash up, and obtrude itself among her calculations, and oppose all her reasonings. Suppose he should return—and he might do so at any time. If she could only consult him in reference to this step, then she could discover the real state of his mind. This uncertainty in reference to Bathie kept her in a state of indecision. If she could have brought herself to believe that her attachment was utterly futile, she would have made much greater efforts to change the current of her affections. An interview with her mother also had a tendency to increase Mary's perplexity. For that evening, after Langdon took his leave, with the understanding that he was to call the next day, Mrs. Smith said, with her natural bluntness—

“What are you goin' to do about Langdon? He's been courtin' you, I know.”

“How do you know, mother?” asked Mary, with a sad smile.

“Never mind how I know. I hav'n't been livin' in

the world fifty year for nothin'. You can't deny that he's courted you."

"I shall not deny it, mother," said Mary, carelessly.

"Well?" said Mrs. Smith, in that intonation which indicates a desire for further information.

"Well?" answered Mary, as though she did not understand what was wanted.

"Well, what's your conclusion?"

"I have come to no conclusion."

"What objection do you have to him?"

"None at all."

"Then why don't you tell him 'yes,' and be done with it?"

"Do you think I ought to tell him 'yes?'" inquired Mary, with an air of indifference.

"If you like him well enough, I don't see any reason why you shouldn't. He's certainly a nice gentleman, and I don't know when you'll have such another chance."

"Do you think he is such a good chance?"

"Yes; and so does your father. He's been inquiren' about the young man, and says he would have no objection to your marryin' him. I think, myself, that you'd better take the first good chance. After awhile you'll get to be an old maid, and then nobody will want you. Your father and me can't live always, you know, and you must have somebody to take care of you."

"You want me," said Mary coolly, "to marry Mr. Langdon that you may get rid of me?"

"No, not to get rid of you, child. You know better than that. But I want you to do well, and have a good home of your own. A lone woman can't well take care of herself. I don't know what you'd do wern't it for your father and me."

"I think I should take a school, as I intend to do, any how, as soon as I can find one."

"It's much better to have a home of your own and a good, kind husband to provide for you. I think old maids have a hard time in the world, even when they're independent. I'd a heap ruther be a widow than an old maid."

"What you say is, no doubt, true," replied Mary, "but would you advise me to marry Mr. Langdon, if I do not love him?"

"That depends on what you mean by lovin' him. I spose you love him as well as you love anybody. I'm sure he is a good-lookin' man, and I do n't see why you shouldn't learn to love him. Did you ever love anybody else?"

Poor Mary could not look up; but feeling that the eyes of her parent were gazing at her, she was betrayed by a deep blush that spread over her neck and face. She felt a strong inclination to shrink back from this close scrutiny. Mrs. Smith was on the trail of the long-kept secret.

"You have loved somebody else, then? Who is it? There's only one other I can suspect."

"Whom do you suspect?" asked Mary, timidly.

"Bathie Beaumont."

Mary was silently discussing whether she should reveal all or not. Probably her mother might give her good counsel.

"Suppose I acknowledge it?" she said.

"Then I'm sorry for you," replied the parent, "for he cares nothin' for you, and never did."

Mary could no longer restrain the crystal drops.

"O, Mother," she said, in a choking voice, "I am so wretched. I have loved him as I never can love any one else. For years I have wrestled in secret with cruel disappointment. I thought it would be useless, but I could not help it."

"Did he ever encourage you to do so?"

"Never. He has always treated me as a sister, and has been so kind to me, as you know; but he never suspected that his kindness was killing me. The thought that he has loved me only as a brother might have made me heart-sick. It is sometimes intolerable."

"Do n't you believe he saw that you loved him?"

"No. He thought my love was merely the friendship of a sister. I have tried hard to keep my feelings concealed from him, and I have succeeded."

"Child," said the mother, after a short pause, "you may as well drop Bathie out of your mind. You can never marry him. You will have to do as most other women have to do. I do n't think a great many of them ever marry the man of their choice."

"They must lead miserable lives, then."

"No; you're mistaken, and you'll find out so, if you marry Langdon, or any other respectable man. If he is kind to you, you'll soon learn to love him, and you'll be as happy with him as Bathie."

"That is hard for me to believe," said Mary. "I have loved Bathie from childhood, and I have tried hard to crush out what I believed was a hopeless affection. I have tried to love Mr. Langdon, but I cannot do it. I have great respect for him; but that is all. O, Mother, I would give the world if Bathie would only speak to me as Mr. Langdon has done."

"Mary," said the parent, with deep seriousness, "if you do n't mind, you're goin' to throw away a treasure. If Langdon loves you as you say he does, you'd better not discard him at once. If you do, you may have reason to repent of it some years from now."

"Mother, I cannot, oh! I cannot marry him with my present feelings. It would be a sin. I don't know how other women are; but the thought of marrying him

makes me shudder. It is not because he is personally repulsive, but because I love the other so."

"Well, my advice is, you'd better not reject Langdon too quick. Put him off awhile."

"If you think it best," said Mary, slowly and thoughtfully, "I will do so."

And here the conversation was dropped.

Again Langdon called, the next day, according to promise. Mary was now in a somewhat different frame of mind, and she gave her suitor a more cordial greeting than she had ever done—a fact that considerably revived his hopes. She had seriously reflected upon the matter, and was no longer halting between two opinions—at least she had decided upon a course of action. Her great fear was that it would not meet Langdon's approval.

"I hope," said he, after they had had a short conversation on general topics, "you are now prepared to give me a definite answer. I must start home in a few hours. I ask you again, shall I return miserable or happy? You know what my sentiments toward you are, and it is useless to reiterate. I suppose you are acquainted with your own heart. I leave to-day. It depends upon you whether I shall ever return. If my attentions are disagreeable I expect you to tell me so candidly, and end my suspense."

"I cannot say that your attentions are offensive, Mr. Langdon. Indeed, I feel highly honored by them. But I fear the answer I must give you will not be altogether satisfactory."

"What is it?" he asked, eagerly, inferring from her words that her decision was not entirely averse to his wishes.

"You have urged me," she said, speaking slowly, "to appoint the important day in the near future. That I cannot do."

"Well, what is the very earliest day you can possibly appoint?"

"Not a day under two years."

"Two years!" exclaimed Langdon, looking at her in astonishment. One timid glance at his face was sufficient to discover his deep disappointment. "Surely," he said, after a pause, during which he was watching her face, "you are not in earnest."

"I am in earnest, Mr. Langdon," said Mary, with gentle firmness.

There was silence for a few moments. Langdon dropped his head in his hands, as if struggling with disappointment. Presently he raised up, and Mary perceived his look of sorrow. She began to fear the effect which her decision might have. Perhaps it might drive him off forever, and the thought produced a feeling of uneasiness. It is rather difficult for a woman to be totally indifferent to a respectable man who truly loves her. We cannot go into the fire without feeling its heat. Mary discovered at this moment that her esteem for Langdon was greater than she had supposed it to be. She was alarmed. Suppose he should conclude to give up his suit entirely? Could she blame him? But could she suffer him to give it up?

"What is your reason," presently asked Langdon, in a slightly tremulous tone, "for such a terribly long postponement?"

She could not give the true reason, and she felt a twinge of conscience on account of her duplicity, which, if known, would make the high-minded Langdon turn from her in disgust.

"I am not prepared for an earlier day," she said.

Langdon rose from his seat, looked at her narrowly for a moment, and said—

"Sometimes ladies have a pretty way of tantalizing

and teasing us, for their own amusement. I do not object to it, to a reasonable extent. But frequently they can go further than they intend. I beg you, let us not part with a misunderstanding that may bring sorrow and regret to us both. You may have reason to repent, as well as I. You are about to cast from you the love of one who would make an idol of you. This long postponement is unreasonable, especially when you can assign no reason for it. I hope you are teasing me merely to test my affection for you. Am I mistaken or not? I shall now take your answer as final."

Mary was troubled, but she answered—

"I am not teasing you, Mr. Langdon. You seem to think my decision is preposterous; but I do have a good reason for it."

"Will you be so kind," asked Langdon, "as to give me your reason? Let me be the judge whether it is sufficient or not. Possibly I may agree with you, and consent to the arrangement."

Langdon perceived the air of vexation which slowly passed over her face, and during its passage she answered—

"I prefer not to give it."

"Whatever it may be," replied Langdon, in an altered tone, that caused her to look at him in surprise, "I shall not insist upon knowing it. I believe I have loved in vain. What is the use of perseverance under such circumstances? I have been a great simpleton to trouble you so long with attentions which you have given me reason to believe must be repulsive. Good-bye. Let us part friends, since it seems there never can be any other relation between us. May the Lord bless you, and give you a full measure of happiness in this world, but especially in the world to come."

Mary was taken so by surprise at this sudden turn of

affairs that she knew not what to say. She stretched out her hand mechanically, not fully realizing that Langdon was leaving her forever. He turned, went into the narrow hall, put on his hat, and next she heard his footsteps as he moved off. The gate opened, and she heard it shut. The sound startled her, and seemed to arouse her to a sense of her true situation.

A man who fell from a ship one dark night, into the Gulf of Mexico, and who was fortunately rescued in two or three days afterward, gives an account of his sensations and his emotions. When he struck the water he was not greatly alarmed, as he knew he was observed, and heard the cry, "man overboard." He expected that in a few moments he would be back again upon deck. But the night was dark and stormy, and he could not make his voice heard against the wind. When he rose to the surface, the vessel was some distance off. He perceived the commotion on board, and yelled with all his might. But all in vain. Presently the search for him was abandoned, and the ship began to move rapidly away. He told with what eagerness he looked after the lights till all had disappeared, and left him in darkness, buffeting the waves. How his heart died within him, as his last hope went out with the lights!

Mary had a somewhat similar feeling, lacking, however, in intensity, as she heard Langdon moving away. She knew not before that he had any hold upon her heart, and had supposed that there was room in it for only Bathie. What made her so foolish as to trample his affection under her feet? Why did she not adopt some other plan for putting him off? She might never again see either Bathie or Langdon. She felt that she was now abandoned to her fate, in a dark, loveless ocean of gloom. The lights were rapidly receding. At some critical periods, and under some circumstances, whole mul-

titudes of thoughts can be compressed into the space of a few seconds. Even long processes of reasoning rush through the mind like a flash of lightning. By the time Langdon had walked a few steps from the gate down the street Mary had worked out a problem—had gone through the steps of a regular syllogism, like this: If he goes off now I may never see him again. He must not go off now. Conclusion—I will call him back immediately. This passed through her mind, and then she said, aloud—

“I cannot stand it! I cannot stand it!”

She instantly sprang to her feet, and rushed hurriedly to the gate. Without turning her head, she exclaimed, in a timid voice—

“Mr. Langdon! Mr. Langdon!”

He did not hear, and every step was taking him further away. She opened the gate, and saw the retreating form. In desperation, she cried out—

“Mr. Langdon! Mr. Langdon!”

But he moved on.

At that moment a gentleman passing, and observing her look of anxiety, said—

“Shall I call him for you?”

Mary turned to look at the stranger, and was thrown into confusion.

“Shall I call him for you?” he repeated.

“No, sir—O, yes, if you please, do.”

The gentleman looked at her in surprise; but when he turned his head again, Langdon had turned into another street, and was out of sight.

“Shall I follow, and bring him back? Talk fast. What is the name?” asked the gentleman.

“No, thank you,” said Mary, blushing at the thought of her situation, “never mind. It does not matter in the least.”

The stranger bestowed on her a look of scrutiny, and passed on. Mary slowly turned, and was going back to the house.

"Mary," exclaimed her mother, who had come to the door on hearing her call, "what are you bawlin' after Langdon for? What in the world is the matter with you?"

"He has left with a misunderstanding," said Mary, in confusion. "He did not give me time to explain; and now he is gone."

"That's so much like silly young folks," said the parent, with a sneer. "You've had a quarrel, then, have you, like nearly all young fools do?"

"No, ma'am, we have had no quarrel."

"What's the matter, then?"

"Why, I told him that I would not marry him for the next two years—that is all."

"That's all!" exclaimed the old lady. "Umph! I think that's enough. Did you really think he'd wait that long?"

"I could see no reason why he should not," said Mary. "Why should he be in such haste?"

"You're a bigger goose than I took you to be," replied Mrs. Smith, bluntly. "What do you want to wait two years for? But tell me about it. What did Langdon say?"

"At first he seemed to think I was teasing him. But when I informed him that I was really in earnest, he suddenly told me good-bye. When he got out of the house I concluded that maybe I had done wrong about it. So I followed after him, intending to call him back, and try some other plan."

"Did he say nothing about coming back?"

"Not a word."

"I'm very much afraid you've let a good chance slip," said Mrs. Smith. "You've acted very foolish-like. You might know that no man 'ud wait two years unless there was some good reason for it; and what reason had you?"

"I gave him no reason," said Mary, "except that I did not care to marry sooner."

"Well, child, if you want to be a dried-up old maid, that nobody will care for, you're in a fair way for it. This is the only good chance you've ever had, and now you've lost that."

"Do you not think he will come back again, or write?" asked Mary.

"That's mighty doubtful, I fear. You've give him such little comfort, I would n't blame him if he never does come back, nor write neither."

"But I can write to him," said Mary.

"You'd better," said Mrs. Smith, "and pretty soon, too, if you want to see him any more."

Mary waited, we will not say with patience, for two weeks, hoping to receive a letter from Langdon. She had changed her mind, and concluded to abbreviate the time to something like a reasonable period. She thought it would be foolish to wait longer for Bathie, who evidently had no affection for her. Two weeks, and then two more weeks passed away, and still no letter from Langdon. As he walked away from the door that day he said to himself, "if my suit is ever renewed it will be at her solicitation."

He was true to his determination. Several times Mary had taken up her pen to write to him, telling him that she had changed her mind, but she would decide to wait a day or two longer. In this way three months rolled by, and then Mary wrote these lines to Langdon:—

“MR. LANGDON: I hope you will forgive me for sending you away as I did. It was not my intention to give offence or to discard you. I have reconsidered the matter, and have concluded to appoint a day nearer in the future. The reason which I once had for postponing is no longer in existence. I would be glad to hear from you at once. Yours, etc., M. S.”

This letter was sent, and Mary waited with trembling anxiety for an answer. To her astonishment and shame none came. Mary had forgotten that Langdon told her he would soon move to a new field. She directed her letter to the post office from which he had written to her. The consequence was her brief epistle found its way to the Dead-letter Office, and never reached the person for whom it was intended. And here, for awhile, we leave her.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### A DISMAL REFUGE.

“He shudder'd, as no doubt the bravest cowers  
When he can't tell what 'tis that doth appall.”

It is now time to return to the cave of Hegobar, whose sole occupant was involuntarily paying a tribute to the power of conscience. There he wrestled alone with the phantasms of imagination, as philosophers would call them, for seven or eight days.

One night, at the expiration of this length of time, Bathie was lying down upon his couch in his lonely abode. He was dreaming; for in his disturbed sleep he muttered words that indicated the horrid character of the scenes which passed in rapid panorama across the field of imagination. “The dream is from Jove,” said the blind old bard of Scio's rocky isle. The old poet, using the license which is accorded to the maker of verses, might also have said that some dreams are from Pluto. To an observer, it might have appeared that some inhabitant of the infernal regions had assumed control of Bathie's mental operations, during the hours of somnolence, in order to “torment him before the time.” This night he exclaimed, aloud—

“De Lancy, come no nearer, or I will take your life!  
Not an inch nearer! You brought it on yourself.  
Your men forced me to it. It was your sister they  
killed. Why do you not help me to avenge her death?  
Why do you hunt me down, as though I were a wild  
beast? I do not want your blood on my hands. Stand  
back!”

At that very moment a form was standing close to

his couch, watching with some interest the workings of his face by the light of the candle, which was in easy reach of the sleeper. It is said that in our slumbers we, at least sometimes, become conscious of an unexpected visitor's presence. Can the mind see dimly through the closed eye? or does the intellectual man, in the moments of sleep, become partially independent of flesh and blood, and exercise in a feeble manner some of those powers of the soul which death shall entirely free from its carnal prison? At any rate, there is something fearful in the steady gaze of the human eye. When the unfortunate President of the Confederate States was confined in a fortress, awaiting his trial for high treason (which trial never occurred, for the reason that it would have involved a discussion of State sovereignty, and must have resulted in the prisoner's acquittal), he states that one of the most grievous features of his confinement was the eye of the sentinel, ever fixed on him. Day and night that eye was ever gazing at him. He could not make the slightest movement without being observed. The ever-watchful eye became a source of inconceivable annoyance. May we not feel the penetrating power of the eye in sleep? It may be so; for man is fearfully and wonderfully made, and does not understand the mysteries of his own being. Whether we can understand psychological processes, such as that to which allusion has just been made, Bathie appeared to become aware that the eyes of a human being were gazing into his face, and his sleep became uneasy. Presently he sprang into a sitting posture, and in the first confused instant of his return to consciousness, he grasped his pistol lying at his side.

"No use for that, my boy," quickly cried his uncle. "I'm not an enemy. Put up your weapon. I don't like its looks."

“O, Uncle Dan, is it you?” eagerly cried Bathie, rising up, and warmly grasping his relative’s hand. “I am so glad to see you. In fact, I would be delighted to see a dog. O, you cannot imagine what I have suffered in this fearfully lonesome place. It is like being incarcerated in a dungeon. The only difference is I am self-imprisoned, sustained by the hope of ultimately regaining my liberty.”

“And that makes a great deal of difference, Bathie. If you were confined here by keepers, it would be far worse. But how have you been getting along? You’ve had plenty to eat?”

“O, yes, plenty, thanks to your foresight. But what is the news? You cannot imagine what a pleasure it is to hear the sound of a human voice after enduring the darkness and silence of this cave for eight days and nights.”

“Yes, I knew you would find it rather unpleasant here all alone, and I felt for you; but I could n’t, with safety, come any sooner. The guards did n’t leave till to-day, and they may come back at any moment.”

“I want to go out of this horrid den, and hide somewhere else. Would it be prudent?”

“No, sir,” exclaimed Mr. Constant, with emphasis, “it would be the worst thing you could do. Your pursuers say they intend to have you at all hazards. The captain of the company seemed to have some personal spite at you.”

“Certainly. It was De Lancy, and he will move heaven and earth to capture me. It would have been better, probably, if I had killed him, when I had it in my power to do so; but I did not think he would be so vindictive. I tell you, Uncle, when warm friends become enemies, their hatred is deeper than that of other people.”

“Certainly, it is,” said Mr. Constant.

"De Lancy will make it the business of his life to find me."

"It was his sister you married, was n't it?"

"It was," said Bathie.

"And he does n't know it?" asked Mr. Constant.

"No, I guess not."

"How would it do for me to tell him, if I see him again? If he understood the matter, possibly his feeling toward you might be softened."

"O, no," exclaimed Bathie, "that will never do. I fear it would make him worse. If he knew all he would regard me as the greater fool for acting as I did. I now see the folly of my course myself. But it is useless to talk about that now. How do they think I escaped? For, from what you tell me about leaving a guard here, they suppose I am hiding."

"Yes, they are greatly perplexed about it. They gave me an account of your leap into the river. I tried to make them think you were drowned; but they would n't accept that theory, for they said your body would come to the surface, if that had been the case."

"How do they suppose I escaped?" asked Bathie.

"Well, they thought you were hiding under the bluff, somehow, and they made close search. One of the men dived right where you did, and never came back any more. I guess you can tell what became of him."

"How is that?" said Bathie, in alarm.

"Why, did n't the man get into the cave? I thought sure he did, as he did not return. Did n't you capture him?"

"No," said Bathie, in astonishment. "I did not see anybody."

"What in the world, then, became of him?"

"I do not know," said Bathie, after a pause, "unless he missed the entrance. That is about the way of it."

He got under the bank, became confused when he tried to rise, and was drowned."

"Who knows but he is in here now?"

"No, no, he is not in here," said Bathie. "If he had found the mouth of the cave, he would have gone back to report."

"Yes, I reckon he would. It must be as you say, and he's drowned. Shall we look for him?"

"No; I do not think we could find him. He is out of the way, and we will leave him where he is. But did not that circumstance puzzle his comrades?"

"Indeed it did. Not another one could be induced to try the same experiment. I tell you I trembled when that man went down. I felt sure he would find your hiding place. Then, that night I was uneasy again. They made me call for you, and I was fearful if you heard me you'd come out, and they'd nab you."

"If I had heard you," said Bathie, "I should have paid no attention to your call; for I knew you had better sense than that. But, do you reckon they have abandoned the idea of capturing me?"

"No, they hav n't, and you must not think of leaving here. Most of them want the reward which is offered for you, and you may be sure they will be on the watch a long time."

"I am sorry to hear it," replied Bathie, slowly, "for I do not see how I am to endure the oppressiveness of this place much longer. It is indescribably awful. You cannot conceive how horrible is this eternal darkness, which sometimes seems to be so thick that it is almost suffocating. I imagine frequently that I can grasp it in my hand, and I have occasionally found myself reaching out and trying to close my fingers over it. It has made the impression on me that it is a thin, black, mushy sort of substance."

"Well," said Mr. Constant, as he snuffed the candle with his fingers, "it is better to be here alive and with plenty to eat, than to be captured, and afterward swung up by the neck, like a dog; and that will certainly be your fate, if you are arrested."

"No doubt of that," replied Bathie, gloomily; "but I would rather try to make my escape to some foreign country than bleach in this eternal darkness. You can form no proper conception of its horrors. It seems to me I have grown cowardly since I came here."

"Why, what is there here," asked Mr. Constant, in surprise, "to put your courage to the test? You are n't afraid of the mere darkness, are you?"

"O, no, not that alone. There is something else, which makes the darkness intolerable."

"What is that?"

"My fearful dreams," said Bathie.

"Dreams!" exclaimed Mr. Constant, as he looked fixedly at his nephew. "Why, are you afraid of dreams? I hope you are n't superstitious."

"Call me superstitious, or what not," replied Bathie, with energy and a frown, "but I tell you, Uncle, when I lie down to sleep, the men whom I have killed seem to spring up before me, with the naturalness of reality. Yes, I see them," continued Bathie, shuddering and gazing vacantly into the darkness, "with their glassy eyes and pallid faces stained with blood, holding up their hands beseechingly, just as they did when I shot them down."

"But still," interrupted the uncle, "you know it is all imagination."

"That is true; but the sickening, terrible scenes appear none the less real. The horrid sights are as natural as if I were looking with my eyes wide open. There is not the slightest violation of the laws of perspective to dispel

the illusion. If there were some incongruity in the scenes that rise up before me, as in ordinary dreams, they would not be so annoying. But they are absolutely perfect. I begin to fear that I was not justifiable in the course I pursued. I suppose I ought not to have held every soldier whom I captured responsible for the calamity which befell me at Vicksburg. But I did not pause to think. I was hurried on—it must have been—by some demon. I certainly was not in my senses. I was maddened by an intolerable thirst for revenge. Uncle Dan,” he said, in a lower tone, “I am disposed to think that I am awake when those fearful appearances pass before me.”

*here* “Why, do you really believe in hobgoblins and demons?” asked Mr. Constant, with a sneer that Bathie did not observe, so absorbed was he with his own thoughts and emotions.

“You know how I was taught, Uncle.”

“Yes, like the rest of us, to believe in the existence of a personal Devil, and a literal place of punishment after death. When I was young, I was often terrified with pictures of that lake which burns with fire and brimstone, and which the preachers would so graphically describe. In my dreams, I remember distinctly seeing the Devil going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he might devour—a great ugly dragon, with club feet and tremendous wings shaped like those of a bat, and fearful, red eyes emitting sparks of fire. I was often frightened by the idea of hell; but of late years I have abandoned all such notions and fancies.”

“Why, Uncle!” said Bathie, in surprise, “you did once profess to be a Christian. I remember you talking to me about it when I was a little boy.”

“Yes, Bathie, so I did profess to be one.”

“Am I to understand, by your emphasis on the word ‘profess,’ that you were not acting in good faith?”

“O, no, no, you’re not to understand that,” replied Mr. Constant, laughing. “I was certainly honest with myself; but, you see, I was deceived, like many others are. I mistook animal excitement for what they call ‘religion,’ and for awhile I believed myself to be a Christian, and I tried to do my duty. But I was a very poor sort of Christian after all—at least an unhappy one, living in constant dread. That imaginary thing, which people call ‘conscience,’ gave me a great deal of trouble. I was the slave of fear. I could not love God as the Bible required, and as the preachers said I must. The duties of religion were extremely unpleasant to me, and I at last began to ask myself if the fault might not be in the Bible, instead of in me. Could God be so cruel as to make demands with which human nature is incapable of complying? Could I help not loving to perform the duties of religion? Why should God make a set of rules for our moral guidance which are so revolting to the heart? Then it occurred to me that the Bible might be the uninspired work of men. I was filled with suspicion. I thought I could detect inconsistencies and absurdities in the Book. I commenced to read what Christians call ‘Infidel books.’ I read Mr. Paine’s *Age of Reason*, but I did not like that work at all. Paine is too virulent and scurrilous. He denies too much, and tries to sweep away the very foundation of morality. I could not endorse his philosophy; for I was bound to admit that there was some truth in the Bible. I could not take the position that the writers were all hypocrites; because honesty of purpose is stamped upon every page they write. So I could agree with none of the old schools of Infidels. They are too much given to denying facts, and are too clearly opposed to actual history. As an

honest man, in search of truth, I could not accept any of their theories. I have no patience with any writer who resorts to sophistry, and contradicts plain historical facts. Truth is what I want, and at last I'm satisfied I've got it. I've found a man whose theory I heartily endorse."

"Who is that?" asked Bathie, who had been listening with considerable interest to what his uncle had been saying.

"It is Renan."

"Who is he? for I am not at all posted in theological literature."

"He is a French writer, and has found the true solution of the Christian Religion. I want you to read his '*Life of Jesus*.' He will cure you of your superstition."

"You have renounced Christianity, then, have you?" asked Bathie.

"O, no, Renan does not do that; but he accounts for its origin in a rational and sensible manner. He don't resort to ridicule and scurrility, as Tom Paine and others of his school do. Renan says that Jesus Christ was one of the greatest men that ever lived on earth, and that He was pious, benevolent, and all that; but affirms that He was a visionary and mistaken enthusiast. He admits that the New Testament is generally true, just as any other history is. In this he differs widely from those rabid Infidels who deny the whole thing, and affirm that Jesus was a mythical character, or, if He did exist, was an impostor. The great beauty of Renan is, that he does not oppose generally acknowledged facts as received even by the Christian world. Indeed, he founds his theory upon the statements of the apostles themselves."

"But, Uncle, if Renan admits that the New Testament is generally true, how can he avoid the conclusion that Christ was what He claimed to be? For instance,

if He raised the dead to life, He must have been more than man."

"Renan," quickly replied Mr. Constant, "proves that Jesus never raised the dead to life, nor performed any other miracle."

"I should certainly like to read his book, then," said Bathie, thoughtfully.

"I'll bring it to you to-morrow night," replied Mr. Constant, "if I'm not watched; and I'll bring another, which shows up the inconsistencies of the Bible, and thus proves that it is not a divine revelation. Besides, you must have some employment in here, or you'll go crazy. You must quit thinking about the scenes of your military life. Though I cannot approve of what you've done, yet it can't be helped now, and it's an old saying, you know, that what can't be cured must be endured. You must get rid of your superstitious notions, or you'll be unhappy. People talk a great deal about compunctions of conscience, retribution, and such stuff; but I'm fully persuaded that remorse, as it is called, has its existence only in the imagination. As a proof of it, an Indian would have done what you have without the slightest regret or contrition. He never would've conjured up the 'horrid sights' which disturb you."

"But I make no effort to conjure them up," said Bathie. "I could not do so in my sleep. They appear in my dreams."

"Our dreams," answered Mr. Constant, "are only a continuation of our waking thoughts. The Indian, or the cannibal who roasts his victims with as much happy anticipation as you would fry an oyster, would have no such dreams as you do. You did n't torture the persons who fell into your hands by the chances of war. The savage would've taken these same people and subjected them to the most excruciating torment, enjoyed their

terrible sufferings, and ever afterwards thought of it with feelings of the most intense pleasure. Surajah Dowlah, you know, studied cruelty as a science, and inflicted the most severe sufferings upon animals and men for the mere excitement which the awful sport afforded ; and yet he never had such dreams as yours."

"I had never thought of that, Uncle," replied Bathie, meditatively. "Why can I not have the feelings of the Indian?"

"You would, with his training," answered Mr. Constant. "You'll have to revise your moral education, and correct it where it is faulty."

This conversation made a profound impression upon Bathie's mind, notwithstanding the fallacy of his uncle's reasoning. He determined to apply the suggested remedy. Why could he not be like the Indian? was the question which presented itself. He had no doubt that what his relative had affirmed was true. What was conscience, after all? Was it not merely one's moral education? It must be, he concluded, or all nations would necessarily have the same standard of ethics; but the truth is, they have differed widely in regard to what was right and wrong. Some vices were considered by some nations as virtues, and *vice versa*. Why, then, should he feel the keen sting of Remorse at killing men in time of war? Could he possibly divest himself of his early training, and adopt the modes of thought of a savage? To do this, he must be thoroughly convinced that the Bible was not a Divine Revelation—a subject which he had never investigated. He knew that he could never feel at ease, so long as even the suspicion lurked in his mind that this Book was what it purported to be. He felt that he must get it out of his way. This he determined to do.

Many men, like Bathie Beaumont, force themselves

to become unbelievers, though actuated by different motives. There is a class of persons who are opposed naturally to the righteousness which the Holy Scripture requires. They exclaim, with a hell-pleasing emphasis: "Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." They are addicted to practices which the Divine Law condemns. So long as their minds incline to the belief that this Law was really promulgated by the Supreme Being, the conscience cannot be at ease. The happiness of the Infidel depends upon the firmness with which he believes in his own irresponsibility after he shall have "shuffled off this mortal coil." Eradicate from the mind all thought of giving an account to any one, and of receiving either punishment or reward, and what does the disbeliever have to fear? Why trouble himself about any atrocious crime which he has committed for the promotion of his temporal felicity, or the gratification of any evil passion? The best he can do for himself is to adopt and act upon the motto of the old Epicurean philosophers: "Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die." It was restoration to his former mental state, which was Bathie's chief desire. Before the war his mind was free from any trouble or care. Why should it not be so again? Then he had no dread of darkness and no fear of dreams. Now the thought of seeking repose in the kind and friendly embrace of Morpheus filled him with shuddering apprehensions. He must work out of this horrible condition. He *would* do it. The shortest way to inward tranquillity was to be found in the City of Refuge of Unbelief. Nemesis, he fondly hoped, would not follow him to that place. The prospect was more flattering than trying to secure the "peace that passeth understanding," which can be obtained only by humbly going through the wicket gate of honest repentance. Thus, without investigation, this

young man came to the conclusion that the remedy for his present trouble was to be found only in the feeble, rickety parachute of Infidelity.

Mr. Constant remained in the cave till the next morning, and reached home before day, under the friendly cover of darkness. As he was leaving, Bathie said—

“Bring Pomp with you to-morrow night, if the way is clear. I want him to stay with me awhile. I must have some company.”

“How do you manage about your cooking?”

“O, I have done well enough to satisfy my hunger. But I am no expert at the business of cooking. In this place, a man does not know how to deal with his appetite. It is worse than being at the North pole; for here it is eternal night. I always feel like I am taking my supper. I do not take my meals with any regularity, but eat when I become hungry. Frequently the interval between meals is twelve hours or more. Residence in this cave would break up the most regular habits in a week, if one had no timekeeper.”

“That would not put me to any inconvenience,” remarked Mr. Constant, “for I have an abhorrence of regular habits. They are like fetters, and destroy half the pleasure of life. They would fit on me like a straight jacket. I think they are an injury to health.”

“How do you make that out, Uncle? You differ from the doctors.”

“I do n't know about that. But to show you what I mean, some people make it a rule to rise at a certain hour in the morning. No matter how they feel, up they must spring, at that particular hour. Sometimes they have not slept enough to satisfy nature, and the inevitable consequence is, they feel bad all the rest of that day. Would it not be more sensible to sleep on an hour longer, and then rise thoroughly refreshed? They

could do more work during the day. There never was a more foolish and false maxim than 'early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.' Early rising does not accomplish any of the three. My general rule is to comply with the demands of nature—eat when you're hungry, drink when you're dry, and sleep when you're sleepy."

"I believe, after all, Uncle, you are the greatest philosopher I have ever met. But, coming back to Pomp, I want him for company as much as anything else. I could not ask you to stay here day after day, or rather one everlasting night. But Pomp will not mind it much. I tell you I would rather have the company of an intelligent dog than to be here alone."

"My opinion is, you'd better learn to adapt yourself to the situation; for there's no telling how long you may have to make this cave your abode. I would n't be surprised if you have to stay right here for several years."

"You mean several months, do you not?"

"No, boy; I mean just what I say. Your body is worth \$50,000, you know. Do you think those fellows will give up the search when they have reason to think you're not far off? I advise you not to show yourself, no matter how strong may be the temptation to do so."

"I hope your fears are groundless, Uncle, and that in a few weeks they will abandon the search as useless."

"Do n't delude yourself in that way, Bathie. They will hang around here for years—at least, that's my opinion. So, you'd better try to make yourself as comfortable and contented here as you possibly can."

"It will be awful, Uncle," said Bathie, despondently, "if your opinion is correct. I do not see how I can endure such confinement for years."

"You'd better endure it, it seems to me, than to have

your neck stretched," replied Mr. Constant, bluntly. "If they catch you, you may as well make your will."

"Yes, I know that," replied Bathie; "I can expect no mercy from them, nor would I ask it. I never paid attention to an appeal from one of them, and I shall never show cowardice in their presence. But it is an old saying, 'catching before hanging.'"

"Well, I must be going," suddenly exclaimed Mr. Constant, looking at his watch. "Come, let me out at the other door. I do n't propose to go through the water any more, unless it is absolutely necessary. I've brought a little bell and a string with me. You must fix it up at the door, and we will agree upon a signal."

They accordingly went to the entrance, and removed the rocks which obstructed it. The string to the bell was hidden under a rock on the outside, so that it could not be easily discovered by a casual visitor. Mr. Constant then cautiously descended to the narrow ledge which has been already described, and reached his dwelling before the dawn of day.

Bathie was in better spirits during the day, since he anticipated more pleasant times. In a few hours he would have Uncle Pomp as a companion, and books, which would enable him to forget many an hour in his lonely abode.

## CHAPTER XX.

### ARTFUL DODGING.

“The knave’s as cunning as the fox,  
And yet, as bungling as the ox.”

It was night again. Two men might have been seen cautiously moving along toward the cave of Hegobar. Not a word was spoken, and no noise was made by either, except that of the necessary footfall, which was purposely made as light as possible. Presently they reach the mouth of the cave, pause, and for a moment place themselves in an attitude of intense listening. Satisfied that there was no danger, Mr. Constant stooped down and jerked the bell-string. Bathie soon appeared, and removed the obstructions. Having entered, they again piled up rocks in the entrance till it was impossible to gain admittance by ordinary means.

“Well,” said Mr. Constant, when they had reached the chamber where Bathie usually stayed, “how have you spent the day?”

“More pleasantly than I have any day since I came here,” answered Bathie. “But it was because I have been anticipating a change in my mode of life after to-night. But, how have you been, Uncle Pomp?” said Bathie, turning to that sable individual.

“O, thanks to de good Lo’d,” answered Pomp, “I is enjoyed health in mod’rate carcimstances, an’ de tymp - num ob my brain am also in good order. So I is sound in de corpral body, an’ in de intelligint fac’lties. Take all togedder I is in very good condition to ’main wid you, to help impel de darkness ob dis minotoniss cave wid de pleasure ob human communication. Mas Dan’l

hab been 'o tellin' me how you hab longed for de soun' ob a frienly voice in dis place ob de absince of light, an' 'cordin' to yo reuess I is come to 'main as long as it mout be necessary to yo comfurt an' well bein'."

"I am very glad, indeed, you have come," said Bathie. "I have had an awful time in here for the last eight or nine days."

"Deed it do seem to be a solemkoly kind ob abode," said Uncle Pomp, looking round with deliberation. "It 'pears as if de darkness mout hab to be shoveled out wid a spade afore de light could git in. He! he! ha! ha! Dat am a 'riginal idea wid me, sho. He! he!"

"That's a good one on the darkness, Uncle Pomp," said Mr. Constant, with a laugh.

"Sich cumparinsons as dat 'pears to be natral to me, Mas Dan'l," said Pomp, composing his features. "I aluz had a keen eye fur de discovry ob semblances ob things."

"Changing the subject a little, Uncle Pomp," said Bathie, who now never laughed at anything, but whose face wore an air of imperturbable gravity, "how do you enjoy liberty?"

"O, sah, libity am 'peared too late fur de ole niggers. Dey does n't know how to han'le dis thing o' freedom. To dem it's like a plow widout any han'les. Dey can't guide it, an' keep it in de furrow. It may do de on-comin' generation some good, howsomeber; tho' I has my doubts 'bout dat, neberdeless. Dis thing ob votin' an' runnin' fur offis, I fear, am gwine ter make fools ob multertudes ob niggers, an' specially dem as am had no speriance in de manigement ob perlitical affars. Most on 'em do n't know how ter read, and votin', in consequence ob dar ignurunce, will be mighty like throwin' up heads an' tails. De niggers am not to blame fur sich 'bundunce ob freedom, fur dey neber did ax fur it. It

ware forced on 'em at de pint ob de bayernet. But still, Mas Baffie, it am not ter be denied dat libity am a great invention. It am de source ob much pleasure an' led-gure, an' it perduces some privlidges dat habs greatly de advantage over a sitation ob bondige. But, considerin' how I inderviduwally hab been raised and bred, freedum am ob no advantage ter me; an' I 'd thank ee, sir, ef you 'd let things go on jest as dey useter did under de ole gub-ernment afore de war."

"Very well, Uncle Pomp," said Bathie, with warmth of feeling, "make your own terms. You be true to me, and I will be true to you, and I will take care of you as long as I can, if you wish it."

"I duz wish it, sah. I'll wait on you jest as I hab alluz done. Dar sha n't be no diffrunce in my treatment o' you. You ken bore a hole in my years, as I hearn a preacher say de Jews useter do to a man as ware willin' to be a slave fur life."

"We have no use for any such ceremony, Uncle Pomp. You can have it your own way."

"Thank ye, sah. I'll 'main wid you till de ole man am ready to go to dat glorus land whar dar am no mo' partin' nor death."

"You understand, Uncle Pomp, my life is in your hands. I trust entirely to your prudence. You can easily betray me whenever you wish, and you will be amply rewarded."

"De good Lo'd! Mas Baffie," exclaimed Pomp, raising his huge hands toward heaven, "afore I 'd 'tray you, dey mout pull dis tongue out by de roots an' make a haim string out ob it. I could a 'tray'd you at fust if I 'd a wanted ter. You am not afeard ob me, am you?"

"No, Uncle Pomp. I fully trust you."

"Why, de good Lo'd, bress you!" continued Pomp, "dar am not 'nuff money in dis whole gubernment ob

Ameriky ter onduce me to stain my hans wid yo blud. No, sah," brushing a tear from his big black eyes, "dar am nuffin in dis worl could make me do sich a piece ob 'niquity as dat. Dey mout take dis head off my shoulders fust."

When this contract had been entered into, and a pause had ensued, Mr. Constant broke the silence by saying—

"I've brought you some books, Bathie, according to promise. Here's Renan's 'Life of Jesus,'" taking the book, and turning over the leaves. "I want you to read it first, to be convinced that everything which the great Rabbi of Nazareth did can be explained on natural principles. There was no more of the Divine in Him than can be found in any other man of great purposes, high resolves, fervid zeal, and a deeply devotional spirit. After you've carefully read Renan," laying down the book and taking up another, "you must read this, which presents one hundred and fifty inconsistencies of the Bible, and thus makes it evident that the Bible is no more a product of divine inspiration than is the Koran or the Book of Mormon. By the time you read these two, you'll be skeptical enough to be freed from all your fears. You'll find, however, that Uncle Pomp will not agree with you."

While he had been talking, Mr. Constant noticed that the negro was paying marked attention. Hence, the last remark.

"No," said Bathie, "for Uncle Pomp used to be a regular old shouter."

"An' I is neber aparted from de raisin' ob my early days, ef dat am what you am aludin to. De good Book says, 'Train up a chile in de way he ought er go, an' when he am older he'll not apart darfrom. I b'leves dat. I hab a good deal ob 'ligious stickability 'bout me. I is not one ob dem as b'leves you ken fall head-fomost

from de bottom ob a well No, sah, dat am an explite dat can't be 'complished by no livin' mortal."

"But the question with us, Uncle Pomp," said Mr. Constant, is, whether there is any well to fall from, or in."

"I dun'no," said Pomp, with an air of deep thought, "dat I zackly aperhens dat statement."

"Probably I did 'nt make my meaning very clear. The point with us is whether the Bible is any book of God. We're disposed to think that God had nothing to do with it."

Pomp looked first at one and then the other of the two men, in amazement. He fixed his eyes upon the candle, and seemed to fall into a reverie. It was difficult to tell whether, from the expression of his face, he was too overwhelmed with astonishment to speak, or was gathering his scattered forces to reply.

"You understand Uncle Dan?" asked Bathie.

"Yes, sah; I imbrace de foce of his langwidge; but I is dumfounder, Mas Baffie, to hear a pusson ob yo' edication an' rezin, 'spressin' sich words as hab jes 'scaped yo' lips. I hope you hab not rejected de 'ligion which you ware bawn and bred wid. You am not agwine to jine de Inferdels, am you?"

"Why not, Uncle Pomp?" asked Bathie, "if the Infidels have the truth."

"But," replied Pomp, "dey has not got de truf, as fur as I ken judge. I has, in my time, spent a good many thoughts on dis here question, an' hab come to a 'clusion long 'go. If de Bible am not God's book, whar am God's book?"

"It is all around us," said Bathie, who often derived amusement from the negro's conversation. "It is the book of Nature."

"Dat am a mighty vas' book, Mas' Baffie, an' it am

one dat I ken take observations 'pon as well as de mos' highly cultivated man in de larnin' ob letters. I hez made it one ob de main projec's of my pas' existence to investergate dat book. I hez look't ober it fur mo' dan thirty years. I hez studied de stars, bof dem wid tails an' dem widout tails, an' I hez made kalkerlations on dar motions, an' I hez walked 'mong de mysteries ob de yearth wid eyes wide open, an' eberywhar I hes discuberd de footsteps ob God."

"No doubt of that, Uncle Pomp," said Mr. Constant, "Nature teaches the existence of God."

"Yes, sah; but I ware agwine to persent de observation dat Natur hez not got quite pages 'nuff. She stops too short off. Fur us poor, iniquitous prosterity of Adam wants to know somethin' mo' 'bout God dan de bar fac' of his 'zistence. We wants ter know what am gwine ter become ob us when we aparts from de shores ob dis worl'; an' Natur doan tell us nuffin 'bout dat. We wants ter know how we ken be saved; but Natur' doan tell us nuffin 'bout dat, neider."

"I give you credit, Uncle Pomp," said Mr. Constant, "for good reasoning on your side of the question. Yes, you do mighty well."

"De Lo'd calls de foolish things ob dis worl' to confuse de wise. Dat am whut de good Book sez. One ken put ten thousand ter flight. Dar am no doubt in my mine but what de true chile ob God ken outargify dem as am wise in der own receipt."

"Conceit, you mean," said Mr. Constant.

"I doan 'no 'bout the gogafy ob dat word," said Pomp, gravely. "'Pears to me, dat receipt am de mo' properer word; fur it means whut the indervidjal receives, an' he can't be wise in whut he don't receive. So it mus' be whut he receives dat he am wise in. At leas' dat am my way ob contemplatin' de definition ob

things. But neber mine 'bout dat. I'd like fur you to tell me, Mas Baffie, if de Lo'd had no han' in makin' de Bible, how bad men could a' writ it."

"I do not say that bad men wrote it," said Bathie.

"Well, den," continued Pomp, with a merry twinkle in his eye, indicating his consciousness of an overwhelming argument, "am it 'cordin' to yo' opinion dat good men would 'ceive, an' invaricate, an' tell lies?"

"O, no, Uncle Pomp," replied Bathie, "I do not believe they intentionally told lies. I think they were zealous fanatics."

"Would you hab de goodness ob heart to give de secret report ob dat word, 'fanatics?' It woan' do to use words widout knowin' dare percise signication."

"I mean," said Bathie, "they were a little wild—a little cranky, you know."

"Den, sah, I aperhens yer use ob dat term. Tell me, den, de rezin why de peoples what lived in de times de Bible ware writ, did not fine out de writers ware crazy an' cranky. Does you bl'ave crazy men could writ out a proph'cy?"

"I never thought of it in that way," replied Bathie.

"He! he! he!" laughed Pomp, with great glee. But seeing that Bathie's risibility was not excited, he instantly checked himself, and said, with seriousness—

"I is n't book-larnt, as you am, Mas Baffie, but I hez picked up a few grains ob knowlidge in my life, an' spec'yly in ref'ence to de Scripters. I ken not read, neider; but den I gits some un to read to me; an' in dat way, since I hez a mighty intentive mem'ry, I fills my mine wid de holy words. I hez thunk a good deal, too, 'bout Inferdels' rezins, an' I hez hearn 'um argify, an' dat am why I ken alluz give a rezin fur de faith dat am in me."

"I do not think, Uncle Pomp, you can give any

reason for believing that the Bible is God's book, except that other people believe it. You cannot prove that it is God's book."

"I ken prove it ter my own satisfaction," said Pomp, quickly, "an dat am all dat be necessary. Fur dis am a question whut each indervidjal mus' settle fur hisself. De argments dat am 'fishent to cunvince my mine ob de truf, mout not be 'fishent ter cunvince you. Our mines am as difrunt as our bodies. We relishes difrunt sorts ob pervisions, ye know. Whut one man enjoys 'ud gin anoder de stomach heavin, under ordn'ry carcimstances. We is n't all unstricted alike in dat respeck. It am so wid de sperits ob men. No two hez 'zackly de same way ob contemplatiu' argiments an' senterments. So, ef I could n't 'vince you, it 'ud prove dat you am harder to sat'sfy dan I is—dat 's all."

"There is some sense in your remarks, Uncle Pomp," said Mr. Constant, good-humoredly. "You are quite a metaphysician."

As we have already informed the reader, Pomp never liked to acknowledge his ignorance of the meaning of words, and would always talk as if he clearly understood their signification. Hearing the word "metaphysician" he promptly said—

"No, sah, I hez n't *met a physician* in a long time. I neber gits much ob my Scripter knowldge from de doctors, anyways."

"I did n't have any reference to physicians, Uncle Pomp," said Mr. Constant, with a laugh.

"No; I understood de natur ob yo' obsvation," answered Pomp, with his usual flippancy. "In de Scriptor, speakin' arter de manner o' men, preachers, de physicians ob de soul, am called doctors of Devinty; but as I said, I gits no Scripter knowldge from dem, as I never meets 'em."

Mr. Constant could not help laughing at Pomp's cunning way of hiding his ignorance. But as he did not care to explain what was meant by metaphysician, he dropped the subject. After some further conversation Mr. Constant left the cave, promising to call in a few days, if it were possible. He thought, for the present, the less frequently he visited the cave the better it would be for his nephew. If it should be ascertained that he left home every few nights, he was fearful that he would be watched and detected. Besides, there was no necessity for making many visits, as the cave was well supplied with provisions, and Bathie had books enough to give him employment for some time to come.

Accordingly Bathie and Pomp were left alone, to the enjoyment of each other's society. We need not enter into the particulars of the life which Bathie now led in his subterranean abode. Nothing of an eventful or sensational character could be expected to occur. He was merely a prisoner, to whom the sight of a human being, except his uncle and Pomp, would have been somewhat alarming, and would have excited his suspicions. Such a life could not be very enviable. But man is so constituted that he can become accustomed to almost any circumstances and conditions under which a human being can exist. A person forced into solitude, whatever may be the cause, will soon learn to make companions of his own thoughts, and will not feel the necessity of society. So Bathie adapted himself as much as possible to the surroundings, and made the most of his situation. To make it as pleasant as possible for Pomp, who was certainly giving proof of undoubted self-abnegation in remaining in this dark cave, Bathie would hold long conversations with him, and read to him. The negro seemed to enjoy this literary exercise, and would frequently surprise Bathie by the

acuteness of his criticisms and the depth of his observations.

"Uncle Pomp," said Bathie, one night, as the negro rose from his knees, after his orisons, "what do you gain by praying two or three times every day? Is there any particular thing you ask for? or do you go through the mere form, from a sense of duty?"

"I is afeard, Mas Baffie, judgin' from de observations you persents, dat you doan hab de correck idee of pra'ar. You am 'bout like half de Christians on dis subject. Dey allurz goes to de bressed Lo'd as beggars. Dey am allurz axin' fur suthin', like a ragged tromp, an' doan 'proach de Lo'd, 'cept wid de feelin's ob a mond-icant. In cose, a indervidjal mus' hab humilerty an' oder feelins ob a simlur char'cter as am proper fur pussons who am carnal-minded. But dar am sich a thing as communyion wid de Heav'nly Father, which a Christyun can an' ought er hab, widout any beggin'. Some folks 'pears to hab de idee dat ef dey doan ax fur vittels an' cloze, or to be helped out'n some kine o' distress, pra'ar am widout any usefule effect. But dat doan 'cord wid my 'pinion. It am a exercise ob de sperrit, an' when a pusson hab indrawn his thoughts an' de wandrin's ob his mine, an' brings 'em all to a pint 'pon one eliment ob contemplation, he feels mo dervotional dan he did afore. Pra'ar am de ack ob comin' nearer to God, tho' de pusson may n't give utterance to nary single word. Does ye think you aperhends my idee, sah?"

"I think I grasp your meaning," said Bathie. "You mean you can pray by thinking."

"Yes, sah. Dar am a kine ob contemplatin'—a pantin' arter de Lo'd, like a deer arter de water. Dar ken be pra'ar widout de interference ob any langwidge."

"Uncle Pomp," said Bathie, "you have more sensible ideas about religion than I gave you credit for."

“I hez bin tryin’ to ’spress de idee dat ’ligion am a sensible thing. It am suthin’, sah, dat am a guide in de affars ob life day by day.”

We can see from this that Pomp had very good theoretical ideas of religion, whatever may have been his practice. But sometimes Pomp found himself in situations which put his spiritual ingenuity to the severest test, and brought into requisition all his casuistical skill to prevent his falling into actual transgression. He did not like to be guilty of palpable falsehood, yet on some occasions the line was very dim between his statement and prevarication. In some moral questions Pomp did not make very nice distinctions. We will illustrate by giving an instance, which is closely connected with our story.

One day Pomp went, for some necessary articles of merchandise, to the town nearest to the cave, about five miles distant. He had many acquaintances there, and was quite popular with everybody.

Mr. Constant knew very well that the reward offered for his nephew was sufficient to tempt the cupidity of many persons who would otherwise have been friends to Bathic. There were some who had almost adopted searching for the fugitive as a regular avocation. It was like looking for lost treasure, or digging in a mine for gold. At any moment they might be worth \$50,000. This bait was too strong for the ties of ordinary friendship. Mr. Constant discovered that there were spies in the neighborhood. There were others who, while pursuing their vocations, were nevertheless thinking about this as a subsidiary resource, which might unexpectedly and accidentally become available. Some of these persons were slyly watching in every direction. Some had suspicions in reference to Pomp, and were under the impression that he could reveal something in regard

to Bathie's movements if he felt so inclined. On the particular day to which we have just alluded, when Pomp went to the town aforesaid, he was met by one of those well-known parasitic characters called "loafers" — a person who has no visible means of subsistence, but is nevertheless always alive, in good physical condition, and dressed in respectable garb. Such can be found in almost every town. While they are generally considered as a social nuisance, yet they do no particular harm to the community, at least harm which is discernible. Sometimes they have amiable, accommodating dispositions, but they manifest a strong aversion to anything like regular employment. How they live, is a mystery. Yet they do live, and some people even like them, to whom they make themselves occasionally useful in little things which do not interfere with their enjoyment of *otium cum dignitate*. When they first start out upon their career of playing the part of what might be called a stationary tramp, they impose upon such as have confidence in their honor, and stretch their credit for all it is worth. But after awhile this resource fails. Their financial habits become known, and they can no more derive any income from this source. One might suppose that, without means or employment, they would soon be reduced to a condition which would imperatively demand labor. But not so. To the surprise of all their neighbors and friends, they keep up a respectable appearance; and nobody can tell how they live.

Pomp met with one of these strange individuals who had for some time been looking forward to Bathie's capture as a probable source of income. \$50,000 made in that way, he thought, could be managed so as to enable him to live in splendor the remainder of his life. Anyhow, he deemed his chances of success as good as those of the holder of a lottery ticket.

"Well, Uncle Pomp," said the Loafer, as soon as they had met, "how does the world serve you now? Getting along fine, are you?"

"Thank de Lo'd, sah, I hez no groun' ob complaint gin de works of special providence. I ken claim de Lo'd as my shepherd, an' I shall neber want."

"You think the Lord takes care of you, then?"

"I hez no doubt ob dat. He's done promised to be nigh on to dem as lubs 'im, an' try ter observe de ordnances ob His will."

"How's Mr. Constant's family now? You still live with him, don't you?"

"Yes, sah. Dey am all in de 'joyment ob dar usuwal healf. De good Lo'd hez persurved dem from de pestilence dat walk in de darkness, an' de 'struction what wastes in de middle ob day."

"How do you like having freedom?"

"Well, sah, ter tell de truff, I hezn't seed no difernce yit. I is jist de same I used ter wuz. I hope it may be ob some advantige to de young niggers as is a growin' up; but it can't be ob no sarvice to me. I is done past de line ob dat age when de things ob dis worl' am ceast to rouse much intrust. All dese things, includin' freedom, am too obvinescent to be pursued arter by people ob my 'sperience. It 'hooves ole folks to turn dar thoughts an' feelins to dat worl' whar thieves doan break fru an' steal. We hez not got long to 'joy de blessins dat am pervided by de good Lo'd."

"Why, Uncle Pomp, I'm astonished at you. You're certainly not over forty years of age, and you talk like you might be seventy."

This was true. But Pomp had for ten years been treated as an old man, owing, we suppose, to his gigantic size, till he talked as if he were really on the verge of the grave, by reason of the flight of years.

“Why,” continued the loafer, “you’ve got a long time to live, if you don’t die of disease. You must take some interest in the affairs of the living. You never expect to leave Mr. Constant, do you, that is, unless you go off with Captain Beaumont? By the way, how is the Captain? I haven’t seen him in a long time. You see him every day, don’t you?”

This question, though the loafer was watching Uncle Pomp narrowly, did not throw the negro off his guard. He at once suspected the man’s purpose, and was prepared for it.

“I see ’im!” exclaimed Pomp, in well-feigned astonishment; “De good Lo’d! how is I agwine ter see under de groun’? I hez hearn talk ob sperits all my life; but it’s neber been my calamerty ter hab any untercose wid dem as hez past ober de Jurden!”

“Now, come, Uncle Pomp,” said the loafer, persuasively and in a low tone, “you know very well that Captain Beaumont isn’t dead. You might fool some people, but you can’t come it over me. You know he is alive.”

“De good Lo’d! Umph!” said Pomp, shaking his head, and looking wild.

“How long since you saw him?” persisted the loafer.

“Saw him!” exclaimed Pomp, “how long sence I seed him? I seed ’im dat day when de soljers ware a pursuin’ ’im. Dey reported dat he jumped in ter de ribber, an’ fore God, sence dat day I hezn’t seed ’im on de face ob de yearth. Dat, sah, am strick true as any ob de gospil.”

Pomp inwardly chuckled over this solemn asseveration, not thinking that there was any falsehood in what he had stated, as he had seen Bathie only in the cave; and that he considered not on the face of the earth. His interlocutor did not notice the prevarication, since Pomp always

expressed himself in the most hyperbolic manner he possibly could.

"Uncle Pomp, I should hate to think you would tell a lie about anything."

"Yes, sah, I should hate fur you ter harbor in yo' heart sich a 'pinion ob me as dat; fur I hez alluz tried to import myself in de mos' carcumspectest manner, 'cordin' to de rules ob good raisin', an' de holy perceps ob de good Book. Sometimes I know I hez come short ob de inquirements ob de Bible; but, den, howsomeber, I endebers wid all my soul an' strenth to be on good terms wid de bressed Lo'd, whose eye am ober us all. It's no use tryin' ter 'ceive Him. No, sah."

"Well now, Uncle Pomp," interrupted the loafer, "you do'nt really believe Captain Beaumont is dead. You know he made his escape, and is hiding out somewhere. You could tell, if you would."

"From all de 'ports, it seems ter me, any reazinuble man 'ud think Mas' Baffie hab ceased to 'pear 'mong de walks ob men. Doan it 'pear, from whut de soljers 'ported, dat Mas' Baffie mus' a bin drowneded? 'Cordin to my 'pinion he am not above groun'."

Pomp made this assertion with a clear conscience; for as Bathie was in the cave, the negro did not consider him as above ground; he was under the ground.

But this time the loafer, who was closely criticising Pomp's manner and language, noticed the ambiguous words.

"Old man," he said, "since you like to be called old, you're not old enough to fool me."

"How's I tryin' ter fool you, sah?"

"You know where Captain Beaumont is. You have said that he's not above ground. My opinion is, he is hiding under the ground."

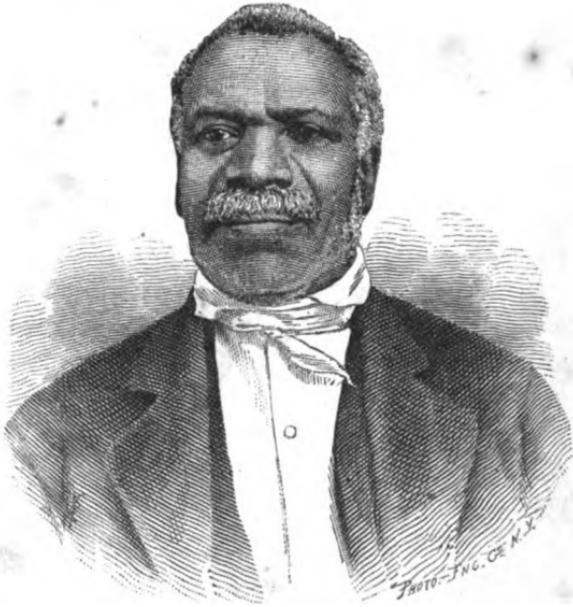
“ We sez ob people who am in de grave, dat dey am not 'bove groun'. I could a' said he am dead, den. What am de difference?”

“ Well, never mind,” said the loafer. “ Good-bye.”

He immediately turned, and went off.

“ Dat man am arter no good,” said Pomp to himself, shaking his head.





**"UNCLE POMP."**

## CHAPTER XXI.

### FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

“Oh! how fiendish man can be,  
When lust impels him on!  
And how slavish bends the knee  
To the God of Mammon!”

After the loafer left, Uncle Pomp seated himself on a goods-box, for the purpose of meditation. His suspicions were aroused. It was evident to him that the loafer had suddenly become possessed of a new idea, connected with the subject of their conversation. After revolving the matter over in his mind, Pomp reached the conclusion that he would not start back home till darkness could protect him with its friendly mantle. Then he rose up, and walked over the town as unconcerned as though his mind were freer from care than any other individual whom he met. Yet, such was not the case; for, go where he would, that loafer, whose name was Coldby, was always in sight, though he seemed to be paying not the slightest attention to Uncle Pomp. After awhile, however, he disappeared, and the negro felt relieved. He did not see Mr. Coldby any more till nearly sunset, and then Pomp saw him ride into town, and hitch his horse to a tree.

“Pra’ps,” said Pomp, to himself, “I is a givin’ myself onnec’ry trouble ’bout dis thing. Whut duz de man want ter watch me fur? An’ still, it looks mighty curious-like dat I perceives ’im whereber I go. But, neber mine, I is agwine to leab here d’rectly.”

Accordingly, about dark, Pomp turned his head homeward, and went boldly out of town. Unfortunately for

him, the moon was at the full, and so illuminated the highway that a person could be distinctly seen for a considerable distance. Pomp had not gone more than half a mile before he discovered that he was followed by a horseman. Of course, he at once suspected that it was Coldby. But he pushed on, as there was nothing else he could prudently do. Every few feet he slyly turned his head, and he noticed presently that the horseman was lessening the distance between them. What should he do? Take to the woods? No, this would not do, as he could not outrun a horse. Besides, it would appear suspicious. Such were the thoughts which passed through Uncle Pomp's mind, as he was traveling as fast as a pedestrian could, in a walk. Another half mile was passed over, and Pomp observed that the horseman was only a few paces in the rear. He stopped, as if to let the man go by. The horseman also stopped, and this caused Pomp's hair to stand on end, "like the porcupine's quills." Not a word was said, and the negro again turned, and pursued his journey, still closely followed by the irrepressible man on horseback. A few hundred yards further on, Pomp had reached the foot of a hill, and was confronted by three men in masks.

"Halt!" exclaimed one.

"Yes, sah," said Pomp, as he stopped. "Is dar anything I ken do fur ye gem'men?"

"Yes; follow us, Uncle Pomp," said one of the men. "We wo'n't hurt you."

"If you hez any business wid me," said Pomp, trying to put on a bold face, "we can perform it right here as well as anywhar else. Whut am de use ob goin' to de woods?"

"Come on," said one, sternly, drawing and cocking a pistol.

"Very well," replied Pomp. "My conscience am

clear ob any offence. You gem'mens surely 'ua not kill a man fur de pleasure ob it?"

Nothing was said till they had gone at least a quarter of a mile from the highway, and stopped under a tree with projecting limbs.

"Now, Uncle Pomp," said one of the men, in a kind tone, but in a voice which the negro did not recognize, "would n't you like to make some money, easily?"

"In coase, gem'mens, if de oppertun'ty fur doin' so am not contrary to de laws ob good morals."

"Yes, I understand. You don't want to do anything wrong?"

"No, sah. It am my intention on all 'casions to do what cor'sponds wid de rectifercations ob a good conscience."

"Of course," replied the man, with a laugh at this display of lexicographical knowledge. "Well," he continued, "I can put you in a way to make a thousand dollars, in an honorable manner."

"Why duz ye not make it yo'self, den?" asked Pomp, "ef it's so easy done."

"Because no one can make it alone. It will take several persons. I'll get my share out of the enterprisë, and you'll get yours."

"Yes, sah; I onderstan's de gen'ralities ob de propersition, but not de perticilers. Whut am de retails ob dis bizness you alludes to?"

"Pomp," said the stranger, in bland and persuasive tones, "you love justice, do n't you?"

"If dar am anything in dis worl'," replied the negro, with energy, "dat 'peals to my heart fur de 'proval ob conscience, it am de principul ob jestic. Onjestic am a crime in de sight ob God, an deserbs de inikertous onfamy ob severe punishment."

"I'm glad to hear you say that, Uncle Pomp. I

thought you 'd be for doing the right thing. Don't you think it is your duty to help the cause of justice?"

"Ondoubtly, sah. It am eb'ry man's duty."

"The peace of society demands it, Uncle Pomp. Offenders against the laws of the country ought not to be suffered to run at large."

"Ondoubtly not," replied Pomp.

"Well, do n't you think that persons who kill their fellow men in cold blood ought to be punished?"

"Ondoubtly, unless it am done in de pugnicious times ob war? In de fury ob battle, you know, men kills each oder when dar am nothin' but a sort of general 'ostelity t'wards one anoder."

"Yes, that's true. But don't you think that a man who kills unarmed people, even in war, ought to be punished?"

"Dat am 'cordin' to my 'pinion, sah."

"Well, I'll tell you, then, if you do n't already know it, that Capt. Beaumont murdered many a poor man during the war, who was perfectly defenceless. Now what do you think? Ought he not to be punished?"

"I 'fess," said Pomp, scratching his head, "I is not 'ficiently posted in de laws ob wa' to decide questions ob dat char'cter. I knows, howsomeber, dat when a man do wrong, an' not 'cordin' to jestic, de good Lo'd hisself will punish dem. It am not fur me to gib a verdick."

"Uncle Pomp, you know well that murderers ought to be punished. The Bible says so."

"O, yes, it do so."

"Very well; I'll make you this proposition: If you'll tell us where Capt. Beaumont is hiding, and will arrange so that we can capture him, you shall have \$5000."

"Whew!" whistled Pomp, with sparkling eyes; "dat

am a big 'mount ob money fur a nigger like me to hab. I would n't know what dispersion to make wid it."

"It will set you up for life. You can live like a nabob the rest of your life. You 'll have nothing to do in the world, but to live on the interest of your money."

"No; dat am true, ef some sharper did n't cheat me out'n it."

"I will see to that; and I 'll manage so that it will be secure."

"I hez no doubt ob dat; but arter all it 'ud be blood-money; an' who could 'joy dat sort ob fundiments. I 'd be like a Judus Caret, an' I 'd be disposed to hang myself. No sah, I could n't do sich a piece ob inikerty as dat."

"You acknowledge, then," eagerly interrupted the man, "that you know where Capt. Beaumont is; but you refuse to tell."

"No, sah," said Pomp, with deliberation and dignity, "I made no sich 'knowlijment as dat. I ware only makin' a gin'ral obsi'vation ob sich a natur' as you or anybody mout make widout any regard to de state ob mine concarnin' de matter under 'sideration. I ware agwine to show de two onpossibilities ob my 'greein' to yo' propersition. De very fust am my own moral char'cter am in de way. I doan' want you gem'mens to think dat I hez no moral principul. De nex' onpossibility am, I is no performer ob mericuls. I hez not de power to raise de dead. Mas Baffie, de soljers said, jumped into de water, an' 'fore God, sence dat day I hez n't seed 'im in de light ob de sun, nor on de yearth."

"Pomp, I 've made you a fair proposition; will you accept or not?"

"Gem'mens," said Pomp, coolly, but emphatically, "it am a onpossibility, as I hez showed you."

✂ I 'll give you two minutes to decide whether you 'll

tell where Capt. Beaumont is. If you refuse, we're going to hang you."

"Ef you wuz ter hang me as high as Himan I could 'nt do it."

"We'll soon see. Where is the rope?"

The two minutes expired.

"Will you tell, or not?"

"How in de name ob rezin ken I?"

"You can do it, and you shall do it, or hang."

Uncle Pomp, though considerably frightened, saw that it would be foolish to resist, and he concluded to remain passive, and suffer the men to do as they pleased. They quickly fastened the rope around his neck.

"Will you tell, or not?"

"It am onpossible, as I hez already telled ye. A man can't do a onpossible thing."

"Pull away, boys!"

Poor Pomp felt the rope tightening around his neck, and felt himself lifted from the earth, though his weight was two hundred and twenty-five pounds. Then he saw a sea of fire, of various colors, floating before him. He tried to call out, but it was a futile effort. Just as he gave up to die, he felt his feet touch the earth, and the rope loosen. In a moment he was breathing naturally.

"Will you tell now? If you do n't we'll pull you up again, and let you stay."

"O, gem'mens, how can a man do a onpossible thing?"

"You won't tell, then?"

"I can't tell whut I doan't know."

"Hoist him again, boys."

And again Pomp went up from the earth. This time they let him remain a little longer. The negro now felt that he was indeed dying. Consciousness entirely left him. When his feet again touched the ground Pomp did not know it. He fell in a heap, and his tormentors

became alarmed. They took the rope off, untied his hands, and fanned him with their hats. But he lay perfectly still, with his eyes bleared open, which could be seen by the light of the moon.

"I'm afraid he's dead," said one.

"Hardly," remarked another.

"I don't believe he knows anything about it."

"Yes, he does; but he's stubborn."

"He do n't come to fast."

"It's a pity if we have killed him."

"I'm not in favor of hanging him any more. It'll be dangerous."

"Look here! is he dead?"

Uncle Pomp's consciousness returned in a moment after the rope was removed, but he determined to "play dead." He heard every word they uttered, but he was motionless, lying flat on his back, with staring eyes, and mimicking a corpse as well as he could.

"What shall we do?" asked one.

"I move we leave here. The old feller don't know anything to tell."

"That nigger is dead. Look at his eyes."

"Let's leave here. We'll come back to-morrow, and report that we found a dead nigger."

Accordingly they left in haste. Half an hour afterward Pomp rose to his feet, stretched himself, and said—

"Fore de Lo'd, dat ware terribul. I thought I ware agwine to Heben shore. But I is back agin. Dey could n't make me tell. No, sah. It won't do to tell dis to Mas' Baffie. He'd come right out, an' kill dem fellers. I knows two ob 'em."

Pomp went on back to the cave, and made some excuse to Bathie for his tardiness. But it was a long time before he mentioned that night's adventure.

## CHAPTER XXII.

ERNEST RENAN.

“ Falsehood puts on the simple face of truth,  
And masks 'i th' habit of plain honesty,  
When she in heart intends most villainy.”

Bathie had been in the cave for many months, and during all this time he had been diligently reading the books with which his uncle had supplied him. He had never before given the subject of religion any special thought. But now, having nothing else to do, and seeking an antidote against the stings of remorse, he perused many infidel works. Without entering into particulars, we state that he finally became a believer in the theories of Renan.

At this point we must ask the reader's permission to make a few remarks in regard to Ernest Renan, who was a Frenchman, born in the year 1823. We care nothing for the history of the man, nor shall we say anything about his private character. It is only his writings we shall criticise.

We regard the *Life of Jesus*, by Renan, as one of the most dangerous productions that can fall into the hands of young people; also old people who are not firmly settled in the faith once delivered to the saints. It is not, by any means, conceded that we ascribe to him any strength of argument, or any profundity of thought; for he is as innocent of deep reasoning, as if no logical processes had ever been invented. Take out a certain cunningness, exhibited in construing the conduct of Jesus and His apostles, also a rather elegant style of writing, and Renan is a silly author. He tramples upon

the laws of Evidence with a recklessness which is truly amusing in one who pretends to be a scholar. He puts himself in plain antagonism with the truth of profane history itself, and exhibits upon nearly every page of his Life of Jesus a most astounding inconsistency. Some infidel writers do try to sustain their propositions upon the supposition that their fellow men can appreciate the force of an argument. But Renan asserts as though he were an infallible oracle, whose bare affirmations must be thankfully received, for no other reason than the disciples of a certain ancient philosopher assigned—*ipse dixit*. Yes, Renan said it, and with that proof we must be content.

What we have affirmed will be substantiated before our story comes to an end. We have not yet reached the proper place to expose the absurdities of his imaginary and conjectural Life of Jesus. We are now merely showing how Bathie Beaumont was brought to believe in the cunning theory of Renan. He was inclined to believe in anything which held out the slightest prospect of refuting the Bible. The very foundation stone of all unbelief is the desire that the Book of God shall be proved a forgery and an imposition. Let a man begin to investigate the evidences of Christian faith with the desire in his heart that the Bible may not be able to stand the test of criticism, and there can be no doubt as to the final result; he will be certain to declare himself an unbeliever in any divine revelation. There is something in the Christian religion which is revolting to the natural heart, the carnal desires and appetites. This is the reason why men are so bitterly opposed to the Bible. Bathie Beaumont did not stop to consider the objections that might be urged against the bold asseverations of Renan.

Why is Renan such a dangerous Infidel in his

writings? We have already said that it is not on account of any convincing proof which he adduces of the non-inspiration of the Gospels. But he begins his *Life of Jesus* with an appearance of candor that is well calculated to win the confidence of those inclined to skepticism. While trying to strike at the very roots of the Christian religion, he utters no disrespectful word in reference to its Founder, to whom, indeed, he ascribes a certain sort of divinity. But, without anticipating what we have to say hereafter, we will remark here that he admits some things which really subvert his whole theory. For instance, he concedes the fact that the gospels were written by the persons to whom they are ascribed by Christians, and that these writers state what they believed to be the truth. Yet, this is a much more effective way than to deny the history *in toto*, as some schools of Infidelity do, and have done. When men assert that there never were such persons as Matthew and other sacred writers, the multitude cannot give them credit for sincerity; because the modes of reasoning which would destroy the genuineness of the Gospels, if applied to other histories, would throw all the past into "confusion worse confounded." Renan was, therefore, wise in adopting a method of attacking Sacred Truth which discards scurrility and abuse, but not plain facts in regard to the authorship of the Scriptures. He makes a covert thrust at Christian Faith under the garb of friendship. Hence, he is a most dangerous enemy to the Great Being whose life he pretends to write. We would by far prefer to have him an openly-avowed foe. His writings are of such a character that the most devout Christian can agree with him to a certain extent. Who cannot heartily respond "Amen" to his high eulogies upon Jesus of Nazareth! He comes so nearly admitting the divinity of our Lord that we are frequently impressed with the

thought that Renan forgets his own premises, and is a Christian at heart. Thus, his opposition to that which gives Christianity its chief value is carefully disguised. Error is cunningly presented in the mantle of Truth. In many paragraphs Renan writes as if he had the warmest friendship for the Lamb of God, and alludes to Him in terms to which the apostles themselves would have heartily subscribed. But, at last, his whole object is to prove that Jesus was a lovable dreamer, mistaken in His mission, pretending to perform miracles, which were only cheats, and finally forced to seek death as a refuge from the difficulties into which His exalted claims had brought Him. Renan insidiously strives to leave the impression on his reader's mind that Jesus was a great and good man, yet nothing more than a man. He well knew that if divinity could be eliminated from the character of our Lord, the Christian religion would be of no more comfort and use than Buddhism.

Renan allows that Jesus has done a great work for the world, both by precept and example, by placing the general religious sentiment of mankind upon a higher plane of spirituality; but however beautiful may have been His theories and rules for the regulation of human conduct, if Jesus rose not from the grave as God, there is no more salvation in His religion than in the mere teachings of Plato or Aristotle. But we must dismiss this subject for the present.

Bathie Beaumont was misled by this crafty foe of religion, and was wandering in darkness as black as that of his cave, while he imagined that he had found the Truth, and with it relief from his troubled conscience.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### EIGHT YEARS IN DARKNESS.

“Thou art the man in whom my soul delights,  
In whom, next heaven, I trust.”

Brevity demands that we pass over the events of eight years, especially since they would be of no interest to our reader. During all these long years the search for Bathie Beaumont had not ceased. De Lancy, it seems, had determined that he should be captured, if he could be found on the face of the earth. His hope of final success was stimulated by the case of John Surratt, whose innocent mother had been executed on the scaffold for alleged complicity in the assassination of President Lincoln. Her son, John, fearing that he would be apprehended for the same offence, fled from the United States. But the people resolved that he should be captured. Accordingly, every possible hiding place in the country was diligently and closely searched. But failing here, they found his trail, leading to some foreign land. It was cold, but they followed it, like bloodhounds, till at last the young man was discovered in Egypt, among the soldiers of the Khedive's army.

De Lancy knew, or believed, that Bathie, too, could be apprehended, if the people were aroused to the importance of it. To stimulate them, he called their attention to the reward of \$50,000, which had never been revoked. The consequence was, there was search for Bathie in all parts of the civilized world. De Lancy had Bathie's photograph, taken while they were at college, and from this he had engravings made, and inserted in all the prominent newspapers and leading magazines.

Policemen and private parties were on the lookout for the original of the picture in every portion of the Union. De Lancy also wrote an account of his bloody career, sufficient to arouse indignation in every feeling breast; and in this startling history of his *quondam* friend, he published the names of the company which had been utterly exterminated. Such a gory history made a deep impression upon the public mind. Many felt a personal interest in Bathie's capture. There were spies everywhere. The cave was, it seemed, the only place which escaped detection. It is wonderful that it was not discovered. People came to see the place where Bathie had jumped into the river, and they examined the bluff up and down the stream, and had come to the very entrance which we have described, and had been near the object of all this hot pursuit; yet the fugitive remained safe in his retreat. Not the slightest clew could be obtained.

Bathie knew all about the measures taken for his arrest, for his uncle sent him the papers, and visited the cave as often as prudence would allow. So, for seven or eight years, Bathie never beheld the sunshine.

But the wildest excitement in regard to any event will subside in the course of time. The public interest in Bathie began to abate. After two or three years, many of those who had been eager in the search gave it up, and thought of it no more. The memory of the affair, after the lapse of eight years, had almost faded from the public mind, and Bathie thought he might now venture forth from his hiding place.

As might be expected, a great change had taken place in his physical appearance during the flight of so many years. It must be remembered, that he was scarcely more than a boy when he first entered the cave. When a man reaches thirty years he can be easily recognized till he is over forty. But the change from boyhood to

mature manhood makes quite a perceptible difference in every way. Bathie, though imprisoned, had progressed in physical development. He took exercise every day, for a long time, in exploring his cavernous abode, till there was not a nook, corner, or turn, with which he was unacquainted. A portion of his time he employed in fishing, which he could do without going from the cave, as the water at the mouth was several feet deep. Thus he kept his table supplied with the most excellent white perch. The rest of the time, except the hours given to sleep, was devoted to reading and study, and conversation with Uncle Pomp, who did not go out oftener than was absolutely necessary. He did not wish to run the risk of being strangled to death with a rope. The study of Pomp's dialect afforded Bathie many an hour's amusement. So, in this way, the time was spent till the year 1873. Bathie's age was confirmed and solidified by heavy, black whiskers, which had grown to the length of about eighteen inches. It would have required the very closest scrutiny of one who had known him eight years before to have recognized him. Thinking it safe to show himself, he determined to go to Europe, and spend the remainder of his days. He was now the sole owner of the splendid plantation in Mississippi, which has been described in the earlier pages of this story, his father and mother both having died immediately after the close of the war. This estate had been managed for him by an uncle on his father's side, who, it was generally believed, was the real owner. As Bathie could not practice extravagance in his dark abode, even if he had felt so inclined, his income gradually increased, till quite a handsome fortune had accumulated. In addition to this his father had deposited in the Bank of England three hundred thousand dollars when the war commenced, and this had not been touched. It will be seen, there-

fore, that Bathie was a wealthy fugitive. His programme was to visit his uncle, Samuel Beaumont, in Mississippi, and make the necessary arrangement to obtain control of his funds in the Bank of England. If he could find no place in the old world where he would be willing to spend his life, he determined to remain abroad till he should grow out of all recognition. Accordingly, he one day said to Pomp—

“I am going to leave here.”

“Gwine ter leave here?” said Pomp, scratching his head—a thing which he always did when he was the least confused.

“Yes. What do you think about it?”

“Well, sah, dat 'pends on whar you mout be s'posed to amberlate, an' on whut means ob safety you mout comman' under de 'mergencies ob oncertainties.”

“Do'n't you think,” said Bathie, “I could venture in safety into daylight? I want to see the sun rise again.”

“You hez,” said Pomp, deliberately, “been mouty closely spied on fur de las' seben or eight years. But de spiers hez got 'sidebly worrid wid sich abunance ob bad luck, dat I b'leves mos' on 'em hez gin it up as a disonprofitible job. An', 'sides, you hez growed out o' de knowlidge ob, pr'aps, all ob 'em as hez eber had de honor ob eider a civil or war-like 'quaintance wid you. Dem picters, dey once had in circ'lacion, hez no 'zem-blunce to yo' presunt—er—er—impusonalerty. But, arter all, dis place hez had some adventerges fur bof on us, dat we could n't er had someoderwise. I is certain o' dat.”

“How is that?” asked Bathie.

“Wy, we hez enjoyed de privilege an' de oportunty ob refillin' an' replantin' our mines wid de seeds ob wisdom. We hez larnt many er bit ob knowlidge dat would neber hab resulted widout dis incarceration, as I hearn you

call it sometimes, an' which am a mo' wisdumatic word dan bein' in jail. Incarcerlation am no common word—it ain't."

"There is truth in what you have said, Uncle Pomp," replied Bathie, who had learned how useless it was to correct any of the negro's mistakes in orthography, or philology, or pronunciation, "for I have read books which, under different circumstances, I never would have noticed; especially upon theological subjects, which are so insipid to the masses."

"Dat am a correck remark, Mas Baffie. You hab added all dis 'ology to yo' oder larnin', an' you am in det fur it to dis incarceration in dis cave. An' as fur me, I hez instored inter my mine a mouty multertude o' words dat I would n't er hearn ob oderwise. I hez no doubt ob dar correckness, eider, sence I rescued 'em on de wing whiles you ware a readin'."

"I have no doubt our imprisonment has been a great advantage to us both," said Bathie; "but, however profitable it may have been, it must now come to an end. The thing I dislike about it is, we must part."

"Part!" exclaimed Pomp. "I hed n't thought ob dat. You do n't mean I is ter leave you?"

"Yes; till I become settled in another country."

"Mas Baffie," said Pomp, in a tone which expressed distress, "hez I not bin a faiful servunt?"

"Yes, Uncle Pomp, more faithful than I have deserved."

"I gin up my freedom fur you, an' liv'd in dis cave wid you fur mo' dan seven years. Now, I is er gwine ter tell you somefin' you neber knowed afore. Doan you 'member 'bout seven years gone by I comed into de cave, jes afore day, wid my neck all tied up?"

"Yes, I remember it distinctly."

"You axed me whut wuz de matter, an' I invaricated

an' told you jest a little fib. De truf wuz, dat on dat very night fo' men follerd me from town an' hung me up by de neck ter make me tell whar you wuz hid."

Bathie looked at him in amazement.

"What is that you say?" he cried, excitedly.

Pomp then gave him a detailed account of the affair. When he had finished, Bathie cried—

"How happens it that you never told me about this before?"

"I was afeard, sah, you'd git angered 'bout it, an' go out o' de cave to 'venge me. So, I 'cluded it 'ud be best to say nothin' 'bout it."

"Uncle Pomp," said Bathie, very tenderly, "you fill me with astonishment. You could have betrayed me, and made your fortune."

"Dat ware no temptation ter me. De ideer ob my 'cumulatin' money ouden yo' preshurs blood 'ud make me shiver. I could neber unjoy a cent ob it. I bl've sich money as dat 'ud burn my fingers ware I ter lay hand on it. You a'danglin' in de air, and I a gazin' at it—umph! dat 'ud make me go off an' hang myself as Juders Carrot did. I could n't stan' dat, even, widout bein' de cause ob it."

"Uncle Pomp," said Bathie, with great warmth of feeling, "you are the best friend I have on earth, and I am going to reward you. You will make more by being faithful to me than by betraying me."

"Mas' Baffie," said Pomp, with tears starting down his cheek, "dat ideer ob makin' anything out'n you hab neber entered dis head. No, sah, I lub'd you from a baby. I hez neber forgot dat time when you run up wid dat axe, an' made Mas' Smif quit whippin' o' me. Dat ware a brave fing for a boy to perfawm. I know'd right den you had de right sawt o' grit. You hez been de only true fren I's eber had in dis worl', an' all de

ambition I hez is ter die in yo' sarvice. I doan want you ter go off an' leave me. You'll need some 'un ter wait on you. Who knows better how to do it dan me?"

At this point Pomp could no longer restrain his emotions, and he sobbed aloud. This demonstration of such undying friendship touched Bathie to the heart.

"Uncle Pomp, do you know the persons who hanged you?"

"Yes, sah! at leas' I know'd two on em."

"Give me their names."

"Fur whut purpus, Mas' Baffie?"

"Never mind, tell me their names."

"Now, Mas' Baffie," replied Pomp, wiping his swarthy face with his sleeve, "whut am de use? I wouldn't tell you all dese years, because I wuz afeard you'd expose yoself. I doan want you ter git into any difficulty, an' take no resks on my account."

"But, Uncle Pomp, you suffered for me, and it is my duty to protect you. You shall not be treated in that way by any living man."

"Whut'll you do, if I tell you?" asked Pomp.

"I will take their lives," replied Bathie.

"But I doan want you to do dat. 'T will do no good now. Let's say no mo' 'bout it. I tole it only to show you dat I'm 'bout as good a fren as you hez."

"I never doubted that."

"Why is yer gwine ter leave me den?"

"You have misunderstood me, Uncle Pomp, I am not going to leave you forever. I never thought of such a thing. But do you not know if we are seen together, you will be recognized without difficulty, and then, of course, suspicion will be aroused against me. If I go alone I can make my escape. I am going to a foreign country, but I intended all the time to take you, if you wanted to go, and I expect to pay you good wages."

"I doan want no wagers. I hez infawmed you dat on difrunt 'casions now an' den. I doan need much, an' I'll stay wid you till I die, an' you can have de ole nigger put away in a ondisrespectful manner."

"Well, you may have your own way about it. But if you die before I do, I will have an elegant marble monument erected over your grave. I tell you now, because you will never see it."

Nothing could have afforded Pomp more pleasure than this promise, for if there is any form of display which the negro loves, it is a grand funeral. Many of them procure their own burial outfit while in the prime of life, and with a reasonable prospect of thirty years before them. But they seem to have a horror and a dread of a shabby funeral. We have often heard the remark made in the South, that almost any negro would be willing at any time to "give up the ghost," if he could have the assurance that his remains would be honored with a long procession of mourners. While the remark may be hyperbolic, there is some truth in it. So, Uncle Pomp made no objection to Bathie's proposition to have a fine monument over his last remains.

"But," continued Bathie, "we do not know what may happen. I may possibly be arrested and executed. In case anything of that sort happens, I have made my will, and directed my uncle to give you the sum of \$50,000. You know you can make that much any day by betraying me. My enemies shall not be more liberal than I am. Faithfulness surely deserves as great a reward as treachery."

"Whut 'ud I do wid \$50,000?" exclaimed Pomp. "It am too big amount to be detained in my mine. I 'ud not know whut ter do wid it. Somebody 'ud cheat me out'n it in less dan a week. It am not money dat I's arter. I wants ter lub you an' be near you—dat's all."

"You shall be with me, Uncle Pomp, if you want to. When I get to New York I will send for you, and we will cross the ocean, and stay a long time, perhaps forever. You can come to my Uncle Sam, on the old plantation, and I will make arrangements for you to go on to New York, where I will meet you."

"O, yes, now I onderstans it. I see yo wisdum 'bout dese affars am s'perior to mine. I expresses myself as ondissatisfied. But, arter all, I's almos' afeerd fur you to leave dis place ob darkness. Dis cave hab been a mouty good fren' to us."

"Yes, it has. But what are you afraid of?"

"Jes' whut we's bin a fearin' fur de las' eight years gone by."

"You are afraid I will be captured?"

"Doan know. I jes' some how hez a onpressment dat dar'll be some kine o' unsuspected onvelopment to you."

"We can only hope for the best, Uncle Pomp."

"We mout do suthin' mo' dan dat, sah."

"What else?"

"We mout pray fur de good Lo'd's pertection," replied Pomp, with deep solemnity. "In all our dif'culties we hez de priv'lige ob callin' on Him fur aid an' direction."

"I will turn that over to you, Uncle Pomp."

"Ef you'll allow me ter say it, Mas Baffie, dat am de only fing I ever obsarved 'bout you dat I did n't like. Ef you ware only a man ob pra'ar, you'd be whut, in my disonestmation, de Scriptor call de up-right man. De end ob dat man am peace. Ef you ware only a Christyun I knows you'd be one widout blame. Dat you may be a Christyun am de pertickler objec' I's gwine ter pray fur from dis time on."

"Do you think your prayer will be answered?"

"De pra'ars ob de righteous man am allurz answered in some way. Ef not in one way, dey am in anoder. We mus' hab faif in de good Lo'd, an' leave de matter 'bout which we is prayin' in his han's. He'll be shore ter do right. Dar am no mistake 'bout dat, shore."

"So," said Bathie, "you think I may be a Christian yet, and on account of your prayers, do you?"

"No, sah. I make no sich insartion as dat. I doan say on' count ob my pra'ars lone. But my pra'ars enjined wid oder pra'ars, an' wid de mysterous oprations ob divine probidunce, may eefect de end o' dat result."

"You mean that your prayers, in conjunction with those of other Christians, may end in making a Christian of me; is that it?"

"Dat am hit," replied Pomp, "though my langwidge mayn't be as larned as yourn."

"Very well; we will see."

"I doan know anyfing ob a tempral char'cter dat 'ud 'ford me mo' plejure dan your convusion to de chuch."

"Well, if I thought the church had the truth, you may rest assured I would join it."

"Dar am no truf, nowhars, ef it am not in de chuch."

"Maybe, I will find it some day, then. But, changing the subject, have my baggage ready as soon as you can."

"It woan take long to do dat," replied Pomp. "You duz n't keep many cloze."

"I have no use for many here. But you must have two or three new suits as soon as you get to Mississippi. You will need them in our travels."

"Thank 'ee, sah, I'll do jes as you say, for you knows whut am bes'."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### JULIET, BUT NOT ROMEO.

“If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully;  
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,  
I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay,  
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.”

The very next night after the preceding conversation between Uncle Pomp and Bathie occurred, a skiff was landed at the mouth of the cave. It was laden with two or three blankets, a bundle of clothing, and several days' rations.

When Bathie emerged from the place of darkness which had constituted his abode for eight long years, Pomp closed the mouth securely, so that there was no way of ingress, except through the submarine entrance. He then returned to Bathie and Mr. Constant.

“What amount of stores have you left, Bathie?” asked his uncle, as the young man was preparing to start.

“Enough to last for several weeks, and longer, in an emergency.”

“I'll visit here occasionally, to see that everything is in order. There's no telling at what time you may have to take refuge here again.”

“I hope I will not have that to do, Uncle. I think I have served my apprenticeship in fighting with darkness.”

“Yes, but we can't see into the future; and as much as you may dislike this sort of life, you may have to come right back, much sooner, too, than you expect.”

The very suggestion had a tendency to cast a gloom

over Bathie's spirits. Here, in Egyptian darkness, he had spent eight weary years. It seemed to him an age. Was it possible that he would again have to fly for life to this Tartarean cavern, and pass the remainder of his days with Uncle Pomp? The thought produced a momentary depression, which caused him to say—

“Do not tell me that, Uncle Dan, just as I am on the point of making an effort to regain my liberty.”

“Of course,” replied Mr. Constant, “it's useless to anticipate misfortune. I do hope you may be successful. But still, it's well enough to look at both sides of the case. In time of peace, prepare for war. But have you given Uncle Pomp instructions?”

“Yes; he will remain with you till you hear from me.”

“Very well. Is there anything else I can do?”

“No, thank you. Good-bye.”

“Good-bye.”

As they were shaking hands Pomp said—

“De do's am all locked, an' de keys am on de outside; he! he! he! You knows whar ter fine 'em in case any misfortunit carcumstances foces you ter come back.”

“Do not talk to me about coming back, Uncle Pomp. The thought makes me heart-sick. I never want to enter that dismal cave any more, if I can help it.”

“I's sho, sah, dat black hole dar am bin one o' yo' bes' frens. She am screen'd you from de pussuit ob de enemy while de wheels ob time hab rolled on to de ocean ob eternty. My 'pinion am she desarves some thank-givefulness.”

“That may be true, but let us have no more of it.”

“It am well under all carcumstances, but specly in 'mergencies ob perrel, ter take measures fur safety as great as prudence can calkilate on. So I lef' a box o' matches on de outside ob de fust do', on a' empty flour-barl.”

"I must be off. Good-bye, again," said Bathie, as he took the oars in his hands, and pushed off from the bank.

"May de good Lo'd bress you," cried Pomp, as he brushed a tear from his eye, "an' gin you a prosperus journey, an' a 'bunance ob all sawts o' materul an' sperital successes."

In a moment Bathie was quietly gliding down the Linden river with the current. By daylight the next morning he was many miles away from the point where he had started. As he did not think it prudent to travel by day, it was necessary to lie by till night. Before the sun rose he discovered a small estuary of the river, and turning into this, was soon engaged in fishing. Here he spent the day without molestation, most of the time being devoted to sleep. In this way he traveled without much fatigue, as he was going down stream, and had to make only an occasional stroke, till he reached the mouth of the river. Here, disposing of his skiff, he took passage on a steamboat, and in due time landed at Vicksburg.

And now a new fear seized him. Whom could he trust? Might not some of his former acquaintances recognize and betray him, for the sake of the reward of \$50,000? He had no doubt that some who had known him would sacrifice honor and friendship for such an amount. He well knew that \$50,000 was a temptation too strong for the virtue of many men, whom it would raise at once from the ashes of degraded poverty to the ease and luxury of opulence. Not one of his former acquaintances would he entrust with the secret of his identity. He then sought a private boarding house, as far away from the frequented streets as possible. Presently he reached a house which he thought would answer his purpose, and entering, he registered as Thomas Jones. He made no inquiry as to the name of the proprietor, and saw no one but a boy, by whom he was

shown to a room. Here he remained till supper was announced. What was his surprise, on casting his eyes over the company in the dining-room, to find himself in the presence of his father's former overseer and his wife! It was too late to retreat. There were several other persons present, none of whom, however, Bathie had ever seen before. He determined to eat hastily and slip away under cover of darkness. He was considerably relieved, though, by the fact that neither Mr. nor Mrs. Smith seemed to recognize him. He seated himself as far as possible from the foot of the table, where Mrs. Smith sat, as he dreaded her scrutiny more than that of her husband.

But presently in came Mary from the kitchen, bearing a plate of hot rolls. And now Bathie felt that the crisis of the occasion had arrived. He quickly glanced at her, and immediately looked down. Would she recognize him? Without raising his eyes he could perceive that she had paused at the foot of the table. He did not dare to look up, but appeared to be profoundly interested in the contents of his plate. He *felt* that Mary was looking straight at him, and, sure enough, she was. There seemed to be something about him which at once arrested her attention. Though Bathie was not looking at her, she colored till she could feel her face burn? How came he there? Was he seeking her? Why did he not make himself known? Such questions flashed through Mary's mind, producing confusion and perplexity. She was recalled to a sense of her duty by hearing her mother's voice—

“What is the matter, Mary? Hand the rolls.”

As she obeyed she began to tremble. She moved from one guest to another, till, at last, she stood directly in front of Bathie.

“Will you have a roll, sir?” she asked.

Bathie, without looking at her or speaking, took one, and she passed on. Both were now puzzled. Bathie began to hope that he would go through the ordeal successfully; yet he was sure he could detect a tremor in the young lady's voice whenever she addressed him; for she passed around the table several times.

At length his supper was finished. He rose from his seat in order to go to his room. Mary was standing at the door as he was going out, and he ventured to look into her face. She was gazing hard at him, and as he approached within two feet, she whispered—

“ Bathie ! ”

In answer he placed his finger on his lips so significantly that she understood him, and he passed out. After leaving the dining-room the first impulse of Bathie was to quit the house at once. But the sober, second thought was, what would Mary think? Would she not tell her parents? Indeed, might she not already have informed them? If so, might he not be betrayed before morning?

Thus it is with persons who are in possession of dangerous secrets, especially concerning themselves. They give themselves unnecessary trouble, and seem to imagine that many eyes are fixed upon them with suspicion, when such is far from the fact.

Thus it was with Bathie. He was uneasy and suspicious. The thought, like some chilling, creeping thing, stole into his mind, that the overseer and his wife had both recognized him, but pretended ignorance that they might have the better opportunity of betraying him. He noticed that Mr. Smith had left the house immediately after supper, and the thought occurred to Bathie that he might be gone after an officer to arrest him. For some time after he had entered his room, he listened anxiously at the footsteps below stairs, and when they

appeared to be approaching him, he involuntarily grasped his weapons. And there he sat, picturing to himself the terrible consequences of his arrest. There was the long imprisonment in a loathsome jail—the trial, with De Lancy and others as witnesses—the retirement of the jury—and after a little their return, with the awful verdict, “guilty.” After this, a few days’ imprisonment, with chains on his limbs—the ride to the scaffold—that ocean of eyes all turned upon him. Bathie shuddered, rose to his feet, looked out of his window at the clear, blue sky, sprinkled with myriads of glittering stars. He almost wished himself back in his cave, where he could lie down upon his couch without fear of molestation from men. Now, he feared to extinguish his light, and dreaded to leave it burning. He sat up for two hours, and was about to lie down with his clothing on, when he heard footsteps stealthily approaching his room. Instantly he grasped a pistol in each hand. Perhaps the officers were coming to arrest him! Nearer and nearer they come along the hall, and presently seem to pause before his door. Bathie was now standing in the middle of the room. There was a gentle tap on the door.

“Who is there?” said Bathie.

“It’s me,” answered a boyish voice.

“What do you want?”

“Here’s a note for you, sir.”

Bathie hesitated for a few seconds, and said—

“Thrust it under the door.”

In a moment a white missive appeared on the floor, and the footsteps were heard retreating. Bathie picked up the note, and hastily read—

“Come into the parlor at once. There is no danger.

“MARY.”

He could not but comply with this reasonable request; yet he took the precaution to belt his pistols around him.

He went slowly down stairs, and entered the room dignified with the name of "parlor." Mary stood up to receive him, holding out both her hands. Bathie paused before her, and then took the extended hands in his.

"How you have changed since I last saw you," she said; and added, with the color coming to her face, "why did you not wish to recognize me?"

"Mary," he answered, in soft tones, "do you not know by what imminent perils I am surrounded? Do you not know that spies have been on my track for eight long years? I have been forced to conceal myself as a fugitive. I have good reasons for not wishing to be known. I do not know whom to trust."

"Bathie, are you afraid to trust me?"

"Not at all."

"I knew," she continued, "that a reward was offered for you, and I saw your pictures. But that was some years ago. I have not seen your name in a paper for two years."

"Nevertheless, people are on the lookout for me. Did your father or mother recognize me?"

"No; I am sure they did not—at least, they have not said a word about you. But, are you afraid of them?"

"I am afraid of almost everybody."

"Tell me, Bathie," she said, in a low, eager tone, "do you fear to trust me?"

"No more than I would my own mother, or sister, if I had one."

How despicable did that word "sister" now sound in Mary's ears! Why could he not have used the word "wife" as well? Why was it that Bathie could not perceive her aversion to being regarded as a sister? With such a thought in her mind, it was with an air of disappointment she said—

"I was going to say, if you are afraid of me, you had better leave at once. I do not desire you to sleep under a roof which covers any one who would be a traitor to you."

"Mary, you do not, perhaps, know what people can be tempted to do for a few thousand dollars."

"Go, Bathie, go at once, if you are the least suspicious of me," said Mary, with a little frown and feigned reproach. "I would not cause you a moment's anxiety in regard to your personal safety for anything in the whole world."

"Mary, my dear sister—"

She gazed at him with such a look of keen disappointment that Bathie paused.

"Why do you look at me in that way?" he asked.

"I am pained, Bathie," she answered, with a sudden outgush of emotion, which her native modesty could not restrain, "that you cannot read my feelings toward you."

"I think I do read your feelings. So far from betraying me, you regard me as a brother, and as such I shall ever treat you, and you shall be as my sister."

"Oh! Bathie! Bathie!"

She could say no more, and the tears rolled down her cheeks. She did not dare to be more explicit. If Bathie was so blind that he could not understand such a plain intimation, she must continue to endure her grievous disappointment in silence. At this unexpected outburst of emotion he looked at her in great surprise, and sat still, confused and embarrassed. Presently, as if ashamed of her weakness, she suddenly dried her tears, and endeavored to assume a calm exterior. This, however, was difficult to do when her heart was throbbing with such wild, intense feelings, and when she was trying by every little womanly art to elicit some expression of affection, without absolutely compromising her maidenly modesty

and dignity. Taking down her hands from her face, she turned her eyes upon him with such a sorrowful expression that he said—

“What is the matter?”

“I am sometimes foolish, Bathie. Forgive my weakness. I was thinking of the time when we were children playing together on the banks of the Big Black. But since then you are so changed—so sadly changed. I think with pain of the terrible mistake you made—”

“What mistake?” interrupted Bathie.

“O, that fearful vow,” she said, shuddering. “In the rash pursuit of revenge—and revenge which was wholly unnecessary, you have lost tranquillity of mind, peace of conscience, and all that gives one control of the inner self. You disregarded my warning, and now I behold the consequences of that disregard in your inclination to distrust some of your best friends. If you had listened to me, weak woman as I was, you would have been a different man. You are so changed, it makes me weep.”

“That is true, Mary. There have been many mournful changes in the last twelve years. I once was a happy child, when we went to school and studied our lessons together. But that horrid war came on. Oh! that awful night! The whole terrible scene rises before me now.”

Bathie paused and buried his face in his hands, as if trying to shut out some dreadful sight. But raising up, he cried, wildly—

“Good God! I was crazed and maddened. My brain felt like a burning volcano! That night I swore vengeance! It was a fearful vow, as you say, but I paid it, with interest. These hands have sent hundreds to the grave. I was a fool, Mary, a mad fool; I confess it. I have brought ruin upon myself, and am reaping the fruits of my folly. I have been forced to hide in

darkness for eight years, and to fight with invisible beings. Yes, you are right, I have changed. I am not what I once was. I must now be a wanderer and a fugitive from my own native land. I am afraid of my own people. I must live among strangers who will know and will care nothing about me."

"Where are you going?" asked Mary, making a great effort to appear calm.

"I do not know to what particular place. I will go to Europe. The first thing is to get out of my own country."

"Do you never intend to return?" she asked, in a voice choking with agony.

"Why should I wish to return?" he asked.

"Why should you?" she exclaimed, endeavoring to make her deep, yearning love manifest itself in her tones and looks. It seemed that she would die, if she could not in some way let Bathie know her sentiments toward himself. Her affection was like the dammed up water, which gathers force till at last it breaks over all bounds. Poor Mary was struggling hard to preserve her womanly delicacy, and at the same time to induce Bathie to utter some little word of deeper significance than mere brotherly love, which would raise her up from the dark depths of despair, and transform her into one of the happiest creatures on earth. Alas! poor girl! why should'st thou be doomed to suffer the bitterest pangs that ever mar woman's existence—those of unrequited love!

"Why should you?" she cried. "Have you no friends in the world for whom you care, and who care for you?"

"I have few friends whom I can trust. I can count them on the fingers of one hand."

"But, may be," said Mary, "the friendship of some

of those few is greater in its concentrated intensity than that of five hundred ordinary friends put together. There is a friendship stronger than life, and which lacks nothing but an opportunity to show its power and depth."

"I shall certainly count you as one of my friends," said Bathie; "at least, until I see that you turn against me."

"And when I turn against you," answered Mary, clasping her hands, energetically, and looking him earnestly in the face, "you may say there is no trust to be put in woman. I would die before I would betray you."

This emphatic assertion changed the color of Mary's face to a deep crimson; yet Bathie took her energetic utterances as the mere outflowing of warm, sisterly affection.

"Thank you, dear sister," said Bathie, with more than usual ardor. "I do not know how I can ever repay your friendship, except by returning it."

"But you do not reciprocate it," quickly said Mary, manifesting an inclination to pout, which was somewhat puzzling to the young man.

"Why do I not?" asked he. "Have I not shown, all my life, that I value your friendship as highly as any earthly consideration?"

"How can you say that, when for eight years you have not written me a single line to inform me you were alive?"

"How could I do that? I would have been fearful that a letter from me might fall into the hands of my enemies."

"Anyhow," said she, "I would not have treated you in that way. But I am under obligations to you, while you are under none to me—that is the difference."

"Mary," said Bathie, "never let me hear you say that again."

"Do you want me to be ungrateful?"

"No; but, if you keep talking about your obligations, you will make me think that your friendship is based on selfish considerations."

"O, Bathie," said Mary, clasping her hands, "your words are like coals of fire."

"Forgive me, then," said Bathie; "I did not intend to wound your feelings. But please, never say again that you are under obligations to me."

"I never will," said she, "if it makes you attribute my friendship to improper motives."

They talked for half an hour longer, and Bathie rose to go to his room. Taking out his pocket-book, he handed Mary a bank note and said—

"Give this to your father, to pay for my lodging."

"What do you mean, Bathie?" asked Mary, turning a shade paler, "you are not going to leave us before morning?"

"I do not know," he replied, slowly. "I feel uneasy here."

"That is all unnecessary, Bathie. You are in no danger. I will sit up myself and watch, and if I discover the slightest cause of alarm, I will notify you. You shall not be harmed under this roof, while I have life."

"I had better bid you adieu, anyhow, for I may possibly leave."

He reached out his hand, slightly stooped, and respectfully imprinted a kiss on her forehead. A kiss often means nothing, but often it makes an impression which lasts forever. Probably it was a foolish thing on the part of Bathie. In the innocence of his heart he meant it as nothing more than an expression of kindness and friendly

regard; but it raised expectations which Mary fondly dreamed would be fulfilled at some future time. How pitiable was poor Mary's condition! That woman deserves sympathy who is dying to lavish her pure and holy affections upon some one to whom she dares not reveal it. In the deep silence of her aching heart she pours out rich jewels of love—treasures of more value than the world-renowned gold of Ophir—upon some man who unconsciously tramples them under foot. For this reason there are many unhappy marriages. The woman, with the power to make home bright and happy, when her efforts to beautify that home spring from a consciousness of requited affection, is forced, by the necessities of her dependent being, into a union with one who can arouse no warmer feeling than respect. Such a woman seems to miss her true destiny.

“When will you come back again, if you do leave?” asked Mary.

“I cannot tell. I have to be governed by circumstances in all my movements.”

“You will write to me?”

“If I possibly can.”

“Well, we will talk more about it to-morrow,” said Mary. “Go, sleep soundly. I will sit up all night, and if I discover that you are in the least danger, I will promptly notify you.”

“I do not want you to sit up,” said Bathie. “It is altogether unnecessary.”

“Go!” she answered. “I will do as I like.”

Bathie made no further remark, but turned and re-entered his room. Throwing himself upon the bed, he earnestly courted sleep. He knew not how long he had thus lain, when the door of his chamber seemed slowly to open. Bathie's pistols were under his pillow, but he seemed to have no power to move. He could only look

in anguish toward the door, which was turning without noise upon its hinges. Presently it flew wide open. Yet no one appeared, though he could hear the rustling of garments on the outside. Slowly a being dressed in pure white approached his bedside. She was followed by De Lancy, who held a pistol in either hand. She drew back her veil, and exhibited a face as pallid as death. In her countenance there was no expression of affection, but rather one of severity. Then she pointed her long fleshless fingers at him, stooped down so that her pale face almost touched his, and said in a whisper—

“How darest thou kiss another!”

No sooner had she spoken than Mary, looking like a corpse, came rushing into the chamber, brandishing a long, keen, glittering knife. De Lancy was endeavoring to level a pistol at Bathie's head; but at each attempt he made, Mary would strike down his arm. Others of the victims whom he had sent to their long homes now came marching deliberately in, till the room was full. Then they raised and brandished their gleaming sabres, pointed pistols at his face, while their horrid countenances glowed with rage, and their sunken eyes flashed with fire. It was in vain Bathie assayed to rise, for he was held down by some invisible power. Mary had to enter the awful conflict alone, while he lay an idle spectator. The battle began. Mary's glittering knife whizzed through the air with the rapidity of lightning. Under her rapid strokes heads rolled off to the floor, and glared at Bathie with their expiring eyes; arms would drop upon his bed, and blood would spurt into his very face; yet he had to lie motionless, and unable to do one thing in his own defence. But gradually the frightful forms disappeared till Mary was left alone. There she stood, holding the awful knife in her hand, with the point resting on the floor. She was crimsoned with blood from

head to foot; but she looked at Bathie with a smile playing over her radiant, glowing face. Presently a stranger suddenly entered, and seized her by the hand. She cast one sorrowful look at Bathie, and began to slowly move away.

“Come back!” exclaimed Bathie.

Instantly they faded from sight, and Bathie found himself staring at the ceiling overhead.

“Horrible dream,” he muttered, after he was aroused by the sound of his own voice. Taking his watch from under his pillow, he glanced at it, and discovered that the time was three o’clock.

“That train, I was informed,” he thought to himself, “leaves at four o’clock. I will board it and go. There is no peace here for me.”

Accordingly, he donned his apparel, opened the door as noiselessly as possible, and descended the stairway. As he advanced, he met Mary at the parlor door.

“Good heavens, Bathie!” she said, in a low tone, as she caught sight of his wild-looking eyes, “what is the matter?”

“Oh! Mary, there is no rest for me here. I must go. The train leaves in an hour.”

“Has anything occurred to alarm you?”

“Yes—no—nothing but a dream that haunts me everywhere. It is Nemesis following me.”

“Tell me the dream,” said Mary.

“O, no,” answered Bathie, deprecatingly. “It would only harrow up your feelings. No, no, it is useless, useless.”

“Where are you going?”

“I told you awhile ago, that I do not know. I am going to Europe. That is all I know.”

“Bathie, will I never see you again?”

“I do not know.”

"You do not want to see me any more," answered the distressed girl, who was scarcely conscious of what she was saying.

"Yes, I do, Mary. But my personal safety makes our separation necessary."

"Do not stay, then," she said, "if you think you are in peril. But be sure to write to me, wherever you go."

"I have promised you I would. Now I must go. Good-bye."

She held out her hand, and leaned just a little forward, looking into his eyes. Notwithstanding Bathie's horrid dream, he could not resist the temptation to imprint a kiss, this time upon her cherry lips, and upon the memory of that little osculation Mary's deep love feasted for many days.

Bathie immediately started to the depot, and ere long he was rolling rapidly in the direction of his old home.

Poor Mary heard the rumbling train, and she felt that strange mingling together of opposite feelings—happiness and unhappiness.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### A STRANGE CASE OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

“In all the catalogues of sin,  
Murder the first hath ever been,  
In heinousness.”

Covetousness is one of those evil passions which leads to the most revolting crimes that men can commit. It is the parent of many dark deeds which will never be known till the last great Assizes, when all the human race shall stand before the Eternal Throne, and give a strict account of what they have done in this life. Very many transgressions are partly punished in this world, but not all. Many of the most direful crimes that have ever darkened and disgraced the records of humanity will lie hidden in the depths of oblivion till the great Books of Judgment are opened, which contain the history of every individual life. Then not only every deed and word, but every thought, shall be exposed. But until that Great Day, for which all other days are made, shall arrive, men will commit murder and robbery, and many will escape detection and due punishment. But the awful sins of many transgressors will be sure to find them out. They may conceal their dreadful deeds for awhile, yet retribution will follow, baying like a bloodhound upon their track, till they seek relief in confession to their fellow men. The fearful secret seems to be more than they can bear, and they cry aloud to their fellow-beings for sympathy, though they expect to be punished. What do they gain by confession? They at least respond to the voice of Justice, and to that extent pacify their conscience. Man

has the desire to share a guilty secret, though it may concern himself. It is burdensome to carry it, locked up in his own breast. The most of these terrible secrets can be traced to the desire of gaining wealth, rather than any other evil passion of the human heart. Covet your neighbor's property, and you are in the highway to ruin. Think about it with the desire to possess it, and you will be apt to find yourself laying plans to secure it. A person may be led along in this way, inch by inch, till after awhile he will be ready to shed his neighbor's blood in order to obtain possession of his property.

The foregoing observations find their application in an incident now to be related. About ten days after Bathie had left Vicksburg, two men were traveling in the direction of a town in Mississippi, which, for the sake of mere convenience, we will designate by the name of Baalbek. The town is still in existence, and does not look as if its monotony had ever been disturbed by the occurrence of any romantic or startling event. But we must not always judge by appearances. Who, now sailing down the "Father of Waters," and gazing at the houses clinging to the hillsides, if he were unacquainted with history, would imagine that Vicksburg had once attracted the eyes of all civilized nations by its memorable siege of forty-seven days? Some of those hills once bristled with tremendous siege-pieces, which kept the enemy at a respectful distance, but they are all gone now. A stranger might walk over the field of Waterloo without knowing that he traversed a spot on which, probably, the world's destiny was settled. So we must not expect the topography of a place shall bear any relation to its moral history. The town to which we have alluded had a veritable existence, but if we were to honor it with any lengthy description, our

readers would not feel disposed to return us a vote of thanks, nor would they feel any greater interest in this story. The fact worthy of notice is, that two men on foot were leisurely moving along the road which led to Baalbek. It was about the middle of the day, and they had sat down to rest on a sweet-gum log which had fallen across the highway, but had been cut in two and rolled to one side, parallel with the road. One of these men had a bundle, which he carried on his back. The spot where they were resting was dismal enough in appearance, for it was in a dark swamp, whose black soil brought forth trees of enormous size, and a rich, abundant undergrowth of shrubs and cane, forming dense and tangled thickets on either side of the road. Close to the log on which they were reposing, was an unsightly slough, covered with greenish scum, broken in places by such filthy animals as love to sport in such waters. Presently one of the two, who was unencumbered with any sort of baggage, rose to his feet, approached the slough, looked at it attentively a moment, and was returning to his seat, after, however, having cut a huge walking cane with a bowie-knife borrowed from his companion. The other was in the act of lighting his pipe, when the first, approached in the rear, and just as his fellow-traveler was applying the match, struck him a blow on the back of the head with the heavy stick, which at once felled him senseless to the earth. But to make sure work, he plunged the borrowed knife into the very heart of the owner. At that very moment he heard the footfalls of a horse, apparently not more than a hundred yards distant. There was no time to lose. Snatching up the bundle, he immediately darted into the forest, not taking the time even to withdraw the knife from the fallen man's breast. There was a small pathway running along the

bank of the slough, and the assassin boldly and rapidly followed it, making as little noise as possible, till he was soon swallowed up in the depth of the forest. He was seen by no one.

In two or three moments a solitary horseman came up. And now happened one of those strange occurrences and remarkable coincidences which mark the lives of some few men, whose names may be found in works on the nature of Circumstantial Evidence, and whose strange histories fill our minds with horror and amazement. We are confused and bewildered by the unbroken chain of circumstantial evidence which entangles, sometimes, a man whom we believe to be innocent, especially when we take his motives into consideration. No doubt innocent persons have been executed who were the victims of ill-timed circumstances, with which they had nothing to do. One or two missing links in the chain of coincidences would have entitled them to an honorable acquittal. But everything seemed to fit with dovetailed exactness, and they were held as fast in the clutches of fallacious testimony as if enwrapped in the slimy tentacles of the "Devil Fish."

This horseman was no other than Bathie Beaumont, whose business made it necessary that he should visit the town of Baalbek. He was riding at a moderate gait, and heard not the movements made by either one of the men, and saw nothing till he came to the man lying by the log. It was but the work of a moment for Bathie to dismount and go to the assistance of a prostrate fellow mortal. The victim breathed his last just as Bathie reached him, and the knife was still in his breast. At once he withdrew this formidable weapon, and blood spurted upon him and stained his clothing. Standing there with the gory knife reeking in his hand, the thought occurred to him that he had done wrong,

and that he should have left the victim in the precise attitude in which he had found him, so that the jury of inquest might have the benefit of every circumstance in order to reach a legal conclusion. Everybody, in fact, should remember this, and not disturb a corpse found on the highway or elsewhere, because sometimes the very posture of the body throws light upon the manner of the death. In the present instance, as the man was really dead, Bathie thrust the knife back into the wound from which he had withdrawn it. But just as he was in the act of doing this three men suddenly came up, to whom it very naturally appeared that Bathie had stabbed the fallen man. From their standpoint they could hardly doubt it. Accordingly, one of the trio immediately presented a short rifle, such as many of the cavalry had carried during the war, and called upon Bathie to surrender. It was the Sheriff of the county and two deputies, who were in pursuit of a couple of horse thieves. Bathie was astounded. What to do, under such circumstances, was the question which demanded rapid discussion and a prompt conclusion. It is amazing what a number of thoughts can pass through our minds when we are in danger, and must quickly decide upon our course of action. We make syllogisms and reach conclusions with the rapidity of lightning. It is an intuitive flash, independent of all words.

To surrender would place Bathie in a very awkward position; to resist would be sure to lead to the effusion of blood, and instead of one there would probably be several victims on whom the Coroner would have to hold an inquest. As Bathie was conscious of his own innocence, he soon came to the conclusion that it would be unwise to make any hostile demonstrations. Surely, he thought, there would be some clue to the murderer, however mysterious the affair might now appear, which would

result in his acquittal and the apprehension of the true assassin. He had never had any experience with courts, but certainly he thought they could not convict a person who was not guilty; this would be a disgrace to law and an outrage upon every principle of justice. With such thoughts in his mind he calmly said to the Sheriff—

“By what authority do you ask me to surrender?”

“I am the Sheriff of this county, and these are my deputies. We are all sworn officers of the law.”

“But why do you want me to surrender? What is your charge against me?”

“I arrest you for murder,” replied the Sheriff, sternly. “What else could you suppose?”

“The murder of that poor man?”

“Certainly. We saw you strike the blow with that knife, yet in his breast.”

“If you think,” said Bathie firmly, “that I killed the man, you are very much mistaken.”

“Mistaken!” exclaimed the Sheriff. “Why, good gracious! did n’t I see you stab the man, not five minutes ago?”

“No, sir, you did not,” answered Bathie. “The man was dead when I reached him. True, I drew the knife out, but replaced it just as you came up. I do not deny that it may have appeared to you I stabbed him; but I assure you your conclusion is wrong.”

“That may be so, or it may not,” answered the obstinate Sheriff, “but it’s my duty to arrest you, at least till you establish your innocence, which, of course, you can do, if you’re not guilty. It looks mighty suspicious against you at any rate. I’d hate to get hold of the wrong man, but circumstances just at present point to you as the guilty party, and I’m bound to hold on to you for the present.”

Bathie now saw that he would be involved in a seri-

ous difficulty. The circumstances thus far were clearly against him. Again he thought of resisting and fighting the three men. But he was very much opposed to shedding any more blood. It made him almost shudder to think of adding three officers to the long list of his victims. So, at last, he concluded to act as if he had not the most remote idea of trying to make his escape. The very effort to escape would be regarded as some proof of his guilt. It would be best then to deport himself as though he were perfectly innocent. Accordingly, in reply to the Sheriff's last remark, he said—

“Well, you are arresting the wrong man, but if you think me guilty I will submit.”

“How was it, then?” asked the Sheriff, somewhat puzzled by Bathie's calmness and air of innocence. “If you can make it clear that you're not the guilty party I have no desire to arrest you.”

“I can explain nothing,” answered Bathie. “You know as much in regard to the affair as I do. I found the man just in the position he is now. I do not think he had been stricken down five minutes when I arrived, for he breathed his last as I reached him. This is all the information it is in my power to give.”

“Did you see no one?”

“I did not.”

“Did you hear nothing?”

“Not a thing.”

“Of course, then,” said the Sheriff, after a pause, during which he seemed to be revolving the circumstances in his mind, “you cannot expect me to release you on such a story as you've told. I'm bound to charge you with the murder. Deliver up your arms.”

Bathie reached behind and drew out a formidable weapon, in the shape of a pistol, feeling that he was parting with his best friend.

"To show you how easily I could escape, if I felt so disposed, look at those three trees," said Bathie.

To the Sheriff and his two deputies it seemed that their prisoner acted with the rapidity of a flash of lightning; for instantly his arm was thrown up to a horizontal position. Then three reports were heard, in such rapid succession that an interval of time could barely be distinguished between them. The trio of officers looked in the direction he had pointed, and beheld three white spots on the same number of trees, not more than two paces apart.

"Now," said Bathie, "I could just as easily have killed all three of you, and I have had half a dozen opportunities to do so since you came."

"Suppose you had," replied the Sheriff, "You 'd have had four, or at least three murders to account for."

"I merely want to show you I am so conscious of my innocence that I voluntarily surrender. If I have to be tried, I want you to testify that I made no effort to escape, when I could have done so. It is reasonable to suppose, if I had murdered that man, that I would have killed you three before I would have submitted. Here is the pistol."

"You may be sure that I'll tell the exact truth," replied the Sheriff, as he took the pistol. "I don't want you convicted unless you're guilty. But certainly circumstances do justify me in arresting you."

"Well, do as you please."

"Give me your name, please."

"Thomas Jones," replied Bathie, promptly. This was the name he had assumed, under the impression that its very commonness would be a protection, for there were thousands bearing this same name.

"Now, gentlemen," said Bathie, "since you have seen proper to arrest me, let us look about, and see

if we cannot find some clue that may lead to the real assassin."

"Very well," answered the Sheriff. "I only want the guilty party. We'll look for signs of some other man."

Accordingly, this was done. All examined the ground with the most rigid scrutiny. But unfortunately it was at a time when the road was so hard and firm that it would have required something heavier than the weight of an ordinary human being to make an impression upon it. Not the slightest trace of any struggle could be discovered.

"Let us see how the man was killed," said the Sheriff, as he examined the victim's head. The stick was still lying by, and this caused the officer to suspect that he had been stunned and then stabbed. He soon ascertained that the skull was fractured.

"The man," said the Sheriff, "was knocked down with that stick, and stabbed afterward. That is my opinion. There's no use of leaving this knife in his breast, that I can see, and I'll take it out."

He accordingly did so, and examined the weapon attentively. There was a name on the handle, which caught his eye.

"Did you say your name was Thomas Jones?" asked the officer, turning to Bathie.

"I did," was the reply.

"You hear him," said the Sheriff, now turning to his deputies. "He says his name is Thomas Jones."

"Certainly it is," answered Bathie, puzzled by the Sheriff's manner.

"Is this your knife?" asked the Sheriff, as he held it up.

"No, it is not," replied Bathie, with decided emphasis. "I never saw it till just now."

"What is your name doing on the handle, then? There it is—Thomas Jones."

"Let me see it," said Bathie, in surprise.

"Look as much as you wish," answered the Sheriff, now confirmed in his opinion that he had the murderer before him, "but there it is."

Bathie examined it, and said thoughtfully—

"Certainly it is, and that is another strange coincidence. Yet, after all, the name of Jones is so common, it is no great matter for wonder that two persons should bear it."

"But it is another circumstance against you," answered the Sheriff.

"It ought to be a circumstance in my favor," replied Bathie, "because, if I had known that name was on the handle, I could have given you some other name as my own."

"But did n't you know it, though?"

"No; but if I had committed the murder, I would not have told you my true name."

"Well," said the Sheriff, "if you think the circumstance in your favor, you're welcome to it."

There was no help for it, and Bathie was taken to Baalbek, and confined in jail.

The next day Mr. Beaumont, Bathie's uncle, heard of the misfortune, and immediately went to Baalbek, and called at the jail, without making known the relation existing between himself and the prisoner. He thought it more than probable that Bathie would not desire this relationship to be known, since he was traveling *incognito*. Telling the jailor that Bathie was an old acquaintance, whom he wished to befriend, as he did not believe him to be guilty of the murder, he was at once admitted to the prisoner's cell. When Mr. Beaumont entered, Bathie was gazing gloomily through the

small, grated window, about five feet from the floor, but he could see only the court house and one or two cottages. These two or three buildings obstructed any view of the streets, or anything else that might serve to break the monotony of a single view. How he longed for freedom, even the freedom of his cave. He soon found that there are circumstances worse than self-imprisonment. He had fallen into a misanthropic reverie, when he was aroused by the heavy door turning upon its hinges.

"How do you do, Mr. Jones," said the uncle, as if he were only an ordinary acquaintance. "I am sorry to see you here; but, being in town, I thought I'd call and see you, and express my sympathy. I hav n't heard the evidence, but I cannot believe you guilty of murder."

"Thank you," replied Bathie. "I am sorry enough to be here, but it is no fault of mine."

"I will leave you awhile, gentlemen," said the jailor. "I have no fear of you, Mr. Beaumont. Your neighbor has got into an unfortunate difficulty, but I hope he'll come out all right, yet. I'll be back in half an hour."

As soon as the jailor was gone, Mr. Beaumont said, "I addressed you as a neighbor, because I did not know what course you intended to pursue."

"You acted wisely," answered Bathie. "I think our relationship had better be kept secret, awhile, anyhow. You may be able to serve me better by appearing merely as one of my friends. You may manage to get on the jury. Besides, if it is known that you are my kinsman, it may lead to an unpleasant investigation."

"Do you propose to stand trial before a Magistrate's Court?"

"I do not know, yet."

"My advice is, you 'd better not."

"My lawyers also say that."

"Of course, Bathie," said the uncle, suddenly, "you are not guilty of what you are charged with?"

"If you intend," said Bathie, looking hard at his uncle, "the mark of interrogation to follow your words, I am surprised at you."

"O, well, I didn't know but that you might have been forced to kill the man, in self-defence."

"No, Uncle; before high Heaven, he was dead when I reached him. I never saw the man before. I can account for it only by supposing that some one else did it, and fled as I was coming up. As a proof that my surmise is correct, the knife was left in his breast. The assassin did not have time to remove it."

"Is it not an unfortunate circumstance that the knife had your assumed name on it?"

"I hardly know."

"You can nullify that circumstance, though, if the worst comes, by claiming your own name."

"That will not begin to do," replied Bathie; "because if I should be acquitted, I would be at once arrested again, and tried for offences committed during the war, and it would be impossible to escape the consequences of those offences. I would be sure to be hanged. By all means, my identity must be concealed. I will take my chances under the plain and unassuming name of Tom Jones."

"Had you not better talk with your lawyers about it?"

"No; I am afraid they would betray me," said Bathie, mournfully. "With the exception of four or five persons, I have no confidence in the human race. Many a man would betray his dearest friend for a much smaller sum than \$50,000."

Mr. Beaumont looked up at him pityingly.

"I should dislike," said he, "to have such an opinion of humanity as you do. Of course, there are men who would betray you for the reward offered. But there are thousands who, if they knew your history, would help you to escape, if you were in peril. Your long confinement has, I fear, made you a misanthropist."

"Probably it has. At any rate, I have a hatred of almost the whole human race."

"You are very unjustifiable in that," replied his uncle. "They are not making any efforts to have you arrested."

"Because they have no opportunity, that is all. If I were free, and it were known that a large reward is still offered for me, one-half the country would be in pursuit of me."

"But think about the matter from their point of view. I ask you, have you not put yourself in opposition to the law?"

"No, not the civil law. I confess that I violated military law."

"Then why should you be so hard upon your fellow men?"

"I hate them," said Bathie, with a frown, "because I have no peace. Here, they have arrested me for a crime I never committed. Once or twice I thought strongly of resisting the Sheriff. I could have easily killed or disabled all three of them, and made my escape."

"I am very glad, though, your prudence prevailed, to say nothing of the crime of murder, for which God would hold you responsible."

"But," quickly said Bathie, "I am not so sure that there is a God who troubles Himself about my conduct."

"O, Bathie, is it possible you are an Infidel?"

"I am not, in one sense of the word. I believe in the existence of some kind of Deity, for I have only to ask myself who made the world, to be convinced that it is the work of a being far superior to man. But whether there is such a personal God as the Bible describes, I cannot say—I do not know. But I do say that I am not prepared to subscribe to the doctrine that Jesus Christ is a God, or the Son of a God."

"If He is not a divine Being," said Mr. Beaumont, with deep solemnity, "we are left to grovel in ignorance, without hope."

"I do not think it is so bad as that, Uncle. I have about as good a hope as any Christian."

"What is it?" asked Mr. Beaumont.

"Well," said Bathie, "your hope is based upon faith and so is mine, to a certain extent. I think God knows what He is doing. If He put me here—and the Catechism says He did—He will take me away when He pleases, and do with me as He thinks best. It is no affair of mine."

"If I had such a belief as that," remarked Mr. Beaumont, with a sigh, "I would be perfectly wretched."

"And I would be miserable, Uncle, if I had such a creed as you have."

"Why would you?"

"Because I have committed so many little things which you call sins. It would ruin me to account for them."

"I fear, Bathie, that is at the bottom of your Infidelity. You are trying to get rid of your individual responsibility. But, remember, the Lord will hold you to it. You cannot make God responsible for what you do in this world. But, I hear the jailor coming, and I must leave you. I will call again soon."

The jailor entered, and Mr. Beaumont took leave of Bathie, as of a neighbor in whose welfare he felt some

little interest. The door again closed and Bathie was left to the companionship of his own meditations. Situated as he was, and having such religious views as his were, his thoughts could not be of a very pleasant character.

We must remark, in closing this chapter, that no matter what objections men may urge against the Christian Religion, it has power to comfort the troubled heart in all the conditions in which men are placed. "Let not your heart be troubled," said One who was acquainted with all the forms of human suffering. "In my Father's house are many mansions." It is the anticipation of entering these blessed mansions that fills the Christian's heart with glorious hopes, noble aspirations, and elevating thoughts. Bathie, whose moral nature was prostrate in the dust of Infidelity, was cut off from the contemplation of these sacred things. In his lonely, silent prison, the Future was all darkness.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE NEGRO WITNESS IN COURT.

“Justice, while she winks at crimes,  
Stumbles on innocence sometimes.”

The Circuit Court convened about two months after Bathie had been confined in jail. According to the practice of the courts, his case went before the Grand Jury, and a True Bill was found against him for the murder of the unknown man, in regard to whose history nothing could be learned. Nothing had been found on his person to lead to his identification. His name, even, was unknown.

Bathie's counsel asked for a continuance of the case, though the prisoner himself was in favor of an immediate trial. Bathie did not like confinement of this sort.

But time is a great consideration with the legal fraternity, when, in doubtful cases, anything is to be gained by delay. It is always safe to postpone, when the accused is in danger of conviction, especially if there are important witnesses against him, because by procrastinating, some of the witnesses may die, or disappear in some other way, before the trial takes place. Between the meetings of the court no one can possibly foresee what will happen. New testimony may be developed in favor of the culprit. The accused may die, or he may make his escape before the next court meets. Besides, the flight of time softens down prejudices against the prisoner. After awhile, when the accused has been confined for several years without trial, a feeling of sympathy is aroused for him in the public mind. People are inclined to think that his long imprisonment is a sufficient

punishment. Again, when there has been a long incarceration, and the trial occurs, nobody feels any particular interest in it. The slain man has been almost forgotten, and to execute another seems like adding murder to murder. The long "durance vile" appears to have answered the demands of justice. Therefore, in cases of postponement it is much more difficult to secure conviction. We have known cases in which, on the first trial, the accused was condemned to death; but a motion was successfully made for a new trial, and the sentence was confinement in the penitentiary for a number of years. But upon some technicality an appeal was taken to the Supreme Court, and a new trial was ordered. On the third trial, strange to tell, the prisoner was acquitted.

So, it may be laid down, as a general rule, in cases where the testimony would seem sufficient to secure the conviction of the accused, that delay will always prove an element of strength. In Bathie's case everything was to be gained by postponement. The murdered man had no friends; and after the first burst of public indignation at an outrage committed on the highway, there would be none who would have any special interest in his prosecution. Bathie was, at last, persuaded to let his case be continued till the next court, anyhow. This was no difficult favor to procure from the court, as the lawyers claimed that the True Bill had been so recently found, they could not go to trial except at a great disadvantage to their client.

Time rolled on, and nothing occurred in the history of any of the parties concerned in this story which is worthy of record. No man's life is one continual series of romantic incidents. It is only occasionally that startling events occur in the life of one individual; and the lives of most persons are not at all eventful.

While Bathie was impatiently waiting till the court

should meet again, his moral nature was far from improving. His heart was becoming more bitter toward his fellow-men. It was a great hardship, he thought, that he should be arrested for a crime, while he was in the act of performing a work of charity. Why should men be so mean? Thus, in this dark way he communed with himself.

At last, the court again met. A few days before, Bathie's lawyers went to the jail to have a conference with him. They were anxious to have the trial again postponed. But to this the prisoner was decidedly opposed.

"I am innocent," said he, "but if you keep deferring my trial, the long imprisonment itself will be a sufficient atonement for the crime, if I had committed it. I tell you, gentlemen," he continued, impatiently and peevishly, "this confinement is a very severe punishment to me, and you must remember it is inflicted upon one who is not guilty. This is very unjust. If I am acquitted, and I certainly ought to be, how am I to be indemnified for the time I have lost, and the interruption to my business, to say nothing of the deprivation of my personal liberty? I have been thinking about this, since my confinement here. It seems to me your laws are very defective. What right have people to snatch up an innocent man and keep him in prison for months, and frequently for years, and then acquit him of all guilt, and tell him he is free? Where is the justice in that?"

"There is none," replied one of the lawyers.

"It seems to me," said Bathie, "I ought to have some remedy. I ought to recover damages from either the County or the State, for the injustice done me. If a railway train runs over a man, and cripples him, he can sue the company for damages. But it appears that an

innocent man may be arrested on suspicion, confined in jail for years, and during all this time his business is suffering, or may be totally destroyed, to say nothing of the defamation of his character—and he is without remedy. I call this downright tyranny and oppression. I should like to know what right courts have to ruin an innocent man ?”

“ But these are exceptional cases,” replied the lawyer. “ It is only now and then an innocent man suffers.”

“ If it is only now and then,” answered Bathie, “ so much the greater reason why such cases should be indemnified.”

“ But,” asked the lawyer, “ does it not occur to you how much the enforcement of the laws would be retarded if every man who is arrested should be indemnified for the loss which he may sustain ? There are numbers of trifling men who would manage to get themselves arrested simply to recover damages for unjust imprisonment. Our officers of the law would hesitate too much to arrest men, for fear they might get innocent parties.”

“ But there could be laws enacted,” rejoined Bathie, “ for the punishment of men who would attempt to recover damages in that way. I do not see that officers would have to be more cautious than they are now.”

“ Well, in your case,” said the lawyer, “ what would you have had the officers to do ? You must acknowledge that your conduct, or at least your situation, appeared suspicious to them. Ought they to have arrested you ?”

“ I think this,” answered Bathie, “ If they saw proper to arrest me, and the authorities saw proper to commit me to jail, and, on trial, I am proved to be innocent, I ought to be indemnified for the loss of my time and the injury done me in other ways.”

"Whether your position is right or wrong," said the lawyer, "one thing is certain, and that is, you and I cannot change the law. We have to submit to it, such as it is, no matter how we dislike it."

"That is true," replied Bathie, "and it makes me hate the law and courts, when such palpable injustice is done. It is useless to discuss the subject. I want to put an end to this flagrant injustice as soon as possible. I do not propose to wait any longer. Let the trial come off at this court."

"If you insist," answered the lawyer, "we will have to yield. We may as well talk plainly about the matter."

"Certainly, we ought," said Bathie.

"I am afraid, then," replied the lawyer, "you do not appreciate the difficulties in the way. Have you thought that all the evidence is against you? We have no witness."

"I beg your pardon," replied Bathie, "but all the evidence is not against me. I can think of many circumstances in my favor, which will be related by the witnesses opposed to me. But how many witnesses can we expect to have by postponing the trial?"

"Time," said the lawyer, "often brings things to light, and frequently clears up mysteries, which it once seemed could not be explained. We do not know what the future may bring forth. It is safe to delay."

"But I am in prison," said Bathie, with a frown, "and I am tired of it. It is a piece of the grossest injustice to confine an innocent man, as I am, month after month."

"That is not a question to be discussed now," answered the lawyer. "Shall we go to trial, or not? I tell you, plainly, if we do, I do not want you to hold me responsible for the final result. It is a bad case, as you must admit yourself. You are certainly in peril."

"Do you believe I am guilty?" asked Bathie, looking fiercely and sternly at the lawyer.

"My belief cuts no figure in the case. I might think you as innocent as an angel, and yet my individual opinion would be a factor lighter than a feather in affecting the verdict. But if it will be of any comfort to you, I will say that, from what you have told me, I am satisfied of your innocence. For that very reason I am anxious to make a sure thing of it. I should dislike above all things for an innocent client of mine to be executed."

"Very well," replied Bathie, "if you think I am innocent, do your best to defend the innocent. But, let us, by all means, have the trial at this court. I can see nothing to be gained by delay. You shall have the fee I promised. Do not spare money, if that is necessary."

"I am not thinking about money now," said the man of law, "but how to secure justice."

"That is all I want," said Bathie. "I scorn to ask mercy when I am not guilty. Justice demands that I should not be here now, like a caged wild beast."

"It seems," said the lawyer, politely, "that you will not reflect upon the customs and usages of human society. We must have laws and courts, or there will be no safety for any one—no protection for the weak against the strong. Men are robbed and murdered in cold blood. Would you have assassins go unpunished, and permitted to practice their nefarious calling with impunity? We may commit a blunder occasionally, but is not that better than a state of anarchy? I cannot think you are a man who would like to live in a country without laws."

"No, sir; but I can never be made to think my arrest is an act of justice."

"It may not be; but would it not be better that you

should be even sacrificed than that your fellow-men should be without laws?"

"All I know is," replied Bathie, gloomily, "that my fellow-men have no right to arrest me, and try me for a crime I never committed."

"All that your fellow-men require, on the other hand, is the proof that you are innocent."

"How can I prove that, when your Sheriff and his deputies will swear they saw me stab the man? Five minutes earlier they would have reached the unlucky spot before I did, and I could not have been implicated."

"Do you deny, then, that circumstances are against you?" asked the lawyer.

"No, I do not; but still I know I am innocent, and it is unjust I should be tried for an offence committed by some one else."

Thus, no matter what argument the lawyer presented, Bathie would rebut it with the frequent reiteration that he was innocent, and therefore ought not to be tried. He was not, by any means, lacking in good judgment or in common sense, but he was blind to reason by the thought that he was persecuted. He was so conscious of his own innocence that it did seem strange to him that other people could not see it. The thought maddened him that anybody should believe him to be guilty of such an atrocious crime. He did not draw proper distinctions, because his reason was overwhelmed by the great wrong done to him. Accordingly, he sank deeper and deeper into misanthropy, and was even making efforts to steel his heart against the higher and nobler sensibilities of his own nature. Bathie belonged to that class, who must be either very good or very bad men. There was no middle ground. The worst part of his character was now in process of development.

The court met, and in three or four days Bathie's case was reached on the docket.

"Are you ready for trial?" asked the Judge.

"Ready," replied the counsel of Bathie, much against their own judgment.

The jury, after the customary delay in all such cases, was at last empaneled, and then the indictment was read. The only witnesses the prosecution introduced were the Sheriff and his two deputies. All told the same story, making allowance for the deviations from the strict line of truth which generally occur among even witnesses of unimpeachable character. It is no indication that witnesses are guilty of falsehood, because they may differ a little from each other. Lawyers will confuse witnesses, if they can, and frequently they make an honest witness, who is endeavoring to tell a straight story, contradict himself. However, this trio of witnesses against Bathie delivered their testimony with a unanimity which almost precluded cross-examination. It seemed that there was no course left for the defence but to found their argument upon the testimony which the prosecution had produced. But just as the last witness was leaving the stand, one of Bathie's lawyers was summoned to the front door of the court room. Asking permission of the Judge, he at once went to the door.

"This is the man who desires to see you," said the Sheriff, pointing to a gigantic negro, who bowed with great politeness and dignity.

"What will you have?" asked the lawyer.

"If you pleases, sah, I hez been a silunt obsarver ob dis trial, an' p'raps I knows suthin' dat mout be ob some usefulness in de legul perceedins, do' I'se neber had much concarnment wid de courts."

"If you know anything about this case, we will go

into this private room," said the man of law, moving a few paces, and opening a door.

"Well, what do you know about the case?"

"Well, sah, I hear um say dat ware Mas' Jones' bowie-knife. I knows dat am not true."

"How do you know that?"

"Becaze, sah, I ware raised up wid 'im. I belongs to 'im, an' I know he am neber had no sich weepun as dat knife. I's well acquainted wid ebery weepun he hez; fur it's part ob my bizness to clean up his weepuns."

At this moment there was a tap at the door, and when it was opened, the Sheriff said—

"His Honor says, come on. He'll wait no longer."

"Stay here a moment till I return," said the lawyer to the negro. Going back to his place, he said to the Court—

"If your Honor please, a new witness has just presented himself, and I was endeavoring to ascertain what he knows about the case. I should like to examine him a little further before introducing him."

"Does he know anything at all in regard to the case?" asked the Judge.

"He appears to."

"Well, bring him in, then. We have not time to wait longer."

Our lawyer did not much like to do this, but he was like a drowning man catching at straws. The new witness might possibly know something of importance concerning the matter, but the Judge was cross, and would not give him time to ascertain. So, he would have to introduce the witness at once, or not at all. Accordingly, he was brought in.

Bathie had been engaged with the other lawyer, in a whispered conversation, and did not notice when this unexpected witness was put upon the stand.

"What is your name?" asked the lawyer, after the witness had been duly sworn.

Bathie quickly looked around, and slightly started, when he heard the answer.

"My name am Pomp, do' I s'pose in a court ob dis body, my more properer name 'ud be Pompei."

Bathie could hardly conceal his surprise, chagrin, and disappointment. He looked at the innocent lawyer with an angry frown. But it was too late now to interfere.

"Be seated in that chair," said the Judge.

"Ef yer Honor, as I hearn 'em call you, pleases, I perfers stan'in' in de presunce ob my inferiurs. Dat am good manners in a nigger. Fredum hab made no fool ob me."

This remark, so innocently and politely made, caused a slight tittering in the room, which, however, was promptly checked.

"Good heavens!" whispered Bathie to the lawyer, "take him out. He will ruin me."

"If your Honor please," promptly spoke up the lawyer, "at the suggestion of my client, I beg leave to dismiss the witness. Mr. Jones says he knows nothing about the case."

"I object," exclaimed the Prosecutor, with a smile. "It was stated by my friend, just now, that this witness knows something, and it may be of importance, too. Let us have it."

"It will be a mere waste of time."

"But," said the Prosecutor, "the Defence have placed their witness on the stand, and if they do not wish to examine him, after commencing to, I claim the privilege of a cross-examination."

"Very well," replied the lawyer, "I will proceed."

Turning to the witness, he said—

"Have you no other name?"

"I neber ware called by no oder name, 'ceptin' dat mos' people hez de perliteness an' de good will to call me *Uncle Pomp*, which am not onbecomin' to one ob my age an' expeerence in dis worl' ob sin."

The Prosecutor seemed highly amused.

"Are you acquainted with the prisoner at the bar?" pointing to Bathie.

"I should fink ef dar am a inderviduwal in dis house dat ought ter be 'quainted wid Mas Baffie, it am dis one as am now 'dressin' ob dis 'sembly."

This made Bathie inwardly tremble. But he was now compelled to trust to Pomp's natural shrewdness.

"Tell what you know about this case; or do you know anything about it?"

"O, yes, sah; I knows 'bun'ance 'bout it."

"Tell what you know, then."

"In de fust place, gemmens, I knows he am not de owner ob dat knife, lyin' on de table ober dar. I aimed ter gib you de info'mation jes now, dat nex' to his own parunce I had de oversight ob his raisin'. It war me dat teachd him how ter beguile de fish, when dey lef' dar wat'ry homes in sarch ob suthin' wid which ter fill dar hungry maws, an' it war me whut teachd 'im how ter clime de 'simmon trees arter de 'possum—"

"Never mind what you taught him," said the mortified lawyer, "but just tell us how you know the knife is not his."

"Yes, sah; I war a comin' to dat pint, arter preparin' de way fur it. When we makes speeches or preaches, we am boun' to commence wid some sort o' interduction."

"We'll dispense with the introduction. Tell us at once how you know the knife is not his."

"Well, now, sah," turning to the Judge, "ef it pleases yo' Honor, as I hearn um call yo'—am you not de boss ob dis court? How is I agwine to tell carcum-

stances widout any beginnin'? Circumstances hez heads an' tails to um, jes as some animuls duz, an' ef I war to persent de body ob de circumstanes dat dis Court am a discussin', no pusson here could imprehen me in de least."

"Go on, then," said his Honor, "but you need not say anything about the 'possums, and unimportant things like that. Tell us, in the fewest words possible, how you know the knife is not the prisoner's."

"Yes, sah; I war a comin' to de pint as quick as de circumstanes would 'low, when I war interrupted so 'ceremonious-like."

"Proceed, then," said the Judge.

"Yes, sah; I is a perceedin'. Well, I done tole yo' how I teachd him in his inferncy. Well," drawing a long breath, "when Mas Baffie—"

"Who is Mas Baffie?" asked the Judge.

"Dat am him," pointing to the prisoner.

Bathie was now almost visibly trembling with anxiety. Would Pomp, while trying to do him a favor, betray him?

"Why do you call him that?"

This question caused the perspiration to stand in great beads upon Bathie's forehead. What answer would the foolish negro make? But Pomp, without the least hesitation, replied—

"Dat am a nickname, sah, which we allurz called 'im by. I ken gib yo' de hist'ry ob how he got dat name, ef yer wants ter hear it," continued Pomp, who was exercising all his ingenuity in inventing a falsehood. He had really forgotten that Bathie's name in the indictment was Thomas Jones.

"Never mind about that," said the Judge.

Bathie felt as if a great load had been lifted from his shoulders, and he breathed more freely.

"Proceed," said the Judge.

"Well, ef I calls 'im Mas Baffie fruout de perceedin's ob dis trial, you may know who I signerfies. I are not 'customed to call 'im nothin' else."

"Proceed," said the Judge, sternly.

"Yes, sah; I are a perceedin' as fas' as it am possible. Yo' see, den, when Mas Baffie had dun growed up a little mo', he bought 'im a gun an' pistels, an' he allurz had plenty o' money ter buy whuteber he wanted, an' hez it now, so fur as dat am concerned. I'll gib yo' all to onderstan', whut duz'nt know it, dat he am no scrub."

"Stop!" exclaimed the Judge, beginning to manifest his temper. "We have not called you to make a speech, but to give testimony. If you are not acquainted with facts in regard to the case, why, leave the stand."

"Yes, sah, yo' Honor, as I hearn um call yo'," quickly exclaimed Pomp, "I imprehends dat as well 's anybody. I'se here to testify, cartainly, to testify, an' dat ware whut I ware a doin' accordin' to my imprehension of de word. I is n't custom'd much to de perceedins ob courts, but hit am de bizness ob a witness to gib testimony. I onderstans dat."

"State what you told me in the room just now," said Bathie's lawyer.

"Dat ware de very fing I ware agwine ter do," said Pomp, with perfect self-possession, "only in a more lustrative manner, so dat all de carcimstances ob de case mout be ripersented to de court. I ware swared to tell de whole truf, an' dat am what I is a deavorin' to do—tell de whole truf, an nuffin but de truf."

"Tell what you know about the case," said the Judge. "We do not want your opinions."

"Cordin' to my onderstanin' ob dat word I'se not been 'vancin' my pinions, do I hez a good many on 'em, but

Ise been 'splainin facks. Facks am whut you want, am it not?"

"Yes," cried the Judge, angrily, "tell what you know, or leave the stand."

Pomp looked at him very innocently.

"Proceed!" commanded the Judge.

"Yes, sah, I is a perceedin'. Well, I ware a testifyin' to de fack dat Mas Baffie neber had no knife to kill dat man whut he foun in de road, an' he had no reason nuther to do sich a murder, becaze he hez plenty o' money widout murdrin pore trav'lers for it. He hez allurz carrid a good char'cter from his very inferncy up to de presunt time, when he ware acsdently foun' wid a man kilt by some oder wicked inderviduwal. Dat am a fack, an it am facks what you wants."

"If the Court please," spoke up the Prosecutor, "I am willing, under all circumstances, to allow an ignorant witness sufficient latitude, but I must object to this man's making a speech in favor of the prisoner."

"Well, bress de Lo'd!" cried Pomp, placing his arms akimbo, and looking appealingly at the Judge, "Mas Honor, if I knows my own heart, I is a tryin', afore God an' man, to do whut am right, an' ter testify der truf, but some un keeps a interruptin' me jes as I gits started. How ken I tell any fing at dis rate?"

"Listen to me," said the Judge, in a kindlier tone.

"Yes, sah, I'se a lisenin'."

"You said a few moments ago you knew that knife does not belong to the prisoner."

"Yes, sah, dat ware my aformation."

"Now, tell us how you know that, without making a speech, or saying anything about the prisoner's character."

"Well, sah, would I be a tellin' de whole truf onless I said suthin 'bout his moral importment?"

"Just tell us, in as few words as possible, how you know the knife is not the prisoner's."

"You duz n't want no testimony' bout his character—am dat it?"

"Not a word on that subject."

"Thank yo', Honor, as I hearn um call yo', fur dis infurmination," replied Pomp, with one of his most respectful marks of obeisance. "Now I'll tell mos' zactly de strick truf. You see, den, when Mas Baffie went into de war he bought two pistils—fine uns too. He ken kill a snowbird on de wing, fur I hez seed 'im do it. He had no use fur no bowie knife, an' de consequence ware he neber bought no knife. I ware wid 'im mos' ob de time durin' de perlongation ob dat bloody war, an' I clean'd up his weepuns, which were two pistils an' a sabrer, an' nothin' else."

"But could he not have bought the knife after the war?" asked the Judge.

"I is bin wid 'im mos' ob de time sence de war, an' ef he'd a bought dat knife I'd a seed it shore, an' no mistake. Becaze I hez waited on 'im night an' mornin', an' dat knife could n't a stayed in his room widout comin' in intack wid my origin ob vision, which am mighty good."

"And is that all you know?"

"Yes, sah, onless you gins me promission to testify on some other pints ob importance in dis trial. I ken tell a great many fings 'bout Mas' Baffie dat dese strangers am not 'quainted wid. Seems ter me, when a man am on trial for his life, de jurymens ought ter know all 'bout his moral stanin'."

"That will do," said the Judge. "We do not care about hearing you on the case, as you are not employed."

"Yes, sah Ise employed ter sarve Mas' Baffie in ebery way dat I ken."

"Do you want to examine your witness any more?" asked the Judge.

"No, sir, I believe not. I was mistaken in the man. I thought he knew something more in regard to the case. We will turn him over to the Prosecutor."

"You can stand aside, then," said the Prosecutor, in disgust. "If he knew all about the case, I believe I would rather dispense with his testimony than to have to worm it out of him with a corkscrew."

"I ~~ez~~ done de bes' I could under de circumstances," said Pomp, humbly.

"Stand aside," ordered the Judge. "You can go till we want you again."

"Thank you, sah. Good day, gen'mens." And the burly form of Pomp moved out of the bar.

The preceding scene is no mere fancy-picture. It is a fair illustration of some of the difficulties with which Southern Courts now have to deal. The illiterate negroes know nothing of the duties of a witness, nor a juror. Yet they are often elected to office, possessing little more knowledge of law than could be expected in an educated ape. It is a solemnly ridiculous fact, that negro magistrates, sometimes, in murder cases, ignorantly assume sufficient authority to condemn the accused to be hanged. Many colored magistrates cannot even read, and they know not the first principle of law. Ask them what is common law, and they would be apt to tell you, with a wise shake of the head, that it is law for "common folks." A negro juror rarely ever has any opinion of his own, and, without scruple or hesitation, falls in with the majority. It is no uncommon thing to see negro jurors *nodding*, or fast asleep, while a witness is giving his testimony in a case of life and death. They cannot understand an argument, and the lawyers, therefore, might as well talk to the winds. The consequence is,

that jury cases are generally decided by two or three white men.

In all this we pity the negro, who has been forced into positions which he has no desire to fill. He has never asked for any such political privileges, and would really prefer not to exercise them, but they have been forced upon him. Trial by jury is now a perfect farce. The so-called administration of justice frequently seems to be the veriest burlesque, and legislation a caricature of all jurisprudence. The negro's idea seems to be that the government is a great charity institution. A negro member once proposed, in the Legislature of Mississippi, that the state government should supply all poor colored people a *cooking stove*. Thus they have no idea of the object of government. It is to them a puzzling problem, why the government of the United States cannot fill every poor man's pockets with greenbacks, as it would cost nothing but the *paper*!

These are the beings whom the North has sought to elevate to the sphere of the white people of the South. It cannot be done. This is not the negro's country, according to the distributions of Divine Providence, and whenever they set up a claim to it, it will be a dangerous claim. We, of the South, do not intend to be governed by negroes. The idea that negroes must enjoy equal privileges with the white people, if insisted upon, will prove ruinous to the black race. The next generation will rise up in arms against it, and if they do, their motto will be "Victory or Death." In that case, they cannot be conquered.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE UNEXPECTED SENTENCE.

“Justice gives sentence, many times,  
On one man for another's crimes.”

When Uncle Pomp left the witness stand, and took his seat in the court-room, which was now crowded with people of his own color, one of Bathie's counsel began a speech in behalf of his client. It would take up too much space to give it. One of his main arguments was, that there was no inducement to impel the prisoner to the commission of this horrid crime.

“By what motive,” he asked, “could my client have been actuated? It seems that the unfortunate victim was a very poor man. He was rather meanly dressed, and no money of any consequence was found upon his person. My client, Mr. Jones, is a wealthy man, as was stated by Uncle Pomp, who was endeavoring to show his affection for his old master by explaining circumstances which were, in his eyes, of some importance. Some of you in this room laughed at the old negro; but, in spite of your ridicule, he told what he knew, in his own peculiar way, with the praiseworthy desire of serving one who has been kind to him. The black man did the best he could, and I am not disposed to make sport of his ignorance. That is not his fault. I honor him for his faithfulness, and for the noble soul in him, and the sympathetic heart which beats under his sable skin. We cannot measure the qualities of the inner man by the mere color of his cuticle. Uncle Pomp stated nothing but the truth, when he affirmed that Mr. Jones was no ‘scrub.’ It is not possible that a gentle-

man of Mr. Jones' circumstances would murder a man for mere pastime."

He went on in this style for some moments, and then came to the knife. "Uncle Pomp," said he, "gave good reasons why this knife," taking it up in his hand, "is not the property of his master. You see, Gentlemen of the Jury, it is an old one. If Mr. Jones had bought it in the last three or four years, Pomp would certainly have known it; but the knife looks as if it might be fifteen or twenty years old. The name of my client is on the handle, but that signifies nothing. Thomas Jones is such a common name, that it is not at all strange that two men should bear it. I am, myself, acquainted with five men in this county by the name of Thomas Jones. We have no proof, then, that the knife is the property of my client. Besides all this, the Sheriff and the two deputies testify that the prisoner could have made his escape from them, if he had so desired. There was nothing easier than for him to have shot all three of them. But he made no effort whatever to escape. He surrendered willingly, believing that his innocence would be made palpable to all the world. I think, Gentlemen of the Jury," he said, in closing an argument of two hours' length, "if you find a verdict of 'guilty,' you will do great injustice to a man who is merely the victim of remarkable circumstances. It was simply a strange coincidence that Mr. Jones should have appeared upon the fatal spot just in time to be seen by the Sheriff and deputies in the attitude in which he was discovered. Execute him, if you will, and you are, undoubtedly, guilty of legal murder. How would you feel if, in the course of a few years, yea, a few months, it should be ascertained that my client was an innocent man, after he had suffered the death-penalty? Then it will be too late to repair the damage you have done.

You cannot restore life. Though your conscience may acquit you of any evil intention, from the fact that you acted under the ægis of law, yet you cannot feel comfortable when the reflection steals into your minds that you are guilty of voluntary legal murder. You have taken the life of a human being, under the protection and cover of the law. You should, therefore, have the plainest and most indubitable proof of his guilt before you condemn him. But you have no such proof, and I feel that it is my duty, therefore, to ask his acquittal at your hands."

The second lawyer for the defence then made a long and able argument. He dwelt mainly upon the danger of finding a verdict upon mere circumstantial evidence. He read the history of the celebrated "Pitchfork" case, well known in the annals of Mississippi crimes, in order to show how easily circumstances may point to an innocent man. But we will not give even the outlines of his speech.

The closing speech of the Prosecutor was dreaded by all who had any sympathy for the prisoner, for he was a highly educated man, a brilliant orator, and a splendid logician. Moreover, he was an ambitious man, apparently more anxious to gain or save reputation, than to do even-handed justice. His whole aim was to secure the conviction of the accused, and he acted upon the principle that every one on trial was guilty of the charges preferred. Listening to him speaking, or examining witnesses, one would suppose he regarded it as a sacred duty to have the culprit condemned to suffer the fullest penalty that the law would allow in the case. He was disposed to show the accused not the slightest mercy, and treated him, during the trial, as an enemy of human society. Yet he was not fierce in his manner, nor was he a boisterous orator. He was cool, calm, but terribly

in earnest, and spoke as if every word he uttered was the strict truth, not to be doubted for a moment, by any one. When he had finished his argument, his very manner said: "now you have the whole truth, act upon it, and agree upon the verdict which I desire." Hence, he was the dread of offenders and their defenders.

He now rose to his feet as if he expected nothing short of success. We give only a few portions of his speech of three hours' length.

In the first place, he made some lengthy remarks upon the character of circumstantial evidence. "It is often thought," he said, "that circumstances point to the wrong man. But it is generally admitted in law that a well-connected chain of circumstances is even more reliable than oral testimony. Witnesses, actuated by all the various motives which enter into human conduct, frequently disgrace themselves by perjury, or prevarication. But circumstances utter no falsehoods. They are not like hounds, following a cold trail, but are more like the living tentacles of the Devil Fish, which wrap one after another around the guilty one, and drag him to the bar of justice to receive the punishment due to his crime. My opponents have endeavored to arouse a species of false sympathy by warning you, Gentlemen of the Jury, of the danger of basing a verdict of guilty upon what they are pleased to call circumstantial evidence. But, after all, there are few men's blood to call for heaven's vengeance from the gallows, which much-needed instrument, I am sorry to say, a morbid sentimentality has well nigh swept from the land. In cases where the accused is innocent, some little circumstance is generally evolved that saves the court from committing legal murder. If the party is not guilty, you may depend upon it that the chain of circumstances which entangle him will be broken, so that his innocence will

be made clear. Why, in almost every case of murder, you may suppose this thing and that thing, and thus create an imaginary tissue of circumstances which will cause the actual criminal to appear as an innocent, persecuted man. But why do the Defence call this a case of circumstantial evidence? If it is a kind of evidence to be dreaded and avoided, because there is a bare possibility of some innocent man's losing his life, we offer you the unimpeachable testimony of eye witnesses. What more could you want, to establish the prisoner's guilt? They saw him stab the fallen man. But the Defence make a feeble effort to prove that Jones did not strike the fatal blow, because the knife was not his. I care not who the owner of the knife was. My opponents have introduced poor old Uncle Pomp, who seems to have made it the business of his life to memorize jaw-breaking words, and they try to prove by him that the knife did not belong to Jones. And how do they prove it? Why, by the very sort of evidence which they themselves denounced as untrustworthy and perilous. For Uncle Pomp proves it by the solitary circumstance that his eye, which, it seems, pries into every nook, corner and closet of Jones' room, never saw it. He never saw it! Strong proof, indeed. Does Pomp see everything which his employer purchases? Is he a kind of Abraham's servant, who might even be trusted to select a wife for his former owner?"

At this point, the Prosecutor, who was gazing straight into Bathie's eye, was met by such a look of withering scorn and hate, that his wit was lost on those persons who could observe them both.

"I tell you," continued the Prosecutor, turning to the jury, "I care nothing whatever about the ownership. The weapon may have belonged to Pomp himself, for aught I know or care. It may have been the property

of the victim, and Jones may have killed the poor man with his own knife. In whose hand was it when the bloody deed was committed? That is the question. It has been asserted that the name of Thomas Jones is not such an uncommon one that it would be a very remarkable coincidence if two men bearing it should meet. I agree with the gentleman who made the assertion. Nobody, it seems, knows the name of the murdered man. Why may it not have been Thomas Jones? Would it not have been an easy matter for this Thomas Jones before us, who appears as stout as a young Samson, to have felled the victim with the club which was found on the spot, and then completed his horrid work with the knife which may have belonged to the deceased? It was like the eagle shot with an arrow winged with a feather from his own pinion. Jones was seen with the bloody knife in his hand. He was seen to thrust it to the poor man's heart. How much stronger and clearer could evidence be? How can you call this circumstantial evidence? If you were to see me plunge a knife into a fellow-being, would you acquit me of murder or manslaughter, by showing that the knife did not belong to me—a knife, too, with my name on the handle? Would you believe I did not commit the deed because I might be able to prove that the knife was not mine? How, in the name of reason, could the mere ownership of the weapon prove that I did not strike the blow? If you can accept that sort of logic, I could make Aristotle blush with shame at the foolishness of the principles to which he devoted his life.

“The question of motives has been lugged into this case. What has been proved? Why, nothing, except the astounding fact, that we do not know what were the motives of the murderer. We do not know the relations existing between Jones and his victim. They may

have been personal acquaintances and mortal enemies, and Jones may have thought this a good place and time to rid himself of a foe whom he feared. It is evident that Jones was not fighting on the defensive, for he had possession of both weapons. If you suppose that Jones took both from his victim, that proves only that he was superior in point of strength. Take whatever view you will, Jones is guilty of murder. Why he committed the hellish deed seems, at present, to be known only to himself and his God. We have no means of ascertaining what were his motives. His counsel have tried hard to make it appear that his object was not robbery. They rely upon the fact that the victim had no money on his person when examined. Upon that point I can only say we are without evidence. But we have facts enough. If you acquit the prisoner, you may as well abolish capital punishment."

The Prosecutor closed with a grand peroration, and there was an expression of triumph on his face, as if the matter were now settled.

The jury retired, and the court took a recess for a few moments. There was a hum all over the room. People were speculating in an undertone as to the verdict which the jury would render, and some were gambling upon it, even in the very Temple of Justice. There was considerable sympathy for the prisoner, aroused, probably, by his bearing. His face wore a sad expression, which none there understood, and he appeared to be absorbed in profound thought. Occasionally he would cast his eyes pensively over the whole assembly, without seeming to notice any one in particular, and he was gazed at, as people stare at the wild animals of a menagerie; but he paid no attention whatever to their rigid scrutiny. Then he turned again in his seat, and fixed his eyes upon a black spot in the wall.

Presently the noise subsided, and people ceased to talk. The reason was, the jurymen were returning with a verdict which would either give liberty to a human being, or choke out his life in the throttle of the gallows. They were headed by the Sheriff, and followed one after another, in single file, till they reached the Judge's stand, around which they ranged themselves in the form of a semicircle.

"Are you agreed, gentlemen?" asked His Honor.

"We are," replied the foreman.

"Read the verdict, Clerk," ordered the Judge.

While breathless silence reigned in the crowded room, the officer read aloud, closing with those words of fearful import—

"GUILTY AS CHARGED."

And now what a multitude of strange thoughts rushed through the prisoner's mind. Did you ever see a criminal executed? It is to be hoped not. At first, when the fatal "drop falls," the poor wretch is perfectly still. It requires a little time to recover from the tremendous shock, which suddenly stops all the machinery of the human frame. After a few seconds the organs try to react, and then the dying victim shows signs of life, and begins to writhe. So it was with Bathie's mind. When he heard the awful words "guilty as charged," they seemed to throw his whole mental machinery into disarrangement. He felt stunned, and was unable to concentrate his mind upon any particular subject. But in a few moments he began to think rapidly—

"Is it really true that I am condemned to death? That is the signification of 'guilty as charged.' Can it be possible that a jury can make such a blunder as to condemn a man to die for a crime which he never had even a thought of committing? If there is any God, will he

permit such injustice to be done? Will not something, now unforeseen, be brought to light which will prevent it? Surely it cannot be that I must suffer death for robbery and murder. No, no, it cannot be. They have made a terrible mistake, and they will find it out. The perpetrator will certainly be apprehended before the sentence is executed. But why has he not been arrested before now? What probability is there that he will ever be apprehended? There is little. Then, I must submit to my destiny. Fate is against me. I will die as a robber and assassin, and disgrace the name of Thomas Jones. But what difference will it make? In twenty years from now, who will know anything about it, except that a certain Tom Jones was hanged? No one but my relatives and Uncle Pomp will ever know what became of me. What is life, anyhow? What is it worth? What have I to live for? I will get rid of all troubles and cares. Why should I wish to live among people whom I hate? With very few exceptions I despise the whole race of mankind. And what do I care for death? What is a momentary pang upon the gallows?"

These random thoughts passed through the prisoner's mind in a much briefer period of time than they can be read. While he sat motionless, people were trying to look him in the face, to discover what effect the verdict would have upon him. If all could have had their curiosity gratified—but they could not, as his back was turned toward the crowd—they would have perceived only his usual expression of sadness

"Take the prisoner to jail," said the Judge to the Sheriff.

Bathie was aroused from his gloomy reverie by a slight tap on the shoulder. The Sheriff looked at him, and in a low tone, said—

“Come.”

Bathie instantly arose and followed the officer, without appearing to notice any one.

Poor Uncle Pomp heard some one say “‘guilty as charged’ means death,” and he was overwhelmed. Those near him heard him mutter, as if to himself—

“Poor Mas Baffie! Dey am agwine to hang ’im, like a dog, when he am as innercent as de angels ob Heben. I wish dey ’d let me die fur ’im. I ain’t got many days ter lib in dis wickerd worl’ nohow. Dey mout jes’ as well hang me as him, fur he no mo’ assaserated dat man dan I did. O, bress de Lo’d! what am dis worl’ a comin’ ter, ter go an’ hang a innercent man. Umph!” groaned Pomp, bowing his head, and breaking into tears. His sobs could be heard all over the room.

“Hush, Uncle,” whispered some one near him, “or the officers will get after you.”

“I can’t hush,” was the broken reply. “It am ’nuff ter make de very angels ob Heben cry. O, good Lo’d, forgib dese men, as knows not whut dey am a doin’.”

“Stop that talking, Mr. Sheriff!” said the Judge.

One of the deputies approached, and seeing what was the matter, said—

“You’d better leave, old man. The Judge will not let you make a noise.”

“Yes sah; I’s’e gwine. Dis am no place fur me. No, no; bress de Lo’d.”

And Uncle Pomp turned and left, in inconsolable distress, shaking his head, and muttering to himself in that mournful way which is peculiar to the Southern negro.

While Bathie and the jailor were on their way to the prison, the latter said—

“I sympathize with you.”

“Sympathize with me?” replied Bathie, in a tone of

indifference. "What good will that do, pray? Who cares for such sympathy?"

The Sheriff looked at him in surprise.

"You and your deputies," continued Bathie, "have sworn away my life—the life of an innocent man, and you now propose to sympathize with me. Is that the way to make amends for the irreparable injury you have done me?"

"I acted conscientiously, at any rate," replied the officer. "I had no malice toward you, and no wish to do you injustice."

"Whether you had or not, you have ruined me, and I hate you for it, with all my strength, and the rest of mankind with you. The world is full of heartless rascals and consummate hypocrites. There is really some comfort in the thought that I will be hanged by a parcel of scoundrels, and then I will be done with them forever. The day may come when my innocence will be established. But what do I care for? You rascals can never repair the injury you have done. What then do I want with your hypocritical sympathy?"

"It is not hypocritical," answered the Sheriff.

"Do you honestly believe," asked Bathie, with a dark frown, "I killed that man?"

"How can I believe otherwise, when I saw you strike?" replied the officer, calmly.

"It is a vile falsehood," exclaimed Bathie, with a ferocity that startled the Sheriff. "You believe me to be a murderer and liar, and then have the audacity to offer me your sympathy! How can you have any respect for an assassin? Do not tell me such sympathy is genuine, or I will the more despise you for your hypocrisy."

"I am sorry that you take such a view of the matter," quietly answered the Sheriff, "and that you have such bitter, unforgiving feelings towards your fellow men."

"I claim no relationship with them," exclaimed Bathie. "Henceforth they shall be to me, in my estimation, no more than beasts. They can kill me, if they wish, but that is all."

"Notwithstanding your harsh expressions," mildly answered the Sheriff, "I shall treat you as kindly as the law will permit."

"Treat me as you please. I care not. You have done me all the harm you can. You can be like the cruel cat, if you want to, that sports with the mouse till she sees proper to put it to death. I have no favor to ask."

"O, Mr. Jones, what does make you so bitter against your fellow-beings, who are acting conscientiously, and trying only to do their duty?"

"I have given you reasons enough, I think, and I do not care to repeat them."

By this time they had reached the jail, and Bathie was locked up in an iron cage, for safer keeping.

"That is right," he said to the Sheriff, with a sneer; "cage me up, like a wild beast, and next admit idle spectators to the show. Chain me down to the floor, if you wish, and thus complete your barbarity."

"I am doing only what the law requires. I shall try to make your situation as comfortable as possible till—"

"You hang me, why do you not say? Cannibals feed their victims till they get ready to eat them."

The Sheriff said no more, but turned the key in the lock. There was a click, which sounds in the prisoner's ears as the death knell of personal liberty, and Bathie was alone.

The next day the prisoner was again brought before the court, to hear his sentence. He was at once asked the usual question, "what he had to say why sentence of death should not be pronounced according to law."

“ Will you allow me to say what I please ? ”

“ If you will keep within the bounds of propriety I will,” answered the Judge.

“ I will be respectful,” said the prisoner, “ but I do not want to be interrupted. I have reasons to show why the sentence of death is unjust in this case.”

“ Proceed, then,” said the Judge, “ and you shall have all reasonable latitude.”

“ I am fully aware that what I may say cannot procure even a commutation of the sentence which you are obliged to pronounce according to law, as it is called. Yet I hope I may be permitted to make a plain statement of facts which may possibly have some effect on the formation of public opinion in regard to my character. I am determined that you shall pronounce your unjust sentence in the very face of truth, whether you believe it or not. It is a most astounding thing to me to find myself, in a strange country and among total strangers, condemned to death for the murder of a person who was a perfect stranger to me. Conscious of my own innocence, which I shall assert to the last, if I must suffer the extreme penalty of the law, there is no reason why my character should be destroyed. I do not know that it is necessary to Justice or the vindication of your laws that my very memory should be disgraced. If I can rescue my character from shame and undeserved infamy, let me do so. And yet,” continued Bathie, in a hesitating way, as if he were tempted to cease speaking, “ what do I care for? What is character? The very universality of my name will be a shield to my character. Less than ten years from now it will be known only that Thomas Jones was hanged. Ten years after that, all that pertains to me will be lost in the dark waters of oblivion. The records of your court may show that on a certain day Thomas Jones was executed.

But which Thomas Jones? Who can tell? In the vast multitude of Joneses, I will sink out of sight, like a stone cast into the ocean. But for the information of those present who may carry the lineaments of my face in their memory for probably a few months, I will make only a few brief remarks.

“It happens that I am the only one who can place this matter in a clear light before you. I do not accuse the Sheriff and his deputies of downright false swearing. But it was not in their power to tell the whole truth. If they had arrived on the ground only two minutes earlier their testimony would have been of a very different character. They would no doubt have seen the real assassin. At any rate, they would have reached the corpse before I did. I am merely the victim of strange circumstances and marvelous coincidences. I had been in the country only a few days, and was on my way to New York, whence I intended to sail for Europe. I had some little business in this place which required my presence. On my way here I found the man lying by the roadside. Before I dismounted I could perceive that he was alive. Prompted merely by human sympathy, I at once went to him in order to relieve him, if possible. But just as I reached him he breathed his last. I thoughtlessly pulled the knife out of his breast, but in a moment it occurred to me that I ought to leave the corpse in the attitude in which I had discovered it, that the Coroner might have the advantage of every circumstance in reaching legal conclusions. With this thought in my mind, I replaced the knife in the wound; but in the act of doing this I was discovered by your Sheriff and his deputies. The only thing I blame them for is not making the distinction between stabbing and replacing. I do emphatically censure them for not making a better use of their eyes. They confounded

the two acts, and made it appear that I struck a blow. I charge them, therefore, with destroying my character and life. I also severely censure the jury for not giving proper consideration to the question of motives, but as this point was so thoroughly ventilated by my counsel, I shall add nothing to what they have said. What is the use of detaining you longer? My words are all to no purpose. I do affirm that I am innocent of this crime, and conscious of this fact I cannot but feel that all concerned in this trial have done me foul injustice. I have done."

Bathie spoke the foregoing without the manifestation of any emotion. As a criminal always arouses deep interest in the public mind till violent death places him beyond the reach of further observation, Bathie was heard with the most profound attention. Every motion he made was watched and criticised with the keenest and most eager curiosity. It was evident that his general manner, and especially his emphatic denial, made a deep and favorable impression upon the minds of his hearers. But of what avail was it? The trial had ended, the jury had decided, and nothing but the developments of the future could change his menacing fate. As soon as the prisoner had finished his remarks, the Judge rose, and said—

"Thomas Jones, it is, indeed, not in my power to change the sentence which the law demands. In this, I have no discretion. I shall make no comments on the trial. A jury of your fellow-citizens have found you guilty of murder in the first degree. I must, therefore, sentence you, on the 25th day of —, between the hours of one and four P.M., to be hanged by the neck till you are dead."

Bathie's tranquillity did not for an instant desert him. Outwardly, he was unmoved; inwardly, his heart was

effervescing with hatred toward his fellow-men. If any had manifested an inclination to pity, he would have rejected it with scorn. He felt, at the moment he turned to leave the court-room, that if all mankind had one neck, and he had a knife in his hand, he could, without a tremor, have severed it, and left the corpse to decay in the sun. There was no particular individual upon whom he could concentrate all his rage and malice. It was not the Sheriff alone who had injured him, nor the Jury, nor the Judge. Why did the Legislature make such laws—laws which would condemn the innocent as well as the guilty. He had told the truth, yet he was practically pronounced a liar. Why should not the jury believe his statement as well as that of the witnesses against him? He was so blinded by his boiling malice that he did not stop to make distinctions. His emotions were like a mad torrent, rushing onward, and he made no endeavor to restrain it. It was a pleasure to him to hate the world, with the exception of five or six persons. He had more confidence in Pomp than all the rest of Adam's race. He did not pause to reflect that he had scarcely twenty acquaintances in the world who could now recognize him. He regarded all as enemies. They had pursued him, and he believed that any of his former friends would betray him, if they could, for the sake of the reward offered for his apprehension.

His conscience was in this state when he again entered the cage to await the execution of his terrible sentence.

O, to what depths of dark depravity can a human being sink when he rejects the God of the Bible, and suffers the worst passions of his nature to drive him whithersoever they will! For such an awful disease there is no remedy save the blood which cleanseth from all sin.

In an hour after Bathie had left the court-room

one of his counsel called at the jail, and being admitted, said—

“I have come, Mr. Jones, to consult with you as to what must next be done.”

“Nothing, so far as I am concerned,” answered Bathie, impatiently. “Let the savages hang me, if they wish. I have done with them.”

“I hope you do not hold me responsible for the result of the trial. You know I went into it against my judgment. I was fearful that it would end just as it did.”

“I do n’t hold you responsible,” said Bathie. “You have done the best you could, and I give you all due credit for it. You need not offer any apology.”

“If we could only have had the case continued for a year or two, we might, I believe, have gotten you out of the difficulty. But it is useless now to talk about what might have been. The important question now is, what is to be done next?”

“I have told you that I shall do nothing.”

“What! do you really intend not to make a single move to save your life?”

“What can I do? I have told the rascals the truth, and they would not believe me. I do not know anything else I can do, unless I try to break the bars of this iron cage, and thus make my escape. Would you advise me to attempt something of that sort?”

“I am not here to talk about such things,” replied the lawyer. “I want to know if you will consent for anything else to be done in order to save you?”

“What else can you do?”

“We can take an appeal to the Supreme Court. By pursuing that course, we can stay the execution for some length of time.”

“And what is a little time?”

"Time is life. Do you care nothing for that?"

"Just at present, I do not. I am tired of looking at men. I would as soon as not be put in the grave, where I will have no more dealings with them, and will be beyond the reach of their treachery and persecution."

The lawyer looked hard at him, as though he suspected that his strange client might be in the incipient stage of insanity.

"I will take your case in hand, and do as I think best," said the lawyer, rising.

"Do as you please," answered the prisoner, in a tone of indifference.

The lawyer left, and Bathie was again alone.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### THE TURNING POINT OF DESTINY.

"God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform."

Excellent health is justly said to be the first and greatest of all earthly blessings. To a person whose physical system is in perfect order, existence is enjoyment. There is a pleasure in the mere act of breathing. It is pleasant to feel the current of life go bounding and tingling along the veins, and exhilarating the animal spirits. It makes a person feel as if he were intoxicated with the fluids of life. He wants to run, jump, yell—anything, to give an outlet to the superabundant steam of vitality. The pinched and withered invalid would give the world for this feeling.

How intolerable, then, is imprisonment to a person in the full enjoyment of health! Such a one was Bathie Beaumont. But here he was, without the privilege of exercising his strong and perfect limbs. He was cooped up in a narrow cage, "eating heartily, only to fatten for the hungry gallows," as he expressed it to his jailer. The thought of the blue skies, the green fields, and the shady forest, suggested by the joyous whistling of the birds, which would steal through the narrow window, sometimes, so maddened him that he would involuntarily seize and shake the iron bars of his cage, as if he would pull them in pieces. Then he would sit down like an enraged beast, in sullen despair. Here he was to remain, day after day, with no company (for in his present condition it seemed impossible to read) but his own reflections. It may well be supposed that his meditations were any-

thing but agreeable. How could he keep his imagination from wandering into the future, to that terrible, heart-sickening scene in which he must be the chief actor and the only object of interest? He was to furnish a practical illustration of what death is to a man full of life. There was nothing in the past or the future that could afford him pleasure. The only happiness he ever enjoyed was during the time of his boyhood. After that brief period his life had been a succession of scenes of bloodshed and dark imprisonment. Frequently it all appeared to him like a horrid dream. Surely, he thought, he could not have murdered scores of men, many of whom had cried out piteously for mercy! It was not in his nature to act thus! Was it true that he had really led the beautiful Genie De Lancy to the altar? Such questions he would propound to himself in his half-waking moments. Presently all came back to his consciousness, and he would groan in anguish of spirit.

“What is there in the future?” he would ask. The answer flashed back, ignominious death—a death so shameful that he could scarcely realize it. The only comfort which the condemned man could derive from a contemplation of the future was, that his troubles would all come to an end. True, he thought, death was an unknown thing, from which all living beings instinctively shrank, but its terrors could not endure for any appreciable length of time. The last convulsions, granting that they were subjects of consciousness, could not extend over the space of many seconds. What was a little, brief suffering of the body? Did he not have sufficient fortitude to endure it? Pshaw! what was death?

But probably the past was a greater source of annoyance to Bathie than the future. As to what might lie beyond the grave, he made no effort to conjecture. But the past was a stubborn reality, and the awful scenes

through which he had gone would roll up before him like the dissolving views of the stereopticon, and his gaze was drawn toward them by a species of strange fascination. There was no escape. While in the cave, he had struggled hard to banish the horrible images which flashed before him as vividly as the lightning, but he succeeded only when he could manage to become deeply absorbed in the contents of a book. In that prison he had read many volumes designed to prove that the Christian Religion was a mere system of "cunningly devised fables," and he had at last brought himself to at least partly believe the theory of Renan, that is, so far as a man can control his belief by volitions. This belief secured him from some of those fears and misgivings which arise out of a well-grounded faith in future rewards and punishments. Every true believer will, at times, have fears, and it is well that he should. But Bathie's exemption from fears seemed to be due more to brutish indifference than to an intelligent, firm persuasion of the correctness of his theory. Still, his religion, if such it could be called, even in the most general sense, could not prevent uneasiness and trouble produced by his past conduct. There is no form of Infidelity that can afford relief to a diseased conscience. This very fact might be urged as a proof of the existence of another state of being, and the immortality of the soul. If the grave is the end of man; if there is nothing beyond it but eternal silence and unconsciousness, why should man trouble himself in regard to what he has done while dwelling in the flesh? Suppose he has committed crimes, even without number, what difference can it make, if he is responsible to no one? But the unbeliever may try to console himself with the forced assurance that there is no future; yet, in spite of this self-bracing against the inner self, he will be dragged

before the assizes of conscience. There may be a hard contest between reason and that invisible power within, which constitutes itself a judge, and forces one to bear testimony against himself; but that mysterious power, call it what you will, cannot be altogether suppressed.

Bathie Beaumont felt it, whether he recognized its functions or not. To a man of such a character, it may be easily imagined how revolting imprisonment would be. At liberty, he could have visited scenes calculated to prevent so much introspection. Possibly he might have renewed his intercourse with society, and recovered, to some extent, his lost spirits. Long imprisonment had engendered a habit of gloomy reticence. In his situation, it was but natural that he should be distrustful of men. Therefore, after he had left the cave, he avoided intercourse with his fellow men as much as possible. Could he have reached Europe in safety, he might have changed his manner of life, and been a different man. But it was not thus to be. Circumstances changed the seeming current of destiny; and when such is the case, the volition of man is in vain.

Three or four days passed away after Bathie had heard the sentence of death, and he had seen no one, except the Sheriff, with whom he would have no intercourse. The officer would hand in his meals, and whatever else was necessary, and leave immediately. They had no conversation, except in reference to the prisoner's wants, which were few.

"Is there anything you want to-day?" the Sheriff would respectfully inquire.

"Nothing that you can supply," would be the answer; and this was about the substance of their interviews, the prisoner neither thanking him nor scarcely bestowing a look upon him. The Sheriff, however unreasonable

it may have been, was held in the deepest detestation by his prisoner.

About the fifth day after his confinement, the Sheriff said to him, as he carried up his dinner—

“There is a gentleman below who wishes to have an interview with you.”

“Who is it?” asked Bathie. “I dare say, though, it is some curious fellow, who wants to see the man that is to be hanged.”

“No, sir,” answered the jailer. “It is a nice gentleman, the pastor of — church.”

“Yes,” said Bathie, with a sneer, “he wants to save my soul, and have another star in his crown. Well, send him up. I will have some amusement out of him.”

In a few moments the Sheriff returned, accompanied by an old acquaintance of ours.

“Mr. Jones,” said the Sheriff, “this is the Rev. Mr. Langdon, who wants to form your acquaintance.”

“How are you, sir,” said Bathie, coolly. “I am sorry,” he continued, in a tone tinged with bitterness, “that I have no better accommodations to offer visitors. You will have to find your own seat, if you wish to sit.”

“You need not make any apologies,” replied Langdon, in a sweet, subdued voice, that caused the prisoner to look at him with closer attention. “I understand it all. Let us say no more about it.” Then turning to the Sheriff, he continued, “will you please open the door, and let me in with Brother Jones? It will be more convenient for both of us.”

“You want to get near the beast, do you?” asked Bathie. “Come in, if you desire to do so.”

The cage door was opened, and Langdon stepped in, and said—

“Let us shake hands, Brother.”

Bathie complied with the request, but did not return the minister's friendly grasp.

"I will retire," said the Sheriff to Langdon. "You can ring that bell when you want to come down."

The minister nodded to the officer, while the prisoner was saying—

"Why do you call me 'Brother?' I am not related to you at all."

"O, yes, you are. We are all of one brotherhood, and are closely related."

"We do not treat each other as if that were true," said Bathie, bitterly. "Does it look brotherly to confine one of your brothers, who is perfectly innocent of the crime imputed to him, in an iron cage, as though he were a wild animal?"

"I have not come here, Brother," replied Langdon, very mildly and kindly, "to talk with you about such things."

"Tell me," said Bathie, looking him squarely in the face, "do you believe I am guilty of the crime for which I am sentenced to die?"

"I know nothing about it. I did not hear the trial. I never saw you before, and it is not for me to judge."

"Why have you come here, then?"

"The only object of my visit is to talk with you about the concerns of your soul. I hope, my Brother, you are making that preparation to meet your God which your present prospects seem to render especially necessary? Are you ready for the event which must, sooner or later, overtake us all?"

"O, yes," replied Bathie, indifferently, "I am ready."

"I am truly glad to hear it," said the minister, doubtfully, and manifesting a little surprise at the way in which his question was answered. "I am to understand, then," he continued, after a short pause, "that

you have made your peace with God, and are fully prepared to stand before the bar of the Great Judge, who makes no mistakes? Am I correct?"

"I suppose I am as well prepared as I ever will be. I have wound up all my affairs, and I have made my will; and that is all the preparation I have made."

"Probably you did not understand my question fully," said Langdon. "All of us have to die, you know. The chief business of our lives ought to be to get ready for the meeting with God in that last, great day, when we must give a strict account of the talents with which we have been entrusted. If our hearts have not been changed by the Holy Spirit, we are in no condition to enter Heaven. You understand that, I hope?"

"O, I have heard of such things. You have expressed your opinion; but we differ."

"What is your opinion, then?" asked Langdon, gently, in order to induce the prisoner to converse freely.

"I cannot say that I have any well-defined opinion on the subject. I will admit there is a God, and if I am an immortal being, He knows what disposition to make of me."

"Do you not firmly believe there is a God?"

"I told you I would admit that there is, but really I do not know. However, I will take it as granted that there is."

"Do you believe the Bible?"

As Langdon asked this question, he drew from his pocket a New Testament, and as he held his thumb on the edges of the leaves, and allowed them to turn rapidly, a photograph of a lady fell into Bathie's lap, who was sitting on his bed on the floor, somewhat after the fashion of a tailor, while his visitor was occupying a stool directly in front of him. Bathie picked it up

in order to return it, but he caught a glimpse of the face, and instantly recognized it. Hardly thinking of the impropriety of his conduct, he held the picture in his hand, and continued to gaze at it, as if to remove all doubt from his mind in regard to the identity of the original. Langdon looked at him curiously, and a deep blush spread over his honest and handsome face. Presently Bathie hastily returned it, exclaiming as he did so—

“O, I beg your pardon ; please excuse me, but that is the face of one with whom I am intimately acquainted. She was a schoolmate and a classmate of mine.”

“Ah!” said Langdon, as he quickly put the picture in his pocket, betraying himself by his very motions, and especially by the fiery blush which crimsoned every visible part of his body. Bathie could not but observe his embarrassment.

“It is evident,” said the prisoner, slowly, “by your being in possession of that picture, that you feel some interest in the young lady, as well as I.”

In the brief interval which elapsed before Langdon made any reply to this last remark, many thoughts passed rapidly through his mind. He fell into a short reverie, seeming to forget where he was, and in whose presence he was. Had he not at last discovered the reason of Mary’s hesitation and indecision? Was it not her affection for this unfortunate prisoner which had caused her to reject his suit? Then a feeling of joy thrilled his heart, that his rival would soon be out of his way. But instantly he checked this wicked feeling, with horror at his own baseness. How could he rejoice at a prospect of happiness which must be obtained by the sacrifice of a human being? In his innermost soul he cried out, “Get thee behind me, Satan.” It was but an instantaneous flash of the “old Adam,” for Langdon

was a pure-hearted, honest man. But no man is complete master of himself at all hours. A vain thought, followed by a streak of temptation, will flash athwart his soul, bearing the relation of a "shooting star" and its bright train. In a twinkling, both are gone. So it is, sometimes, with that man who is "after God's own heart." The minister at once crushed down what he rightly regarded as a godless feeling. But the next question which perplexed him was, the relation between the prisoner and Mary. How was he to ascertain? He now partly lost his desire to talk more about the Bible. It must not be supposed that ministers have lost all the infirmities and passions of human nature. After all, they are but men, and pardoned sinners.

"Possibly," said Langdon, "you may be mistaken; and, to settle the matter, what is the name of the lady you have in your mind?"

"Mary Smith."

"The same," replied Langdon. "Does she know where you now are?"

"I cannot tell."

(He is either not engaged to her, or is ashamed to write, thought Langdon.)

"Would you like her to know?" timidly asked the minister, "or do you keep up a correspondence with her?"

"No;" answered Bathie, "do you?"

"I do not; neither have I seen her for several years."

"She is as dear to me as a sister," said the prisoner. "Would you regard it, then, as a breach of etiquette, if I ask how you have her picture in your possession?"

This direct question again brought the crimson tide to Langdon's face, and his eyes fell to the floor. Presently he looked up, and said, quietly and innocently—

"If it can be of any interest to you, sir, why should

I refuse to tell, especially since you are a friend of hers? To make a long story short, I was wounded in the battle on Big Black River, which you may have heard of."

"I was in it, sir."

"You were! Do you remember seeing a man gallop over the railroad bridge?"

The question made Bathie almost start. But he answered, indifferently.

"Yes; I saw him."

"I mention it, because the incident has ever since been associated in my mind with that battle. It was the most daring feat I ever saw. It is a great pity the man turned out as he afterwards did, or, at least, as I heard he did."

"How was that?" asked Bathie.

"Why, I heard that he became a robber."

"It is a lie!" Bathie was almost on the point of exclaiming, but he checked himself, surprised, too, that he had been nearly thrown off his guard. Instead of this, he said: "Well, never mind about him. Go on with your story."

"It is not much of a story," replied Langdon. "After I was wounded, I hobbled down the river, in a critical condition. The country was deserted. But I went from house to house, till I at last came in sight of one which was inhabited, but I did not have strength enough to reach it. I shouted with all my might, and fell, fainting, to the earth. The young lady about whom we are talking saw me, and came to my relief. She nursed me during my sickness. I soon discovered that she was unusually intelligent, and was all that a man could desire a wife to be. What was more natural than that I should become enamored of her, and ask her to be mine? She refused; but, nevertheless,

agreed to correspond with me. However, owing to the uncertainties of the mails, not a single letter passed between us. After the war ended, I went to visit her, and again addressed her in person. I imagined that she desired to discard me, and I left, and have not directly heard from her from that day to this. There was always something strange to me in her manner, but I think now I understand it."

"What is there you have found now that explains the mystery?"

"I am of the opinion that her affections have been won by yourself, and if so, you ought to be congratulated."

"Congratulated!" exclaimed Bathie. "Good heavens! what for? You forget."

"O, Brother, forgive me," cried Langdon. "I had forgotten."

Bathie fell into a reverie, from which Langdon would not arouse him. He sat still, therefore, waiting for the prisoner to break the silence. Presently he looked at Langdon, and slowly spoke.

"I hope you are mistaken, for her sake. I have never had any other feeling toward her than such as any brother might have for a sister. Such a thought as addressing her never entered my head. I have been married once, and my affections are in the grave."

"Would you mind telling me about it, for I see, from your manner, that there is something extraordinary in your history?"

"O, no, no;" quickly exclaimed Bathie, with a frown, "let us say no more about it. It drives me mad to think about it."

He at once relapsed into silence, burying his face in his hands.

"I pity you, sir," said Langdon, in his gentle voice, "and sympathize with you."

"I despise pity," exclaimed the prisoner. "Do not talk that way, or I shall ask you to leave."

"But it is my duty," answered Langdon, mildly, "to weep with those that weep, and mourn with those that mourn."

"I am not weeping nor mourning."

Langdon seemed to be unfortunate in his expressions. He spoke again—

"At least, you are in distress, and I can and do sympathize with you."

"I care nothing for sympathy. I neither want nor need it."

Langdon was greatly confused by these tart replies. He determined, therefore, to say no more till the prisoner should speak. In fact, he knew not what else to say, since Bathie so rudely rejected all his advances. The prisoner was absorbed in thought. What Langdon had suggested caused him to recall Mary's manner toward himself. Was it really true, or was it a mere conjecture of Langdon's, springing simply from that jealousy which is usual in love affairs?

"Mr. Langdon," said Bathie, presently, "what is it that makes you think I am the object of Mary's affections? I think you are mistaken."

"I judged from her manner, sir. I at first suspected a rival, but she threw out no hint as to any one else. I am certain she never mentioned your name in my presence. But from what you tell me, my suspicions are confirmed."

"You know what the great poet says about 'trifles light as air being to the jealous proofs as strong as Holy Writ.'"

"The suspicion," replied Langdon, "to which the poet alludes is different from mine, both in character and kind."

"It may be different in degree, but not in kind," replied Bathie. "All jealousy is alike."

"Have it as you will, sir," said Langdon, pleasantly, "but I am satisfied it is as I say."

"For your comfort," answered Bathie, bluntly, "I will tell you I am no rival of yours, whether I be hanged or not. So far from it, I will use all my influence in your behalf. If you had not made an honest statement of the matter, I would not do this. But if I am not much mistaken, you are the sort of man to make her a good husband. Renew your suit, and I will help you all I can, though I know nothing I can do now, except to give her to understand that I can never be anything to her more than a brother, even if I should escape the gallows."

"I am much obliged to you," answered Langdon, "but without more encouragement from her, I do not feel disposed to renew my addresses. But, if you please, sir, we are wandering far from the subject with which we commenced."

"That is true," said Bathie, "yet I am glad of it. I do not wish to talk about the Bible to-day. You have given me something to think about. I must study up a scheme to get you and Mary united. She is a worthy girl, and deserves a good husband. I make no secret of it that I am prepossessed in your favor, though I have a poor opinion of mankind in general. I should like to know that you have won Mary's heart, before I am hanged like a dog, by a set of savage cannibals."

"While I feel under obligations for your intended kindness," said Langdon, "yet the importance of saving your soul is far greater than the temporal happiness of any human being."

"You would rather save my soul, as you call it, than win the girl?"

"If I know my own heart, Brother, I would. I would renounce all earthly happiness and prospects, to save you from that death which never dies."

Bathie looked into his face with a searching gaze, as if he would penetrate the very depths of the minister's mind.

"I think you are firm in your belief," said Bathie. "And you suppose you can easily convince me of my error, do you?"

"I think the Lord can convince you. I can only use the authorized means, and leave the result to God. I do not pretend that my intellect is superior to yours, nor that I can overpower you with stubborn argument. But I know I have the truth on my side, and the Holy Spirit may drive the truth home to your conscience. That is my hope."

"Very well," said Bathie, "you may have the opportunity of trying your power on me, if it will be any accommodation to you."

"I am sorry to hear you talk with so much indifference on a subject of such vital importance," replied Langdon, with deep solemnity.

"I am going," said Bathie, not paying the slightest attention to the preacher's grave air, "to call your attention to some of the inconsistencies and contradictions of the Bible, and if you can explain them I will give you credit for considerable ingenuity."

"Is that all? If the Lord shows you, through me as an humble instrument, that the contradictions to which you refer have no real existence, will you not accept the truth? Is it not your duty to do so?"

"We will talk about that afterwards. I must first hear your explanations."

"Very well. Let us begin at once."

"No, not now."

"O," said Langdon, in an urgent tone. "This is too important a matter to be postponed. You ought to redeem every hour of the time you have. You have not a moment to lose."

"I have nearly a month, even at the worst," replied Bathie, carelessly. "Surely, that is time enough. You have put me on the track of something else, which I must see accomplished."

"What is that?" asked Langdon, perceiving that the prisoner would have his own way.

"Are you very busy, now?"

"Not especially," answered Langdon, "though I try never to be idle."

"Can you make a short journey?"

"Yes; if it is necessary."

"Then I would be glad if you would make a trip to Vicksburg."

"For what?"

"I want to send a letter to Mary Smith, and I want you to explain my situation, and I want you to tell her that I am innocent."

"But," interrupted Langdon, "I told you awhile ago that I had formed no opinion as to your guilt or innocence."

"You are honest, I see," said the prisoner, with an air of thoughtfulness. "Will you tell her I say that I am not guilty of the crime for which I am condemned to die?"

"Yes, I will tell her that."

"That will be sufficient. When you do that, then renew your suit."

"I do not know so well about that."

"Well, do so, if you feel encouraged by her manner and conversation."

"I will go, more for your sake than my own," replied Langdon.

"Go down stairs, then, and I will write my letter. When you return from Vicksburg, call on me again, if you desire, and we will have our discussion. If you can convince me that I am in error, I will admit it."

The bell was rung, the Sheriff came up, and Langdon went down with him, and waited till Bathie had finished his letter. The next morning Langdon mounted his horse, and, with mingled emotions, started for the town of Vicksburg, which he had not seen for several years.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### AWFUL NEWS.

“No thought within her bosom stirs  
But wakes some feeling dark and dread.”

Again we find ourselves in the town of Vicksburg, which must forever be famous in American history. On a certain street, which shall be nameless, there stood a hotel, more respectable in appearance than the one in which we last saw Mary. Her father had rented it, and thus moved to a more central portion of the town. His wife and daughter understood the art of keeping a good table, which invariably attracts boarders. So it seemed that Mr. Smith had rapidly prospered in business, and his entire household appeared in better style. The house had been supplied with new furniture by Mr. Smith; and everything, under Mary's skillful management and touch, wore an air of comfort, which was very tempting to the weary traveler. Mr. Smith was growing rich, though he himself was out of harmony with the general surroundings. He could not rid himself of a certain awkwardness engendered by the habits of his early life, and which still clung to him with the tenacity of Sinbad's "Old Man of the Sea." But Mary made atonement for the paternal roughness of manners. She was highly educated, and well versed in general literature, and as soon as her residence in town had been changed to a more fashionable street, fell, without difficulty, into the ways of the *beau monde*. Under her delicate touch and taste the parlor wore an air of brightness and elegance equal to any in the city. Seven or eight years had rolled over her head since the war, but

she exhibited no marks of age. She looked young and fresh, yet grave, and, perhaps, a little sad. There was not that air of gayety and vivacity about her which her acquaintances thought would be justifiable, considering her surroundings. Often she would go about the house, attending to her duties in a sort of mechanical way, while her thoughts were wandering far away. We know, or can easily guess, where they were. With Bathie chiefly, partly with Langdon. Her emotions, though, went along with her thoughts, to the former; and this fact she did not attempt to conceal from herself. It was useless to do so. Bathie filled up the horizon of her existence, though seriously troubled by the consciousness that he regarded her simply as a kind sister. Sometimes she wept in secret, and her eyes were frequently red and swollen, but nobody was acquainted with the cause. In such a condition was Mary when an event occurred that stirred up all the energies of her nature.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon, and the hills in and around Vicksburg were casting shadows on the hills to the East. Mary was in her room, poring over a book written by that famous author, George Eliot, in regard to the fate of whose productions it is difficult to make a prediction. The volume was *Middlemarch*, and Mary was absorbed in the scene in which Dorothea and Will Ladislaw were the only actors. They were alone in the house, while a violent storm was raging without. There was something in Dorothea's conduct which reminded Mary of herself on two occasions. One was when she had run out to the gate and called after Langdon; the other was when Bathie had imprinted that burning kiss on her own lips.

"George Eliot," said Mary to herself, "certainly understands the emotions of the heart, and knows how

to describe them. What a beautiful and sacred scene is this, and a 'consummation devoutly to be wished!' I have felt all this wild ecstasy of an uncontrollable love, but it has only recoiled upon me, and crushed me in the ashes of bitter disappointment."

At this moment she was wanted in the parlor. The card brought up to her room contained the name of Langdon. Mary at once went to her bureau, looked at her handsome face, brushed her hair, shook her dress, so as to get the folds in proper order, and without further delay descended to the parlor. Langdon rose promptly to meet her.

"It has been a long time since I saw you," he said, "but you look as rosy as ever."

"Thank you," she replied, with a becoming blush. "I hope you have been well since we last met."

"I have no reason to complain."

After some further conversation upon ordinary subjects, Mary said, with a little timidity—

"I am ready for a quarrel, Mr. Langdon."

"About what?" he asked.

"Why did you not answer my letter?"

"Letter? What letter?" asked Langdon, in unfeigned surprise. "You puzzle me."

"I wrote you a short note, after you left me so abruptly."

"You did!" exclaimed the minister.

"Certainly I did," answered Mary, with a smile at his look of blank astonishment, "and you treated me so rudely as not to make any reply. I deserved it, though."

"I never received it. That is strange. But to what office did you direct it? Baalbek?"

"No; but to the office where I directed others."

"That accounts for it, then," said Langdon. "I removed to Baalbek soon after I left here, on that

sorrowful day to which you have alluded, and have been living there ever since. That is the reason I did not get it. You may rest assured I would have answered it, if it had been received. Will you not be so kind as to repeat the substance of what you said?"

"O, no," she exclaimed, with a laugh; "it is barred by Statute of Limitation, now."

Langdon was confused, but after a momentary silence, he said—

"Will you not even explain the object of your letter? I think you ought to do that."

"It would be useless, now. So let us say no more about it."

There was another short interval of silence, which was soon broken by Langdon—

"Are you acquainted with a Mr. Thomas Jones?"

His eyes were fixed earnestly upon her face, which wore, for a moment, an almost blank expression. She might be, Langdon thought, running over the list of her acquaintances. But presently he noticed that her countenance assumed an air of unusual gravity.

"There are so many Joneses, you know, that you will have to be a little more explicit."

"I allude to a classmate of yours."

Who could it be, but Bathie?

"Yes," she answered, with forced tranquility. Her heart was swelling and quivering. "What about him?"

Langdon had decided what course he would pursue, before he broached the subject.

"I am the bearer of a letter from him."

"Give it to me," exclaimed Mary, with an involuntary eagerness, which fell like a blow upon the minister's hopes, and completely confirmed his former suspicions. But he slowly drew from his pocket a letter, and gave it to her.

“ I will retire till you read it,” he said.

“ O, no, no,” quickly exclaimed Mary, with a trembling frame. “ Keep your seat, please, and I will go to my room. Excuse me for a moment.”

With a haste which was sadly ominous for Langdon, she disappeared, and was soon in her room. Mary was unconsciously betraying herself in all her movements. Closing the door, and even locking it, she threw herself on a chair, eagerly tore open the envelope, and read as follows :—

“ MY DEAR SISTER: This will be handed you by our mutual friend, Mr. Langdon. I know he is a true friend to you, whatever he may be to me. If it would suit you to form a closer relation with him than a friend, I, as a brother, would heartily approve of your choice. I should like to know that you have given your consent, before I go to that country where, so far as I know, there is neither joy nor sorrow. You do not know what I mean, but I leave it to Langdon to explain. I cannot write it. He knows all. I hope you may yet be happy with him. I have every reason to think him as noble as men ever get to be. I suppose we will never meet again in this world, and I know nothing about the next. I would write more, but Langdon will explain everything. Never mention me again by another name than

“ THOMAS JONES.”

This letter was, of course, an enigma to Mary, though it contained one or two sentences which chilled her to the heart. She read this short epistle several times, as if there might be some hidden meaning, which one or two perusals might fail to unfold. Then she laid the letter on a little table, and pressed her hand to her forehead, as though she would hold the tumultuous

thoughts and wild fancies which were darting through her mind with too great a rapidity to be grasped by reason. Her feelings and reflections, or rather attempts at reflection, were a maelstrom in miniature. But what was the use of wild conjectures, when Langdon was waiting to give her full information? She dreaded to hear it. But, composing herself as much as possible, she returned to the parlor, and to divert Langdon's attention from herself, she said, at once—

“Mr. Jones alludes to something in his letter which I do not understand at all. Will you have the kindness to inform me what has happened to him? I am left to imagine; but I infer it is something terrible.”

Langdon now endeavored to break the awful news as gently as possible.

“Have you heard nothing at all,” he asked, “in regard to Mr. Jones's difficulties?”

“Not a single word. This is the first intimation I have had that anything of a serious character had befallen him.”

“Then, I dislike very much,” said Langdon, speaking slowly and solemnly, “to be the bearer of ill-tidings, who, you know, has but a losing office. I am sorry that Mr. Jones has left it all to me to tell. But, I pray you, be as calm as possible, for I perceive that you are deeply interested in your friend.”

“Undoubtedly I am,” replied Mary, trying to manifest no deeper concern than was justified by her relation to the object of their conversation. “Mr. Jones is one of the best friends I have in the world. But go on. Let me hear the worst.”

“I will give you the details,” said Langdon, “as I learned them, in as few words as possible.”

He gave her the particulars of the arrest, and added—

“He was tried for murder.”

Here he paused, as if dreading to continue.

“And was he not acquitted?” asked Mary, in a voice tremulous with emotion.

“No; not acquitted,” answered Langdon, sorrowfully.

“What!” almost gasped Mary.

“Prepare for the worst,” said Langdon. “He is condemned to be executed.”

“Oh! oh!” groaned poor Mary, in a tone that might be imitated by one in similar circumstances, but can never be described. It was uttered as if hope, happiness—everything which could make existence desirable, were taking their flight forever, and leaving a sort of black despair to torture the soul. In it there seemed to be compressed a part of her very life. But this was not all. There was something else which Langdon did not understand.

Several moments elapsed before another word was spoken.

“Was what you have told me,” presently asked Mary, “the only proof they had?”

“Well, I do not know, unless it can be regarded as proof that the name of Thomas Jones was engraved on the handle of the knife.”

At this Mary became deathly pale. Her lips were livid, and she trembled. Langdon attributed her altered appearance to her distress on account of Bathie's misfortune. But the truth was, she was thinking of other circumstances in connection with the affair, which, at this stage of our story, we cannot unfold without an unwarrantable anticipation of events; for we must observe the laws of logical sequences in a story as well as in sober history.

Poor Mary! the world seemed to be in a whirl. There was a mist before her eyes; and she sat there in

her chair as helpless as a little child. There was an ineffable tumult in her mind, and her brain felt as if it were revolving like a mass of molten glass whirling on the blower's pipe. She was trembling on the edge of an abyss with the blackness of darkness beneath. Could Langdon read her thoughts? He was under that impression; but he was deceived as to all the causes of her agitation, and of this she felt sure. He kept his eyes centered upon her, as much as the rules of etiquette would permit, with the shadow of a deep sorrow upon his open, candid face.

"If I had been at the trial," said Mary, as though utterly oblivious of Langdon's presence, "I could have testified that it was not his knife."

"If you can do that," said Langdon, "it may enable him to get a new trial."

Mary started, and looked wildly at him.

"Probably I am too fast. Yes I am. I think I am mistaken, Mr. Langdon. Yet, it could not have been his. How could it, when"—

She paused abruptly.

"When what?" asked Langdon, in surprise.

"Nothing. I scarcely know what I am saying. You must excuse me, Mr. Langdon. Mr. Jones has been a great friend to me. That you may not be surprised at my emotion, I will tell you something which he would not tell. I am indebted to him for my education."

"I do not wonder, then, at your conduct."

"When is it to be?" she asked, abruptly.

"To what do you allude?"

"The—the—execution," she gasped.

"It is not certain. The day appointed is —; but his lawyers have taken an appeal to the Supreme Court. So we cannot tell."

“What is to be expected from the Supreme Court?”

“Well, such courts are uncertain. Sometimes they affirm the decision of the lower court, and sometimes they reverse it, and order a new trial. If he has a new trial he may be condemned again, or acquitted. It is all uncertain.”

“But it is certain, though,” she said, “that he has till the—”

“O, yes; there is no doubt of that.”

“There is no telling what may happen between now and then.”

Langdon paid no attention to this old truism at the time, but the words caused him to reflect afterwards. He was now perplexed concerning the course he ought to pursue under the present circumstances. Had he better mention the subject which was nearest to his heart, or postpone it to some future and more favorable opportunity. It was a contest between the head and the heart. Reason said: “You had better wait. She is in distress, and not thinking of you. You will destroy your prospects. The rules of etiquette demand that you should keep silent on this subject.” On the contrary, the heart said: “This is a favorable opportunity. You have no rival. No doubt Jones has told her so. You have his influence. She wrote to you last. What could she have written, unless it was something in regard to this very subject? Now is your time.” Thus these antagonistic powers carried on a vigorous conflict, and kept Langdon in a state of bewildering, perplexing indecision.

“I deeply sympathize with you,” at last said the minister, beginning to feel how awkward was the prolonged silence.

“He is the one who needs sympathy,” replied Mary. “It is not I.”

"Well, he is a dear friend of yours, and for aught I know, something more," answered Langdon.

"No, no," quickly interrupted Mary. "He is, and always has been, a brother to me. How can I help feeling distressed, when a calamity too horrible to contemplate is hanging over him? This is a misfortune which is undeserved, too, for I have not the slightest idea he is guilty. I fully believe his statement of the affair. What is your opinion about it?"

"I cannot say that I have formed any."

"If you want to be on friendly terms with me, do not intimate that you think him guilty. If you knew him as well as I do, you would not think so. He is utterly incapable of such a crime."

"I suppose, then," said Langdon, venturing a hesitating smile, "I must concur in your opinion, to retain your friendship."

Mary bestowed on him such a look, that he easily perceived it was no time to be at all facetious. Langdon felt that it would be best to take his departure, and he rose, as if to execute his purpose.

"I must now leave," he said. "Do you wish to write, or send a message to your friend?"

"Must you hurry away so soon as that?" she asked, with a look of surprise.

"I had something else to say to you," he answered, speaking slowly, and looking at her doubtfully, "but, possibly, I had better not."

"Are you acquainted with the contents of this letter of my friend's?" she asked.

"How should I be?"

"He may have told you."

"He did tell me some things. One was that he would use his influence in favor of my suit, if you would allow me to renew it."

"You may, Mr. Langdon, at some future time," said Mary, candidly.

"Why not now?"

"Because—because—"

"That is said to be a woman's reason."

"Well, be satisfied with it for the present."

"Will you answer my letters if I write to you?"

"Yes. I wish you would write, and let me know how our friend bears his misfortune."

"I will."

Langdon extended his hand, and he felt a pressure that sent him away a happier man.

As soon as he was gone, Mary went back to her room, and tried to compose herself.

"I know he is not guilty," she said to herself. "I saw that knife. Of course it was not Bathie's. Oh! it cannot be the other. I will not think it. He could not have committed such a deed; yet, it does look suspicious. I cannot, I will not investigate. How strange it all is. O, God of Heaven! direct me in this dark hour of distress and doubt!"

## CHAPTER XXX.

### 144 SELF-CONTRADICTIONS.

“Many believed ; but more the truth of God  
Turned to a lie, deceiving and deceived.”

Langdon left Vicksburg early the next morning after his brief and rather unsatisfactory interview of the previous evening. He had wisely come to the conclusion that he would not renew his attentions to Mary until Bathie's temporal destiny was finally settled. He had, be it spoken to his honor, become deeply interested in the spiritual welfare of the prisoner, and was extremely anxious to have another interview with him, in order to ascertain what might be his creed, and to make every effort in his power to convince Bathie of his errors. The minister was a man of that rare type who would allow no earthly consideration to come between him and his duty. He would even have sacrificed his prospect of winning Mary's hand, if it had been necessary to the salvation of a human soul. Therefore, he hastened back to Baalbek, and on the fifth day after he had left Bathie, to make the visit to Vicksburg at the prisoner's solicitation, he again called at the jail.

“I did not expect you so soon,” said Bathie, as Langdon again entered the iron cage. The Sheriff, as before, locked the door and left the two to themselves.

“I went on your business, mostly,” said Langdon, “and after having attended to it, there was no reason why I should delay longer.”

“You delivered my letter?”

“Yes; and explained the situation.”

"What effect did the news have? Or had she already heard of it?"

"She had heard nothing about it. It would be difficult to describe the effect. I never want to be the bearer of any more such news to any one."

"I expected she would be greatly distressed. But, what progress did you make yourself?"

"Very little," replied Langdon. "I thought it best, under the circumstances, not to insist too much on that subject. But, if you please, we have said enough in regard to that matter. I want to talk with you about your spiritual interests, which are of far more importance than any earthly concern. You promised that you would talk freely with me, after my return."

"So I did, and I will redeem my promise."

"I am glad to hear you say so," answered Langdon, "and we will begin at once."

"How shall we begin?" asked Bathie.

"The best thing you could do, would be to lay aside all prejudices, and accept the Saviour."

"But I cannot do that. I told you that I take the Bible to be a human work."

"Yes; I remember you said it was full of inconsistencies and self-contradictions."

"Yes; I said that."

"Will you be so kind as to point out these inconsistencies and contradictions?"

"Certainly; I am prepared to do it."

"Well, now," said Langdon, "if I explain them, and show that what you esteem contradictions are not really so, will you admit that you have been mistaken?"

"Who is to be the judge whether your explanations are correct?" asked Bathie.

"You may be the judge yourself. As an honest man you should want only the truth. If you cannot find

any objection to my explanation, then you ought to admit that you have misinterpreted the Holy Scripture."

"Yes," said Bathie, after a brief, thoughtful pause, "that seems to be fair."

"Begin, then," said Langdon.

Bathie took from his pocket a memorandum book, and remarked—

"I have written in this book about a hundred self-contradictions of the Bible, which I studied closely for that purpose."

"If," said Langdon, gently, "my Brother, you had written all the truths you could find, you would to-day be a happier man. But, never mind, now. Let us have the self-contradictions you have found."

"Very well," said Bathie.\* "In Gen. i, 31, we read: '*And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good.*' It seems, from this, that the Lord was perfectly satisfied with what he had done. But now turn to Gen. vi, 6, and it reads: '*And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.*' Do not the two passages contradict each other?"

"Not at all," replied Langdon, looking at Bathie in surprise. "When God first created the earth and all things, He was pleased with His work. Fifteen hundred years afterwards, the time to which the second passage refers, when men had become corrupt, and the earth was filled with violence, the Lord repented that he had made man. There could be no contradiction, unless the Lord were represented as being satisfied and

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\* The author would here state that the instances of self-contradictions of the Scriptures adduced by Bathie Beaumont are taken from an Infidel book, entitled "144 Self-contradictions of the Bible." They show clearly how weak is the cause of Infidelity, and how unreasonable are its advocates.

dissatisfied *at the same time*. You might be satisfied with a thing to-day, and dissatisfied with it to-morrow; how could there possibly be any contradiction in that? Certainly, there is none."

Bathie at once perceived his error, but in order that he might not be forced to confess, he quickly said—

"But how could an All-wise God, such as the Bible describes, 'repent' of anything? Repentance always implies that a mistake has been made."

"Of course it does," replied Langdon, "when applied to man. But you must bear in mind that all through the Scriptures, in mere condescension to human weakness, God is represented as a man, and having the passions of a man. He cannot repent in the sense in which human beings do. The passage means that if God had really been a man, he would have repented. Besides, the literal meaning of the word 'repent' in this passage is not 'to be sorry for,' but 'to turn away.' God turned away from man. But take it literally, if you will, and keep in mind that the Lord accommodates himself to human frailty. In many places in the Bible God is represented as having feet, hands, eyes, and as being angry and jealous, etc., but no fair-minded man would ever put a literal construction on mere figurative language."

"Well, we will let that go," said Bathie, "as it is of little importance any way. I will show you much stronger instances. Here is one which I think will give you trouble. Turn to Ex. xxiv, 9-11. '*Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. . . . They saw God, and did eat and drink.*' It says 'they saw God.' Now turn to John i, 18, and we read: '*No man hath seen God at any time.*' If that is not a contradiction, I do not know where to find one."

"Mr. Jones," said Langdon, "I am surprised that a man of your intellectual ability should jump to conclusions, without fully investigating. There is no contradiction whatever in the two passages. Who was it that Moses and Aaron and others saw?"

"They saw God, says the Bible."

"To convince yourself of your mistake, read Ex. xxiii, 20: '*Behold I send an angel before thee . . . my name is in him.* It was the *angel* of God who led the children of Israel, and who bore the name of the Lord. It is true, therefore, that no man hath seen God at any time. Men cannot see him. Where is any contradiction, then?"

"If that is the way you explain it, there is none. But let us go on. Turn to Ex. xxxi, 17, and it says: '*For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.*' It seems that the Lord was *tired*. Now turn to Isa. xl, 28: '*Hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?*' One passage affirms that God is *weary*, and the other, that he is not."

"There is no contradiction in those passages," replied Langdon. "You err in not examining the literal meaning of words. The first passage you read does not mean that the Lord was physically *tired*. The Lord finished his work and *ceased* on the seventh day. That is the meaning of '*rested.*' You are a scholar, and ought to know that. But, even granting that it means He '*rested,*' I have already told you that God, in a great many places, represents Himself as a man, and as having the passions of a man. He brings Himself down to our level, in order that we may understand Him. If you will only remember that, it will enable you to clearly

comprehend a great many passages which might otherwise appear inconsistent."

"O, if that is the way you are going to explain, of course, you can explain anything in the book," said Bathie.

"Why surely," said Langdon, "you will allow the Bible to be its own interpreter. You affirm that it contains self-contradictions. I merely show you, by the book itself, that this is not true. I do not see how you can possibly object to that."

"Well, never mind," said Bathie, "I will find something which you cannot explain. Turn to Prov. viii, 17. '*Those that seek me early shall find me.*' Now turn to Prov. i, 28. '*Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.*' Are the passages not opposed?"

"I want no easier task than to reconcile them," replied Langdon. "The first passage refers to the period of offered mercy, and the second has reference to the time when the offer is withdrawn. Nothing can be plainer."

"Not saying whether I am satisfied or not," replied Bathie, "I will try you with some other passages. Turn to Jer. xiii, 14. '*I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy.*' Now turn to James v, 11. '*The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.*'"

"They are just as easy of explanation as any you have mentioned," replied Langdon. "I am only surprised that everything appears so plain and clear to me, where you find so much difficulty. God is always merciful to the *penitent*; but when nations and individuals have filled up the measure of their iniquity, then God no longer shows mercy or spares. How in the world can such passages perplex you or any one else?"

"They seem self-contradictory to me," replied Bathie, looking thoughtfully at his opponent.

"That is because you never sought for any reconciliation," answered Langdon. "You are trying only to force the Bible to contradict itself. But proceed."

"The next I have here in my book are in Gen. xxii, where God commanded Abraham to offer up Isaac as a burnt offering, and in Deut. xii, 30, 31, where God forbids human sacrifices."

"God merely designed to *prove* or *test* Abraham. He did not really permit his servant to slay his son. I am astonished that you can find any difficulty in as clear a thing as that," said Langdon.

"I did not mean to mention Abraham," said Bathie, quickly. "It was Jephthah. In Judges xi, we have an account of his offering up his daughter as a burnt-offering."

"The proof is not clear that Jephthah did any such thing," answered Langdon. "Most commentators are of the opinion that he merely *consecrated* his daughter, or devoted her to religious purposes. But putting the worst possible construction upon his conduct—say that he burned his daughter as an offering, there is not one particle of proof that the Lord approved of it. Jephthah made a rash vow for which God cannot be held responsible. He had positively forbidden human sacrifices, and Jephthah himself knew this. But the question is, did the Lord order him to offer up his daughter? If not, there is no contradiction whatever between the passages to which you have referred."

"What do you say to this?" asked Bathie. "In Ex. xii, 36, '*And they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment. . . . And they spoiled the Egyptians.*' In Levit. xix, 13, we read, '*Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob*

him.' Notwithstanding this prohibition, we find the Lord commanding the Israelites to *borrow* jewels and raiment."

"You have found no self-contradiction yet," replied Langdon, "for, unfortunately for your side of the case, the word translated 'borrow,' does not have the signification which we ordinarily give it. The proper reading would be 'they *asked* jewels of silver and gold,' and the Egyptians *gave*, not *lent*."

"Where do you find that?" asked Bathie.

"I find it in Gesenius' Lexicon," answered Langdon. "Ours, I believe, is the only version which has the word translated 'borrow.' In all others it is *asked*. The children of Israel had served the Egyptians for several centuries. They were kept at the hardest kind of labor. And now, when they were ready to leave, did not the Egyptians owe them something? Was it not right they should *give* Israel jewels and raiment? This is the only sense in which they spoiled the Egyptians. They had no power to *rob*, nor *defraud*. The Egyptians knew that the Israelites were not coming back, and they never expected the jewels to be returned. So I cannot, for the life of me, see the force of what you call a self-contradiction."

"If 'borrow' means only to 'ask,' of course there is no contradiction," said Bathie. "But I never knew that before."

"If you have any doubt about it, you can easily refer to Gesenius. I have it."

"No, I will take your word for it."

"Have you any more instances?"

"Yes; I told you that I had more than a hundred, but there is little use of mentioning them, if I accept your method of explanation."

"If you are not satisfied," said Langdon, "just show

me the fallacy of my reasoning. If I am in error, I will candidly acknowledge it."

"I will try you on another one or two, anyhow," said Bathie. "In Gen. ix, 6, it is said, '*At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.*' In Gen. iv, 15, we read, '*And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.*' Here we have God himself protecting a murderer, and violating his own law."

At hearing this, Langdon laughed.

"What are you laughing at?" asked Bathie, blushing with vexation.

"Excuse me, Brother. But it does amuse me to see how you could have fallen into such a palpable error."

"Where is the error?"

"Why, look at your Bible. Do you not see that this law, which you accuse God of violating, was made more than 1600 years *after* the Lord set the mark upon Cain? Do you not see your error?"

"Candidly," said Bathie, "I had not noticed it, but I yield the point."

"Well, let us have other instances of your self-contradictions."

"No, I believe not," said Bathie, looking rather shamefaced.

"Why not? I will cheerfully admit it, if you can show me any inconsistency in God's Word."

"It is useless. Of course, you have some sort of answer ready for every instance that I can produce."

"Brother," said Langdon, with deep solemnity, "the Bible is God's own Book. I beg you not to trifle with it. It is a book which is in harmony with itself. Every instance of self-contradiction which you can adduce is just like those which you have already mentioned. You see what mistakes you have made in these few instances.

I respectfully suggest that you look over your list, and see if you cannot reconcile the apparent discrepancies. Believe me, they are only apparent. There are no real inconsistencies throughout God's Word."

Bathie made no reply, and in a little time Langdon left him, promising to call again. When he had disappeared, Bathie sat thinking, for a long time. "It is possible," he said to himself, "that I may be mistaken. I have tried to make out contradictions in the Bible where there are none. Certainly this is not the proper way to ascertain truth. But even if I am mistaken in regard to the inconsistencies of the Bible, I cannot believe it is a book of divine inspiration. I hold to Renan's theory. It is, it must be correct."\*

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\* The author of this story intended, at first, to notice some twenty or thirty instances of the so-called "144 Self-Contradictions of the Bible," which seems to be a text-book among Infidels, but he soon discovered that his limited space would prevent his so doing. The few instances here noticed will serve as a fair specimen of the "self-contradictions." Out of the whole number, 144, there is not a single one that cannot be explained to the satisfaction of any unprejudiced mind. Some of them are so grossly perverted, that the attempt, on the part of the writer to make them appear antagonistic, only excites ridicule and contempt for his judgment. None but a dishonest man would ever have tried to discover inconsistencies where they are not to be found, except one who is blinded by the purest malice and prejudice. Some of the "self-contradictions" are so easily explained, that the writer must have inserted them for no other purpose than to make out the number, 144. We cannot imagine why he should have had such a fancy for twelve dozen. We have said enough in this chapter to show the reader how easily these "self-contradictions" can be explained.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### A WOMAN'S STRATAGEM.

"She show'd that her soft sex contains strong minds,  
Such as evap'rates through the coarser male."

The precipitation of several millions of ignorant negroes upon the "States in rebellion," by the unconstitutional Act of Emancipation, it may easily be imagined, was the cause of great inconvenience to the Southern people. The old system of labor was utterly destroyed, and it was rather difficult for the people to adapt themselves to the changed circumstances. Great fear was felt in all ranks of society. In the days of slavery, the negro had been forced to labor by one of the most powerful incentives to exertion that can influence the mind of a thinking being—the dread of punishment. But that fear being now removed by the boon of unrestricted liberty, the Southern people contemplated the prospect with tremulous anxiety. Many predicted insurrections, riots and general licentiousness. It was believed by many that the freedmen would at once renounce all regular labor, and betake themselves to general pillage as a means of subsistence. It was well known that the negro is naturally opposed to labor. He has no ambition to amass a fortune, nor even a comfortable independence. The negroes in the South have it in their power to enrich themselves by moderate work and proper economy. But they are as a gang of sheep without a shepherd. They will not work unless they are forced to it by the pangs of hunger.

But, notwithstanding all this, we are glad to testify that many of our fears, immediately after the war, were

groundless. The great bulk of the negroes did not suddenly abandon their laborious habits. They did not, at first, seem to fully realize that they were free. Civil equality with the white people appeared to them like a mere dream. It required time for that strange idea to work through their thick skulls and make an impression upon their brain. So they did not rush off in a great body, as some people had expected, leaving the flourishing crops to be choked by weeds and grass, in the month of April, 1865. Their former masters wisely accepted the situation, and offered them satisfactory wages. As a general thing, they remained with their owners till the expiration of the year, and then there was a universal collapse of previous habits and customs. The negro seemed to have the commendable desire to realize his freedom. He wanted to call no man "master." To enjoy the full privileges of liberty, he must hire to some new man, whom he could call "boss" or "cap'n," and who would not dare to raise the lash, since he could claim the rights of citizenship and the protection of law. It was something great to make contracts, and sign his name with a, "his X mark," binding the "boss" to pay him a stipulated sum of money or such a part of the crop at harvest time. But we will do the negro the justice to say that he worked much better than was expected.

Nevertheless, though the negroes received good wages, they were not prosperous. They never have been, and never will be. They did not labor as they had done under the *regime* of the whip. We repeat, that they are an improvident and thriftless race. They appear to think of nothing but present enjoyment. The consequence is, though they bear the name of freedmen, they are yet slaves, and, we regret to say, they are in a much worse pecuniary condition than they were in a state of

bondage. Few of them have homes of their own, and the large majority "live from hand to mouth."

It is strange that this race of people despise the word "negro," and "nigger," as it is pronounced in the South. It quickly arouses their ire to be called "negro." They insist upon it, strenuously, that they are "cullud pussons." Ask any one of them for the reason of this strange antipathy to a mere word, and he will tell you that "the ole devil is a nigger." To retain their friendship, some new name will have to be given to the race, in history and geography. It may be worthy of remark, while we are on this subject, that the *ante-bellum* negroes, who are fast disappearing, have a contempt for the rising generation, and declare that even their own children, born in a state of freedom, are "no 'count." We believe that when death removes this element, this feeble check upon negro impudence and encroachment, their insolence to the whites will become so great that we shudder to think what will be the solution of this social problem. The repeal of the Civil Rights Bill, which once compelled hotels, steamboats, and railways to furnish first-class accommodations to negroes, has had no tendency whatever to open their eyes to their future. In spite of law, they clamorously insist upon the enjoyment of privileges which a hasty and prejudiced legislation once conferred upon them. Those who believed in that false assumption of the Declaration of Independence, that, "all men are born free and equal," were in too great haste to disannul the law of Heaven, which declares that some nations are superior to others. Men, in times of great excitement and deep-rooted prejudices, do and say things of which they afterward have to repent, and which may recoil upon themselves. The Northern people may some day regret what they did in the hour of triumph. Constitutional amendments, forced at the

point of the bayonet, making the negro the equal of the white man, have had a bad effect upon the negroes. They regard the right of citizenship synonymous with a right to the country itself. They claim and clamor for *half* the offices, as if they were justly entitled to them, simply because they have been honored with the elective franchise. They forget that Africa is their fatherland. They have no affection for it whatever, and could not be persuaded to return to it, except *vi et armis*. To mingle with white Americans in all the affairs of life, to have possession of the country jointly, to have the way open to the highest offices of the government, in a word, to enjoy the very same privileges which the white people do, is their idea and cherished dream. But this can never be, and will never do. Those who violated the Constitution of the United States, and forcibly set the negro free, are becoming convinced that they were in too great haste. The effervescence of Northern fanaticism is beginning to subside. They see the effects of rash legislation in the vain attempt to elevate the negro to a sphere where he is utterly out of place. In the course of a century, probably much less time, the people North and South will take the same view of the question. But, before that time comes, we fear the negro will become more boisterous and insolent, and then—*nous verrons*.

In the beginning of this chapter we remarked that the sudden emancipation of all the enforced labor of the South threw the Southern social machinery into confusion. Soon a great many of the negroes manifested a decided aversion to cooking. This produced great inconvenience; for the large majority of Southern ladies had little or no experience in the culinary art. Their time had been passed mostly in the parlor, and not in the kitchen. Even with the aid of "Mrs. Hill's Cook

Book," not many of them could, at first, manage to prepare a respectable dinner. They did not understand the practical details of the art, which had been given up entirely to the blacks. Many Southern ladies had not the physical ability to perform the duties of the *cuisine*. They had been delicately reared, and could not endure the hard labor and the fatigue of dishing up meals three times a day. Hence, they were under the necessity of hiring a cook. And now came the trouble. Some of the negroes demanded exorbitant wages, and some, who offered themselves in the capacity of cooks, knew nothing about the art; yet they had to be employed. It was soon discovered by those who were under the necessity of hiring cooks, that the family expenses were doubled. The provisions, somehow, mysteriously disappeared. But soon this mystery ceased to be such, for it was not long a secret that the cook was feeding other families of her own color. Yet there was no remedy. The white ladies were in the power of their cooks. If it were intimated to the black negress that she was suspected of dishonesty, she would become indignant, and leave without an hour's notice. After she had gone, to hire another was but to go through the same process. But, in the course of a few years, the white ladies learned to do their own work, and then the negro cooks began to find it a rather difficult matter to obtain a situation. They were glad to secure employment at five or six dollars a month. They have learned a lesson, and now they go from house to house humbly begging to ply their vocation as cooks.

One morning, about two weeks before the execution of Bathie was to call the country together, from "Dan to Beersheba," to witness the last agonies of a fellow-being, the cook of the jailer's wife failed to make her appearance. She had been offered better wages the day before, and had left without giving her employer notice.

Mrs. Hayfield, the jailer's spouse, at a late hour in the morning had to go into the kitchen herself, and hastily prepare the best breakfast she could, under the circumstances. In an hour afterward a young negress presented herself at the prison, and applied for the vacant situation. She was plainly but neatly dressed, and had an appearance indicating docility and humility—rare qualities then as well as now.

“What sort of cook are you?” asked Mrs. Hayfield, who was in no very good humor. “I reckon you're like the rest of 'em, though, that go off without saying a word about it. I had a good one, but she put out somewhere last night, and left everything on my hands. That's the way they all do us. But, what can you do? Talk fast. I have n't got time to dilly-dally.”

“I only ax a trial,” replied the negress. “If I do n't suit, you can turn me off.”

“But, can you cook at all?” inquired Mrs. Hayfield.

“O, yes, Missis, certainly I ken.”

“That's what they all say. But some of 'em, I find, after I've hired 'em, know nothin' at all about it, and then I have to learn 'em, and when they learn a little somethin', they thank me by walking off. That's the way the black wench treated me this mornin'.”

“Yes, 'um, I met her dis mornin', an' she told me I could come here if I wanted to.”

“What did the black heifer leave for?”

“She said de work was too hard, an' dat dar was too much to do, an' dat she was afeard of de pris'ners.”

“That was all a lie!” exclaimed Mrs. Hayfield. “How could the prisoners hurt her?”

“I dun'no mum, onless dey could git out.”

“S'pose they did get out, what would they want to hurt her for? Besides, there is only one here now, and

he's in the iron cage, and won't be there long, for he is to be hung in a few days."

"Poor feller!" said the negress, "what has he done to be hung fur?"

"He killed a man, to rob him, I reckon, but I don't know."

"What's his name, Missis?"

"Tom Jones. "But I hav'n't got time to stand here talkin' to you. You want to hire?"

"Yes 'um."

"How much wages do you ask?"

"Well, I dun'no mum. I ain't hard to satisfy. How much has you bin givin'?"

"Different prices. It depends on how you can cook."

"Well, 'spose I tries you a week, an' den we can 'gree 'bout de wages. I ain't afeard but you'll do right."

"Very well. If you're a good cook, I won't suffer you to leave me on account of wages. So it's a trade. What's your name."

"Mary."

"Mary who?"

"Well 'un, it's jes Mary. I don't want any more name."

"It makes no difference to me," said Mrs. Hayfield. "But if you don't care, I'll call you Moll. It's short."

"All right, mum. Moll will do well enough."

"Are you fond of company? Mr. Hayfield don't like for his cook to receive visitors much."

"You won't fall out wid me on dat account, Missis. I is not a gwine to have no company."

"It's time to go about dinner."

Moll immediately began her work, and the first meal

which she prepared convinced Mrs. Hayfield that she had found a cook who fully understood the niceties of the culinary art. After the lapse of two or three days she resolved to retain Moll in her service as long as possible, if good wages would be any inducement. For this cook, unlike others, neither made nor received any visits. Besides, there was a very perceptible diminution in the family expenditures for provisions. There was always something left over for the children after each meal. Before this, Mrs. Hayfield, when her children clamored for the "scraps" remaining from dinner or breakfast, generally found herself in the condition of "Old Mother Hubbard," who went to the cupboard to get her dog a bone. The cook had carried off everything for her own family, or for some of her "cullud" friends. But Moll seemed to be an honest cook. Accordingly, Mrs. Hayfield, before the expiration of the first week, said—

"Well, Moll, I am willing now to make a contract with you. I want to hire you. You suit me exactly."

"I is glad you is satisfied, Missis," replied the negress, in an humble manner. "I thought I could please ye."

"If you'll only keep it up, though," said the lady. "Some of them do finely for two or three weeks, and some not that long, and then they begin to slack off, and do so bad that I have to dismiss them."

"But I won't do that-a' way, Missis."

"Oh, no. That's what they all say. It looks like there's no confidence to be put in them."

"I knows, Missis, dat many of 'em does slack off, as you says, but I don't think you'll find me one of dat sort."

"I hope not," said Mrs. Hayfield. "But before I

hire you, I want to tell you that you must occupy the servants' room, out there in the yard. I have other use for the room you are now in."

"O, Missis," said Moll, pleadingly, "don't make me do dat, please."

"Why?" asked Mrs. Hayfield, opening her eyes in wonder. "What makes you so opposed to that? The room is comfortable, is n't it?"

"Yes 'um, it 'pears to be. But I has done tole you I wasn't raised up wid niggers. I is bin used to sleepin' in de white folks' house all my life. I is a house servant, an' I don't like to mix wid niggers. I'll keep de room jes as nice as if white folks staid in it."

"You seem not to like to associate with negroes," said Mrs. Hayfield, thoughtfully.

"No, mum. I was n't raised dat way."

"That's one thing I like about you. Well, if you'll keep the run-about negroes out of the room, you may remain in it, though I at first intended you should occupy it only for two or three days."

"Thank ye, Missis. I won't let no other nigger come into de room."

"If you do, I'll have to put you out of it. I give you fair warning."

"Yes 'm, I onderstan'."

"How much wages do you ask?"

"How much does ye think I is worth?"

"I do n't like to price other people's goods."

"Well 'um, is ye willin' to give six dollars a month? I think it's worth dat."

"Yes; I'm willing to give that."

"All right. I'll stay awhile longer, and see how we agrees."

"You must stay a month, anyhow."

"No, mum, I can't promise dat. Hit all 'pends on circumstances."

"What kind of circumstances, Moll? You're not going to be married, are you?"

"No, mum, I has no sich notion as dat. Dar is some other circumstances, dat I can't tell you, now. You'll see."

"Well, have it your own way, then," said Mrs. Hayfield, "but stay as long as you can."

"Yes 'um. I will."

Thus it was arranged.

In a day or two after this partial contract was made, the Sheriff was taken quite ill, and one of his duties had now to be performed by Moll. Three times a day she carried the solitary prisoner his meals. In the iron cage there was a small opening, through which could be handed the diminutive plates and other little articles which might be necessary to the prisoner's comfort. The Sheriff never suffered any but himself or one of his deputies to open the door. Bathie hardly noticed the fact that a new cook had been substituted for the one who had occasionally brought his meals when the jailer did not feel disposed to do it himself. Bathie did not speak to her in a way that required anything but monosyllabic replies. The next evening after his sickness the Sheriff became so much worse that his wife felt some alarm. She sat at the bedside, and left all the household affairs under Moll's control and management.

It was two o'clock that day when Moll carried up the prisoner's dinner. As he received the little plates through the opening, she said, in a whisper—

"Keep silent. I wants to save ye. Be ready to git away either to-night or to-morrow night."

"What!" he exclaimed, with a violent start.

"Talk in a whisper, for yo' own sake," she said, hurriedly, and in considerable agitation.

"Who are you?" he asked, looking intently at her.

"It do n't matter. I has come here to save ye, if I can. I is employed by some o' yo' frens. Do n't ask me any more questions, but do jes as I tell ye."

"What must I do?"

"Nothin, now. Wait till I tell ye. But be ready by to-night or to-morrow night."

"Certainly, I will make the attempt, and I will reward you handsomely, if you will give me the opportunity."

"Never mind about dat. We'll talk 'bout dat at some other time. But do n't be too much lifted up, 'cause I may fail. Hit's a dangerous 'speriment, but I's agwine to do my bes'. I mus' go now, or dey'll 'spect suthin'.

Saying this, she hastily descended and attended to her household duties. In an hour afterward she said to Mrs. Hayfield—

"Missis, I's bin invited to a weddin' to-night. Does ye object to my gwine? I hasn't bin off de place since I come here. I hope yo' wo n't care. It's a big favor."

"I thought you did n't associate with negroes," replied Mrs. Hayfield.

"Sometimes I is throwed wid 'em, Missis. I can't help it. The white folks won't invite a nigger to dar weddin's. So ef I do n't go to nigger weddin's, I can't go to none."

"Well," said Mrs. Hayfield, "you have been very good about staying at home, and I suppose I'll have to give my consent. But when do you want to start?"

"Not till arter supper."

"Very well. Go on, but do n't stay all night."

Moll somehow managed to have a late supper that

evening, notwithstanding Mrs. Hayfield's complaints. When it was at last prepared, there were none to partake of it except Mrs. Hayfield and the children. The Sheriff had improved during the course of the evening, but he was still quite sick. All were seated and had been helped, and now Moll thought the time had come to act. With a wildly beating heart she left the dining-room, and slipped quietly to the Sheriff's room. Behind the bed's head, on a nail, hung the bunch of keys to the cells and the iron cage. To secure these was an indispensable part of the programme. How to obtain possession of them without attracting attention or arousing suspicion, was the chief difficulty to be overcome. Moll had all along trusted to her wits to accomplish this necessary object. She had devised no fixed plan. But now, when the crisis had come, the thought of what she was attempting caused her to tremble. But there was no time for hesitation. As noiselessly as possible, yet boldly, she walked into the sick man's room, stopped at the bedside, and looked in his face. He breathed as if he might be asleep. With a voice slightly quivering, she said, in a low tone: "Mr. Hayfield."

He paid no attention. Surely, thought Moll, he must be asleep. Then, with cat-like tread, she glided behind the bed's head. She thought she could distinctly hear her heart beat. But with tremulous hand she seized the keys, and there was a slight jingling, which aroused the Sheriff, who immediately asked, in a feeble voice—

"Who is that?"

In an instant Moll was at the bedside.

"I come to see ef yo' wants anything to eat."

"No; but I thought I heard the jail keys rattle."

"So ye did, sir. I happened to strike 'em wid my head, as I was lookin' fur de broom," she answered, while her very knees smote together.

"Yo' say ye do n't want nothin' to eat?" quickly asked the cook, anxious to draw his mind away from the keys.

"No."

It was well for the shaking girl that the sick man was under the influence of an opiate, for he had scarcely answered before he fell into a slumber. The cook next turned the wick of the lamp down as low as she dared, so that there would be as little light as possible when Mrs. Hayfield should return. This done, she tripped lightly out of the room with the keys clenched in her hand under her apron. She next dropped them into the bucket of water which was to be carried up to the prisoner, and which was to be placed on the outside of the cage immediately under the opening to which allusion has been made, so that the prisoner could reach out and get water whenever he desired. After supper Mrs. Hayfield and her children returned to the sick room. The cook followed, and stood at the door listening. The Sheriff was awakened by the entrance of his wife, and turning on his side, said, in a tone so loud that Moll could hear—

"Wife, I had a strange dream just now."

"What was it, Deary?" she asked.

"I dreamed that Moll came in here and carried off the jail keys."

On hearing this, poor Moll trembled from head to foot. The perspiration stood in great beads upon her forehead, and her heart beat so violently that she imagined she could hear its pulsations.

"What would she want with the keys?"

"I don't know. But look and see if the keys are safe."

Mrs. Hayfield looked at the place where the keys always hung, and said—

"O, yes, they are safe. They are hanging on the nail where they always stay."

The Sheriff was satisfied with this assurance, and Moll breathed more freely. The truth was, the cook had procured another bunch of keys, which she left hanging on the nail. Mrs. Hayfield had never examined closely the jail keys, and was consequently easily deceived. Had it not been for the cook's foresight, her scheme would certainly have miscarried. But only half of her perilous undertaking was accomplished. Hastily she went back to the dining-room, in order to carry the prisoner his supper. On the second floor, she placed the lamp in such a way that it could not be seen by any below what she was doing.

"Take dis piece o' burnt cork, an' black yer face an' han's as quick as ye ken," she said, in a whisper. While he was doing this, she took the keys and tried them in the lock, till she found one which would fit it. The heavy door turned without noise, for the girl had poured oil on the hinges. Again she hastily descended to the foot of the stairs, and returned with a bundle.

"Put on this dress," she said.

This was done in a moment, and Bathie was transformed into an apparently respectable negress, except in height.

"Are you ready to go?"

"Yes."

"Take the North road. Follow it about a mile, till you come to a large post-oak tree, on the left-han'. Stop, an' whistle three times, an' a good fren will meet ye wid a hoss. You know den what to do."

"For Heaven's sake," said Bathie, in an earnest whisper, "tell me the name of my deliverer. I must know."

"And for Heaven's sake," answered the cook, "don't

ask me questions. Ye hev no time to lose. Go at once down stairs, boldly. If ye sees any un dey'll thinks it's me. Go."

Bathie took the black hand of the cook, gently pressed it to his lips, and went down stairs, as he had been directed. The hall door was open, and he stepped out into the fresh air, and walked leisurely along the street. He met several persons, but no one paid any special attention to him. With strange thoughts, he left the town of Baalbek, following the directions which had been given him by his sable deliverer. As a matter of course, he was greatly perplexed as to the identity of his unknown friend, and, as he walked along the highway, indulged in conjectures. Who could it be? Was it some male friend, who had so admirably played the *role* of a negro cook? Why might it not be Langdon? That was a thought which had crowded, among others, into his confused mind. Yes; now he had solved the problem. Langdon had visited Mary, and together they had planned this escape. Why had he not thought of this at first? But how could Langdon have executed it so well? Would he not have been missed? Besides, he was taller than the cook; therefore, it could not have been Langdon. Only one more solution occurred to him, which seemed hardly probable. Might it not be Mary Smith, herself? But how could she possibly take such risks? No, no, it could not be Mary. Finally, he concluded that he did not know, and that guessing was useless. The friend whom he would soon meet no doubt knew all about it. While busied with these conjectures, he was walking away as rapidly as compatibility with safety would allow. It would not do to arouse the suspicion of a chance passer-by, by hasty movements. At the distance of a mile, Bathie thought he could perceive the outlines of a human form

in the road. He at once gave the appointed signal, and, to his great joy, was promptly answered. In a moment more he was within ten paces of some person, and said—

“Who is that?”

“Bress de good Lo’d,” exclaimed a well-known voice, “hit am me, an’ no oder inderviduwal. Dat am you, Mas Baffie?”

“Yes.”

“O, how I ar rejoiced,” said Pomp, “dat you am in a state ob saferty once mo’.”

And the gigantic negro threw his mighty arms around his young master, and tenderly embraced him, sobbing with joy.

“My dear old friend,” said Bathie, deeply affected, “you shall never lose anything by your devotion to me. You shall be rewarded till you are satisfied.”

“Don’t infer to de ’lusion ob any reward,” answered Pomp. “You is awar dat I wants nuffin, an’ hit’s mouty little dat I hez any use fur in dis sinful worl’. But we hez no time to be talkin’ here. We mus’ be a makin’ tracks, an’ fast, too. Wait a minit till I comes back.”

Accordingly, uncle Pomp hurriedly turned from the road into the forest, but returned in a few moments, leading two horses.

“Here am a pair o’ pistols dat yer uncle saunt ye. Dey am all loaded. Now, sah, mount dis hoss, an’ we’ll trabble.”

The two then journeyed on toward the Mississippi river, in as brisk a gait as the horses could endure without exhausting their strength. Pomp appeared to be well acquainted with the route, and Bathie trusted to him implicitly. The negro, it seems, can easily find his way to any place to which he wishes to go. He appears to

be endowed with the instinct of a horse in this respect. You can hardly lose him in the woods. He diligently studies the stars, and by them and other indications can find his way through the pathless forest.

As they were riding along Bathie determined he would question Pomp in regard to the means and instrumentalities by which his escape had been effected. It was evident that three persons were concerned in it—his uncle, Pomp, and the cook. As they must have planned together, he had no doubt that Pomp could inform him who was the cook, especially since she had played the principal part.

"Uncle Pomp," said Bathie, "I am very much perplexed about the way I have been enabled to escape; but, of course, you can tell me all about it. How was it managed?"

"Mas Baffie," replied the negro, speaking slowly, "dat am a problurm dat hez bin a 'plexin' dis head o' mine, too. I hez bin bodderin' my brain ober it no little. I ware jes' about ter perpose some unterrogctions to you, concarnin' o' dis matter."

"Do you not know who is the cook at the jail? That is one of the mysteries of the affair."

"So it am, Mas Baffie. You are correck in dat 'sertion."

"Do you pretend to tell me you are not acquainted with her?" asked Bathie, in vexation.

"Jes' so, Mas Baffie. I are boun' to tell you, I does n't know her."

"But you must have had some communication with her, or how did you know when to meet me?"

"O, yes, sah. As to dat, I hez bin aroun' dat town fur de las' two weeks. Your uncle Sam ware in camp 'bout five miles from de town, what d'ye call it, Bull-back?"

"Baalbek," said Bathie.

"Yes, sah. He pertended to be a huntin'. I comed to town ebery night ob de worl', ter see ef I could n't 'vise some way fur ye to 'scape. One evenin', not long 'go, I ware a passin' slowly roun' de jail, ter see ef I could n't commuercate wid ye some way, an' dat cook sees me, an' talks ter me about it. I met her at de back-yard gate. She neber spoke only in whispers. I neber hez seed her in de day-time. So you sees, dar ware little chance fur me ter find out her viserbilities."

"Did she never send any letters to my uncle?"

"No, sah, nary letter. 'Sides, she 'pears to be a nigger cook. How gwine ter expect her ter write letters?"

"Some of them can write," remarked Bathie.

"Dem as is eddicated niggers ken. But she am none ob dat sort."

"How do you know that?"

"Ha! ha! ha! ha!" laughed uncle Pomp. "You spose I 'se bin livin' in dis sinful worl' all dese years widout eyes ob obsivation? I could tell by de gram-maratical mistakes she made. No, sah, she am not a eddicated pusson."

"Did she tell you to meet me to-night?"

"Yes, sah. She telled me las' night to meet you, a mile from Bull-back, on dis very night, widout fail; an' she even telled me about dat oak whar you foun' me."

"She has planned everything admirably, anyhow, whoever she may be," remarked Bathie, thoughtfully. "I can hardly believe she is a colored woman. I do not believe a negro woman could devise and execute such a scheme."

"Some nigger wimmens am as keen as briers, sah. Dey hez got mo' sense dan a heaps ob white wimmens."

"When was the first time you ever saw her?"

"Ra'aly I hez neber centrated my vision on her at all. I telled ye, I allurz met her at de back-yard gate, in de night."

"Does my uncle know who she is?"

"I 'se not able ter gin ye no inf'mation on dat pint, neider, sah."

"Where is Uncle Sam?"

"He am to meet us at de riber."

"Strange! strange!" muttered Bathie.

"Dar am some mystery 'bout de affar," said Uncle Pomp. "Sometimes I 'se bin tempted ter think dat 'ar cook ware a white 'oman."

"What made you think that?"

"Wal, sah, one 'spicious carc'mstance ware dat she did n't have de 'fluvier dat empreses de nosal oregins whenever a nigger comes in smelliu' distance. You knows a nigger am diffrunt from all oder beins in dat one respect. In dis pertickler case I thought dat 'culiar scent ware absint, an' dat fack rouses my 'spicions."

"What white lady would you suspect?"

"Wy, who could 'speck, but Miss Mary Smiff?"

"I have thought about her. But this woman is larger than Mary. Besides, I cannot think Mary capable of such an undertaking."

Seeing that he could get nothing out of Pomp in regard to the matter, Bathie endeavored to dismiss the subject from his mind, and followed his sable guide in silence. They occasionally, however, conversed for a few moments upon different topics.

About two hours before daylight they left the road and turned into the forest. Bathie, who was very much fatigued, having had no exercise for months, insisted upon taking rest. Taking off his saddle, he made a pillow of it, and a couch of his blanket, and threw himself upon his rude bed, and was soon in the embrace of

profound sleep. Pomp sat down against a tree, and, according to the practice of his race, literally went to the land of "Nod." Under the circumstances, he preferred this posture, because he could sleep like the cat or dog, and wake up every few moments, thus performing the duty of a sentinel.

When the sun was an hour's travel above the horizon the next morning Bathie awoke, and they pursued their journey through the woods. Traveling in this way, they in due time arrived at the shore of the renowned "Father of Waters." Here they met Mr. Beaumont, who embraced his nephew with tears in his eyes.

"Poor boy," he said; "you have had a hard time of it, and made a narrow escape."

"But I have not quite escaped yet," replied Bathie. "I am not safe, by any means."

"You can escape now, though, with even half management. I have a skiff ready, and you know how to find your hiding place."

Bathie was burning with curiosity.

"Uncle Sam," he said, "you have planned my escape in a manner worthy of a general. It has been admirably executed."

"You are giving credit to the wrong person, Bathie. The escape was not planned by me."

"Who, then, was it?"

"Why," said Mr. Beaumont, in surprise, "you ought to know that better than I do; for it was the cook at the jail, whom I suppose you saw every day. Is it possible you do not know her?"

"I do not. She refused to give her name."

"Well, that is strange," said Mr. Beaumont.

"What do you know about it, Uncle?"

"Well, all I know is, she came to my house one night, and proposed the plan which has been so success-

fully executed. Of course, I was anxious to do anything to aid you in escaping, and I agreed to follow her directions. Pomp has told you all about it, has he not?"

"He has told me all he knew; but it is of little importance."

"It is a rather mysterious affair," remarked Mr. Beaumont, after a brief pause.

"Uncle," said Bathie, abruptly, "do you believe that cook is a negro?"

"I certainly took her to be one; but she would not talk about herself, nor tell where she lived. I could get nothing out of her, except that she wanted to save you."

"Did she assign no reason for the interest she takes in my welfare?"

"None, except that she believed you to be innocent."

"Certainly it is some one who feels a very deep solicitude on my account. If it is a negro, I do not remember ever having seen her. I am inclined to the opinion that it is some white person in disguise."

"I do not know," replied the uncle. "But it is enough for me that you are safe."

"But it is not enough for me, though," exclaimed Bathie. "She must be found out and rewarded."

"Certainly, if you can find her; but my opinion is, that will be hard to do. You seem to have no clew at all. She has very effectively covered up her footsteps, and does not wish to be known."

That night two persons were going up the Mississippi river in a skiff. They traveled only under cover of darkness.

At twelve o'clock one night, just as the last rays of the moon were giving a farewell kiss to the murmuring waters of Linden river, they, that is Bathie and Uncle Pomp, paused close to the bank.

“Bress de good Lo’d,” exclaimed Pomp, fervently, “you am safe once more. Pity, Mas Baffie, you can’t glorify de name of de Lo’d.”

“I do, in my way, Uncle Pomp. But never mind now. Can you make the dive?”

“Yes, sah.”

So saying, Pomp straightened himself and plunged into the water. Bathie rowed to the other mouth, which the negro opened, and presently he stood in his old home, feeling a sense of safety and security.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### A GREAT SURPRISE.

“I cannot love; to counterfeit is base,  
And cruel too; dissembled love is like  
The poison of perfumes, a killing sweetness.”

The next morning after Bathie had made his escape from the jail of Baalbek, Mrs. Hayfield awoke as usual, and dressed herself. There was not the least noise about the house or in the yard. Going hurriedly into the kitchen, she discovered no indications of any preparations for breakfast. The cook was nowhere to be seen.

“It’s just like ’em,” the good lady muttered to herself. “That’s the way they all do—leave you just when they are needed most. I declare, I haven’t got any confidence in any nigger on the face of the earth. They’ll make any sort of promise, and do n’t mind breaking it any more than takin’ a drink of water. They might as well have set the mules free and allowed ’em to vote. If I had my way I’d put the last one of ’em back into slavery. It’s the only condition that suits ’em. They’re a pretty set, goin’ to weddin’s, and ridin’ about over the country in shacklin’ old buggies, and tryin’ to imitate white folks. But possibly Moll has staid all night somewheres, and will be in presently.”

But fearing that this hypothesis might not prove to be a fact, she commenced to prepare the meal herself. It was well that she did, for an hour passed away, and the cook had not made her appearance. While she was busied about the breakfast, she was also preparing a round scolding for Moll, whenever she should return. After awhile the meal was ready, and while the children

were eating, she concluded to carry the prisoner his breakfast. She went to the cage, but at a glance perceived there was no one in it. The door was wide open, and the keys were hanging to the lock. The solution of the problem intuitively presented itself to Mrs. Hayfield's mind. A man would, in all likelihood, have stopped a moment to reason about it. But this lady instantly jumped to the proper conclusion, without the least pause to weigh possibilities and probabilities. She stood in no need of any syllogism to enable her to form a correct opinion in regard to the affair. It never once entered the lady's head that the prisoner might have male friends on the outside, who might have been engaged in it. She turned slightly pale as she said to herself—

“This is that Moll's work. She turned the prisoner out last night, and hired to me for that purpose. I always did suspect her of being up to some trick or other. But I did n't have any idea that this was what she was after. She's been hired to do it, of course. Well, well, well!”

Fearing the effect which the news might have upon her sick husband, she went quietly down stairs, and dispatched one of her children after the chief deputy. As soon as he came, she met him at the door, and informed him what had happened.

“That new cook of mine has done it all,” she said, “but she can't have gone very far by this time. You can arrest her.”

“I'd rather have the prisoner than her,” said the deputy.

“Yes, but she ought to be punished too, the trifin' hussy, sneakin' round and turnin' murderers out of jail.”

The deputy made some inquiries in regard to the affair, and immediately set about collecting a *posse* to go

in pursuit. Soon the news was all over town, that the prisoner was out and gone, and that Mrs. Hayfield's cook had done the mischief, and there was a great commotion. Then this startling news spread rapidly over the country, and in two or three days Mary Smith, with a glad heart, read an account of the escape, and the description of the prisoner, in the Vicksburg papers. Ten days afterward a reward of \$500 was offered by the Governor, for the apprehension of one Thomas Jones. Mary smiled, but made no remark to any one. Nobody rejoiced more than she did over this escape; yet it was sad rejoicing.

Three days after this exciting event who should make an appearance at the hotel but Langdon? This time Mary's face was crimsoned as they met.

"I know you have heard the news," were the first words he uttered, after the usual salutation.

"To what news do you allude?" she asked, without manifesting any surprise.

"The escape of your friend, of course."

"O, yes, I read about it in the newspapers, and I am glad of it, because I honestly believe him to be innocent of the charge brought against him. Nothing short of his own confession could make me think him guilty."

"It was a well-planned escape," said Langdon, "and yet simple. It seems that the Sheriff's cook managed the affair."

"I presume some of his friends were in the secret. Perhaps you are one of them," she added, with a laugh.

"No, not I," answered Langdon, with some energy. "I cannot set myself up in opposition to the laws of the land."

"Suppose," said Mary, gravely, "you had a dear friend condemned by the law, or judged guilty by a jury

—a friend whom you had every reason to believe innocent, would you make no effort to save him ?”

“O, yes, I would make every possible legal effort.”

“I do not mean that. I will put the question in another form. Suppose you were engaged to a young lady, and she should have been found in the attitude in which my friend was, and she should be tried and condemned, as he was, would you not try to save her, by even illegal means? Answer me plainly.”

She looked at him so earnestly that Langdon slightly winced. His reply, he fancied, might have some effect on his own temporal destiny, and he hesitated a moment.

“Are you afraid to answer?” she asked, gazing solemnly into his face.

“Miss Mary,” said Langdon, with a laugh, “why are you so serious about abstractions? What difference can it make whether I answer or not?”

“Abstraction!” exclaimed the young lady. “How can you employ the word, when the hypothesis was a reality before your eyes?”

“What! are you, then, really engaged to your friend?”

“No, no,” she quickly cried; “but, as I have told you, he is as a brother.”

“But he is no very particular friend of mine,” answered Langdon, endeavoring to avoid her question.

“The supposition I made,” replied Mary, “had reference to one more than a friend. We supposed you to be engaged to the young lady, and she is charged with the commission of a crime of which you believe her to be innocent—what would you do?”

“Tell me,” said Langdon, “what would you do under such circumstances?”

“You try the old plan of answering one question by asking another. But I do not mind telling you what I

would do. I answer, everything possible a woman could do. I think I would be equal to Alcestis, if it would be of any avail. What more could I do than that?"

"Nothing," replied Langdon.

"But that is not all. Do you suppose that I would hesitate to violate the law, if it stood in my way?"

"I hardly think you would," answered Langdon, with a smile.

"No, I would not," she answered, with flashing eyes; "I would break it, with no more compunctions of conscience than I would break a spider's web. But what would you do? I have answered you; now answer me."

"Why do you insist so strenuously upon my answering a mere abstract question?"

"I insist. Answer me."

"It is an old question of casuistry," replied Langdon, thoughtfully, "and has been often discussed. The question resolves itself into this: Is it wise to outrage my conscience and destroy my prospects for eternity, for the sake of doing a little doubtful temporary good; or should I not be true to my religious principles, even though it involve some suffering on earth? According to my view, that is what the question involves. Has any friend—even an innocent friend, as you suppose, who would be better off in death, if he were a true Christian—the right to sacrifice my soul, in order that he may live a few years longer? If dying in her place would save her, I might be willing to do that; but to tell a falsehood, or act a falsehood, for her benefit, would be altogether a different matter. The salvation of my soul is of far more importance than temporal happiness, which soon fleeth away as a shadow."

Mary was silent and thoughtful. Must we say that this reply, so different from what she had anticipated,

elevated Langdon in her estimation? "Surely," she thought, "a man so true to religious principle, must be animated by a lofty soul. I have been doing him injustice. I have taken only a one-sided view of the question. His mind is broader and deeper than mine."

Her face wore a serious air, as these reflections passed through her mind.

"Is my answer satisfactory?" asked Langdon, in a gentle tone."

"It was not exactly what I expected, but I will accept it."

"Thank you," he replied, with a brightening face; "I was under the impression you would agree with me, after reflecting upon it."

"I have not said that I agree with you," she replied, quickly. "I might admit the correctness of your principle, but I still say that I would break the civil law, without scruple, to save a friend of mine."

"Would not that be tantamount to violating the moral law?"

"I suppose it might, but I do not care."

"Well, for your sake," said Langdon, not caring to prolong the controversy, "I am glad that your friend has made his escape, especially since you believe him innocent. But I want to talk with you about a different subject. Why have you not answered my letters, according to your promise? I wrote twice in the past two weeks."

"For the reason," said Mary, blushing, "that I did not receive them till a few hours ago. I intended to reply to-morrow, but since you have come, that will not be necessary."

"I suppose the mails were in fault," said Langdon, "and I accept your apology. Your friend acquainted me with the contents of the letter I brought you,"

added the minister, abruptly. "You believe what he said?"

"Certainly. I never doubt anything Mr. Jones affirms. He is a truthful man," said Mary.

"You undoubtedly, then, remember that he urged you to accept my suit?"

Mary blushed, and became aware that her eyes were moistening. Was it possible that she must now renounce all hopes of Bathie? One little word, a feeble "yes," would settle her temporal destiny forever. The Rubicon would then be crossed, and she would have to drag out a miserable existence, without an opportunity to exercise the deep and powerful love which governed her whole being. Now, there was no impediment to her affection; she could think of Bathie as much as she pleased. But once the wife of Langdon, all her fond thoughts in regard to another would be illicit.

"Well, he spoke very highly of you," she said, at length.

"Is it worth while to renew my suit? May I ask you again to be mine?"

"Mr. Langdon," said Mary, turning her eyes full upon him, "I think I have already told you that I am unworthy of you. Besides, I am not prepared to take such an important step."

"Do you refuse my suit?" asked Langdon, in a tone of despondency, "Let me know, once for all. If my attentions are disagreeable, end my suspense and I will go."

"I do not refuse, if you see proper to persist," she answered, slowly and sadly. "I know not what I might do in the course of time. It would be unreasonable in me to ask you to cherish hopes and expectations which may result only in disappointment. I have great respect for you, and that may possibly ripen into a warmer feeling. Yet, I cannot make promises."

"Well," replied Langdon, with a smile, which was more sickly than joyful, "that gives me at least some slight grounds on which to base a hope of ultimate success. I have already waited long and patiently. Surely, such devotion as mine must be rewarded at last."

"I do not know. We women are said to be strange creatures. But I will candidly say, that if you find another who suits you, and there are many who are much better qualified than I to fill the station of a minister's wife, you had better not delay on my account. I am as uncertain as the winds."

"You are not fickle," said Langdon, "but are undecided. Will you continue to write to me?"

"Yes, if you desire it."

"Will you let me visit you occasionally?"

"I will be glad to see you," she said, "whenever you can make it convenient to call."

With this understanding, Langdon the next morning started homeward. Mary kept her promise, and answered his letters. Langdon perused them with eagerness, looking for that one word of four letters which would make him one of the happiest men in this lower world, but he looked in vain. She wrote such letters as Bathie had once written to her; that is, they were such as a sister might write to a brother.

But we must now turn our attention to matters which will, in all probability, prove to be more interesting.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### MORE FUGITIVES.

“This is a traveler, sir ; knows men and  
Manners, and has plough'd up the sea so far  
Till both the poles have knock'd.”

Again Bathie was confined to the same old monotonous life in the cave, which he once hoped he had escaped forever. But his personal safety demanded this self-incarceration. Shut up in black, thick darkness, whose gloom could be relieved only by the ingenuity of art, he led anything but a pleasant existence. Again he was compelled to undergo the tortures of a rebuking conscience. True, Langdon's explanation of his list of imaginary self-contradictions of the Bible had well nigh destroyed one of his strongholds, but had not convinced him of the truth of Holy Writ. Our reader will remember that Langdon explained only a few of what Bathie had regarded as inconsistencies, but perceiving how easily the minister had explained them, he carefully revised them himself, and saw that they could be reconciled by an honest mind. Bathie had too much sense to cling to a theory which stood upon such untenable grounds. Consequently, he no longer relied upon his list of “self-contradictions” as proof against the divine origin of the Bible. But notwithstanding this, he was still an unbeliever, and being an Infidel, coupled with the fact that he could not but regard himself as a murderer, he was in the waters of deep trouble. Such will be the state of any Infidel who *thinks*, unless he is dead to all the nobler hopes and higher aspirations of humanity, and has managed to exterminate conscience

from his moral nature. We are glad to say that Bathie was not this sort of man. He earnestly desired to feel at peace with himself; but he was seeking the remedy from the wrong source. He had an abhorrence of the only source that could restore tranquillity to the outraged conscience. His thoughts, in the blackness of his lonely abode, tended only to enhance his wretchedness. In order to free himself as much as possible from his disagreeable reflections, he devoted the most of his time to hard study, and this severe employment enabled him, at least for a time, to hide his moral self behind the fortifications of mental abstraction. Intrenched in this way, the "secret monitor" could not take his position by storm. Bathie forced himself to solve the most abstruse problems in mathematics—especially in analytical geometry and calculus, and to translate the most difficult works of classical lore. He also studied different systems of philosophy, and pored over the works of Plato and Aristotle. In addition to this, he read with avidity all the treatises of Infidels which he could procure. But one thing is worthy of remark: he read nothing which was favorable to Christianity. For instance, he had looked over Paine's "Age of Reason," but never thought of glancing at Watson's "Reply," if he knew there was such a work in existence. We may say, with truth, that this is characteristic of all Infidels. They study only one side of the question. For this reason they are easily perplexed by one who is at all conversant with the evidences of Christianity. It is observed by David Nelson, in his "Cause and Cure of Infidelity," that, it is astonishing how ignorant they are in regard to everything which has a tendency to establish the Divine origin of the Bible. They swallow down the scurrilities of Paine and men of that school, and imagine they are in possession of arguments in

the shape of inconsistencies and contradictions of the Bible that are sufficient to prove that the book is a forgery and an imposition; but it does not seem to occur to them that these boasted arguments might be successfully refuted. Bathie had never read a single work on the evidences of Christian faith. As has been previously stated, he had studied Renan with the closest attention, and believed firmly that the unbelieving Frenchman had found the key to the Life of Jesus Christ. It is strange that he did not notice any of the glaring inconsistencies and the gross misrepresentations of which Renan is guilty. But events soon occurred which forced Bathie to re-examine the ground he occupied.

After two or three months' residence in the cave, when the danger of pursuit had subsided, Bathie was in the habit of standing in the mouth of his dwelling every morning, that he might behold the first rays of the rising sun kiss the tree-tops which shaded the silvery waters of Linden River. It was also refreshing, he imagined, to bathe in the external air, though that in the cavern, as had been fully tested by experience, was perfectly innocuous.

Early one morning he was standing, as usual, in the mouth of the cave, behind the rock which concealed it from view, as heretofore stated. He had risen from his couch, after a restless sleep, desirous of enjoying the daylight, while Pomp was preparing the breakfast. To his surprise he heard a female voice, which sounded as sweet in his ears, and as soft and gentle, as the morning breeze. This voice was down at the river's edge, fifteen or twenty paces below where Bathie stood. The language spoken was broken English, which Bathie understood without great difficulty.

"Father," said the female voice, "what will we do

now? We can go no further, you see, and to turn back is capture."

"I do not despair, my child," replied a male voice, in a tone which was rather inconsistent with what he was saying. "I have not lost faith in God, and I am praying Him to deliver us."

"Do you believe your prayer will be answered?" she asked, in despondency. "I do not see how it can be, under present circumstances."

"Don't you remember," said the father, "about the old prophet of Israel and his servant, when the enemy was approaching? The servant was afraid, and the prophet prayed the Lord to open his eyes, and when this was done, he saw that the mountain was full of horses and chariots. So, if our eyes were opened in the same miraculous way, we, too, might see the chariots and horses of the Lord God of hosts."

That man, thought Bathie, is surely a priest.

"I believe my prayer will be answered in God's own way, though it may not be as we desire at present. He will do what is best for us. It may be His purpose to permit us to be captured. If so, we must submit to the Divine will, without murmuring."

"But capture means death, Father."

"It may, my child. We cannot live always. I've done all I can to preserve our lives. But if it please God that we must die by the hand of violence, I trust we can do so without complaint. The Lord knows we are guilty of no crime, though we have been pursued to this part of the world."

"I did not think they would follow us here," said the lady, "but it seems we cannot escape. What will we do? I am so tired and hungry."

"*Jehovah-Jireh*," was the only answer.

"I have often heard you say that, Father. I admit

that strange things have happened to us, and we have made some seemingly miraculous escapes, but it appears we must be caught now. Where can we hide? The country will be closely searched to-day, and unless we can conceal ourselves somewhere, we will certainly be captured."

Bathie crept cautiously to the top of the rock, and looked down at the speakers. He saw three persons—an elderly gentleman and two ladies. As they had their backs toward him, he could not see their faces. The man stood with his head bent down, as if engaged in profound thought. Presently he said to his daughter (for such seemed to be the relation between them)—

"We can go no further in this direction. All we can do, is to retrace our steps ——."

"Oh! Father, look!" cried the lady, in anguish. "It is too late! We are discovered!"

As she said this, she pointed to the bluff up the river. Bathie looked, and saw three men, who appeared to be gazing at the persons below. They were distant nearly a quarter of a mile. They paused only a moment, and suddenly disappeared. Bathie readily conjectured that they had gone down into the ravine, which has been previously described, to find the entrance to the narrow ledge that ran along close to the water's edge.

"True, child, we are discovered. I know not what to do. May God have mercy upon us."

"We are lost!" exclaimed the lady, in a tone of such deep despair that it smote Bathie to the heart.

"Their condition seems to be similar to mine," said Bathie, to himself. "Why not aid them? They may be pleasant companions."

Under this impulse, Bathie instantly stepped down from the rock, and was within a few paces of the parties

before he was noticed. All looked at him in great alarm.

"Follow me!" said Bathie, speaking rapidly. "I will conceal you. I heard your conversation, and I know your wants."

"Who are you?" asked the gentleman, in a quivering voice, and looking suspiciously at the man who proposed to deliver him.

"I have not time to answer you, now. There is not a moment to lose. If you want to be saved, do not hesitate to trust me. Remain here five minutes, and you are lost. You will be captured by your pursuers. I know very well where they are gone. Come, be quick. I must leave here. I am a fugitive, myself."

The young lady, who had, in the short space of time allowed her, narrowly examined Bathie's handsome face, said—

"Let us trust him, Father. It can be no worse for us."

"Young man, in God's name, don't betray us!" exclaimed the old gentleman.

"O, come on," cried Bathie, impatiently. "But, if you will not come, say so, and I will get back to my retreat."

"Come on, Father," said the young lady, as he moved a pace or two. "I am not afraid to trust the gentleman. He will save us. He has come in answer to your prayer."

The old gentleman, without further hesitation, followed Bathie, who had the two ladies by the hands, and was assisting them up the ascent. Not another word was spoken till they were all safe in the cave. At the mouth Bathie paused, and said—

"No doubt your pursuers will come to this very spot in five minutes, and I will now secure the entrance."

Saying this, Bathie lighted a candle, and then raised up the flat rock which he used to close the cave's mouth, and piled up heavy rocks against it, till no one on the outside could have opened it with ordinary means, even if the existence of such an underground abode had been suspected. He next conducted his guests to his chamber. Soon they smelled the odors from the kitchen, which caused the old gentleman to make some remark about hunger.

"I understood you to say," remarked Bathie, turning to the young lady, "that you were quite hungry."

"Yes, indeed," she answered, in a remarkably sweet voice. "But you overheard our conversation, did you?"

"I could not avoid it well, when you came immediately under my door. It was fortunate for you that I did overhear you, for if I had not in this manner ascertained your condition, I doubt not that you would now be in the hands of your pursuers."

"Are we perfectly safe now?" asked the old gentleman, looking timidly at Bathie.

"Dismiss your fears on that score," replied Bathie. "I have been here for many years, and have been as hotly pursued as you, and yet my retreat has never been discovered."

"We trust to you, then," answered the gentleman; "and now if you can provide us something to appease our appetites, you shall be well remunerated for it."

"Have patience for a few moments. Uncle Pomp is my *fuctotum*, and is now preparing breakfast. Excuse me a moment, and I will inform him that I have visitors."

While Bathie was absent, the gentleman said to the young lady—

"Well, Daughter, you see that the good Lord did answer my prayer, and just at the right time, too. Was it not remarkable?"

"It certainly was, Father. It looks as if the Lord drove us to this hiding place, where we shall have food and shelter. The young man, it seems, was sent to the door of his strange residence just in time to save us. It all has the appearance of a regular scheme."

"So it does. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.' The Lord never disappoints, or at least fails, those who trust Him. Our escape, like others which we have made, is miraculous, and yet how simple it appears. Let us fall on our knees, right here, my child, and thank the Giver of all good for His mercy."

At once they knelt down, and the old gentleman offered up a sincere, heartfelt prayer to Almighty God.

"Our deliverer, Father," said the young lady, as soon as they had risen from their knees, "must have a strange history, to shut himself up in such a dismal place as this."

"Yes, no doubt. But he may not have been here long, or he may be a highwayman, for aught we know. This would be an admirable *rendezvous* for a band of thieves."

"Your suspicion, I think," replied the daughter, "is unjust to him, Father. No robber ever had such a noble face as his. Besides, why should he be so anxious to betray his hiding place to strangers?"

"O, as to that," replied the father, with a perceptible shudder, "he is taking no risk in admitting us into his retreat. He could let us down into some deep dungeon or pit, in this dismal cave, from which we could never escape."

"You are inconsistent, Father."

"How so."

"Why did you thank the Lord just now for our wonderful deliverance, if we are to encounter a fate worse than that from which we are escaping?"

"I confess I spoke hastily, Daughter. I acknowledge I am too suspicious."

"Yes, you are. I scanned the gentleman's features as closely as I possibly could, and I do not think I am deceived. Judging from his general bearing, I am not afraid to trust him. No villain ever had such a face as his."

"Thank you, lady, for your good opinion. I was not playing the eavesdropper," said Bathie, coming forward, "but in this place there is such intense silence that any sound is conveyed to a considerable distance. I could not help but hear your words, unless I had stopped my ears, and we poor mortals have too much curiosity to do that. To remove your fears, I will tell you that only three persons in the world, so far as I know, have any knowledge of the existence of this remarkable cavern. Two of them are here now—myself and my servant, and the other, my uncle, lives a short distance up the river. So you need not fear."

"Excuse me," said the old gentleman. "People who are flying and hiding for their lives, as we are, are suspicious of everybody."

"I know that, from personal experience," replied Bathie. "So I do not blame you for being cautious. But I assure you, if you feel any alarm on my account, you can go forth from here whenever you wish."

"We will give you due notice," said the young lady, pleasantly, "when we wish to leave."

"How long have you been dwelling here, if you have no objection to answering the question?" asked the old gentleman.

"Ever since 1865, with the exception of a few months. This same place," continued Bathie, in a gloomy tone, "may be my abode for many years to come."

“And have you, who are yet so young, become disgusted with this sinful world, and hidden in this cave that you may hold uninterrupted communion with God?”

“Far from it,” answered Bathie. “I am a fugitive from injustice, and have sought refuge here from the oppressions of my fellow-men. I do not know your history, but when I heard you talk to this young lady, whom you call Daughter, and assert your innocence, I at once thought of the beautiful language of Queen Dido, ‘*Non ignara mali, disco succurere miseri,*’ and I instantly determined to offer you a safe retreat, at least till you could make such arrangements as you desire. Both of us, it seems, are unfortunate.”

“Your history must be a remarkable one,” said the old gentleman.

“I suppose some persons would call it so. We have not time now, however, to exchange biographies. We must first ‘cloy the hungry edge of appetite.’ Pomp is not a first-class cook, and requires a good deal of time to prepare a meal.”

“My maid is an excellent cook,” said the young lady. “Let her assist.”

“I suppose that would be advisable. She knows how to prepare dishes that will suit your taste. But you cannot expect any great variety in such a place as this; yet you shall have the best the larder affords.”

“Thank you,” replied the young lady; “we are now so famished we can eat anything. We have brought sauce along with us, kindly created for us by an enforced abstinence from food for the last twenty-four hours. We have been so hotly pursued that we have had no time to eat. Rajah,” turning to her maid, “if this gentlemen will show you the way to his kitchen, you can assist his cook. I do not know that I would object to seeing it myself.”

"I will show it to you, with pleasure. It is Nature's own work. There are many other curiosities in Hegobar worthy of notice."

"Is that the name of your cave?"

"Yes; that is what I call it."

"Why do you call it that?"

"Step this way, and I will tell you."

The party immediately went into the corridor, and paused before what Bathie called the "parlor."

"Now," said Bathie, "cast your eye over that rude door. You see those large letters?"

"Yes," replied the old gentleman, "I see crude marks that resemble letters."

"You see there are five tolerably well formed letters, H, G, O, B, R. I took the liberty to supply two vowels, in order to make the complete word, *Hegobar*."

"Has that word any signification?" asked the old gentleman.

"I do not know, sir. There is no such word in any language with which I am acquainted. I have never been able to decide whether those letters were made by the hand of Nature or art. Ages ago water may have trickled down the wall, and formed the letters, or the upheaval which made the cavern may have produced them. It is also possible that the aborigines of this country may have known of the existence of this place, and some Indian may have carved the letters, not knowing that they were the representatives of sound. At any rate, I adopted it as the name of my subterranean abode."

"And a pretty name it is, too," said the young lady.

"My opinion is," remarked the old gentleman, "that those letters are the initials of the name of some person or persons. They are too perfect to have been formed by Nature or accident."

“Your opinion may be correct,” replied Bathie. “It is possible that seventy-five or a hundred years ago, white men may have been in here. It is a problem I cannot solve. But Pomp is now calling us to breakfast. Let us go.”

Bathie advanced a few steps, and turned suddenly around a huge rock, followed by his visitors. Going a little further, and turning to the left, they stood in a large chamber of circular form, at least thirty feet in diameter, and arched overhead like a dome, from which hung magnificent stalactites. The light was reflected from every part of the chamber, presenting to the eye a splendid and beautiful scene.

“O, how lovely!” exclaimed the young lady, as she seated herself at the table.

The old gentleman took his seat, and asked Bathie’s permission to invoke a blessing. Bathie merely nodded assent, and a grace was uttered, with deep solemnity.

“You have excellent fare,” said the old gentleman, as he glanced over the smoking dishes. “I suppose you get your fish from the stream outside, do you not?”

“I get them from that stream, but fortunately for me, I do not have to go outside to catch them. I will show you, after you have broken your fast.”

All parties did full justice to the meal, thereby paying the cook a high compliment. Uncle Pomp watched the visitors with great curiosity, and with an expression indicating doubt upon his face, for Bathie had not yet given him the history of his guests.

After they had satisfied their hunger, Bathie showed his visitors the curiosities of his residence.

“You see my cooking stove,” said he, to the young lady, “and you see it is a coal-stove?”

“Yes. How do you procure fuel?”

“Not very far from here there is an inexhaustible

supply of anthracite. Then here is most excellent water," he continued, moving across the kitchen, and pointing to the little stream that gurgled along at the rear of the chamber.

"How wonderful!" exclaimed the lady. "It would seem that this underground mansion had been expressly prepared for fugitives."

"Whether it was or not, I owe the preservation of my life to it. But probably you are wearied, and if you would like to rest, I will try to furnish a chamber for you."

"I would be greatly obliged," she answered. "I did not sleep at all last night."

"I have quite a number of rooms in my mansion," said Bathie, "but not expecting visitors, I am not very well supplied with accommodations. However, I will do the best I can. I am sorry I have no bedstead."

"It does not matter," replied the lady. "I am so fatigued that I can sleep on a rock." ●

Bathie delivered up a part of his own bed-clothing to the maid, and led the way to another chamber next to the parlor, which was almost as beautiful. The old gentleman threw himself on a blanket in Bathie's room, and soon all the guests were in the strong grasp of Morpheus.

Not more than ten minutes elapsed after Bathie had closed the mouth of the cave, before three men appeared on the very spot where the fugitives had halted. They looked in astonishment in every direction, but could discover no vestige of a human being. Ascending the rude steps, they came to the very mouth of the cavern. It appeared to the pursuers that the earth must have opened her mouth and swallowed the fugitives, or that they must have plunged into the river and swam across. The latter was the most plausible supposition, and they

immediately sprang into the stream, and disappeared on the other side, and made for an opening which they saw in the bluff. And here we must leave them.

While the guests were sleeping, Bathie went to the kitchen, in order to give some directions to Uncle Pomp. No sooner had he entered than Pomp opened a conversation.

“Mas Baffie, whar did dem indervidjals arise frum? Or did dey come in on abstrack principuls, or how?”

“They are people like I am, hiding from their pursuers. I brought them in.”

“Why, bress de Lo'd, it looks as ef dis cave ware agwine ter be a city of rufuge fur de benerfit of de man-killer. Does ye zackly imprehens by what princerpuls dey is inanermated? Hit am ob very great impourtunce to know all dat. Am ye not afeerd, sah, dey mout turn out ter be Judus Carriots?”

“No. I am not afraid to trust them.”

“Wal, sah, I can't help but feel dat dis cave am now in de recognition of oder folks, cept us uns. Hit am not onsistent wid de quirements ob a state of saferty. Does ye know 'em?”

“I never saw them before; but I am not afraid of them. I would not be surprised if they have to remain with us for some length of time, and if they do, you will have to bring in some more bedding. We have not enough.”

“Jes' as ye orders, sah; but I hez my doubts bout no good comin' out o' dis.”

“You must not be so suspicious, Uncle Pomp. I could not bear to see the poor people captured before my eyes.”

“Wal, I hopes dis goodness ob heart manerfested by you may 'nt turn out to yo' ondisadvantige. I'll bring in de beddin' onder cober ob de darkness.”

“I do not know that they will want to remain more than a few hours. In that case, you will not have to trouble yourself.”

“Hopes dey won’t want to bide onder dis roof fur many hours,” said Pomp, to himself. “Dey’ll gin us trouble ef dey stays long.”

After giving some other directions with a view to the comfort of his guests, Bathie took his tackle, to provide fish for dinner.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### REMINISCENCES.

“In the same beaten channel still have run  
The blessed streams of human sympathy.”

Bathie's unexpected visitors enjoyed a profound sleep of several hours' duration ; in fact, it was noon before they awoke. Being much refreshed, they partook of a dinner, the chief feature of which was white perch, the Linden river being famous for this kind of fish.

After dinner, all being rested and in good humor, it seemed a proper time for mutual explanations, and to hold a consultation in regard to what the guests should do in the future. They were assembled in the parlor, and for some moments there was deep silence, excusable on account of the fact that the visitors were gazing with wonder at the beautiful chamber, hewn in the rock by the supervising hand of the Supreme Architect of the Universe. While they were thus engaged, Bathie took advantage of the opportunity to scrutinize his guests as closely as the rules and regulations of respectable society would permit. The person whom we have thus far designated as the “old gentleman,” was a man of about fifty years of age, and of very striking and noble appearance. He was of medium height, well-proportioned, notwithstanding that he was inclined to be stoop-shouldered. His eyes were large, black, and piercing. His head, scantily covered by hair too white for his years, was large, and, according to the principles of phrenology, the organs that represent the noblest passions, faculties and instincts of man, were fully developed. His voice had the subdued tone of one who

had endured much sorrow, and who was yet in distress. The habitual expression of his open face was indicative of benevolence. From his conversation, which was frequently interlarded with pious phrases and exclamations, Bathie drew the inference that he belonged to the clergy. He soon discovered that this man, whoever he might be, occupied a position as to theological questions which was the opposite of his own. They were antipodes.

The lady bore a resemblance to the person, whom she called Father, in some respects. She had the same large, lustrous black eyes, and of the same shape and general movement, of those of her progenitor. They seemed to penetrate into the very soul of the person with whom she conversed. Her hair was so black that, in artificial light, it looked as if it might have been formed out of the darkness of the cave. Bathie perceived at a glance that the general contour of her head and face was like that of her parent. She was queenly in form, dignified, and graceful in all her movements. Her head, in shape and size, came up to, and even surpassed, the requirements of the phrenological standard. But the foregoing enumeration of excellencies exhausted the catalogue of her beauties. When Bathie looked at her face he felt, without knowing why, most bitterly disappointed and perplexed. Her complexion was of a strange hue, which Bathie had never before seen in any healthy human being. The face, though finely shaped, exhibited an indescribably sickly cast, which was utterly incongruous with her features and movements. If she had been languid or feeble, Bathie would not have been so greatly puzzled. But while her countenance presented this curious hue, which was more like that of a corpse than an invalid, she had the air of a person in robust health. She enjoyed existence and relished her food. There was another disfigurement of the face which tended to increase Bathie's

disgust. On her cheeks there were many excrescences, which he took to be common, or rather uncommon warts, that reminded him of some of those knotty oaks occasionally seen in Southern forests. Another peculiarity, which struck Bathie with astonishment, was that the expression of her face never changed under any circumstances. While she was engaged in the most animated conversation, that dull, leaden color preserved its curious uniformity. If she ever even smiled, it could not be perceived. She had a clear, ringing laugh, too, but there was not the slightest variation in the expression, or more properly, want of expression in the countenance. She never blushed, nor looked glad, nor sorry. Such a strange look frequently caused Bathie to shrug his shoulders, and at the same time to pity the unfortunate woman. The young lady, though, did not seem to be conscious of these remarkable physical defects, nor did she try by any art to conceal them, but departed herself as if she were the equal, in point of beauty, to that celebrated female of ancient times, whose personal charms involved nations in bloody wars. How strange it is that a pretty face, with its rosy cheeks, cherry lips, sparkling eyes, and marble-white forehead, can exercise such a tremendous influence over the mind of man. Yet, it is an undeniable fact.

One of the first thoughts that passed through Bathie's mind was, that he would certainly not be in any danger of losing control of his heart, if they two should remain together in the cave during their entire lives.

We know not why it should be so; but, nevertheless, it is a stubborn fact, that it requires great considerations and the most splendid accomplishments to atone for the absence of beauty in a woman. Every man, no matter how cynical he may be, feels proud to present to his friends a beautiful woman as his wife. It is said that

Lord Beaconsfield, on being asked by an ill-mannered man why he had married such an ugly woman, had the honesty to reply, that he was influenced by the principle of gratitude. A man is disposed to boast more of his wife's beauty, than her intellect or wealth. We must, therefore, pardon Bathie for the thought which crept into his mind. The young lady was highly accomplished, possessed a voice of thrilling melody, and had the air of one who had been reared in the so-called "first circles of society," but nothing could disguise the fact, that she was shockingly homely. She was a perfect enigma to Bathie, from the strange lack of correlated affinity between the face and other physical organs. She might be compared to a brilliant diamond with an unsightly blemish in it. The *ensemble* was horribly disfigured by this single defect.

The young lady's waiting maid was but an ordinary woman, needing no description beyond the remark that she was large and stout. Notwithstanding that she was but a serf, her face was handsome, compared with that of her mistress.

Bathie very soon reached the conclusion that his guests were persons of no ordinary character. They were foreigners, as was clearly indicated by their pronunciation of English. They were dressed plainly, but neatly, and in good taste.

The parties now arranged themselves near the rude table on which the candle was placed. The old gentleman was the first to break the silence, as soon as it became embarrassing by long continuance. Not a word had been spoken for at least five minutes.

"I never enjoyed sleep," said he, "more than I did this morning, in my life. The intense silence and darkness of this place are certainly very conducive to slumber. I hope, Daughter, you, too, feel refreshed."

“Yes, sir, wonderfully so. I feel like a new person. My dreams, also, were very pleasant. This beautiful cave somehow reminds me of the Oriental tales which I have read. Consequently, in my sleep I dreamed about the golden waters of the Princess Parizade, which diffused sweet odors in every direction. I suppose,” turning her lustrous eyes upon Bathie, “you have passed many pleasant hours in this subterranean castle, some of whose chambers glitter as if they might be the abode of fairies.”

“No,” answered Bathie, gravely, “I have never had a pleasant dream in this cave, nor a single moment of pleasure, if I except the hours devoted to hard study. I have drunk deep from the waters of the Pierian spring, with the hope that they would have the same effect as those of Lethe. This magnificent cave is but a gloomy prison to me. In the Arabian Nights’ Entertainment you have read about the horrid giant who was confined by king Solomon in a copper vessel, and cast into the sea. That is a fair specimen of my dreams. They are of a suffocating character. I could scarcely feel worse, if I were in the condition of the giant.”

The lady gave him a searching, inquiring look, denoting that she desired fuller information; but perceiving that Bathie had sunk back into himself, like the giant in his copper vessel, she said nothing. Her father also discovered that this subject was not agreeable to their kind host, or at least, awakened unpleasant reminiscences, and he quickly changed the topic.

“Whatever may be said,” remarked he, “in regard to the dreams which the place may engender, it is certainly an excellent refuge for those who fly from either justice or oppression. Surely, a kind Providence must have directed our footsteps hither.”

“My father,” remarked the young lady, seeing that

Bathie made no reply to this last observation, "is a firm believer in special providences."

"Yes," said the old gentleman, "we are told in the Bible that the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; that is, a man who fears God and obeys Him. While I do not lay any claim to being good, in the highest sense of the word, yet I do humbly try to serve my God. He has never failed me yet."

"My faith," said the lady, who desired to draw out their silent host on this subject, "is not quite so strong as that of my father; but our escape a few hours since did seem to be under the control of a supernatural power."

Bathie still made no remark, and since it was manifest that he did not wish to express himself on this topic, the lady turned to her parent and said—

"But there are, no doubt, dangers yet ahead of us. Have you concluded what we will do?"

"Not yet; but we must begin to think about it, and act, too."

"If I can be of any assistance," said Bathie, "command me. From what I overheard—and I trust, under the circumstances, you will not regard me as a prying eavesdropper—"

"Far from it," interrupted the old gentleman. "If you had not overheard us, there is not the slightest doubt we would now be in the hands of our enemies. In my opinion, it was the great God who directed you to the mouth of the cave in time to save us."

"As to that," replied Bathie, rather carelessly, "I sit at the door of my house nearly every morning. Perhaps it was a coincidence, in which there is nothing remarkable."

"I cannot take that view of the matter," quickly rejoined the old gentleman. "What was it that sent us

to such an unusual spot? I can give you no particular reason for leaving the highway just where we did, and following that narrow ledge till we came to where we could go no further. It is well said that man's extremity is God's opportunity. In our case it certainly appears as if this were true. If we had not arrived at the proper time, you would not have overheard our conversation, and we would, undoubtedly, have been captured. It seems to me—I cannot help but think so—that the good Lord led us, by unknown paths, to the source of deliverance. Everything has turned out just as if it had been deliberately planned. I must, therefore, believe that our steps were directed by the Lord.”

Bathie was in no humor to argue the question with his guests, though he took the old gentleman to be fanatical and superstitious.

It is thought by some philosophers that women have a sixth sense, of which man is destitute, which enables them to arrive at correct conclusions without the tedious process of reasoning. Whether this be true or not, the young lady very soon discovered that the subject of special providence was one in which their host felt no interest, and while her father seemed to be trying to lead him to an exchange of views, she was endeavoring to entice them away from theological questions.

“But, Father,” she interrupted, “while we have thus far been delivered, we must not forget that we are still in peril. We must decide upon some course of action.”

“I infer that you are watched,” said Bathie.

“Yes,” replied the old gentleman, taking up the conversation, “and have been for the last five years. We have been closely pursued, and it has brought all our ingenuity into requisition to prevent capture. But I must acknowledge my obligation to this young lady,”

nodding his head toward her, "for frequently extricating us from very puzzling dilemmas."

"You need not mention that, Father."

"If I understand you," said Bathie, not seeming to notice the compliment of the old gentleman, "you want a place of secure retreat."

"Yes, sir, that is it."

"Where, then, can you find a safer place than this black cavern, which closes its mouth, and swallows you in Cimmerian darkness? I dare say I have been as closely pursued as you have, and yet I have remained here unmolested for years. Even if the existence of the cave were discovered, I believe I could defend myself against a regiment. If you feel disposed to share it with me, you can do so as long as you choose. No doubt, you can find a more pleasant retreat, but I think it would be difficult to find a safer one."

"We cannot take ease and comfort into consideration now," replied the old gentleman. "Safety is what we are seeking at present. I have been admiring your underground palace, which you seem to think so dismal, and if you will permit us to remain a few days, at least, till the immediate danger is over, you will place us under permanent obligation. Besides, I will remunerate you till you are satisfied. The Lord has been so kind to me as never to suffer me to beg my bread."

"Your company," replied Bathie, "will outweigh any pecuniary considerations. For some months past I have been impressed with the gregariousness of the human race. I have longed for society, but have had to avoid it. The consequence is, my disposition has become soured, and I am almost a misanthrope. Is that your experience, sir?"

"No, not exactly," answered the gentleman mildly, "but I have become suspicious of my fellow-men, and

am afraid to trust them; yet I do not hold the entire human race responsible for my calamities. My religion will not allow that. The follower of Jesus Christ must forgive and love his enemies, and pray for them. I confess this is sometimes hard for me to do, but I strive to do it. I would prefer to obey the laws of my country, yet I do not think I am required to sacrifice my life to injustice. We are fugitives from oppression. But I am talking too much about myself. May not our stay here put your own safety in jeopardy?"

"Not at all," answered Bathie.

"You say," continued the gentleman, "that you could defend yourself against a regiment, but if your enemies should discover this cavern, might they not starve you into submission?"

"They might, if the cave had only one place of egress," said Bathie.

"There are other outlets, then, than the one by which we entered?"

"Yes, one, and as you might have occasion to use it some time, suddenly, I had better show it to you now."

Taking the light, Bathie conducted his guests to a distance of about fifty yards, where the cave abruptly terminated. They were at the water's edge. Bathie paused, and said:—

"Do you discover any outlet?"

"None at all."

"You see that slightly projecting rock?"

"Yes."

"Well, if you will wade to it, and dive under it about two feet and a half, and rise to the surface, you will find yourself in the river, close to the shore."

"But such an outlet would be useless to me," remarked the lady, "for if I should plunge into the water I should be sure to drown."

"One must learn something from the permanent inhabitants of the water, of course," replied Bathie. "But we do not know what wonders we can perform when our lives are in peril. When we are struggling for life, we are capable of almost superhuman exertions. We astonish ourselves."

"Your observation is correct," said the old gentleman. "You have been here for some years, I believe you said?"

"I was little more than a boy when I first entered here. I have been here over eight years."

"You are a young man yet," said the old gentleman, "and also a man of intellectual culture. I noticed your library."

"I have had to kill time somehow," replied Bathie, "and as I confess to a taste for literature, I have gathered up a few volumes, which have been indeed very agreeable companions."

"No doubt of it," said the old gentleman, "for intellectual pleasures are the most solid that earth can afford. I place them next to those of religion, which, though, ought hardly to be called earthly, since to be enjoyed, one's thoughts must be transported beyond the confines of this world."

"Are you a priest, sir?" asked Bathie.

"No, sir; but why do you ask?"

"Because you seem fond of introducing subjects which are suitable to clergymen."

"Is religion of such a character that nobody must talk about it but priests? I thought it was for all men, and my opinion is, that all men ought to make it, not only a matter of thought, but of conversation. Why should we not talk about it, since it is the most important of all earthly concerns?"

The old gentleman looked hard at Bathie, as if expecting a reply, but none was made.

"Your history must be a remarkable one," said the young lady, who could easily perceive that Bathie had no disposition to converse upon religious topics.

"It is an unpleasant one, whether it is remarkable or not. No doubt you would regard it as singular, unless your own is more so. I am willing, though, to exchange confidences with you. By so doing, we will become better acquainted with each other."

"With all my heart," answered the gentleman, "though there is nothing very startling in our history. It is more sad than exciting."

"Let us return to the parlor," said Bathie, "where we can be more comfortably seated than here."

Arrived at the glittering chamber, they seated themselves around the table, and Bathie said:—

"Of course, you have heard of the war between the North and the South?"

"O, yes," said the old gentleman, "and I candidly confess my sympathies were with the North. They had the best side of the question."

"I know," answered Bathie, "that such was the opinion of the civilized world, generally, and other nations furnished troops to fight us."

"You were on the Southern side, then?"

"Yes; and I am not ashamed of it, either. I am sorry that you condemned our course. We were fighting for our rights. The North invaded our fair country, burned our homes, drove our women and children to the forests, and then, to crown their iniquity, robbed us, by giving freedom to the negroes."

"Surely, you are not an advocate of negro slavery!" exclaimed the old gentleman.

"No, sir; that is not my meaning," answered Bathie. "I object to the illegal manner in which they were emancipated. The Northern government, according to my way of thinking, had no more right to give our slaves freedom, without remunerating us, than they had to confiscate our lands or other property. But we might have submitted to this unjustifiable spoliation, without a murmur, if our conquerors had stopped at giving the negroes personal liberty. It would seem that they desired to humble us to the very dust. So they made the mad effort to place them on an equality with us, by bestowing upon them all the political privileges which we enjoy."

"And why should they not have done this?"

"Because the blacks were not qualified for the enjoyment of such blessings. Not one in a thousand could read. They knew absolutely nothing in regard to the nature of our government, nor the duties of citizenship. Besides, this is not the negro's country."

"What would you have, then?" asked the old gentleman. "Do you want the blacks to go to Africa?"

"I think it would be best for all parties, if they would go; for the present state of affairs will, in my opinion, end in disaster."

"Why so?"

"Because there is no social congeniality between the two races. There is an antagonism between them that nothing can destroy. This feeling of antipathy is not, by any means, confined to the South. The Northern people manifest far greater animosity toward the blacks than we do. In a generation or two from now, when the bitterness of the late strife shall have died out, I predict that the proposition to destroy the negro's political influence, or to get rid of him altogether, will come from the North. I am confident that time will

come. The present political status of the South cannot exist for any great length of time. The elements are too heterogeneous."

"I do not know about that," replied the other; "but I do think we ought to rejoice that the blacks are free, for I have ever believed that slavery is a curse and a sin. But never mind now," continued the gentleman, checking his rising ardor, "proceed with your story."

"I do think, though, the Northern people ought to have paid us for our slaves. They constituted the great bulk of our property, and freeing them impoverished the Southern people at one fell blow. I ask you, as an honest man, do you think it was right to take our property without compensation, especially when they professed to be fighting only for the restoration of the Union?"

"No; that was unjust."

"Many of the Northern people themselves did not think it was right. But our people were despoiled. Sometimes they were put to torture, and were hung by the thumbs, and even by the neck, till they were half dead, in order to make the wretched victims deliver up gold and silver which was supposed to be concealed. In some instances, they invaded cemeteries, and dug into the graves, in hope of finding hidden treasures. In their camps it was no uncommon thing for them to use the tombstones of our dead for tables. Wherever their armies appeared, the black bird of desolation took up his abode. When these invading armies at last departed, the South was completely impoverished."

"What do you think is the real state of feeling between the two sections?"

"Whatever it is now, there will be no genuine fraternity till a new generation arises, that took no part in the war. I have mentioned what I did just now, to

justify my own course during the war. The private crimes committed by the Federal armies will never go down to future generations in history. Their narration would be considered an outrage upon the so-called 'dignity of history.' They are mere *scraps*, which, if they are ever handed down to coming generations, will have to be interwoven with the scenes of romance. I hope some novelist will arise in the South, who, like Sir Walter Scott, will gather up these neglected facts, and found his stories upon them. Such books are necessary to show the real animus of the war, and to vindicate the South."

"But will not such books have a tendency to keep alive the spirit of the war, and engender bitter feelings?"

"The Northern people do not spare our feelings," answered Bathie. "They write slanderous, abusive books about us, and call us wicked rebels, and all that. Would you have us keep silent, as though we deserve what they say?"

"O, no, I should not blame any Southern writer for defending his country and people."

"We want nothing but simple justice. But I am straying. You may know I have no good feeling for the Northern people, when I tell you that they have caused me to imprison myself here ever since peace was declared. They inflicted a personal injury upon me during the war."

Bathie paused abruptly. The bloody scenes of the battles in which he had been an actor were passing across the field of his mental vision, like troops in review. For a moment he forgot the presence of his guests. A dark frown rested upon his brow, and he was observed to shudder.

"They maddened me!" he presently exclaimed. "I

lost my senses. All my better feelings, impulses, and conscience, if I had one, were swallowed up in the horrid vortex of hatred. I cared for nothing but vengeance, and I sought it with the fury and desperation of a gigantic lunatic. The consequence was, I soon became notorious. To-day, the man who delivers me up to the United States authorities will receive a reward of \$50,000. Of course, many people have been trying to capture me, but they have failed."

"Do you mind telling what was the injury inflicted upon you?" asked the gentleman.

"No." And Bathie gave the details of his marriage, and his subsequent history. When he had finished, the young lady, who had been listening with the closest attention, said—

"Have you no particular lady friend?"

"Only one in the world," was the reply. Bathie then gave a short account of Mary Smith, adding—

"She has always been a sister to me, and I have always thought of her in no other light."

"You beings of the masculine gender are somewhat dull of comprehension in these matters," said the young lady, with a laugh, which did not at all change the expression of her face. "That lady, Mary Smith, hired herself as a cook to the Sheriff, for no other purpose than to save your life. If you will pardon me for being so bold on so short an acquaintance, she wants to sustain a closer relationship than that of sister."

"That has been suggested to me by a friend," replied Bathie, "but I hardly think so. Such a thing has never been mentioned by either one of us."

"If you will mention it to her, you will soon find out."

"But that I cannot do," answered Bathie, with a sigh. "My affections are buried in a certain grave in

the cemetery of Vicksburg, and I feel that there they will remain forever."

The young lady made no reply to this, and all relapsed into silence for a moment. Presently the old gentleman said—

"Yours is indeed a strange and sad story, but He who ruleth all things knoweth what is best for us. We should not murmur at the dispensations of His providence. If we could carry out our own erring will, we would bring destruction upon ourselves."

Bathie remained silent and gloomy.

"Father," interrupted the lady, "you must now relate our history to our kind host. It is fair that he should know something about us."

"Yes, I expected to hear it," said Bathie.

"I will begin at once," answered the gentleman, and he related what will be found in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### THE FUGITIVE NIHILIST.

“There’s a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them how we will.”

“I am,” said the old gentleman, “a native of one of the largest countries in the world, and that is Russia. If you would like to know my name, you may call me Moreing.”

“That is assumed, is it not?” inquired Bathie, “for it has not the features of a Russian name.”

“As an honest man,” replied Mr. Moreing, “I tell you it is assumed. Of course, you could not expect a fugitive from injustice and oppression, as you have called yourself, and which term is also applicable to myself, to travel under a name that would lead to his discovery and apprehension. At present you must excuse me for not revealing my true name, even to my benefactor, which might be known to a person of his extensive information; for it is historical.”

“Your compliment is more flattering to my heart than my head,” said Bathie.

“I did not so intend it,” answered Mr. Moreing, as we will hereafter call him. “I certainly would not be afraid to trust the preserver of my life, who even now has it in his power to betray me. I have full confidence in you, sir, but if you knew my real name, you might betray me unintentionally. You might happen to call it in the presence of my enemies. It would startle me to hear it myself. So I think I have good reasons for keeping that secret.”

“You are correct,” replied Bathie, “and I have

received the reward of my duplicity. My name is not Jones, as I told you."

"We are even, then," answered Mr. Moreing, with a smile, "and we will be known to each other by the pseudonyms we have chosen. I will now proceed, and be as brief as I possibly can, for it is no pleasure to me to dwell on a portion of my past life. I was a faithful subject of Alexander II, who is an unfortunate ruler in some respects. He is a pious man, whose intentions are good; but he makes some great errors. For instance, in order to make himself popular with the masses, and to elevate the serfs, you doubtless remember that in the year 1857 he gave freedom to 23,000,000 of them. They were to become owners of the lands which they cultivated for the nobles, by paying four-fifths of their full value in the course of forty-nine years. This was one of Alexander's political blunders, for it was of no benefit to the serf. His condition was not changed. He merely changed masters. His master was some wealthy man in the village, from whom the serf was compelled to borrow money. The serfs were not satisfied. I mention this, also, to show that the faction known as *Nihilists* could easily find recruits among those very people whom the Czar thought he had obligated to himself by giving them freedom."

"I wish you would tell me something about those *Nihilists*," said Bathie, "for I never have understood their objects."

"I am going to do that," replied Mr. Moreing, who paused a moment, and continued: "I certainly have no reason for loving the Czar, as you will see presently. I confess there are some features of the Russian government to which I am opposed. It is a little too despotic for the civilization of the nineteenth century. The educated classes are becoming impatient and intol-

erant of it, too. The students of the colleges are beginning to feel more keenly that they are oppressed, owing to the fact that they compare their condition with that of other nations. The truth is, there has been a struggle, for centuries, between the Czars and the educated classes. I scarcely know at what precise time Nihilism did originate. Michael Bahunin has done as much as any one to disseminate the doctrines to which they hold. Next after him, who did most to propagate their ideas, was the novelist, Tscherryschewsky."

"What are their principles?" interrupted Bathie, who cared not to listen to a long discourse on the origin of the party.

"I joined them for the sole purpose of finding out," answered Mr. Moreing.

"Why," said Bathie, in surprise, "I thought they were atheists, and you seem more like a priest than an atheist."

"Some of them do profess atheism, but not all. Their purpose, so far as I could understand it, is to sweep away all existing institutions, and regenerate Russian society, and reconstruct it on a better basis. As I told you just now, I joined them in order to ascertain their purposes. I was a friend to the Czar, and I intended to inform him in regard to the movement, if I discovered that any conspiracy against him was in contemplation. I was an officer, it matters not of what grade, and I was a faithful one. I had not learned all I wished in regard to the objects of the Nihilists, before I was reported to the Czar. In the year 1865, a member of the particular society to which I belonged was arrested, and to save himself, turned traitor, and gave the Czar the names of all the members, including mine. The Czar, without investigation, immediately set out to where I lived. Reaching my house, he called me out,

and without a word of explanation, he stripped off the badges of my official dignity, before the eyes of my wife and child. I told him that I suspected he was laboring under a wrong impression, and that I would explain everything, if he would listen to me. But he said he desired no explanation, and that I must at once go back as his prisoner. I entreated him to tell me plainly of what I was accused. He merely said, 'you know.' If, said I, you have mistreated me on account of my connection with the Nihilists, I can explain it to your entire satisfaction. 'I tell you,' he said, sternly, 'I want no explanation nor apology. If you had any connection whatever, and you admit that you did, that is sufficient to seal your condemnation.'"

"It was in vain that I implored to be heard. He was inexorable. My daughter, this child, became very indignant, and imprudently used language which was very obnoxious to the angry Czar. Among other things, she exclaimed, in a burst of rage—

"'I wish every Russian in the empire would become a Nihilist, and they would all rise up and dethrone you.'"

"'That wish,'" said the Czar, "'will cost you your liberty.'" Then turning to his escort, he told some of them to arrest her. Three or four soldiers rushed forward, and she was bound in my room, where she had fled, and even gagged. My poor wife, who was in wretched health at the time, fell in a swoon, and I was not allowed to go to her assistance. I felt my heart swelling with rebellious thoughts, but I durst not utter a word. If I had opened my mouth to remonstrate, I believe he would have beheaded me on the spot with his own hand. My daughter and I were immediately hurried away to St. Petersburg, my wife not being able to follow us, even if she had been permitted to do so.

We were kept in close confinement for two days, and then I was informed that in twelve hours more I should be executed. There was no trial, but the Czar himself decided I must die. I now regarded myself as lost, and I tried to be resigned to my awful fate. The hours passed rapidly away, and soon the last one had nearly expired. I heard footsteps approaching my cell, and I thought that in a few moments I would be in the eternal world. To my surprise, it was the son of the Czar, who was friendly to me, and did not believe me guilty of treason. He informed me that he had used his influence with his father, and had my sentence commuted to banishment to Siberia, and that my daughter would accompany me. This was the best he could prevail upon his father to grant. Of course, I was thankful for this, as exile is a little more desirable than death.

"The next morning we were hurried off on our journey, the Czar scarcely allowing us time to procure any clothing. I begged for four or five days to return home to arrange my affairs, and take leave of my sick wife, but the Czar refused my request."

"Why, he must be an inhuman monster!" cried Bathie, with flushed face.

"I thought it was extremely cruel," answered Mr. Moreing, mildly, "but I was consoled with the reflection that my Lord and Master was a greater sufferer than I was. But to proceed: as we were leaving, my wife caught sight of us. She had followed us to St. Petersburg, as soon as she could travel, and had just arrived. She screamed. I turned my head, and saw her in the grasp of two officers. We were hurried on, and not allowed to see her a single moment. Those terrible, heart-piercing screams have rung in my ears from that day to this."

Mr. Moreing paused, and hung his head. The

daughter was not able to restrain her tears, and she was weeping bitterly. Bathie's heart was fired up with indignation at the Czar's inhumanity, and he could not but exclaim, in a tone that caused both guests to look at him with deep earnestness—

“Diabolical wretch! why do not your people rise up in their might, and drive him to the North pole? He could not act so in this country and among this people.”

“I fear,” said Mr. Moreing, presently, “that you do not understand the character of the Russian people. They are a very patriotic people, and love conquest. Most of them are under the impression that the whole world will one day be under the Russian government. You can hardly form a proper conception of the tie which subsists between the Czar and his soldiers. The army in Russia is regarded with reverence. It is the channel through which rank is sought. The Czar looks upon the soldiers as his children, and so calls them, and they call him ‘Father.’ They would die for him. They consider themselves as one vast family, of whom the Czar is the head. They are not, therefore, the people to rebel against their sovereign. His will is law, and to that will they would sacrifice anything, even their children.”

“Yet, he is but a selfish despot,” said Bathie.

“Perhaps you do not understand his character,” gently replied Mr. Moreing. “I told you that he is a pious man, but he is suspicious. He can make no allowance for treason against his government. He thinks his ‘children’ ought to be the happiest people in the world. When any of them, therefore, manifest a disposition to revolt, he believes they should be severely punished.”

“The people must be very blind,” remarked Bathie, “not to see that he is a savage and heartless monster.”

“Many of them do think so, and from what I could learn, the Nihilists are determined to destroy him.”

"They would perform a righteous deed if they did," said Bathie.

"I must proceed with my story," said Mr. Moreing, not seeming to notice Bathie's last remark. "We were hurried on till we arrived at Irkutsk. Here we remained a considerable length of time. I learned that my wife was coming on after us. Two days before she reached the place, we were ordered on to Yakutsk, and I could not hear from her. We remained only a short time there, and were sent on to Verkeransk. My heart almost died within me, and had it not been for this dear child I must have yielded to utter despair."

"The Czar did not wish you to see your wife, after she had traveled so far?" asked Bathie.

"It seems not," answered Mr. Moreing.

"And yet you call him a pious man!" exclaimed Bathie. "Good heavens! I never heard of a more execrable tyrant. It would be a pleasure to me to join the Nihilists, and help to destroy such a merciless despot."

"Monsieur," said the young lady, who had not spoken since her father had begun the history of their trials, "seems to be *Un homme de guerre*."

"O, I despise oppression and cruelty in a ruler, above all things," exclaimed Bathie, with energy. "If I were in your country, I would be sure to join the Nihilists. By the by, they seem to lack organization. They need only a bold and daring leader."

"I never could ascertain who the leader was," said Mr. Moreing, "but, of course, they have one. But, begging your pardon for speaking so plainly, you do not understand the character of the Russians."

"I certainly infer, from what you tell me yourself, that they are disposed to submit to a galling despotism, which would not be endured for a moment in this country."

"Suppose your President," replied Mr. Moreing, "had under his command 400,000 troops, who were devoted to him, do you not think he could execute his will."

"Not if his will conflicted with the Constitution. If he should attempt any usurpation, the people would rise up in arms and put him down. But your supposition is an impossibility. We are all imbued with the spirit of liberty, and no one is in favor of overthrowing existing institutions. I have always had an abhorrence of the Russian government, and your history confirms my dislike of it. Whatever may be said of the charges of the Czar against you, he has proved that he is a merciless tyrant, in banishing your daughter to Siberia without a trial. Her only offence, I gather from you, is that she applied disrespectful language to him. I admire the bold, independent spirit which she displayed. Her punishment is a burning shame to the Russian people for permitting it."

"But the people could not prevent it," answered Mr. Moreing. "They are powerless."

"I suppose it would be useless to attempt to instill the principles of true liberty into the minds of such people," remarked Bathie.

"I do not know, sir. But let me get through with my story. Some time after we reached Verkeransk, I learned that my wife, after traveling two thousand miles, had turned back, and reached home, broken-hearted. This is all I have ever heard in regard to her. Whether she is now among the living I know not.

"We had been at Verkeransk but a short time, when an opportunity of escape presented itself. Up to this time I had given up all hope, and had made up my mind to spend the rest of my days in Verkeransk.

Had it not been for my beloved daughter, I must have sunk under the terrible weight of grief and disappointment. I loved my wife with a deeper affection than I was aware of. When I was taken away from her, it was then I discovered what a deep hold she had upon my heart. The thought of never seeing her again almost drove me mad. I tried to feel resigned to what seemed to be the Heavenly Father's will, but frequently my heart rose in rebellion. This girl," pointing to his daughter, "encouraged me all she could, and endeavored to inspire me with hope. But, in regard to our escape: a vessel landed one day on our rough coast. It was an English boat returned from an Arctic exploration, but being considerably damaged, had to lie up for repairs. My daughter suggested the idea of trying to make our escape, and I at once caught at the idea. I knew it would be a hazardous undertaking. But who would not make an effort to regain his liberty? The thought of being once more free produced an excitement in my mind which I was fearful would betray my purpose. My daughter and I talked about the matter day and night, but had it not been for her, I could not have been successful. We were closely watched, but not confined in a prison. The situation itself was prison enough, and the authorities seemed to think it impossible to escape. But when the English vessel arrived I could easily discover that their suspicions were aroused. The Commandant of the post could not speak a word of English, and this gave me an advantage without which our plan could not have been executed. I had to act as interpreter, as I could speak the English tongue. The Captain of the vessel was a brave and daring man. At the first interview with the Commandant, I begged the Captain to call on me at night, at my hut, and he agreed to do so. When he made his ap-

pearance I introduced my daughter. He looked at her in surprise, and I perceived that she had made a deep impression upon him."

On hearing this, Bathie involuntarily glanced at the young lady, as if wondering what attraction it could have been that had so profoundly affected the English officer. Surely the charm could not be in her curious-looking face. She appeared to read his mind, and without a smile, or change of color, she said:—

"Your look of surprise, Monsieur, betrays your thoughts. You think I am very homely, and I do not blame you."

"You do me great injustice," replied Bathie, "if you suppose I regard mere physical beauty as the principal attraction a lady ought to possess."

"Yet," she archly replied, "it is the first consideration with most men."

"It is not to be denied," said Bathie, politely, "that beauty of person is a great attraction, and gives a woman a great advantage *ceteris paribus*."

"I shall not say what it was," spoke up Mr. Moreing, "that attracted the officer. I only state facts. I will not say that Cara, for that is her name, encouraged him in his particular attentions, but knowing that our only hope of escape lay in him, she did not take any pains to lessen the impression which she had made. I begged him not to betray us, after I should make known my desires, and he promised that he would not. I then explained our situation, and entreated him to take us off in his vessel."

"Where do you want to go?" he asked.

"I answered that I did not care, so that we could get out of Russia. He asked if we would be willing to accompany him to England. I promptly answered in the affirmative. He requested me to give him time to

consider the matter, and he would see what could be done. After this, he called frequently at our hut, and seemed to be happy in the presence of Cara, who, from motives of policy, I suppose, did all she could to entertain him, though I had a suspicion that she was not over well pleased with his marked attentions. The frequency of his visits rather alarmed me. To be plain, I was fearful he would propose marriage to her, and make her acceptance of him a condition of our escape in his vessel. So I begged him to decide whether he would attempt our rescue. To my inexpressible joy, he consented to try it. I requested him not to call again till he was ready to sail, lest he should arouse the suspicion of our keepers. He said there was no use of the caution, as he intended to set sail in the next thirty-six hours. You may imagine how glad we were to hear this, and how we secretly rejoiced, though we trembled, when the officer came at night, and informed us that he was ready. He had several sailors with him, who removed our little baggage to the vessel. We gave them half an hour the start, and then followed on, Daughter and I both being dressed in the garb of English sailors. This precaution, however, was not necessary, as we met no one. It was not long before we were on board the ship, hidden away where it would have been difficult to find us. Immediately the vessel set sail. How my heart throbbed with joy as I felt the vessel moving off from the shore. After we had been out for several hours, the Captain informed us we could now come with safety into the cabin. To ward off all suspicion, in case we came in contact with another vessel, we were to retire instantly to our hiding place, which was a very ingenious arrangement. I do not, of course, know how long it was before our keepers discovered that we had escaped, nor do I know that we were pursued. We

never saw a Russian vessel after the first week. But there was another source of danger, which I feared from the beginning, and that was the Captain of the ship. I was fearful that he would again renew his attentions to my daughter, and I so expressed myself to her. She smiled and said, 'never mind, I will see to that.'

"In about ten days after we started, Cara seemed to be attacked by sea-sickness, and she managed to protract that sickness till we actually reached the English coast. I could easily perceive that the Captain was deeply vexed and mortified. At last he made himself disagreeably officious, and insisted upon seeing Cara anyhow. We had to grant his request, in order not to give too great offence. But she played her part admirably, and managed to keep herself sick by taking medicine. She, indeed, looked so ill whenever the officer made a call, that he would pity her, and go off expressing the hope that she would be better in a day or two. At length, when we reached England, he insisted that we should go to his house. I tried to excuse ourselves, and again repeated my offer, which I had frequently made, to remunerate him for the trouble and expense which our rescue had occasioned, but he would receive nothing. My daughter, just before she was arrested, had presence of mind enough to secrete about her person four or five valuable diamonds; so that we had ample means to compensate him. We could not well decline his invitation, and we went to his residence, expecting to leave as soon as his excuse for detaining us longer should expire. Cara improved very rapidly as soon as we came to land, and even in three or four days appeared to be in the enjoyment of her usual health.

"And now my fears were realized, for the officer at once made Cara an offer of his hand. She insinuated that it was rather indelicate in him to address her in his

own house. He replied that, under the circumstances, it made no difference. But she insisted upon the observance of due etiquette, and requested him to wait, at least till we could find a home. He seemed to have misconstrued her words, and drew the inference that she would give him an answer favorable to his desires as soon as we were settled in a home of our own. I told him I desired, for a while at least, to reside in Liverpool. He offered no opposition, but when we were ready to start, I was pained that he announced his intention to accompany us. What could we do? He said he had business which required his attention in that city. So we could but submit with the best grace we could assume. When we reached Liverpool, I rented a small cottage in a quiet part of the city. Here he became a constant visitor, and annoyed my daughter no little with his attentions. At last she determined to discard him outright. Accordingly, one day she informed him that his visits were disagreeable. This information enraged him. He accused her of deceit and ingratitude. She asked how she had shown deceit. 'Why,' he said, 'you told me that as soon as you were settled, you would give me a favorable answer.' But this she emphatically denied, and requested him to recall her words. 'As to ingratitude,' she said, 'I am sure that my father and I both feel the weight of our obligations; but is it right to require me to marry you to show that I am thankful? I admire your courage and generosity, and I would like to be your friend, but I can never be your wife without doing violence to my heart.'

"'You do n't deserve liberty,' he cried, 'and if I had known that you would treat me in this manner, I would have let you remain in your miserable hut in Siberia. You have deceived me, but I will be revenged.'

“Having uttered this threat, he left, in anger. I did not know in what way he would seek revenge, but I thought it best to leave the country immediately. So we took passage in the first ship that sailed for America, and in due time we landed at New York. Here I hoped we would be safe, but I was greatly mistaken. My opinion is, that the English officer went to, or wrote to, the Russian Minister at London, in regard to our escape. I have no doubt that the Minister immediately reported the fact to the Czar, who sent spies to this country to watch and apprehend us. One day as I was walking along Broadway, I met a man whom I had known in Russia, and I at once suspected him of being a detective. He looked hard at me as he passed, but there was such a crowd he could not easily stop, and in a moment we were separated. I thus became aware that there were spies on my track. I did not go out of the house any more for several days. This daughter of mine, who is equal to almost any emergency, soon devised a plan by which I could go anywhere without fear of molestation. She disguised me so completely that on looking into a mirror I could not recognize myself. After this I went out boldly, which is the best way for a man trying to avoid his fellows. Because if he acts as if he thought himself watched he is sure to attract attention. I soon ascertained that the Czar had made a requisition upon the President of the United States for me. He was determined to have me apprehended, and offered a reward of a hundred thousand roubles. This, of course, excited the cupidity of all the detectives in the United States, and led to the most rigid efforts for my arrest. They had my picture, but thanks be to that young lady, next to the Lord, it bore no more resemblance to me, disguised as I was, than it did to ten

thousand other people in New York. But at last, after a stay of several years, they got on my trail in that city. Cara happened to overhear the lady with whom we were boarding remark that she believed we were the people the police were trying to arrest. The remark was made about nine o'clock one evening. In an hour afterward we were on the train, and we went on to New Orleans, where Cara and I both had yellow fever. I was fearful that during the time of our prostration we would be captured. But we had rented a little house in the suburbs of the city, and fortunately we were not both stricken down at the same time, so that we could wait on each other without having a physician. I need not enter into all the particulars of our history. We have been rambling over the United States, the chief object of our lives being to escape the detectives. We have made some narrow escapes, enough I suppose, to make a little volume.

"The city is best for a fugitive, but I at last determined to try the wilderness for awhile. For this purpose we crossed the Mississippi river, and, after some days' travel, stopped at the town only a few miles from here. There I discovered that I was followed. As soon as darkness set in, we started to the country, disguised as much as we could be in the short time we had. It was the closest chase we have ever had. We tried in every possible way to throw them off our track, but we failed."

"Why did they not rush upon you at once?" asked Bathie. "It appears to me they could easily have done that."

"I do not know. I was constantly dreading that very thing. It may have been that they thought it dangerous; or they may have been subordinates, who had

instructions merely to keep us in sight. Their movements, I confess, were a mystery to me. It was the worst manœuvring I have ever made, and yet, under Divine Providence, it has proved to be the best. This, sir, is an epitome of our history. The future I leave in the hands of my Lord and Master.”

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### AMERICA AND RUSSIA.

"The noble ranks of fashion and birth  
Are fetter'd by courtly rule."

Bathie's life in the cave was now much more endurable. Having had no other companion than Uncle Pomp, he was thoroughly convinced that man is naturally a gregarious animal. Man's natural disposition revolts at asceticism. Monasticism is an outrage upon the best and noblest impulses, instincts and sensibilities of the human heart. At any rate, Bathie Beaumont was not qualified to lead the life of a recluse. As he was by nature strongly tinctured with the gregarious principle, his prospect for comparative happiness, even in the darkness of his subterranean abode, was rendered somewhat brighter by the arrival of Mr. Moreing and his daughter. Had it not been for the stings of remorse, his life might have been even pleasant. His guests were persons of refinement and intellectual culture. Miss Cara, notwithstanding the uncomeliness of her face, which presented such an enigmatical contrast to her general air, was splendidly educated, and had a passion for literature. There was a queenly grace, a dignity in her movements, which Bathie thought he had never seen in any other woman. From all this he inferred that she belonged to some distinguished and wealthy family of Russia, numbers of whom, he knew, were every year condemned to horrid exile in Siberia. Yet after the first day he asked no more questions in regard to her history, for two good reasons. The first was, he had too much politeness to do so, after they had told him as much as they saw proper; the second

was, he did not feel sufficient interest to awaken his curiosity. If the young lady had not been so lacking in facial beauty, it might have been otherwise. But, notwithstanding that Bathie's condition was improving in a social point of view, he was not so happy as he would have been with a conscience at ease. In vain he tried to withdraw his thoughts from the gory scenes of his bygone life. For him the lake of Lethe had dried up. It seemed that the more he endeavored to drive out the horrid spectres from his mind, the more vivid they would become. In devising expedients to produce forgetfulness, he would sometimes try the plan of remembering—that is, he would endeavor to keep the imaginary apparitions in the field of mental vision, and would gaze at them in a spirit of defiance, hoping that, when he would cease to make such efforts, the involuntary uprising of the terrible scenes would be more tolerable by contrast. Again he would resolve not to offer any resistance, but to gaze steadily at the bloody panorama as often as it appeared. Ah! human philosophy is not the remedy for a soul burdened with guilt. Men may experiment with the "secret monitor," but there is nothing of a sublunary character—nothing in the mind—which can mollify its sting, or calm its reproaches. Yet, it is true, that they may find intervals of rest amid the busy activities of human society and in social intercourse. So it was with Bathie. He was now in the company of intelligent beings with whom he could converse, and thus kill a part of the time which hung so heavily upon his hands. In order to give himself some new employment he undertook to learn the Russian language, under the tuition of Cara. As soon as he had acquired a respectable stock of words, they all agreed to speak the Russian only, till Bathie should learn it perfectly. No great

length of time elapsed before he could converse with his guests in their own tongue, with fluency.

One day, after the parties had become well acquainted, Bathie discovered that Cara had a contempt for many phases of American character. We suppose it was the fact, already stated, that Bathie had asked no question in reference to her personal history, which induced her to say—

“I am glad, Monsieur (she never called him by any other name), that you are deficient in one horrible trait which is characteristic of your countrymen.”

“What is that?” he asked.

“Contemptible curiosity,” she said.

“Do you think that attribute belongs specially to Americans?”

“It is certainly developed in them to a most remarkable degree.”

“Give an instance,” said Bathie, “before I admit your sweeping accusation.”

“Have you never noticed that they invariably ask the price of every article they see, whether they expect to buy it or not? If they meet a neighbor with a new dress, the first question generally asked is, what did it cost? I do believe, in the day of Judgment, when they are brought up before the Great White Throne, they will desire to know what it cost.”

“O, I do not think they are quite that bad.”

“You do not know how it strikes a foreigner,” said she. “It makes a greater impression on me than on you, I suppose, because you are accustomed to it.”

“Well,” said Bathie, good-humoredly, “if they have no worse fault than prying curiosity, they ought to be a very good people.”

“Unfortunately they have other traits, which, accord-

ing to my mind, are very objectionable, or, to use a milder term, of questionable propriety."

"I demand the proof," said Bathie, playfully.

"Your people have a morbid taste for fiction of the very lowest grade. I have mingled with Americans a great deal in my fugitive peregrinations. Your boys and girls have little relish for fiction of a lofty character, whose design is to convey useful instruction. They take delight in heroes who are robbers and cut-throats."

"Are they worse in this respect than your people, or any other people?"

"They are worse than the Russians. As a proof of what I have affirmed, your country is full of 'dime novels,' which demoralize and corrupt the youth."

"I will admit the justness of that charge," replied Bathie, "for this vitiated trash is a curse to our land. But is this all you find objectionable in American character?"

"No, Monsieur. If you can bear to hear it, I will name one or two more traits, which strike me as rather peculiar."

"Very well, proceed."

"You are not blind to the toadyism of your people. You boast of your republican institutions, and rejoice over the fact that all men are born free and equal, and yet the lines are drawn more sharply between the higher and lower classes, than in countries where these social distinctions are legalized. The manners of your would-be aristocracy are really disgusting. When I was in New York, two or three years ago, a person who professed to be a Duke made his appearance, and it was amusing to me to see him lionized by the whole city. I knew he was an upstart, a contemptible *parvenu*, the moment I cast my eyes upon him. He had some foolish lectures, which, strange to tell, he delivered to crowded

houses. Wherever he went, your people lavished money upon him, and vied with each other in doing him honor. If you had the distinctions which obtain in European countries, Americans would, at first, be the greatest simpletons in the world."

"I will have to admit that there is some truth in what you say. But what other peculiarities have you noticed?"

"The enthusiasm of your people over politics, as you call it, is something very amusing to me. I attended one of your grand conventions assembled to nominate a candidate for President of the United States, and was perfectly astounded. I cannot better describe it than by saying it was a whirlwind of confusion. It was impossible for the presiding officer to maintain order. At length, when the nomination was made, there was something which I would call a volcanic eruption of yelling, or a cyclone of the human voice. Men and women seemed to be suddenly converted into wild savages. Your grave senators lost their dignity; your elegant women forgot their modesty, and they screamed with all their might. And what for? They could not tell themselves. It was a gigantic outburst of senseless enthusiasm. Men danced and jumped around like savage warriors. Hats, bonnets, umbrellas and flags were tossed up into the air. From the galleries the ladies threw down their handkerchiefs till there was a cloud of white linen in the atmosphere. I never saw such a Babel in my life. Everybody wanted to throw something. The yelling, and screaming, and crying, and all the extravagant demonstrations that could be imagined, were kept up for more than half an hour. I never again want to be in such a furious storm of foolish enthusiasm. I suppose there is not such another people on the globe. But while I think of it, there is another peculiarity of Americans which I will mention.

They seem to be destitute of local attachments. They have a roving disposition, and do not understand the true meaning of the word home. They all seem to be discontented. You can find very few who regard themselves as settled for life. One place will suit them as well as another. The whole country is like an enormous beehive in a state of activity. Your people will bid farewell to the homes of their youth without a sigh of regret, and move westward, leaving the grassy yard, the noble oak, the bubbling spring, and the old iron-bound bucket, and such other inanimate objects as bind one to the spot which we call home, without the slightest emotion. Some, I have no doubt, would part with any kind of antiquated heirloom to secure funds necessary to move."

"You are rather hard on us," replied Bathie, "but notwithstanding what you have said, I love our democratic institutions. Our people enjoy more freedom than any other nation on earth. I admit that we have many purse-proud fools among us, who think that wealth elevates them to a sphere above ordinary mortals; but they are a small minority. I do rejoice at the fact, that in this country there are no artificial distinctions of rank or birth to keep any aspiring man in the background of obscurity. If he has merit and sufficient energy to conquer, there is nothing to prevent his rising to the highest office within the gift of the people. There was a sergeant once, in the English army, whose bravery won a glorious victory, but the general in command could not so much as mention his name in his report, because it was contrary to the laws to report the military exploits of any but a commissioned officer. That same man in an American army would have been honored with promotion at once, and his name would have been on every lip."

"Of course, your government has many excellencies," replied the young lady.

"Yes, excellencies which the Russian government has not," answered Bathie, with some energy. "If you will pardon me for saying it, I have always had a hatred of the Russian government. It is the most despotic and cruel in the world. The very interest of the salary paid to that ruthless Czar for ruling over a deluded people with a rod of iron, would more than pay the whole salary of our President. His will is all the law you have. He orders whom he pleases to be put to death, and it is done without a word of remonstrance, and without giving the accused any opportunity of defending himself. He can banish any of his subjects to the mines of Siberia for life, without the formality of a trial. Your own history, as related by your father, is sufficient to inspire you with horror of such tyranny and despotism. We Americans can afford to be ridiculed for our peculiar manners, when we enjoy all the political privileges which are possible to human government. We are both fugitives from our respective governments; but if I were apprehended, I could not be executed without due process of law. But if you should be so unfortunate as to be arrested and taken back to Russia, what would be your fate?"

"It would depend on the will of the Czar."

"Exactly; and that is the thing to which I object. How could you expect justice from your bitterest enemy?"

"What you say, Monsieur, may be true. I did not undertake to compare the two governments. I was speaking only of the social manners and habits of your people. But really, do you not think the Americans are the greatest toadies in the whole family of nations?"

"Do you expect me to defame my own country?"

"I know that a man of your intelligence can see the faults of your people."

"But," said Bathie, "I have not the same data for instituting a comparison that you have, as I have never been out of the United States. What I know in regard to other nations, I have learned from the pages of history, and not from personal observation. But I should like to ask if you find nothing praiseworthy in the character of the American people? Do you think that all of them are truculent sycophants?"

"No, Monsieur, I do not think that. You, yourself, are an exception."

If Cara had been a woman with beauty equal to her intelligence, Bathie would have appreciated this compliment more highly. Perhaps it might have produced that thrilling sensation arising from a feeling which is almost sure to be engendered between two of opposite sex, when thrown constantly together. But no such delicate sentiment had been aroused in Bathie's heart. So, with perfect self-possession, if not absolute *sang-froid*, he said—

"I thank you for your good opinion of me, even if it has a slender foundation. But I fear you judge of our people merely by what you have witnessed in the cities."

"You are mistaken," she said: "I have observed the manners, customs, habits and tastes of American people, both in metropolitan and rural districts. I think there is a streak of levity running through the character of Americans as well as the French. It is evidenced in the frivolous character of their reading, and in their love of common theatres, and their morbid curiosity. I have never seen such people for shows. They rush to a mere monkey show, when you could not induce them to attend an instructive lecture, even if it were free."

Your Congressmen, even, are not free from these blemishes. They are sadly lacking in dignity. Your most elegant ladies seem to have as much curiosity as the common herd. They crowd into a court-room to witness the trial of a wretched criminal; and yet they try to assume aristocratic airs, and aspire to be the leaders of fashion. But there is an awkwardness about them which is truly amusing. Their assumed manners fit them like a straight jacket."

"Are they worse than the ladies of other countries?" asked Bathie, whose feelings were a little ruffled by these severe strictures upon his countrywomen.

"They are a hundredfold more affected than the nobility of my country."

"I am under the impression," said Bathie, "that the nobility of all imperial governments are very proud and haughty."

"In that you are mistaken, Monsieur. They are not half so proud as your Americans, who ape a mere imaginary aristocracy. The true nobility of any country are simple and natural in their manners. Your people seem to think that the nobility are the embodiment of what the French call *hauteur*. Hence they make themselves ridiculous when they attempt to be aristocratic. They sustain about the same relation to the real aristocracy that your servant Pomp does to the white people."

"O, come, now, Miss Cara, you are a little too hard upon us."

"You must remember I do not include you, Monsieur," she said, with a laugh.

"Is it possible that I am the only one in America that does not come within the scope of your strictures?"

"No. I cannot compliment you to that extent. There is a class, to which you belong, that I gladly except, but this class is not very large. It is like one

of the estuaries of your great Mississippi river, which, if entirely destroyed, would have no perceptible effect upon the 'Father of Waters,' as you call it. The influence of your class is not felt by the masses. You cannot give shape and color to their sentiments, nor make any impress upon their character. Your class is the true nobility of America."

"My daughter," spoke up Mr. Moreing at this point, "expresses herself a little too freely and emphatically, I fear. Her tongue got her into trouble in her own country—a fact which she should remember."

"I accord to her the right," said Bathie, "to criticise my countrymen, and even my humble self, if she sees proper. This is one of the privileges of the fair sex in this country. They can say whatever they please about the highest officer in the land, and they will not be molested. We have no Siberia to which they can be banished. I acknowledge the correctness of some of Miss Cara's views; but I think she has unintentionally travestied some of our defects. After all, there is no standard of manners to which all nations are obliged to conform. I doubt not that some of your customs and habits appear extremely ridiculous to American visitors. There is one which I am told provokes laughter among the Russians themselves."

"What is that, pray?" asked Cara.

"The indiscriminate bestowment of military titles. I am told that tailors and blacksmiths, and other mechanics, who know not a thing about the art of war, are frequently honored with the title of General."

"You are correct in that," said Mr. Moreing. "That practice is pushed by the Czar to a senseless and ridiculous extreme. It is unfortunate that all civil professions are undervalued in Russia. The military profession is the only one that is held in high esteem."

"I do not think," said Bathie, "that your nobility have much to boast of, either, unless I have read history in vain. Many of them can boast of nothing except illustrious descent. They have no means to support their official dignity, and are too proud, or indolent, to turn their attention to anything which would fill their empty coffers. Among them you have an abundance of what your novelist, I. Tourgeneiff, very properly calls the 'Superfluous Man.' They are the mere parasites of Russian society,"

"We will have to admit the justness of that observation, Daughter," said Mr. Moreing.

"Certainly, I will not deny the truth."

At this point the conversation was changed to a topic which would be of no particular interest to our reader. But we must take advantage of the space left in this chapter to emphasize some of the observations made by Cara. It may be that some of her remarks were a little too hyperbolic; yet truth compels us to admit that her criticisms were not destitute of foundation. From her assertions we may see what impressions our customs and habits make upon the mind of an intelligent, well-bred foreigner. As to morbid, prying curiosity, perhaps, it may be no greater than that of the generality of mankind; but it must be allowed by all, that our literary taste has not reached as high a condition as our circumstances would justify. It certainly ought to be more elevated than that of the nations of Europe, from the fact that there is less poverty among the masses. The sun, in his course through the skies, never shone upon a more productive country. The soil, with moderate cultivation, will bring forth every vegetable that man can desire. Every man can find a climate and soil to suit his taste and the pursuit in which he may wish to engage. The South especially is rich in lands, and

offers as fine a climate as the world affords. No one can suffer here for the necessaries of life who will devote even half his time to diligent labor. If he desires, he can easily procure those luxuries which in Europe are so far beyond the reach of the poorer classes that they are only the subjects of dreams. If any man suffers, it is due simply to mismanagement. With patient industry, proper economy, and judicious management, any one can become rich. There is no excuse for abject poverty such as converts men into mendicants. The toiling millions of Europe are sometimes afflicted with famine; but such needs not be the case in this heaven-favored country. In this broad land, with its fertile hills and alluvial valleys, there is never a failure of the crops. This being true, what excuse is there for indigence? Poverty and ignorance, like two unsightly twin sisters, go hand in hand. They are almost as inseparable as Eng and Chang. But owing to the productive power of our lands, our people enjoy superior literary advantages. All our children have within easy reach facilities for acquiring a finished, yea the very highest conditions of education. There are good schools in every township, and colleges and universities in every State. Any young man of energy, no matter how poor he may be, can push his intellectual attainments to any extent he may desire. He has it in his power to rise to any official position for which his qualifications may fit him. Under such favorable circumstances ought we not to be a literary people? Books are cheap, and all classes of society can find time to devote to intellectual pursuits. But what are the facts in the case? Passing through the country, how many private libraries do you find? With all the advantages which we possess, Southern literature will not compare with that of other countries. Really, have we a Southern literature? How many books are

annually copyrighted by Southern authors? Is it not true that all the books produced by Southern writers would not make a respectable library? Few in the "sunny South" would have the temerity to rely upon the productions of their pens for the means of subsistence. Few writers, if any, on the warmer side of Mason and Dixon's line, pretend to give their whole time and attention to literature. Probably none of our young men or women ever dream of authorship as a profession. If one were to attempt it, he would be the laughing-stock of the community, and would receive a solemn warning from all his friends. The few books which come from the South are produced by persons engaged in other pursuits. They are the hasty outgrowths of "spare moments." If they are marked by blemishes, one reason is, because the authors have not time to employ in revision and correction. As a general thing, their works do not find a sufficient number of purchasers to justify them in turning their attention to book-making. There is little encouragement, therefore, to a man of intellectual attainments to consecrate his energies to the pursuit of literature. Our young men look to the law and politics as agencies through which to secure fame and wealth. Of all the graduates whom our universities have sent forth, not one, in our knowledge, has ever dared to adopt authorship as a profession. For these reasons, Southern people are regarded throughout the literary world as inferior to our brethren of the North in mental ability. It is charitably supposed that the hot climate of the "sunny South" has enervated the very brains of our people, and "scorched out" their native talents. But this friendly apology is far from the truth. We have, we think, stated the truth, and we will dismiss the subject.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### SUPERSTITION.

“Say from whence  
You owe this strange intelligence?”

In the course of a few weeks Bathie and his guests became very intimately acquainted, as might naturally be expected. It could hardly be otherwise, when they were together every day, and had no other company except Bathie's uncle, who made an occasional visit. Community of interests and dangers necessarily made strong ties of friendship.

We must not forget to mention Uncle Pomp in this connection, who came two or three times a week to supply the physical wants of the fugitives. Since Cara's maid had superseded him as cook, it became necessary that he should act as commissary on the outside; and in this capacity he discharged his duties to the admiration of all parties. Mr. Moreing appeared to be very wealthy, and as Bathie was by no means poverty-stricken, Pomp kept the larder filled with the best edibles the country could afford. Cara's maid was an excellent cook, and such being the case, the fugitives fared as well as they would have done above ground. However, they were obliged to remain in the closest confinement, as Pomp discovered that their pursuers were in the neighborhood. They went to Mr. Constant's house frequently, and at different hours in the night, in hope of finding Bathie, whose enemies had now united with those of the Russians. It was suspected that the fugitives were hiding together, and it was believed they were concealed somewhere along Linden River. The

existence of the cave was also suspected, and the most rigid search had been made for it. One day the detectives thought they had discovered it. Our reader will remember that there were three outlets to the cave—one at the upper end, where the current of air was constantly rushing out. It was through this mouth the pursuers essayed an entrance, but there was such a strong draught of nauseating air that they were compelled to desist. This opening, however, led the detectives to believe that there was some other entrance to the cave, and they made every possible effort to discover it, but all in vain. Pomp was also suspected of knowing something in regard to Bathie's place of concealment, but he managed to avoid the vigilance of the detectives. It seemed that he was endowed with the keen scent of the canine species, and could detect his enemies afar off. Whether this be so or not, it so happened that he never went to the cave when he was watched. Pomp, himself, attributed his success in escaping his foes to a cause far different from any power in himself, for he had his full share of the superstition which belongs to his race. It needs hardly be observed that the Southern negro is a firm believer in the supernatural. No sort of reasoning can convince him that he may not be "bewitched," and have a "spell" laid upon him by some one of his fellow-blacks, who has procured this mysterious power from the invisible world. The opinion once obtained among them, and we suppose still does, that a person could "sell out" to the Evil One, and, by so doing, he could secure whatever he desired in this life. At his death, this person was bound, by the terms of the contract, to deliver up his soul to the custody of Satan. A negro preacher once informed the writer of these pages how the Devil could be made to appear in visible form by any person who felt disposed to

bargain off his soul for temporal advantages and prosperities. However, as the author was at the time a boy, and as the process involved going alone at the dead hours of night to cross roads, and performing certain ceremonies, which the preacher minutely described, with black-gum switches and a tin pan, the author did not try the experiment. There was a process known among the slaves, to which there was a resort whenever a "runaway" especially desired to ascertain if he was in danger of pursuit. It mattered not how often he might be deceived, he had unbounded faith in the process. Since we have, doubtless, excited our reader's laudable curiosity by these remarks, and since one object of the present volume is the delineation of negro character as it actually is, we will gratify our reader's inquisitiveness by an illustration. The time may come when the characteristics of the Southern negro in a state of bondage will be lost, unless they are rescued from oblivion by the novelist, whose privilege it is to gather up the little "scraps," which dignified history rejects as unworthy of notice.

We will let Pomp explain the "process" to which we have just alluded. It will be no digression either, since it is really a part of our story.

One night, when Pomp made his appearance a little earlier than usual, Bathie expressed his fears that he might be watched and followed.

"Everything," said he, "depends on you. If they catch you while you are entering the cave, then we are all lost."

"As to dat, sah," answered Pomp, looking dignified and mysterious, "I is neber in peeril ob presuit. I unveerably onderstans when ter keep widin de com-pusses ob saferty. Dar am no sort o' disception ken be practiced on a man ob my sperience."

"But you must remember," said Bathie, "detectives are very shrewd men, and have experience as well as you. I am afraid they will trap you before you know it."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Pomp, shaking his head in a manner that signified he was superior to any detective, no matter how sharp-witted he might be. "Dar mout be some cessity ob yo' warnin' ef I put my trust clusively in de wisdom ob man. I carries somefin wid me dat am sperior to all dem as am a' pursuin' ob you. No ginerol principuls 'pon which dey oprates am ekul to mine."

"I do not understand you," said Bathie.

"No, sah. I is awar ob dat. You does 'nt impren' me. But ef ye hez curosty serficiunt ter be inquisertive, I allurz carries wid me a instermunt dat ken unveerably gin me de infermation when I is in peeril, or is 'bout ter be."

"What sort of an instrument?" asked Bathie.

Pomp deliberately drew from his pocket a ball with a leathern cover, to which there was attached a string about ten inches in length. Holding it up with glistening eyes before his wondering auditors, he exclaimed—

"You see dat!"

"Yes; what is it?" asked Bathie.

"De tucknical name ob dat instermunt am 'Jack.' Dar am mo' wisdom and natrul cuteness ob ception in dis insterment dan Ole Mas Solerman hissself eber opirated wid."

"How is that?" said Bathie.

"Wy, jes so, sah. Wheneber I hez iny reason to jecture dat I is watched or follered by iny pusson, be dat pusson black or white, I insterntly pulls out Jack, an' iousults wid in a minit, an' soon finds out all bout it."

"That is truly a wonderful instrument," said Mr. Moreing, with a laugh, "if it can do that."

"It ar' not ter be doubted," replied Pomp, in a tone which plainly indicated that he did not approve of the Russian's merriment. "Dis am not a subjec ob sport."

"I beg pardon, Uncle Pomp!" exclaimed Mr. Moreing. "Of course, I ought not to laugh at a thing which I do not understand. I promise I will not do so again. Please tell us how you operate it. Can it talk?"

"O, no, sah," said Pomp, satisfied with the apology, "hit can't talk, dat am, not in iny viserble ways, but she habs a langwidge ob her own dat I onderstans as well as I does my own mudder tongue."

"Let us see you consult it," said Bathie.

"I'll try, sah, fur yo' edifyin. She am a familiar tex ter me, but hit am doubtful whedder she'll 'spond to me befo' dis comp'ny. She gets stubborn sometimes in de presence ob strangers, an' specially strangers whut am disposed ter ridercule."

"We will be serious," said Mr. Moreing.

"Yes," said Bathie; "we will treat 'Jack' with as much respect as if it were the veritable *Urim* and *Thummim* of the Aaronic priesthood, which was just as sensible."

Mr. Moreing looked searchingly at Bathie when this remark was made, but said nothing.

"Jack," said Pomp, holding the string so that the ball could vibrate freely in the air, "will ye hab de onbeneverlunce to insult wid de weakness an' oder infermities of flesh an' blood in de presence ob dis comp'ny?"

He paused a moment, looking intently at the ball, but "Jack" remained motionless.

"Jes' as I feerd and 'spected," cried Pomp, with

solemnity. "Dar am scofferers in dis presence. She won't condescend to converse. Dis am a 'ligious 'Jack.' I hez seed some wickid Jacks; but mine hab bin edicated on script'ral principuls, an' she keeps dum afo' dem as hez no love ob de Bible, an' hez no confederence in her."

"Suppose you had been alone," said Mr. Moreing, "in what way would this wonderful embodiment of wisdom have responded?"

"She would a' swung in de air, so-fashion," replied Pomp, causing the ball to vibrate. "If I specks I ar' watched, I hez only to ax Jack in whut drection am de watcher, an' immediuntly she swings in dat drection, an' no mistake 'bout it. I ax Jack how fur off am de pusson who am a trackin' me, an' she verberates jes one inch to ebery hunderd yards, so's I can tell zackly whar de pusson am. She neber disceives me in dat, fur I hez made de calkerlation agin an' agin, till I ar' satisfied she neber perpetserates a falsehood, nor a purvarication."

"It is certainly wonderful," said Bathie. "But what is inside the ball?"

"Dis Jack ware made wid great skill an' injernuity, an speriance, by a celerbitted witch, nigh on ter seventy year past, an' ware 'livered to me by my mudder on her deaf bed, an' I hez had her in my possession eber sence. My ole mudder she gin me de hist'ry, an' at dat time I tuck a inverntory ob de containins, which I neber will forgot. You hez ter keep dem in de mem'ry, or de Jack am ob no availance. She will lie ter ye so much, dat you ken hab no confederence in what she do say. A Jack am ob no ability, sah, unless he ripersents de vegetable, de animul, an' de menerul kingdums. In dis Jack, now zibited afore you, dar am a piece ob loadstone, a white pebble, a small bit o' green glass, an' a

brass ring, a few grains o' spice, pepper an' ginger, an' de seeds ob Tartarus—"

"The seeds of Tartarus!" exclaimed Mr. Moreing. "And what is that, pray?"

"Well, sah," answered Pomp, looking very wise, "dat am de tucknickral name. De seeds ob Tartarus am knowed 'mong de ignerunt class o' peoples by de name ob Injun Turnup. Dat vegertable, if you hez neber seed it, am very hot; hince we habs de name ob Tartarus."

"It is an American plant," said Bathie, "of the genus *Arisæma*."

"Yes, sah, dat am de tucknickral Latun name, wich I had furgot. You ken rerly on it dat Mas Baffie um correck. But lem me see—whar wuz I? O, yes; seeds ob Tartarus, an' muskerdine an' fox-grape seeds. Den we come to de animul kingdum. In dis Jack um a lizurd foot, snake rattle, water-mockerson jaw bone, an' a frog fore-paw, an' de little eend ob a 'possum tail. Dar am four or five oder ingrediunces, wich I ar n't 'lowed to disenfole. For whenever I cummunercates de knowlidge ob ebery one ob doze ingrediunces, Jack loses her power, onless I gins her to de pusson as am acquainted wid dem; an' I ar' not ready yit to lose Jack."

"And you think, Uncle Pomp," said Mr. Moreing, "that wise instrument always gives just the information you want?"

"'Deed she do, sah. I'd as soon 'spute de correckness ob de gospil, as de correckness ob dis Jack. Yes, sah; you ken put conferdunce in de communercations dat she makes, when you manages her in de right way. She hez got me out o' various trubbles. You 'members, Mas Baffie, when you made dat 'stonishin' 'scape from de jail?"

"Yes ; I can never forget that."

"Wal, dat night dis Jack telled me when you war a comin'. I axed her if de plan 'ud be successful, an' she 'plied it would, an' in de posertive infermative, an' arter dat, I felt all 'ud be right, an' so 't wuz. She hez neber disceived me yit."

"That may be so, Uncle Pomp," said Bathie, "but I do n't want you to trust too much to this Jack. It might become stubborn some time, and deceive even you, and lead to our discovery."

"As to dat, I allurz keeps my eyes open, fur de purpus ob observation—not dat I doubts Jack at all ; but I knows dat at times de ingrediunces might not be zackly in melerdy wid each oder ; an' in dat case, Jack mout git fooled herself. So I ar' allurz mighty cautious, 'cept when de infermation dat Jack bestows zackly cords wid my own speriance."

"That is right," said Bathie, with a twinkle of humor in his eye, "for, as you have intimated, the relations between the vegetable, animal and mineral kingdoms might be disturbed by the vicissitudes of weather, or disarranged by some accidental concussion, which might, to a considerable extent, impair the energies of your miraculous talisman."

"Dat am a very wise an' correck observation," replied Pomp, with a sage shake of the head.

Pomp would not for any consideration admit that he did not understand the signification of all words which were addressed to him in conversation. When he had gone, Mr. Moreing said to Bathie—

"Is it possible that our fate is made to depend upon the oscillations of that ball?"

"O, no. Pomp does not have as much confidence in the intelligence of that Jack as he imagines he does."

"Does he try to deceive himself?"

"No, not exactly. He tries harder to deceive the 'Jack' than himself. I know Pomp as well as he knows himself. If 'Jack' gives information which Pomp does not think reliable, he would not for the world let the instrument know that he doubts. The truth is, Pomp finds out by his own wits what he wants to know, and employs 'Jack' to corroborate his own opinion. He causes the ball to vibrate as he desires."

"But is it possible," asked Mr. Moreing, "that he can have any confidence in the supposed revelations of the instrument?"

"Certainly he does. The negro is a strange being. He is not like any other race of people on earth."

"I believe," said Mr. Moreing, "if I find out much more about the blacks, you will bring me over to your opinion, that they are fit only for slaves."

"When you learn to know them as well as the Southern people do, you will have no difficulty in coming to that conclusion."

"But Pomp seems devoted to you."

"Yes; and yet his friendship for me is not like that which might exist between you and me. His affection is not founded upon esteem."

"What is it, then?"

"It is very similar to that which a dog has for his master. There is no doubt that Pomp is attached to me. He has risked his life for me more than once."

"He is a mystery to me," said Mr. Moreing.

"The negro," continued Bathie, "is a very dependent being. He has no capacity for managing for himself. Pomp is proud of me as his master, and freedom he regards as a curse. He does not think, any more than a child does, as to how he is to gain a livelihood. He leaves all that to me. The negroes in the South never will be a prosperous people, owing to their dependent natures."

They may labor with diligence, but they need some one to manage for them."

"Are you not fearful," asked Mr. Moreing, "that Pomp may be induced to betray you?"

"Did you ever know a dog to betray his owner? Pomp is not a dog, but I do not know how to describe his affection for me except by comparing it to that of the canine species. I have not the slightest fear that he will turn traitor. He would die first."

"And what sort of affection do you have for him?" asked Mr. Moreing.

"That is difficult to explain," said Bathie. "He knows that I would defend and protect him at the risk of my life."

"Pomp is certainly a valuable servant."

"Yes; and he is just what he wants to be. He would not exchange his present position for that of President of the United States. He feels his importance in providing for us and taking care of us, and in being the possessor of a secret which so many desire to know. The negro can never be anything but a servant. His attributes and instincts fit him for that position, and he delights in it."

"So," said Mr. Moreing, with a smile, "you can never be brought to see that freedom is a blessing to the black race?"

"No, sir. The negro can no more change his natural tendencies than the Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots. We may, possibly, lift him up from the degradation of such slavery as once existed in the South, but that does not bestow upon him the power of self-government and self-management."

Such was Bathie Beaumont's opinion.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### THE PERPLEXED INFIDEL.

“Out from the anchorage of God, his bark is  
A plaything of the billows.”

Mr. Moreing had for some time earnestly desired to approach Bathie on the subject of his religious principles. Bathie had not spoken a word in regard to his faith, but the Russian soon discovered that he was disposed to eschew the topic. His contemptuous remark about the Urim and Thummim led Mr. Moreing to suspect that he was a foe to the Christian religion. However, in a few days subsequent to the conversation related in the preceding chapter, an opportunity presented itself which enabled the pious Russian to accomplish his object. An event occurred which brought up the subject in a natural manner.

One night Bathie retired to his couch as usual, and fell into an uneasy slumber. Unpleasant dreams appeared to be passing through his mind. We can easily imagine their character, from the insight we have already had into his soul. The conscience still spoke out with the authority of a stern judge. Bathie had once hoped that, in the society of his Russian friends, he would be enabled to conquer and banish the bloody spectres which constantly disturbed the hours of somnolence. He could manage tolerably well in the daytime (for in the cave, though it was as dark at noonday as midnight, the fugitives observed regular hours) to free himself from struggles with the inner man. He could hold converse with his fellow-beings, and he could, by the power of abstraction, lose himself in the pages

of his books ; but when he retired to the silence of his couch, in the death-like stillness of the darkness, he could not so well fortify himself against the phantoms of imagination. They came trooping up before him, not like hideous Calibans, neither were they club-footed imps, breathing out smoke and flames, but they were true to nature, and presented an appearance very much akin to realities which Bathie's eyes had once gazed upon. If these disturbers of his slumbers had been simply hobgoblins, such as mar the dreams of childhood, Bathie would have paid little attention to them, at least so little that they would have made no impression upon him during his waking hours. But the fanciful spectres that fearfully discomposed Bathie's repose were so natural that when he awoke he at once associated them with scenes through which he had passed in bygone years. He speculated a great deal in regard to them. Why should they give him annoyance? Certainly, they were nothing but fancies; yet some of the pallid faces he distinctly recollected. Let mental philosophers explain the facts of this deep, inner consciousness or conscience. We shall not attempt it.

On the night to which we have just alluded, the horrid objects of Bathie's dreams so impressed him that he cried aloud in anguish, and a wail of distress suddenly broke upon the deep silence, startling all within the cave. Mr. Moreing at once arose, to ascertain the cause of this disturbance. As he entered the apartment, Bathie suddenly sprang up, seized his pistol, and fired at an imaginary foe whom he fancied to be standing within three feet of the door. The ball struck the rock wall, and rebounded with such force that it inflicted a slight wound upon Bathie himself. The report reverberated in the cavern in a terrific manner, and had the effect of fully restoring the dreamer to consciousness.

“O, Mr. Moreing!” exclaimed Bathie, when he perceived what he had done, “I beg ten thousand pardons. I did not know you were in here.”

“No; certainly not,” replied Mr. Moreing, “but you did not miss me more than four feet. What were you firing at?”

“I am truly sorry that I have disturbed you, but I had a most awful dream.”

“It is dangerous, I should think,” said Mr. Moreing, “to keep such deadly weapons in reach, if you are in the habit of using them in this careless way.”

“So it is,” answered Bathie, “but I will guard against any accident of this kind in the future.”

“You have so aroused me,” said the Russian, speaking a little peevishly, “that I do not believe I shall be able to sleep any more to-night.”

“I am sincerely sorry that I am the innocent cause of annoyance, and I beg your pardon.”

“Well, good-night, and may you have more pleasant dreams.”

Again Bathie prepared to repose, but he was now wide awake. He could not but think of the dream, which had unfolded a bloody panorama so hideous that he shrank from contemplating it. He tried to withdraw his thoughts from it; but in spite of his efforts to confine his attention to some other subject, his memory would revert to the past. He tossed upon his couch for two hours, and fell asleep. Again he dreamed, and again he saw phantoms, his former victims. They came one at a time, though rapidly, and arranged themselves in battle-array. At first, they seemed to pay no attention to the sleeper, but were intent upon their own movements. Presently they all turned their glassy eyes upon Bathie, as he lay watching them with feelings of horror. He could not but gaze into their faces, which

were as pale as death. They stood, for a few moments, as stiff and immovable as statues, their great, staring eyes penetrating into his very soul. And there he lay, powerless to move a limb or muscle. Writhing in agony, he endeavored to turn his head away from the terrible phantasmagoria, but he seemed to be clamped in a vice. Suddenly the panorama changed, and presented a still more terrifying view; for, as Bathie was gazing reluctantly at these supernatural beings, the flesh dropped from their bones, and there was a company of living skeletons. All at once, they stooped down with military precision, and each took up a red-hot sword, emitting millions of sparks. Pointing these fearful weapons at Bathie's breast, they all started toward him, and advanced several strides. But this was more than human nature could endure, and Bathie was again awakened to consciousness. It was in vain that he tried to sleep.

The next day, while Bathie and Mr. Moreing were fishing at the mouth of the cave, the latter said—

“You must have had a very disagreeable dream last night.”

“Yes; it was unusually so. Yet I have similar dreams almost every night.”

“Do you attribute them to any particular cause?”

“Dreams,” said Bathie, slowly, “generally have some connection with our conscious thoughts.”

“Am I to understand, then, that your dreams are the offspring of your reflections?”

“That would be a legitimate inference from what I have said,” replied Bathie.

There was a brief pause, during which the Russian seemed to be reflecting. Presently he looked earnestly at Bathie, and said—

“I cannot understand why a man as young as you are should have such gloomy reflections and dreams.”

Man is a social animal, and naturally abhors solitude. There is something within which impels him to an interchange of thought with his fellow-beings; especially when his conscience bears a great, overwhelming burden, does he seek relief by opening his mind to his sympathizers. Every man feels that confession is good for the soul. Hence the criminal, standing on the scaffold, ready to be launched into eternity, cannot be satisfied till he makes a statement of the truth. Bathie suddenly felt an inclination to unbosom himself to the pious Russian. He was weary of carrying his grievous burden alone. Laying aside his fishing tackle, he said—

“Mr. Moreing, I have gone through scenes sufficient to congeal the blood of an ordinary mortal. You know not how many human beings this hand has sent to the grave, and to the other world, if,” he slowly added, “there be any other world.”

“But it was in war, was it not?” quickly asked Mr. Moreing. “War means the effusion of blood.”

“Certainly, that is true,” answered Bathie, who did not care to tell how many he had murdered unarmed and defenceless, “but I now regret having slain so many, when there was no necessity for it.”

“Possibly I understand your difficulty. Is not the trouble with your conscience? You have just expressed a doubt as to the existence of a future world, but in spite of your disbelief, conscience tells you that you have done wrong. Am I correct?”

“Conscience, then, is a troublesome thing, if it has that effect,” said Bathie, rather carelessly.

“So it is,” answered Mr. Moreing, “when it is your enemy; but make it your friend, and it becomes the source of the most exalted felicity. Happiness is impossible to that man who is at war with his own soul. I speak from experience, for I was once as great a

transgressor as ever broke the divine law. But I turned from my evil ways, by God's grace, and for many years I have been a follower of the Lord Jesus. You may think it strange, but, notwithstanding my present prospects, there is a sense in which I am happy. No guilty conscience disturbs the peaceful and deep serenity of my soul. This world is but a state of brief probation, and I am continually looking forward to the time when I shall quit the body, and enter into the God-built city, where I must spend an eternity in joy, love, and peace."

"I wish I could make peace with my conscience, as you call it," replied Bathie, "if that is the source of such happiness."

"You can," answered Mr. Moreing, earnestly. "I care not what you may have done; though you may have swum in human blood, there is a remedy for the guilty conscience. The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin."

"You believe, then," said Bathie, looking straight into the Russian's face, "that Jesus Christ was a divine person?"

"I have not the slightest doubt of it," replied Mr. Moreing. Then, after a pause, he added: "But you have given me some reason to suspect that there is a wide difference of opinion between us on that subject."

"If you want me to be candid," said Bathie, "I do not hold to the views of church people. I have tried hard to believe as you do, and I might have succeeded had I not met with Renan's 'Life of Jesus.' I have no quarrel with the Christian religion on account of any evil of itself. Indeed, there is no denying that many of its doctrines are the highest embodiment of human wisdom. But Renan's work convinced me that the pretensions of Jesus were unfounded. Renan shows that He was a mere dreamer."

"I am sorry to hear you aver such sentiments," answered Mr. Moreing, without, however, manifesting any surprise. "Renan is one of the most insidious writers on the subject I have ever read. His work is peculiarly dangerous to young people, from his pretended friendship for the Lord. I prefer an open enemy to this sort of friend. I do not deny that he is an elegant writer; but his rhetoric is far superior to his logic. He makes so many purely gratuitous assertions, that I am surprised that a man of your intelligence should not see his glaring absurdities."

"You use very strong language," said Bathie, "in regard to the production of a man whose arguments I consider unanswerable."

"No stronger than the weakness of the man deserves, for I have less patience with Renan than any writer that ever undertook to combat the Christian religion."

"If his absurdities are so very apparent," said Bathie, with a slight sneer, "no doubt it would be an easy task for you to point them out."

"I would not desire an easier task," said Mr. Moreing, with a look of compassion, for which Bathie did not thank him.

"I have the book in my chamber," replied Bathie, "and if you will have the kindness to show me Renan's errors, I am sure I shall be under obligations to you. Besides, I am open to conviction; and if you will only satisfy me that my belief is wrong, I will promptly renounce it. I only want the truth."

"I am glad to hear you say that," rejoined the Russian, warmly. "Let us get the book at once, that I may verify my assertion."

They both immediately left off their fishing, and entered Bathie's room. He looked among his books, and soon found the desired work, which he handed to

Mr. Moreing. The Russian, turning a few pages, said—

“Before entering into particulars, I want to ask you if you have never noticed the palpable discrepancy between the character of Jesus as delineated by Renan, and His character as drawn by the Sacred writers?”

“Certainly, I have noticed that. Renan had a better idea of His character than they did. They were fanatical, and given greatly to exaggeration.”

“You admit, then,” said Mr. Moreing, “that a plain man, guided only by common sense, on reading the Sacred History, would not, if he believed the writers sincere, come to the conclusion which Renan has?”

“Yes,” replied Bathie, a little cautiously; “but what use do you expect to make of the admission?”

“Why, just this,” replied Mr. Moreing; “if Renan’s delineation of Jesus’ character would not impress itself upon any ordinary mind as in harmony with the New Testament narrative, must he not have perverted facts and colored events to suit his own preconceived notions?”

“No, sir. I think Renan puts the proper construction on the conduct of Jesus. The writers of the New Testament did not understand it. They mistook the natural for the supernatural.”

“You claim a great deal for Renan. How could he possibly understand the character of Jesus better than those who associated with Him every day? But, since you are disposed to avoid the consequences of your own admission, I will show you plainly that Renan does misrepresent facts. He says that he admits the authenticity of the New Testament, does he not?”

“Yes; he admits it as common history.”

“Very well. He says that Jesus was the imitator of John Baptist, and for some length of time acknowledged

the superiority of John. Now, tell me where the sacred writers give the slightest hint of any such thing. On the contrary, do they not state that John himself said he was not worthy to unloose the shoe latchet of the Divine Master? At His baptism, did not John testify that this was the Messiah? Did he not point to Jesus, and cry aloud to his disciples, 'behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world'? On what authority, then, does Renan make the reckless assertion that Jesus recognized John's superiority to Himself?"

"From his conduct Renan got that idea."

"There is not one thing in the Master's conduct, on any occasion, to make such an impression. It is simply one of Renan's wild and lawless fancies, which is utterly without foundation. But here, on page 135, he intimates that Jesus hoped to establish a temporal empire, and he represents the Lord as in a state of uncertainty and vacillation, and as discussing the question with Himself, whether the kingdom of God should be realized by gentleness or force, by revolt or patience. But not one scintilla of evidence does he adduce to sustain his assertion. The whole history of Jesus proves that not for a moment did He ever entertain the thought of interfering with political affairs. How often He may have publicly uttered the words, 'My kingdom is not of this world,' we do not know. Our Lord in the very beginning of His mission rejected the only means by which He could hope to be successful in founding a political empire. He made no proposition whatever to the influential classes of the Jews, but, on the contrary, by His unmitigated denunciations of their iniquities, arrayed them against Him as His worst enemies. Was that the course for a man to pursue who expected to succeed by force of arms? Once, you remember, Jesus had to hide Himself to prevent the people from proclaiming Him

their king. He could easily have made Himself a temporal emperor if He had desired. Therefore, I do say boldly that Renan is guilty of misrepresenting the intentions of Jesus in this respect." Turning a few more pages of the book, Mr. Moreing continued: "It is really amusing to see with what ease Renan dispenses with the miracles of Jesus. He does not believe that our Lord performed a single miracle, notwithstanding the testimony of the Inspired writers, who, he strangely admits, were honest in their statements. How could they be honest if they state that Jesus healed a withered arm or raised the dead to life, if such miracles had not been really performed? Their senses assuredly could tell them whether the miracle was real or pretended. If Lazarus was raised, how could they possibly be mistaken? But here, on page 157, Renan says, speaking of Mary Magdalene: 'According to the language of the time she had been possessed of seven devils; that is to say, she had been affected by nervous diseases apparently inexplicable. Jesus, by his pure and gentle beauty, calmed this troubled organization.' That is the only explanation Renan condescends to give. How the mere physical beauty of the Lord could have such an effect as to heal even nervous diseases, he does not pretend to say. If it was simply comeliness of person, why is it that the process is not efficacious now? I must be allowed to say, that Renan's solution of the miracle of casting out devils is the weakest, yea, the silliest, I ever heard of. In the name of reason I ask you how could a nervous disease have been cured by mere personal beauty?"

"I do not know," replied Bathie, rather sullenly.

"It is nonsense," said Mr. Moreing, "and I do not see how any man of ordinary intelligence could advance such an idea. But let us proceed. Here, on page 164, after admitting that Jesus was an honest fanatic, he

charges Him with downright deception. Here is his language:—

“‘Sometimes Jesus made use of an innocent artifice, which Joan of Arc also employed. He would aver that he knew something intimately concerning him whom he wished to win, or he would recall to him some circumstance dear to his heart. It is thus that he touched Nathaniel, Peter, and the Samaritan woman. Dissembling the true cause of his power—I mean his superiority over those around him—he suffered them to believe, in order to satisfy the ideas of the times—ideas which, moreover, were entirely his own—that a revelation from on high discovered to him their secrets and opened their hearts.’

“Jesus,” continued Mr. Moreing, “Renan says, was a pure, honest man, and yet would resort to trickery, in order to secure followers. Renan, it is as clear as anything can be, flatly contradicts himself. The truth is, his absurd theory confuses his own mind. Sometimes he speaks of the Master in the highest terms of praise, in fact, concedes a certain degree of divinity to Him; then again ascribes such craftiness to Him as would render Jesus really contemptible. The Frenchman, it is evident, becomes puzzled and bewildered, and as a natural consequence, is guilty of the very hypocrisy of which he accuses the authors of the gospels. The way Renan misrepresents the teachings and doctrines of our Lord, is an outrage upon truth, and disgraceful to himself. For instance, on page 172 he has this sentence:—

“‘The first condition necessary for a disciple of Jesus, was to realize his fortune and to give the proceeds to the poor!’

“Renan lays down this sweeping proposition, because in one instance our Lord ordered one man to sell his

goods and give the proceeds to the poor. Jesus did this because avarice was the man's besetting sin, and this was necessary in his particular case; but this was not the first condition of discipleship. Every one who can read the Bible, well knows that the first condition is repentance. This was the burden of every sermon which Jesus preached. According to the mode of reasoning which Renan adopts, he might just as well say Jesus taught that every thief will go to Heaven, because He said to one at His side, on the cross, 'This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise;' or, with equal propriety, he might charge our Lord with approving a crime which has ever been regarded as one of the very gravest offences against human society, because He judicially forgave the 'sinful woman,' who was brought to Him for the sole purpose of entrapping Him. You cannot but perceive the unfairness of such reasoning."

Bathie was listening with close attention to Mr. Moreing, but he made no answer. The edifice which he had built was beginning to shake, and Bathie was thoughtful.

"But see here," remarked Mr. Moreing, as he turned the pages of the book, almost at random, "Renan copies the parable of the rich man, and then makes this singular comment:—

"'He (the rich man) is in hell because he is rich, because he does not give his goods to the poor, because he dines well while others at his gate fare poorly.'

"In the name of reason, I ask from what does Renan draw such an inference? Did Jesus, or any of His disciples, say that the rich man's sin consisted only in the fact that he was wealthy? Did they say that he went to torment for no other reason than that he was rich? If so, how came Abraham to be in Heaven? He was rich, too. According to Renan's logic, Abraham

ought to have lifted up his eyes in hell, as well as the other rich man. This I call shameful misrepresentation. What do you say to it?"

"Well, I do not think it is exactly fair," replied Bathie, "but go on with your criticisms."

"Very well; here is another specimen of your author's acute reasoning. On page 177, he says—

"'The doctrine that the poor only shall be saved was, therefore, the doctrine of Jesus.'

"He bases this false charge upon these words of Scripture: 'Wo unto you that are rich, for you have received your consolation.'"

"Well," Bathie ventured to ask, "does it not seem that Jesus denounced the rich because they were rich?"

"I would never have thought," replied Mr. Moreing, "of putting any such construction upon our Lord's words. Sometimes we must interpret His sayings by the circumstances under which they were uttered; nor must we lose sight of the character of the people with whom He had to deal. The rich, as a general thing, were ungodly, and nearly every man of wealth was an outbreking transgressor, made so by his great possessions. Jesus did not recommend poverty as one of the Christian graces and as a virtue in itself. He never taught, in a single instance, that the poor are saved *because* they are poor; yet it is a stubborn fact, that it is chiefly the poor that are saved. Our Lord never uttered a truer saying than, 'how hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of heaven.' That will be true till the millennium dawns. Renan utterly mistook the meaning of Jesus, or knowingly and willfully misrepresented it. Again, on page 183, M. Renan writes—

"'He pardoned the rich man only when, by reason of some prejudice, the rich man was hated by society.'"

"He has reference to Zaccheus. Now, from what does Renan get the idea that Jesus forgave the 'little man' because he was hated by society? The plain truth is, he was forgiven because he repented of his sins. But this is a case which contradicts Renan's general proposition, for Zaccheus gave half his goods to the poor, and retained the other half for his own use. If poverty was indispensable to salvation, why did not the Lord tell him to sell *all* his goods? Why, the very example which Renan cites in order to establish a certain point, refutes another position. So much for consistency. He is guilty of the very thing which he charges upon the writers of the New Testament. I do not know where you can find a more reckless author than this same Renan, whom you have allowed to give shape to your faith. He has not a particle of regard for the truth of history. It is astonishing to see with what audacity he denies generally received facts."

"Give an instance, if you please," said Bathie, who was beginning to writhe inwardly under Mr. Moreing's merciless criticism on his favorite author.

"Why, see here, on page 218," promptly replied Mr. Moreing, "where he asserts positively that Jesus was born at Nazareth and not at Bethlehem. He makes this assertion, remember, after accepting the Gospels as authentic history. Who is more likely to know where Jesus was born; those who were His cotemporaries, or M. Renan in the 19th century? I confess that I never in my life met with a more daring disregard of historic truth. Why, does he not thus oppose Josephus and all other ancient writers? On what principle does he so coolly set aside the emphatic statement of the Inspired authors? He assigns no reason for it; but his purpose is very obvious. Renan wants to falsify the prophecies in regard to Jesus. The prediction was,

that the Messiah should be born at Bethlehem, and Renan, in order to show that Jesus had no claim to this exalted position, affirms, without any proof whatever, that He was born at Nazareth. How did he ascertain this important fact, which, it seems, has escaped the notice of all Biblical scholars for the last nineteen centuries? I ask you, as an honest man, are you willing to take naked assertion for argument?"

"No, sir; I am not. I confess that Renan does sometimes make assertions without sufficient proof. I do not think, however, that he is guilty of deliberate falsehood. You call his inferences falsehoods. But is there not truth enough in what he says to establish his position?"

"How does he establish his position when, in his strained efforts to delineate the character of Jesus, he makes the Lord inconsistent with Himself? Renan ascribes to Him great wisdom; yet, if the Redeemer had been the visionary enthusiast that he says He was, it was the enthusiasm of downright insanity. What would you think of a person, now, who would claim to be the Son of God in the sense that Jesus claimed it?"

"Certainly I would consider him a lunatic," said Bathie, without hesitation.

"Undoubtedly you would be correct, too," answered Mr. Moreing. "Why, then, was not Jesus treated as a madman when He set up this exalted claim? He pretended to raise the dead to life. If He did not really perform such a miracle why did not the people say He was some poor deranged man, who should be confined in a lunatic asylum, or locked up in a room, or, at least, regarded as a harmless crazy man? Why did the learned Rabbis discuss important questions with a self-deceived fanatic? His contemporaries certainly did consider Him as a man of sound mind, or they would not have put

Him to death? If He was sane, it cannot be doubted that there was some foundation for the report that He performed miracles; yet our French author affirms, in the face of the very strongest testimony, that our Lord's pretended miracles were performed in secret. He lays down this general proposition on the fact that in one or two instances Jesus wrought miracles privately. But the truth is, that nearly all of His miracles were performed in the most public manner. Great multitudes were gazing at Him when He caused the lame to leap, the blind to see, and the devils to leave possessed persons. But," continued Mr. Moreing, after a pause, "see what Renan says about raising Lazarus: 'In other words, we think that something took place at Bethany which was regarded as a resurrection. Fame attributed to Jesus two or three events of this kind. The family of Bethany may have been led, without suspecting it, to the important act which was desired. Jesus was there adored. It seems that Lazarus was sick, and that it was, indeed, in consequence of a message from his alarmed sisters, that Jesus left Perea. *The joy of his coming might recall Lazarus to life.* Perhaps, also, the ardent desire to close the mouth of those who furiously denied the divine mission of their friend, may have carried these enthusiastic persons beyond all bounds. Perhaps Lazarus, still pale from his sickness, *caused himself to be swathed in grave clothes, as one dead,* and shut up in his family tomb. . . . Jesus desired to see once more him whom He had loved, and, the stone having been removed, Lazarus came forth with his grave clothes and his head bound about with a napkin. This apparition must naturally have been regarded by all as a resurrection. Faith knows no other law than the interest of what it believes to be the truth. . . . Thoroughly persuaded that Jesus was a worker of

miracles, Lazarus and his two sisters may have aided the performance of one, as so many pious men, convinced of the truth of their religion, have sought to triumph over human obstinacy by means of the weakness of which they were well aware.' ”

“ You see,” said Mr. Moreing, after he had read the foregoing extract, “ how artfully your author disposes of this wonderful and awful circumstance. Look at the hypotheses he is forced to make. He has to employ such auxiliaries as ‘ may have ’—it ‘ may have been ’ this way, or that way ; any way rather than the plain statement of the sacred writers, that Lazarus was dead, and our Lord restored him to life, and that, too, in the presence of some of His worst enemies. If it was a mere trick, as Renan so audaciously affirms, it is strange, indeed, that the foes of Jesus, who were dogging His steps, and watching every movement He made, did not expose it. But your author caps the climax when he supposes that Lazarus dressed himself in grave-clothes, and lay in the tomb four days, sick, too, waiting for Jesus to come and pretend to raise him from the dead, not knowing where the Lord was. Of all the outrages upon common sense I ever saw, this solution of the resurrection of Lazarus is the most impious, malicious and foolish.

“ Again, Renan affirms that Jesus was compelled, by force of circumstances, to pretend to work miracles, and that He shrank from it as much as possible, thus intimating that the Master was practicing a deception. Was the first miracle, the turning water into wine, wrought under compulsion ? What compelled Him ? No one on that occasion asked Him to do such a thing, and no one was expecting it. Where, then, was the compulsion ? Besides, if He had been a mere trickster or juggler He certainly would have been detected, because He per-

formed miracles every day almost, and in all sorts of places where it would have been impossible to impose upon those who were watching Him, in order that they might find grounds upon which to base an accusation against Him.

“But I want to call your attention to some of Renan’s strange inferences. He says that people were forbidden to marry after they joined the church. To prove his assertion he refers to Matt. xix, 10. Let me read the passage: ‘His disciples say unto Him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is good not to marry.’ How Renan can draw the inference from this passage that there was no marrying after joining the church, I confess I cannot understand. On page 266 Renan has this sentence:—

“‘At one time the master seems to approve those who should mutilate themselves for the sake of the kingdom of God.’

“‘He gets this inference from the passage which says: ‘If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee.’

“Now, who with any sense would infer that, from this passage, the disciples of Jesus were even encouraged to cut off their limbs? No one at that time understood our Lord to mean any such thing. We never read of anybody’s taking His words in a literal sense, and cutting off their hands and feet, and plucking out their eyes. What, then, does Renan mean? How can you expect to find truth in such a writer, who makes the boldest assertions without the least proof, and who puts himself in direct opposition to plain facts of history? He makes Jesus and his disciples a band of hypocrites, even after saying that the Master was trying to establish a purer religion than then existed. Your author insinuates that they did not scruple to

resort to 'pious frauds' in order to promote the cause of Jesus. But we may well ask, why should they do this? Why should they give up their very lives to support the cause of one who, according to Renan, was nothing more than a hypocritical juggler? Your author says that, 'Jesus desired nothing but the religion of the heart.' Is it not wonderful that a hypocrite should desire this sort of religion? Is it possible, my friend," continued Mr. Moreing, with energy, "that you do not see how inconsistent your author is with himself? If you will compare his statements with those of the Inspired writers, you will see that he makes no more of contradicting and correcting them than if they were mere school children. His broad and sweeping charges are better calculated to bring him into contempt than to produce conviction of what he affirms. I confess to you, that I have a greater contempt for his intellectual abilities than any author I have ever read on the subject. I can find, as I have just shown you, the grossest absurdities on almost every page of his 'Life of Jesus.' Yet, this is the man whom you take as your religious guide."

"Do you suppose I have no opinion of my own?" asked Bathie, manifesting a little vexation.

"Excuse me for speaking so warmly and emphatically on this subject," said Mr. Moreing. "I did not mean to give any offence; but you told me that you adopted Renan's views."

"I cannot agree with him in everything, for I candidly confess that you have called my attention to some things which are absurdities, but which had escaped my notice," said Bathie.

"You must admit, then, that he is not trustworthy. I ask you, as an honest man, only wanting truth and peace of conscience, had you not better re-examine the

ground, and see upon what sort of foundation your faith rests? You will embrace the truth, will you not?"

"Yes, if I know myself; but I must be satisfied that it is truth."

"Certainly. That is right. My friend, you are in trouble, and you have intimated what is its nature. I shall not press you for a full analysis of your feelings; but you say you want internal peace. Why not seek it from the only source whence it can be obtained?"

"I suppose I do not know how," replied Bathie, thoughtfully.

"The way is plain. You cannot err."

"You think," said Bathie, slowly, "that the relief I need is in your religion?"

"It is to be found only in Jesus Christ."

"But I will have to believe the Bible?"

"Certainly, you must."

"I do not think I can."

"You can, if you honestly search for the truth. The Bible shrinks not from investigation. Give it a fair trial; examine the evidences which prove it to be a Divine book."

"Your proposition is fair," replied Bathie, whose mind was now in confusion, "and with your assistance, I will honestly examine the evidence, and if I have reason to believe the Bible is a Divine revelation, I will accept it. I want the truth."

"I am glad to hear you talk so," said Mr. Moreing, earnestly. "Begin at once. If you will only be honest with yourself, I well know what will be the final result."

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### ON WHAT ARE OPINIONS BASED?

“For, were all plain, then all sides must agree,  
And faith itself be lost in certainty.”

Rigid introspection reveals many curious mental phenomena. Indeed, man is fearfully and wonderfully made. But, while the corporeal machinery is a wonderful piece of mechanism, proving that it is the product of Divine workmanship, the immaterial mind verifies the fact that man was created a “little lower than the angels.” When the human body is dissected, we are filled with admiration at the wise adaptation of all its parts; but the analysis of the inner, invisible man, reveals to the consciousness many strange powers. We do not and cannot understand them. They elude the incisions of the scalpel. For many ages intellectual science has been a study which has absorbed the attention of philosophers. Though they have discovered many laws of mind, yet there is a wide difference of opinion among them in regard to some of its most important faculties. What is the Will? How does it operate, so that its influence flashes like lightning along the veins, arteries, nerves and muscles? How does it move dead matter? No one can explain.

It is far from our purpose to enter into any metaphysical discussion, but we regard it as necessary to the defence of our hero's character to propound this question: On what do opinions hinge? Are they the offspring of pure intellectual reasoning, standing like a rock of Gibraltar on an immovable foundation? We believe not. They can be shaken, staggered, and

changed from Zenith to Nadir. Sometimes we wonder at such changes in a person, forgetting that opinions concerning questions which admit of any discussion float upon the surface, as mere corks on the bosom of the sea. We have read of a great man who was not able to reach a conclusion in reference to a subject of great importance. The arguments on both sides seemed to be exactly balanced. At last, in a fit of desperation, he tossed up a shilling, exclaiming, "Heads or tails!" "Heads" turned up; and from that moment he never wavered nor hesitated. Ever afterwards he was a most bitter adversary of "tails," although he had once been willing to let the controversy in his mind be decided by the accidental turning of a piece of coin, whether he should or should not advocate the opinion which "tails" represented. Thus, it is often difficult to form an opinion, and difficult, frequently, to hold to it when formed. Let us briefly notice two or three circumstances which decide human opinions.

It is frequently the case that our opinions are shaped by *prejudice*. Persons are trained up from their very infancy to believe certain political or religious doctrines. They follow implicitly the teachings of their parents or guardians, and they can be made to see no orthodoxy or excellency in the opposite doctrine. The arguments which support it appear weak to them. They conceive an aversion to a certain party, and nothing can make them see any good in that party or its doctrine. "No good thing can come out of Nazareth." To every thinking being there is a "Nazareth" which he condemns. "It is hard to escape from our ancestors," said one of America's essayists. They make impressions upon our minds which are ineffaceable. If we revere them, we are disposed to regard it as a species of treachery to depart from their teachings. We suspect, some-

how, that we are ungrateful, unless we hold with tenacity to the opinions which they sought to instill into our minds, and we appear to ourselves to be guilty of sacrilege, unless we follow unhesitatingly in their footsteps. On the contrary, if our parents or guardians do not inspire us with affection and esteem, we are almost sure not to adopt their sentiments. In both instances our opinions are based upon nothing but prejudice.

Again, *pride* has a tremendous influence in causing us to hold to our opinions. We do not want to be considered fickle-minded. We love to have credit for great stability, and we want to be consistent, or, at least, thought to be so. Hence, we sometimes hold to opinions which we may suspect to be slightly tinctured with error, but we are too proud to renounce them. Having once taken our position, we feel that it would be a sure indication of weakness to be driven from it by stubborn arguments.

—Another powerful factor in the formation of opinions, and the last one our space will allow us to discuss, is *self-interest*. It is very easy to persuade men to adopt a sentiment, when they are convinced it is to their interest to do so. We do not, by any means, affirm that they are destitute of honesty; but it is impossible to free ourselves from the influence of our passions. We cannot thrust them aside entirely, as mere cobwebs, and contemplate every question presented to us from a purely intellectual point of view. The matter and mind which make up our composition mutually act and react upon each other. Of what use are opinions but to guide us in the affairs of practical life? What care we for a simple abstract axiom? Hence, when we are called upon to choose between certain theories or principles which must have an influence upon our conduct and destiny, we are so constituted that we

cannot entirely eliminate the *cui bono* element. We cannot, or at least, we will not disregard our own interest.

The foregoing observations are not a total digression from our story. Bathie Beaumont was now brought face to face with grave questions which he determined to decide. Could he ignore self? Could he discuss the momentous question of the divine origin of the Bible without feeling he had a personal interest in the subject? Mr. Moreing's exposition of Renan's fallacies had subverted the whole foundation upon which he had based his faith, and he was now like a mere straw in the winds. There was nothing upon which he could lean amid the perplexities that rolled around him like the turbid ocean waves. In this condition of uncertainty, he determined to take a calm survey of his situation, his horrid environments, and then seek some pathway out of his troubles. Introspection made it manifest that he was disturbed by *something* within which destroyed his peace. What was it? Mr. Moreing at once made his diagnosis, and without hesitation pronounced the trouble a *guilty conscience*. Whether Bathie agreed with him or not, he could not disregard the facts. And to what source should he apply for relief? What comfort was there in a system of bare negations, which held out no hope and no well-defined end to absorb the energies of the soul and become the chief goal amid all the aspirations of the inner man? Renan had tried to sweep away the foundation of everything that gave any meaning and purpose to human existence. If he succeeded, then what? Why, human life was an insolvable mystery, a profound mockery, a tantalizing enigma. For what was he placed here on the theatre of the world? Was it merely to suffer a few years, and then disappear forever beneath the dark and silent waters of oblivion? Reason protested against

this conclusion. The idea of immortality, of existence under better conditions than those of earth, was certainly more attractive and desirable than that of a state of eternal unconsciousness. The hypothesis that there was a life beyond the grave, seemed to be necessary to the vindication of the Wisdom which put man here in his brief, terrestrial abode, while the contrary idea threw all thought into confusion, and made the moral world appear as one great, bewildering contradiction. Was it not to Bathie's interest to believe in the immortality of the soul? At any rate, he at length reached that conclusion, and this was one step in the process whose termination is the everlasting salvation of a human soul. Is belief voluntary or involuntary? Is faith the outgrowth of volition? No doubt, to a certain extent, it is. In some cases we may be forced by overwhelming evidence to believe what we desire to be untrue—and here belief is involuntary. But in other instances, where there are arguments both *pro* and *con*, we may believe as inclination leads us. If a man earnestly wishes to reject the Bible, he can persuade himself that it is not a book of Divine Inspiration. On the other hand, if it is his desire to accept the Word as truth, that very desire itself destroys one of the strongholds of unbelief. We are, therefore, driven to the conclusion that the great obstacle in the way of salvation is the natural perversity of the human will. Unbelief is more the offspring of moral depravity than any defect in the evidence which establishes the divine authenticity of the Bible. If a skeptic desires to be a Christian, the precedent condition is, he must wish to be one. Bathie was now willing to try the comfort of the religion of Jesus. The moment he gained his consent to do this, the more clearly he perceived the weakness and the absurdity of Infidelity. He honestly weighed both sides of the question, with his

inclination to the side of Christianity. We admit that the evidence to prove the truth of the Christian Religion is not so very irresistible that there is absolutely no room for doubt. If that were so, there could be no Infidelity, and infidel and fool would be interchangeable terms. A person's desires and inclinations must, then, play an important part in the investigation of Christian Faith. Indeed, they will finally settle the question.

The most serious and dangerous of Bathie's difficulties were removed by his disposition to be a Christian. His desires gave strength to every circumstance which was favorable to the truth of Christianity, and weakened every one opposed to it.

If we were writing a treatise on Mental Science, we might very properly devote some space to the discussion of the question, whether our desires ought to be suffered to have any control in the investigation of Christian Faith; but we must waive it. We will say, however, upon this subject, that a man is justifiable in resorting to any process which will produce or confirm belief in the religion of Jesus. Why? For the simple reason that it is the only thing on earth that holds out the shadow of a hope to beings who dread annihilation. Any unbeliever can observe the effects of religion upon the character and life of his fellow-beings, whose conduct is regulated in accordance with its principles. He can see that it makes them happy. He is bound to admit that it is the best safeguard human society has ever had. It elevates individuals and civilizes nations. Take the very lowest logical view of the case: a man can lose nothing by leading a Christian life, even if it should turn out to be a mere "cunningly devised fable;" but if it be true, the Infidel has lost all. As Bathie asked himself, "would it not be better to take the safe side?" Nothing else promised relief. If this failed there was

nothing else to try. We need not enter into the details of Bathie's religious experience. It was similar to that of all persons who have changed from Infidelity to Christianity. In the course of a few months Bathie became a devout believer. His opinions underwent a radical change, and he was now a different man—a happier man. If he could not blot out the memory of his past life; if he still was troubled with terrible dreams, he was not without hope. In consequence of this wonderful change, we must now follow a different person in the progress of our story.

## CHAPTER XL.

### THE METAMORPHOSIS.

“Never met or never parted,  
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.”

We all know how powerful is constant association in the formation of friendships. Every man wants and loves friends, unless hideous misanthropy has crushed out all those tender sensibilities and noble impulses and generous sentiments which constitute the foundation of human society, or unless he has lost all taste for the pleasures of this world, and is fearful of the allurements of sin, and desires religious meditation in the gloom of a hermit's cave. People thrown together for any considerable length of time will form strong attachments, or they will be driven further apart by those incompatibilities which make a great fixed gulf between the different grades of human society. Let people of opposite sex meet constantly, day after day, and generally a very tender sentiment will spring up between them. Bathie and Cara met every day, and conversed freely. There is no doubt that the usual result would have soon followed, had it not been for the conspicuous absence of an attractive face. If Cara had been the owner of even a moderately handsome countenance, their daily association would, in all likelihood, have wrought out the results which are to be expected under such circumstances. But Bathie could not, by any known process of logic, delude himself into the belief that she was beautiful. She was horribly unhandsome, with that curious complexion, rendered still more repulsive by hideous warts.

As the days and months rolled by, Bathie became more confirmed in his opinion that they were persons of consequence in their own country. For this reason, had there been no other, he did not wish to form an attachment which would be likely to end in disappointment. He felt that he was in no danger so long as she presented to his view that horrible, almost disgusting face. If he had been blind, he might have become hopelessly enamored. But he had two good eyes, which were of service in this particular instance.

One day, however, an event occurred which caused a great and wonderful change to come over the spirit of Bathie's dreams, and which was destined to affect the current of his history. He entered the parlor where Cara was reading. The light was shining full upon her face. But what a miraculous change! The complexion was replaced by one as fair as Bathie had ever seen in his life. Not a single one of the disgusting excrescences was visible. There sat before him the most beautiful woman he had ever met, and he stood looking at her in amazement. Was it really Cara?

"Miss Cara," he asked, in doubt, "is that you?"

"Certainly, Monsieur, it is I. Do you not know me, after we have been associated together so long?"

"You have another face!" exclaimed Bathie. "What have you done to yourself?"

"What is the matter with my face?" she asked, rising, and approaching a small mirror suspended from a projecting rock in the wall. She merely glanced at her countenance, and exclaimed, in apparent embarrassment and alarm, "O, excuse me a moment, Monsieur, till I become natural."

Then she quickly left the apartment. In a very short time she returned, presenting to Bathie's view the

same old, ugly face. Bathie was astonished at the sudden transformation.

"You will please explain," said Bathie. "I do not understand this metamorphosis. You remind me of some of Ovid's stories. Which one of the two is your proper self?"

"Monsieur, you came in when I was not expecting you. Besides, I had forgotten ——."

She paused.

"Forgotten what?" asked Bathie, with aroused curiosity.

"Monsieur," she said, with a laugh, "you have caught me, and I will no longer try to deceive you. I have been forced to disguise myself for some years, in order to confuse our pursuers. My father, also, is in disguise, and you have never seen him as he really is. We have frequently escaped by such means. My father's present disguise is very different from mine, though."

"Tell me," interrupted Bathie, "am I looking at your natural face now?"

"No, Monsieur, you are not."

"Why," asked Bathie, "do you wish to conceal your face from me? Are you afraid that I will betray you?"

"O, no; not that, at all," she answered, "but I have reasons which I cannot now reveal."

"Do you object," said Bathie, "to appearing before me as nature made you?"

"Why should I, Monsieur? What difference can it make to you?"

"What do you want with such a homely disguise when you are in no danger?"

"Persons in our situation know not when they are in peril. Besides, I cannot see why our intercourse, which

must terminate at some time, may not be just as pleasant and friendly, though I am masked."

"Your present mask," said Bathie, "does you too great injustice."

"What matters it, Monsieur? The disguise has no effect upon our conversation."

"Begging your pardon, I think it does. You cannot smile, and the lack of a smile detracts much from conversation. I have thought it very strange that you never smiled. Will you please remove it?"

"Remove what?"

"Your mask, or whatever it is."

"Monsieur, I prefer not to do so, for very good reasons, I think."

"Give me the good reasons, please."

"I am not at liberty to give them now. You do not know who I am, and you have never asked me. I told you once that you had as little curiosity as any one I ever saw. Shall I tell you now?"

"I care not to know," replied Bathie. "I would have the same opinion still."

"You might not, Monsieur. But if you have no disposition to know, I shall not tell you."

"Wait till I ask you, said Bathie. "Only appear as your proper self."

"If you insist upon it," answered Cara, "I will comply with your request, but I do so against my own judgment."

"I will risk it," replied Bathie, playfully.

Accordingly, after that day, Cara threw aside her mask, and the consequence which any one would naturally suppose followed. Cara now lacked nothing, in the estimation of Bathie, to make her the most handsome woman he had ever seen. Down to this time he had often gazed at the miniature picture of his wife of a

moment, in whose grave he imagined his affections were forever buried. But, alas! how weak is man, and woman, too. The image of the dead bride, that once had filled his whole heart, began gradually to fade away, in spite of himself. He had once deemed it disloyalty to her memory to think of any other woman. But now, when alone, he detected nearly all his thoughts in the act of running out to Cara. He became alarmed, and determined not to allow his affections to become entangled. For this purpose he resolved to avoid her company as much as possible, believing that by such a course he would soon become master of his heart again. When he discovered that his thoughts were seeking Cara he would draw forth the little picture, and gaze at it till he thought his loyal feelings were restored. He now regretted that he had seen Cara without her disguise. He had asked her to remove it only because it was so repulsive to his sight, not dreaming that he would lose control of his feelings. He determined to assert his manhood and self-government, but his efforts were all in vain. He found himself struggling, like the poor fly entangled in the meshes of the spider's web.

One day, while gazing at the picture, his heart revolted under the restraint.

"What is the use," said he to himself, "of wasting my life on a handful of dust? Why make such efforts to hold my affections in a tomb? I can nevermore see her in this world. Yet what hope have I of winning this fair Russian. She is probably above me in social position. I fear she is some grand princess, who would scorn an alliance with a common American. If she is disposed to return my affection I cannot perceive the slightest indication of it. But I can be as proud as she can. I do not want a wife who would regard our marriage as a *mesalliance*."

Several days passed away, and Bathie neither spoke to, nor saw Cara. He took his meals in his own chamber, in order to avoid her.

But at last Cara sent a message, requesting him to meet her in the parlor. How could he refuse such a request? He felt impelled to comply, and entered the parlor with a heart violently palpitating. As he took his seat, she looked searchingly into his face, and said:

“Is Monsieur offended at me? I have sent for you to ascertain what is the matter. If I have said or done anything to wound your feelings, I should like to know what it is, that I may explain and apologize.”

“You have neither said nor done anything to which I have taken exception,” said Bathie, warmly.

“Then why have you avoided me so?”

“I scarcely know how to answer you,” said Bathie, with great hesitation.

“The plain truth is the best answer,” replied Cara, with a smile that set the poor fellow’s heart fluttering violently. “Why prevaricate?”

“There is no necessity for deception,” replied Bathie. “All I can say is, we sometimes desire the solitude of our own thoughts.”

Cara looked grave, but quickly rising up, she said—

“Excuse me, then, for disturbing you. But since you inform me that you are not offended, and are only fond of your own meditations, I will not trespass upon your time, nor disturb your reflections. Please forgive me for interrupting your occupation. You may be sure I shall not trouble you again.”

Before Bathie could recover himself so as to speak, she had vanished.

“She has answered the fool according to his folly,” Bathie muttered to himself. “What a downright simpleton does a man make of himself who has not control

of his passions! She is disposed to flout; but I can be as obstinate as she can. Perhaps, though, I may be mistaken."

But he was not mistaken, for days passed away, and Cara sent no more messages, nor did anything occur to indicate that she desired to be in his presence. If they met again in the parlor, Bathie was convinced that he would have to be the aggressor. They met, however, at meals, but to his mortification, she put on another mask, which was even more uncomely than the first. Yet she did not appear to be the least offended. She conversed, while they were eating, with as much vivacity as ever, but she treated Bathie as one in whom she felt no particular interest beyond what gratitude demanded. He had saved her life and that of her father, and had given them a safe retreat for several years, and she must, therefore, not show unthankfulness. But, in all respects, she acted as one whose heart was perfectly free, and that made Bathie miserable. He became melancholy and reticent. Sometimes, in spite of his pride, he would resolve to freely tell Cara all that he felt, and thus bring matters to an issue.

"It is possible," he thought, "that she cares for me. Why did she unmask, if it was not to captivate me with her dazzling beauty? True, she acted as if I had accidentally discovered her, but that may have been a *ruse*. Yet she now acts as though I were nothing to her. I cannot yet run the risk of rejection. I will endeavor somehow to cause her to betray herself, if she does love me."

Even men, with all their boasted dignity and independence, will, in affairs *de cœur*, resort to petty arts in order to force love-smitten maids to betray that delicate sentiment which every refined woman will try to conceal till she has the legal right to reveal it. Bathie had

the little meanness to resort to a trick, intended to surprise Cara into an involuntary confession. However, the only deception which he contemplated consisted in the purpose for which he determined to seek another interview with the young lady. He had conditionally made up his mind to quit the cave, and he desired to see what effect the communication of his intention would have upon Cara. Two months had gone by since they had had any conversation alone. Bathie now requested her to meet him in the parlor. When she entered, he fixed his eyes upon her masked face, and said—

“I had hoped to see your natural countenance once more.”

“If that is any pleasure to you, Monsieur, excuse me only a moment.”

She hastily went into her room, and removed the disguise, which was very ingeniously arranged. Returning to the parlor, she looked so superbly beautiful that Bathie felt like throwing himself at her feet, and making an offer of his heart, hand and fortune, but he prudently checked this strong impulse, and, in a sorrowful tone, said—

“I have come to take formal leave of you.”

Whether Cara divined his purpose or not, she did not shrink from his gaze, nor exhibit the tell-tale erubescence which Bathie so much desired, nor manifest any great astonishment.

“Are you really going to leave us, Monsieur?”

“That is my intention,” said Bathie, anxiously watching her.

“Can you do so with safety?”

“I do not know that it will be altogether safe, but I can afford to take some risks in order to regain my liberty. I do not propose to pass my entire life in a cave.”

"I do not blame you, Monsieur," answered Cara, with an indifference which sent a chill through Bathie's heart. "I only wish all of us could leave. I should like to go back to my own country, but I do not know when I can do so. We will be in danger the moment we enter daylight. The consciousness of security makes this place very desirable to us, whatever it may be to you."

"I hope the day is not far distant when it will be safe for you to go. I know such imprisonment must be terrible to one who has been accustomed to scenes of gayety, as you have been."

"How do you know to what I have been accustomed?" asked Cara, with a laugh that made Bathie's heart palpitate so violently that he became conscious of its vibrations.

"Why, I am not so ignorant of the fashions of genteel society that I cannot perceive you have moved in the very highest circles."

"Of course, Monsieur, you can perceive that I do not belong to the serfs. I have never tried to disguise the fact that I have seen better days. I am ready to inform you who I am whenever you want the information."

"I do not want it yet," quickly answered Bathie.

"That is strange, Monsieur; you do not care to know who your guests and friends are?"

"I hope," said Bathie, as if half talking to himself, "the day may come when I will want to know."

"When do you propose to leave, Monsieur?"

"I am a creature of impulse, and may start almost any moment. I may go in an hour, or in a month. I am endeavoring to practice self-government before I go out into the world."

"You think you will go?"

"I must go," said Bathie, energetically. "The longer I remain here the worse it will be."

"I do not understand you, Monsieur. You are talking in riddles."

"I believe I am, and I beg your pardon. We sometimes make egregious blunders, even when our intentions are good. You see that?" continued Bathie, in a kind of desperation, drawing forth a picture and handing it to her.

"That is a beautiful face," said Cara, after she had examined it attentively. "What relation, may I ask, does she sustain to you? Am I to understand you wish to leave the cave, in order that you may see her?"

"I can never," said Bathie, solemnly, "see her again in this world, however much I might desire it. She is not among the living."

Here a pause followed.

"I had something to say to you about that picture," remarked Bathie, "but I find I cannot do it. It would be a waste of words, I fear."

"Monsieur can do as he pleases about that," answered Cara, in a tone of such freezing *nonchalance* that Bathie felt like quitting her at once and forever. He was deeply chagrined. Yet, what for? What had Cara done to give offence, except to foil his ruse? Bathie could not charge her with anything else.

"We will be very lonesome," she said, presently, "when you leave us."

"I should rejoice to know," said Bathie, "that my presence has tended in the least to remove the gloom of this dark prison."

"Why, to be sure it has, Monsieur. I wish we had several more companions like yourself. We could then be a little community to ourselves."

Bathie desired to hear no more. He had never seen

Cara manifest more indifference toward him. Accordingly, he determined to go as soon as possible. He arose and extended his hand. He felt the pressure of hers, and turned slowly and sorrowfully away.

“It is best,” said Cara, to herself, “that we should part. He is my ideal of a true man ; but it can never be. There is a gulf between us. If I were certain that he loves me, I do not know that I could resist. I shall miss him sadly ; but better that than a mutual attachment, which would prove a source of keen disappointment to both.”

And thus they separated.

## CHAPTER XLI.

### THE ARREST.

“They enter’d—’t was a prison room  
Of stern severity and gloom.”

Some men are naturally venturesome, and such was Bathie Beaumont. It might seem foolhardy in him to go boldly forth from his place of concealment and mix with his fellow-men, among whom were those who were directly interested in his apprehension. But men in a paroxysm of desperation or despair will do things from which they would shrink during their sober moments. Bathie was most bitterly disappointed. In a spirit of recklessness he determined to leave his friends in the cave. Accordingly, he started off early the next morning after his interview with Cara, without bidding adieu to her or Mr. Moreing. Pomp brought him a horse, and, as he was mounting, the negro said—

“You hez n’t gib me no instructions, Mas Baffie, nor informed me whut pint am de objec’ ob yo’ perdestenation. Am you a gwine to leab us in dis ignerunt manner? Dat am not right, sah. Spose ye ware to run in ter de hazurd ob some differculty.”

“If I get into any difficulty, Uncle Pomp, I will notify you. I hardly know where I am going, myself.

I am going first, though, to —, on a reconnoitering expedition.”

“Mas Baffie,” said Pomp, with great earnestness, “I immonstrates gin yo’ gwine to dat town. Hit am de very las’ place you ought ter go to.”

“I do not know that it is, Uncle Pomp. Did you not tell me you had seen none of my pursuers for several months?”

“Dat am true; but, den, dey ken come back any time, ye know. A pusson in yo’ sityeration am allurz in de peril ob dangerous carcimstances. You hez to hav’ de eye ob de eagle, de cunnin’ ob de fox, an’ de smell ob de bloodhoun’ dorg, to keep outen de way ob yo’ enemies—dat am, ’less you hez a good Jack, like dis one o’ mine, ter gib you warnin’ ob ’proachin’ perils. Ef you ’d take mine ’long—an’ dar am nobody else on de face ob de green yearth I ’d loan her to but yo’self—but I say ef you could pervail ’ober yo’ supistisherous prejerdices so much as ter take her ’long wid you, an’ insult wid her wen you ware ’bout ter venter inter peril, she ’ud be ob sarvice to ye. She am bin very useful ter me in de hours ob trial, an’ she ’d be so ter you, too, ef you ’d only treat her wid de proper respect wich am due, an’ ’ud hab conferdunce in her knowlidge an’ abiliteries. You am welcome to her sarvice fur a brief space ob time.”

Bathie would have laughed at this kind offer, if his risibility had not long since been blunted by the gloomy circumstances amid which the greater portion of his life had been spent. But he did not so much as smile.

“I thought you told us,” said Bathie, “that the Jack would be of no use to any except the owner? That is my impression.”

“Did I say dat?” asked Pomp, looking puzzled, and scratching his head. “O, yes; lem’me see. Yes, dat ware in de preserence ob dem Rusheryans—dat ware de reason I said dat, sah.”

“You told a falsehood, did you?”

“No, sah—he! he! he!—not ’zackly a falsehood. I meant she would n’t sarve strangers—dat ware my signercation. But ef I tell her to sarve you, she’ll do it, widout a doubt.”

“Well, I thank you, Uncle Pomp, for your kind offer,

but I am afraid your Jack would only get me into trouble, as I do not know how to use it."

"O, ef you hez dat kine ob feelin', she'd do you no good, fur you mus' hab faif in her unications. O, Mas Baffie, am it raally inderspenserble dat you mus' go to ——?"

"I do not know that it is, Uncle Pomp. I have no particular business there."

"Den, fur de Lo'd's sake, I 'zorts you not ter go dar. Why should n't ye have some o' de grace ob prudence as well as knowlidge? You am safe now. Whut makes ye want to run right slap inter de very jaws ob def agin? Ef ye am captervated agin I does n't know how we ken save ye. You may be sho' dey am not gwine to let dat ar' cook outgin'ral 'em any mo'. No, sah, you am gone up on dat mode ob 'scape."

"That is true," said Bathie, carelessly, "but I am going to cross the Mississippi river at ——, and —— is right on my road. I'd have to ride a considerable distance out of my way to avoid it."

"You 'd better go outen yo' way some, dan to git yo'self imprehended agin."

"I do not feel that I am in any great danger," said Bathie. "You can come there this evening, to satisfy yourself. I intend to stay there some hours."

"I see you will hab yo' own way, Mas Baffie. I pray God dat you may not hab to repent ober dis step. But wen does ye intend ter come back? You hez some idee, sho'ly."

"I think I will be back in about a month. I believe I will go to my uncle's, first, and then to Vicksburg."

"May de good Lo'd bress you, an' bring ye back to us in saferty."

Bathie shook hands with Uncle Pomp, mounted his horse, and was soon in the town of ——. Assuming as

unconcerned an air as possible, he conducted himself as though there were no person on earth that had less cause to dread his fellow-men. He did not believe that he had an acquaintance in the town. True, he had known some few persons there when he was a boy, but he felt sure he had grown out of their knowledge, even if they were now residents of the place, which was very doubtful, as the people of these United States have a roving disposition, and are continually moving from one locality to another. If your friend lives in a certain place to-day, in less than six months you may hear of him in Arkansas or Texas. So, when Bathie reached —, he saw not a single human being with whom he was acquainted. But, unfortunately for him, he was recognized. It happened in this way: When Bathie was pursued by the Sheriff from Mississippi, and two deputies, it turned out that one of the deputies, who was a young man, had a relative in the town of — engaged in the mercantile business. The kinsman needed a clerk, and as Coster— for such was the deputy's name—was a good salesman, he entered into the employ of his relative. As ill-fortune would have it, Bathie at once went into the store where Coster was clerking, and purchased a few articles. The *quondam* deputy felt certain that Bathie was the escaped convict, as soon as they met face to face, and while he seemed intent upon selling his goods, he was examining his customer as closely as the circumstances would allow. Feeling assured that he was not mistaken, he made it convenient to disappear. Bathie made no note of his absence, believing that Coster was a perfect stranger. Besides, Bathie had a poor memory for faces. He must have seen Coster while he was in Baalbek, but he certainly did not now recognize him. While he was sitting in the store, five or six men entered the building, one at a time, and at short intervals, but they did not seem to

pay the slightest attention to him. Presently he arose, to go. As he was walking deliberately toward the door, he felt himself suddenly grasped by a pair of stout arms, and held as if he were in a vise. Before he could speak, three or four deadly-looking pistols were leveled at his breast.

"You're my prisoner!" exclaimed Coster, "and you may as well surrender."

"Certainly, I surrender," said Bathie, "but don't let this fellow press the life out of me."

"Loose your hold," said Coster to the man. "Give up your arms, though."

Bathie, at a glance, perceived it was folly to resist, and suffered himself to be disarmed, at the same time asking what they meant by this outrage. No reply, however, was made, till he was bound hard and fast. When this was done, Coster said—

"You know very well what we mean. Your name is Jones, Thomas Jones, is n't it?"

It must be remembered that Bathie was now an humble follower of the Lord Jesus. Before this great change occurred, he would not, in all probability, have hesitated to utter a falsehood to secure his personal safety. The question arose, what should he do under the present circumstances? Was there any principle of the Christian religion which would justify deception in order to extricate himself from an awful difficulty? He might, indeed, say, with truth, that his name was not Jones, but would not this be deception? He knew what Coster meant. He could not deny that he had passed under that name. Did not religion demand strict honesty under all circumstances? Suppose he should deny his name, and thus procure his release by a lie, could he ever be forgiven? Would not the Lord withdraw the peace which he had unmistakably en-

joyed? O, it was a sore temptation to do violence to his conscience. What must he do? At the moment, it appeared that a lie would serve his purpose better than the truth, but would not that lie place him beyond the pale of Divine protection?

This discussion flashed through his mind in the space of a few seconds, though it seemed much longer to Bathie, since we measure time by the number of ideas or thoughts that pass over the field of our mental vision. It was a moment of terrible trial. Would the good Lord save him from an ignominious death if he should preserve his integrity? He rapidly recalled the promises made to the faithful believer, but he could settle upon none which justified the hypothesis that his life would certainly be saved. Here was eternal life on the one side, on the condition of inviolate fidelity to a regenerated conscience, balanced against, on the other side, the possibility of a few years on earth and everlasting death in the world to come. This was the view which Bathie took, whether it be correct or not. Does any one say it was an easy question to decide? When man is brought face to face with death, he shrinks back from the monster. It is no indication that he is not a true believer because he has a dread of death. Evidence has been furnished in this story that Bathie was not deficient either in moral or animal courage. But he was horrified at the thought of expiating upon the gallows a crime of which he was not guilty. O, it made him shudder—that stepping upon the scaffold in the presence of a great, unfeeling crowd, burning with curiosity to behold the agonies of a fellow-being, suffocating, strangling, writhing in the throttle of the awful noose. Bathie felt a sickening sensation creeping over him, and he thought that his face must be pallid. Many thoughts can dart through a man's mind in an in-

credibly short space of time, in the situation in which Bathie now suddenly and unexpectedly found himself. He was under the impression that he had reflected at least five minutes, but it was not true.

At length, a conclusion was reached, and a course of action was marked out. Bathie determined that he would not criminate himself. This brings us back to Coster's question—

“Your name is Jones, isn't it?”

“I demand to know,” said Bathie, “by what authority I am thus treated?”

“I am the Sheriff of this county,” spoke up one of the men, “and I arrest you upon a warrant issued at the request of Coster.”

“And who is Coster?” asked Bathie.

“You have seen me before, Mr. Jones,” said Coster, “though you pretend not to recognize me. You know me, sir.”

“If ever I saw you before,” replied Bathie, who had determined that he would tell no falsehood, “I have no recollection of it.”

“I suppose,” said Coster, sneeringly, “you do not remember that I assisted in arresting you, when you killed that man near Baalbek?”

“I never killed any man near Baalbek,” answered Bathie, with emphasis.

“I say,” replied Coster, “that you were tried for murder at Baalbek, Mississippi, and you were condemned to be hanged. You gave your name as Thomas Jones. You may deny it, if you will, but you are the same man. I am willing to make oath to that.”

“Very well; do as you please. I am powerless now. Possibly there may be some law which will accord damages to a peaceful citizen, arrested without any proof of his guilt.”

“ You look very much like a peaceful citizen,” replied Coster, “ armed with such a weapon as this,” holding up the pistol which had been taken from the prisoner. “ You are violating the law by carrying such things.”

“ I understand my own affairs better than you do, I should think,” said Bathie. “ I shall not talk with you any more in regard to the matter. You have apprehended me; now proceed. But you had better be certain that you have the law on your side.”

“ O, you need not try to intimidate me in that way,” rejoined Coster. “ You are the same man that escaped from the Baalbek jail, and it is my duty to take you back, that that little job of hanging may be finished. I don't blame you for making your escape. It was cleverly managed by that cook; but you'll hardly be successful the next time.”

“ Mock and ridicule a defenceless man as much as you will,” answered Bathie. “ I shall not bandy words with you. You insist upon it that I am a murderer. It devolves upon you to substantiate your charge. I am a stranger here, and you have seen proper to arrest me on suspicion. Unless you release me on my own affirmation, you act at your own peril. I deny, solemnly, that I killed any man near Baalbek.”

“ Pshaw!” exclaimed Coster, contemptuously, “ do n't I know you are the same man? You can't deceive me. I would recognize you anywhere.”

“ Very well, sir. I shall say no more, and offer no resistance. We will see whether you are mistaken or not.”

“ That we will. You deny, then, that you are the man who escaped from the Baalbek jail?”

“ What is the use of denying it? You say that I am. I shall talk no more with you. You have overpowered me. Now do as you will.”

“ You may be as stubborn as you please ; but I am going to do my duty. Come on.”

Bathie, without uttering another word, followed his captors to the jail, where he was locked in a cell. The next morning he was on his way, under strong guard, to the town of Baalbek, and in two or three days he found himself in the very same loathsome cage from which he had made his escape. As the door turned upon its hinges, and he was left alone, multitudes of confused thoughts came rushing into his mind. How like a horrid dream was his life ! How the unwearied bloodhounds of Retribution had yelped upon his track, for years in succession ! But, mingling with his bewildering reflections, was the consoling thought that he was quite different from what he once had been. He recalled the conversation he had held with Langdon, and what foolish objections he had urged against the Christian religion, and he fell upon his knees to thank God for the wonderful change which had been wrought within him. But the question came up, what must he do ? Submit to his fate, without making an effort to save his life ? Who would save him now ? Where was the mysterious cook ? Would she not devise some other scheme to effect his rescue ? What would Cara think ?

Here, for the present, we must leave him, alone with his meditations. He adopted the policy of preserving absolute silence, and he spoke to no one. They might prove his identity, but he had determined that he would not be a witness against himself.

## CHAPTER XLII.

### A NEGRO'S ANGUISH.

“Nor less was she in heart affected,  
But that she masked it with modesty.”

The day that Bathie left the cave, Pomp was in a state of uneasiness and anxiety, feeling certain that some misfortune would befall his obstinate master.

“He’d better a’ lisen’d to my advisement,” said the negro to himself, “but he would n’t pay no ’tention ter me. I’s e had a good deal ob ’speriunce in dis worl’, an’ is well ’quainted wid de dangers dat ’cumerlates roun’ a fugertive frum de law. But Mas Baffie alluz ware obsternate, from a boy, an’ ’ud hev his own way ’bout everything. It hez tuck all my wisderm to git him out o’ his scrapes. He comed mighty nigh on ter bein’ hung once, an’ ef it had n’t er bin fur me an’ dat cook, he’d a bin a goner, sho’. He jes’ did ’scape by de skin ob ’s teeth. Ef dey ware ter imperhen’ him agin, I doan know how I could posserbly ’complish his temp’ral salvation no mo’. I fears it ’ud ’quire mo’ wisderm an’ ’speriunce dan I hez, to do dat.” He paused, and shook his head sagely. “Dat cook could n’t do dat trick agin. I jes’ knows ef he am imprehended agin, dey ’ll ’zamine all de cooks wid a critic’s eye—question whedder dey ’ll hev no cooks. Dey ’d eat dar vittels raw afo’ dey ’d let ’im ’scape in dat manner no mo’—’deed, dey would. But hit taint no use ’er climin’ de hill till yer git to it. Dey hez n’t imprehended ’im yit. But Mas Baffie am so ventursome, I’s e mighty ’feard dey ’ll nab ’im unawars. May de good Lo’d watch ober ’im.”

Two hours elapsed, and Pomp became very restless.

He walked through the woods, occasionally pausing, then sitting down, and burying his face as if engaged in the most profound meditation. Presently, he sprang to his feet, and plunged into a dense thicket. Going fifty or sixty yards, he sat down on the root of a fallen tree. He listened anxiously, and drawing forth the ball, already described, said—

“Jack, here am a good place ter insult wid ye on a matter ob great impawtence. Am dar iny individuwal near here? Ef dar am not, you ’ll please ter reverberate towawd de East an’ back agin to de West.”

The ball made the required vibrations.

“You am correck in dat. Now, I wants ye ter tell me ef Baffie Beaumont am in iny peril. Ef he am, you ’ll please reverberate twice to de East an’ de same to de West.”

The “Jack” obeyed.

“I fear’d as much, Jack. Tell me, am he imprehended? Ef he am, you ’ll please reverberate free times to de Norf an’ free times to de Souf. Be cautiouserous dis time. I want ter know de zack truf. Sometimes a Jack am allowed ter joke a little, but dis am not one ob dem ’casions. Dis am a ser’ous bus’ness, an’ I doan want ter be troubled wid no fool’shness. Now, here goes. Reverberate.”

The ball made the vibrations demanded, and Pomp started up, in amazement.

“Jack, am you guilty ob falsehood in dis here ting? Ef yer am, you knows whut am de consequencers. I’ll sacerfize one o’ yo’ ancessterers, an’ make a bougfire ob ’im. Yer ole granfader snake may be de one to suffer. Now, ter show dat you am not a’ deceivin’ o’ me, I ax you ter repeat dem reverberations.”

The ball performed the same movements as before.

Pomp looked earnestly at his talisman, shook his head, and muttered—

“I b’leves you. Dis am bad news, Jack, dat you gibs, but hit am no mo’ dan mout be naterly ’spected. But I mus’ go an’ see ef you hez made a fool o’ me. ’T won’t be good fur ye, ef ye hez. Mas Baffie tole me ter come inyhaw. Bress de Lo’d, hit won’t do ter be stanin’ here.”

Having said this, he immediately started off in a brisk walk, in the direction of —. In about two hours he was in the town. Here he soon met with an acquaintance of his own color.

“How does yer do, Bob?” exclaimed Pomp. “I ar’ oberjoiced to see you. In whut state ob helf am de wife an’ little uns?”

“Dey is neerly all in de ’joyment o’ bad healf, at dis time, thank de Lor’; but dey is improvin’ slow, do. But ye looks well yerself, uncle Pomp.”

“O, yes; I hez no raisin on ter which ter base a cumplaint. De good Lo’d am very beneverlent ter me in de presivation ob life an’ de ’stowment ob strenth; but am dar iny news a floatin’ loose roun’ town? It hez bin a good while sence I ware here.”

“No, I b’leve dar is nuthin’ wuf talkin’ ’bout, ’less you ’cept dat a man wurz ’rested here awhile ago. Dar ware not much ’citement ’bout it, neider. I seed ’im as he wurz agwine to de jail.”

“Who ware de inforternate inderviduwal,” asked Pomp, in such a tone of carelessness as he was able to assume, “who am had de clamerty ter fall inter de han’s ob de law?”

“He’s one, I’s e had no ’quaintance wid,” replied Bob. “I neber seed his face befo’.”

“Whut sawt ob lookin’ pusson mout he ’peard ter be?”

"As to dat, he wurz a berry good lookin' pusson, tall an' stout-built like, an' a face mo' white dan a 'oman's."

"Does ye know de nater ob de crime dat ware de 'casion ob his imprehension?"

"How 's dat?" asked Bob.

"Whut ware de crime ob de pusson? Ware it larceny, high fellerny, arsum, bigermy, or ware it some o' dem lesser offences wich de law ken jes barly take hold on? You knows crimes am 'vided off in ter diffrent dergrees, 'cordin' ter de obsternacy ob de carcimstances under wich dey am perpetsurated."

"O, yas, I knows dat bery wal," replied Bob, who had only a vague idea of Pomp's meaning, "do I'se neber had much to do wid de cotes."

"Yes; an' ef ye knows whut am ter yer own intrus' you'll make a bressin out'n yo' absince frum de cotes. Dey am no place fur a pusson as wants ter keep cleer o' de cluches ob de law. Dey am of'en injest."

"Yo' is right about dat, Uncle Pomp, shore. I knows by my own little expeeriunce dat dem as has nothin' to do wid cotes is de bes' off in de long run."

"Whut crime did ye say de pusson under 'sideration am charged wid?"

"I thinks," answered Bob, who could recollect but one of the offences enumerated by his erudite interrogator, "I thinks I hearn 'em say hit wurz fur de bigemly ov killin' anudder pusson."

"Yo' am got dat crime not by de correck pernunciation zackly," said Pomp, gently. "Hit am bigermy an' not bigemly. Neider am de word employ'd in de same bref wid murder. Dey am two crimes as fur apart as de East pole am frum de West pole."

"Yas, I knows dat," said the friend, "who was determined not to manifest ignorance of lexicography in

the presence of Pomp, "but I got der ideer dat it wurz bigermy, an' I thought dat wurz de right word."

"Pra'ps it mout a bin de right word, ef dat had bin de state ob de case. But whut did yer say ware de name ob de pusson?"

"I think I hearn say 't wurz Jones."

"Wich one o' de Joneses? Dar am so many as go under dat nomernation, it am mighty hard ter tell wich am meant, when de fus name am lef off."

"You's too hard fur me, now. I'se tole ye all I knows about it."

"Does ye know whedder dis Jones am incarcerated in de prison heah, or hez dey tuck 'im off to some oder change ob venure?"

"He's in de jail heah."

"Did yer hear um say whut mout be dar intentions toward 'im?"

"I'se telled ye all I knowed."

"I ar allwurz sorry ter hear ob iny pusson fallin' under de frown ob de law, specially ef he am a innercen inderviduwal. De law am jes like a spider's web. You hez beholden a fly in one ob dem webs?"

"Sho' I has, Uncle Pomp."

"You hez 'served how de mo' he struggle to extercate hissself, de mo' hard do he become dervolved in de trap?"

"Yes; I'se seed dat very thing. He! he! he! he! Don't de little fly wiggle so! he! he! he!"

"Fur a fack he do," said Pomp, gravely. "His inverlutions am very piteurous, an' hit allurz rouses my enermoserty agin de spider. Now, you ken learn a lesson from dat; fur dat am de way wid a man in de clutches ob de law. Ef he am not full ob 'speriance an' wisderm, so as he ken work a severunce out o' de web, de spider ob iniqerty will lay his ugly claws on him—no doubt o' dat."

"Yo' is right, uncle Pomp. He! he! he! he! Yo' sho' is, an' no mistake."

Bob shook his head in that way which is peculiar to the African race in the South, and giggled, and thus expressed the most lively satisfaction at his discovery of the beauty and appropriateness of Pomp's comparison.

"It's growin' into de night, Uncle Pomp. Spose yer go to my house, an' stay till mornin'. You has no ideer ob gwine back home ter-night, has you?"

"No; and I b'leve I'll cept de offer ob yo' stended hospertalerty. I wants ter see ef dat man Jones am a quaintance ob mine, and I'll stay till to-morrer ter observe ef his passonal identerty ken be recognized."

Accordingly, Pomp went to the humble residence of his colored friend, and remained till daylight the next morning. Not another word was spoken concerning Jones, though Pomp's thoughts were concentrated on that subject. After an early breakfast, Pomp was again on the streets. He made it convenient to be near the jail. He did not have to wait long to gratify his painful curiosity; for at an early hour he saw Bathie brought forth, handcuffed, and put into a carriage, which was driven off to the river. However, Pomp had managed to make his master look at him. Their eyes met, but not a word was spoken.

The faithful negro now turned his steps homeward, and as he walked along, great tears rolled down his swarthy cheeks and fell to the dust. At once he acquainted Mr. Constant with the distressing circumstance. That night he made a visit to the cave. No sooner was he in the presence of the inmates, than he burst into tears. The gigantic frame trembled like the aspen, and it was some time before he could control his choked utterance.

“What is the matter, Uncle Pomp?” asked Cara, gazing at him in surprise and pity.

Presently, he began to talk in a tremulous voice, and in broken sentences.

“I know’d Jack—would ’nt tell no—lie. You all made spote—ob her—an’ delighted yoselves wid fun—at her expenses—but she hez tole—de orful truf!”

“What are you talking about?” asked Cara, almost laughing. “What is the matter?”

“O, Miss Cara, I’ll neber enjoy iny mo felicerty in dis worl. I hez—nuffin ter live fur, an’ if it ware de good Lo’d’s will—I ar’ ready ter bid farwell to all de sorrows an’ trials ob dis willerness ob wo’. O—O—I hez no desire to stend my existerece into iny futur years. O, may de good Lo’d hab mussy on me, an’ on us all.”

“Why, Uncle Pomp,” said Cara, “is your wife, or any of your children dead?”

“O, no, Miss Cara, ’tis not dat. I hez neber committed de ceremoner ob matermony in my life. I hez bin a bachelur frum de day I ware born. I could a’ married ter many a intelligernt ’oman, ef hit had bin in ’cordunce wid my views, but I’s e had no time. It hez bin my priverlege to watch ober Mas Baffie eber sence he ware a little boy. He could ’nt ’er got ’long widout me. I hez bin de same as a mudder ter him, an’ hez got ’im out ’en many a dilemmer. I hez neber loved iny body in dis worl but him, an’ now —.”

Here Pomp’s emotions utterly overcame him, and he cried aloud. When he became a little more tranquil, Cara said—

“Do tell us, Uncle Pomp, what is the matter?”

“O, how ken I eber tell it? I b’leve it ’ll be de def ob me.”

“Has anything happened to Monsieur?” asked Cara.

"I wint off in de forest yistiddy, an' insulted wid Jack about it, an' he tole me de truf, as much as ye all pour'd out de vilence ob yo' redercule. Dis same Jack hez help'd ter git Mas Baffie out'n many a scrape, an' I tried ter pervail wid 'im ter tuck de intelligernt insterment 'long wid 'im, and ef he'd a' done so, an' paid a filleral attention ter my advisemunt, he would n't be whar he am at dis presunt minit."

"Well, where is he?" asked Cara, in vexation. "Why do you not tell?"

"Don't fly into a cotantrim, Missus," said Pomp, wiping the tears from his eyes. "You'll know de orful news soon 'nough."

"Where is Monsieur?" she again asked.

"O, bress de good Lo'd!" exclaimed Pomp, wringing his hands in anguish, "how can I eber tell sich a clamity as dat?"

"Tell it, if you are going to," said Mr. Moreing. "Where is Mr. Jones?"

"Wal, sah, at dis pertickler minute, I hez no knowlidge ob his wharabouts. I wish I ware wid 'im, so as I could gin you de correck inf'mation; but I ken only guess whar he am."

"Tell it when you get ready," said Cara, "but you are enough to provoke a saint."

"Wy, Missus!" exclaimed Pomp, in surprise, "I ar' a tellin' you as fas as I ken. Poor Mas Baffie am at dis presunt minit a flotin' down dat bery riber some-whars."

"He has been captured, has he?" asked Mr. Moreing.

"I tole him wen he started off yistiddy, to exercise cortion an' prudence, or he'd run de resk ob impreshion, an' I sisted on h'is takin' my Jack wid him, but he would 'nt pay no tention ter me, an' now he am in de hans ob de law's tormenters."

"He has been captured, then," said Mr. Moreing. "Is that your meaning, or not?"

"He ware imprehended yistiddy, an' I seed him dis mornin', wid my own eyes, gwine 'long to de boat, wid his hans cuffed up wid dem iron locks. O, good Lo'd, hab mussy on him! I trem'les to think whut am to become ob 'im. How me an' Jack am to git him out o' dis dilemmer am a little mo' dan I can see. May de good Lo'd watch ober him, and bring him out 'n harm's way. De Lo'd will hev to do it, fur it 'peers to me dat de help ob man am ob no 'vail in dis case. It'll tuck a mericle ter save him dis time. Dat cook can't do dat agin, no sah, an' I doan know whut ter do."

Mr. Moreing, touched by Pomp's distress, said—

"The Lord knows what is best, Uncle Pomp. He can lead the blind by hidden paths they know not of. We must have faith in God."

"I does n't despar yit, do de way at dis presunt time, am dark wid stormy clouds. I ken see no outlet out o' dis trouble. It am mighty hard to hab ter suffer fur de onbecomin conduct ob oder evil-minded pussons. Mas Baffie no mo' killed dat man dan I did."

"I am sorry," said Mr. Moreing, "that I cannot leave this hiding-place, or I would endeavor to help your master."

"No, sah, 't won't do fur you to leab here yit. De Lo'd knows I hez watched ober you all, an' 'dcavored ter keep you hid frum dem infatigobble persuers, an' I'd hate ter see you all nabbed at de same time. But I doan know as you could hep Mas Baffie, ef you ware out o' here. But he mus' 'scape somehow. O, Mas Morein, I ar confused, sah. My ole head am a wool gadderin. But I ar' agwine ter make some sort ob effurt ter save Mas Baffie. I may lose my life at it, but

I ar' willin' to do dat. Dey can't cheat me out 'n many days, nohow. I can't remain many mo' years in dis worl', 'cordin' to de coase ob natur."

"Why, you do not look old, Uncle Pomp," said Mr. Moreing. "I would n't take you to be over fifty, anyhow."

"No, sah; but fifty years am a long time to live in dis sinferl worl, an' it seems ter me I hez bin here a hunderd year. I hez seed some bloody sights durin' de war. Mas Baffie am a hero, sah. I hez seed him perform deeds dat not many would 'tempt at all, for no 'sideration. At de battle ob Big Black I seed him do a thing dat made my har stan' on eend."

"What was that?" asked Cara.

"I ware on de top ob a hill whar I could see de whole battle. I picked up one o' dem magnifyin' glasses which de officers carried. I s'pose some on 'em had dropped it. Anyhow, I clum a tree, an I brung de armies right up to me, it 'peered like. Mas Baffie's company ware a crossin' de riber as fas' as dey could, an' he ware a long ways behind. He ware right at de foot ob de railroad bridge, which ware half a mile long, an' in some places it ware forty feet above de groun'. Dar ware planks laid down on de cross-tiers fur de sodgers ter march on. Preserently de inemy made a charge, an' I thought Mas Baffie would be sho' ter be capter'd. But bress yo' soul, he had no sich notion as dat. What do yer spose he done? Wy, he jes put spurs to his coal-black hoss, an' dashed on to de bridge. Here he went as hard as de hoss could tar. Umph! you could hear his huffs a strikin' on de planks. It made me tremble all ober, fur I spected ter see de hoss fall off de bridge ebery minute. De inemy ware so dumbfounded dat dey jes stopped, an' looked at him. Here he went, clatter, clatter, clatter, clank, clank,

clank, an' eberybody a lookin' at 'im.\* Dat sight jes' stopped de battle on bofe sides. But when he struck de bank on de oder side, you ought ter a heerd de yell dat went up from fren' an' foe. I jes' could n't keep frum cryin' like a fool wen I heerd dat cheerin'. I doan s'pose dar ware anoder man in eider army dat would a' done sich a orful preformance as dat."

"Why did he ride over the bridge?" asked Cara.

"Becaze it ware de only way he could 'scape bein' killed or capter'd. Ef he'd a tried ter swum de riber, de inemy would er shot 'im. But when dey saw 'im take de bridge, I 'spose dey ware so 'stounded dat dey neber fired a single gun at 'im. I tell ye, Missus, de good Lo'd neber made a braver an' dariner a man dan Mas Baffie."

Uncle Pomp again burst into tears, and Cara turned her head away from the light, to conceal her emotions. After awhile, when his feelings were more composed, he arose to leave, and said—

"Mas Constant will look arter yo' needs wen I ar' gone."

"Where are you going, Uncle Pomp?" asked Cara.

"In coase I ar' gwine ter foller Mas Baffie. I know whar dey 'll take him."

"What do you expect to do?"

"I can't git my ideers centratered jes now, Miasus. I'll insult wid Jack on proper 'casions. She's bin ob great utilerty in all de past years, an' I doan think she'll fail me in de wus 'mergencies, wen she am needed mos'."

"Follow him, Uncle Pomp," said Cara, with ill-concealed emotion, "and do what you can to save him."

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\* Other persons, besides Uncle Pomp, witnessed this fearful performance. Since then the bridge has been lowered to the ground.

If money will be of any avail, let us know, and you shall have it."

"Ef money could settle de differculity, Mas Baffie would long sence a bin free, to go whar he please, widout fear ob molesteration. Money am no subject wid him. But I mus' be a gwine. I doan know wen I 'll be back. May de good Lo'd bress you, an' shadder his wings ober you, an' at las' take you home to Heben, beyant de skies. Good-bye."

All three of the inmates took Pomp's great horny hand, and gave him a warm grasp, and in a moment he was gone.

After Pomp's departure, there was dead silence for a quarter of an hour. Mr. Moreing and Cara were both reflecting upon the same subject—Bathie's terrible misfortune. The subject seemed to make a deeper impression upon her than upon her father. Mr. Moreing heard an unmistakable sigh, and glancing furtively at Cara's fair face, which was now undisguised, he saw something glittering with reflected light on her cheek, that sought a path down the smooth epidermis to a point whence it could fall to the floor. The crystalline drop caused Mr. Moreing to start, and it seemed to arouse some new thought. Abruptly he broke the silence—

"Cara, my child, do you know that your tears excite my suspicions?"

"You will have to explain your meaning, Father," she answered, with a sad smile. "To what sort of suspicions do you allude?"

"I suspect that you are thinking of Mr. Jones, in a way which is not entirely right. I hope you have not forgotten who you are."

"Almost, Father," she replied, with a blush. "We have been hiding so long that I think of myself as scarcely anything but a fugitive."

"But I hope this will not be the case always," replied Mr. Moreing. "It is, indeed, a long lane that has no turn."

"Ours has certainly been a long lane, Father; and I see little prospect of a turn."

"But I am still looking forward to the time when we will return to Russia, and you will take your place in society as the wife of Count Mendojowski."

"I have almost despaired of that, Father. The Count treats us very coolly, I think. He might have found us out if he is so vehemently in love as he once professed to be. We have not heard from him since we fled."

"No, not directly. But he is still unmarried, as I see from the papers we get."

"Father," said Cara, suddenly, "how do you manage to get those papers?"

"Very easily. There are Nihilists in this country, among whom I have friends. They send me the papers, through Mr. Constant."

"Suppose the Czar's son should hear of that, do you believe he would still be your friend?"

"Why should he not be? It is the only way I can hear from Russia."

"I am afraid of the arrangement, Father."

"You have no reason to be. The Czar's son is ignorant of my movements. So we will say no more about it. Coming back to the Count—"

"I am under no obligations to him," interrupted Cara; "none whatever."

"What do you mean?" asked Mr. Moreing, looking earnestly at her face.

"Just what I say, Father. He has neglected us. Besides, if you want to know the real truth, I never have loved him."

"Look here, Cara," exclaimed Mr. Moreing, wildly,

"tell me the truth; has Jones induced you to violate your plighted troth to the Count?"

"Father," said Cara, in a reproachful tone, "does it become you to speak so contemptuously of our benefactor? What would have become of us, had it not been for him?"

"I really did not mean any disrespect to our friend," quickly replied Mr. Moreing. "But I spoke as I did merely to show you how improper would be such an alliance. Among your friends, when we return home, he would be known as 'the man Jones,' or some other such epithet."

"You need not give yourself any uneasiness about 'the man Jones,'" said Cara, "even if I regard him, in an intellectual point of view, far superior to Count Mendojowski. Besides, his name is not Jones."

"That makes no difference in America. A name here signifies nothing. He might as well be called Jones as anything else. There is no rank here."

"No; but if Monsieur were a Russian, he would deserve high rank. He has the bearing of my ideal of a Count."

"Do you mean to tell me!" exclaimed Mr. Moreing, "that your affections have been won by Jones? You dare not tell me that!"

"I said no such thing, Father; but I do say, that if Monsieur were a Count, I should prefer him to Mendojowski. But do not lose your tranquillity. I know what your rank is, and I know my place as your daughter. I have no idea of forming any *mesalliance*. I have too much pride for that. But do you wonder at it that I should have great respect and esteem for Monsieur, when he is the only companion, except yourself, I have had for several years? He is interesting, and possesses a mind of a very high order. He is the

equal of any American lady in the land. I sometimes suspect that he cares for me; yet he has never mentioned such a subject. I do not know why he should keep silent, for he does not know your rank, and if he did, I do not think he would consider that as a barrier. He would, no doubt, regard our social positions as equal. These American aristocrats care little for our social distinctions."

"Yes, that is true; but I am glad to know that you have no idea of degrading yourself by an alliance with any American, no matter how wealthy and intelligent he may be."

"Do not give yourself the least uneasiness on that score," said Cara.

"Very well; I will trust you. I do not think you would deceive me?"

"No, sir; I will not."

Suppose we lay open a human heart, and witness a violent struggle between *love* and *pride*—a strange warfare between two strong passions. Let us contemplate a plain truth. Cara endeavored to deceive even herself, by regarding her affection for Bathie as mere esteem and friendship. In this instance she confounded love with gratitude. Why was she miserable without him? Why should she leave her parent immediately after the foregoing conversation, hasten to her chamber, fall upon her couch, and weep, as though utterly heart-broken? But was not a dear friend in the utmost danger? Did she not owe a debt of gratitude to "the man Jones?" Why, then, should she not weep when she heard of the terrible calamity which had befallen him? Would she be such an ingrate as to banish all thought of him from her mind? She had enjoyed the hospitalities of this noble friend for several years. Why, then, should she not grieve over his fearful troubles? Probably he

would, ere long, be beyond the reach of persecution. She would, therefore, allow herself to think freely about him every day, and even weep as often as she felt so disposed. She would not suffer herself to be amazed at the idea that she longed to hear from him. O, that he would only write to her!

And thus the young lady, without being fully conscious of the fact, was giving herself up unrestrainedly to a wild, deep passion. It was so easy to deceive herself, because her friend was now standing face to face with death. Of course, she had not the most remote thought of ever marrying him. O, no! no!

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### NEGRO FETICHISM.

“Pour in sow's blood that hath eaten  
Her nine farrow; grease, that's sweeten  
From the murderer's gibbet, throw  
Into the flame.”

When Uncle Pomp left the cave, he went to Mr. Constant's, had an interview with that gentleman, and started early the next morning for the town of Baalbek. His expression was different now from what it had ever been. You have seen a person die in the presence of a dear friend—say a wife, who loves her husband with a purity akin to that of the angels? He is now about to cross over that dark and dismal stream which separates the living from the dead, or more properly, a great, yawning gulf, from whose opposite shore, lost in the dark immensity of eternity, no one ever returns. Look at the expression of intense anguish upon that wife's tear-stained face, which no painter's brush can correctly portray. If a slight hope of his recovery springs up for only a moment, caused by that delusive change which frequently precedes the final convulsions, what a bright gleam of joy spreads over her face! But the brief streak of sunshine passes away, and the consciousness that there is no ground for hope brings back again the fixed look of blank despair. Such an expression settled upon Uncle Pomp's sable countenance. He moved about in a sort of dreamy confusion. When he reached Baalbek he tried in every possible way to see Bathie, but his efforts resulted in failure and disappointment. He dared not ask permission to visit him in the

jail. He would sometimes stand gazing for a long time at the gloomy prison, wishing, and trying to think. Then he would leave the town and stroll in the forest—for what? An idea, an inspired thought, an unexpected suggestion from some mysterious, invisible power. In our perplexities we sometimes drop the reins, and suffer our mind to rove whithersoever it will, and to our surprise it solves the difficult problem. There is a strange power in the mind, when thus left to its own guidance. It is like throwing the reins on our horse's neck, when we are lost in the forest, and suffering the animal, by an unerring instinct, to find the way for us. Pomp was turning his mind loose in this way, and was thinking, thinking, thinking.

So far as he could learn, no one was making any effort to save Bathie's life; so poor Pomp, with all the force of his untutored mind, was endeavoring to devise a scheme for his master's rescue. For days together he wandered about in a state of stupefaction. Alas! it seemed he could think of no plan!

The necessary legal process in Bathie's case had been completed, and the day had again been appointed for his execution, and the time was rapidly approaching. The prisoner, true to his proposed policy, had spoken to no one since his confinement. He appeared to be dumb. Whether it was right or wrong, he determined that he would keep perfectly silent. So he acted as if he had lost the sense of hearing. His former lawyer, and Langdon, and other persons called, but he paid no attention whatever to them. He answered not a single question, but conducted himself as though all his senses were paralyzed. He was not trying to play the *rôle* of an innocent man, but simply refused to speak about anything. Possibly he might have been trying to create a doubt as to his identity; but if this was

his object he failed in it, for he was legally identified, and the Court did not hesitate to re-sentence him to be executed. No explanation of his conduct on this occasion was ever given, and we shall not indulge in conjectures as to his motives and intentions.

The awful time was rapidly approaching, and no one was permitted to see the prisoner, except in the presence of the Sheriff. It was Tuesday, and the following Friday was the appointed day.

Now let us follow Uncle Pomp. At dark on Tuesday evening he left the town of Baalbek, carrying a sack across his shoulders. He kept the road for about two miles, and turned at right angles from it, and walked on till he came to a creek, down whose shore he traveled till he was far from any human habitation. After a while he halted, struck a match, and lit a candle. The light revealed a hole in the earth about eighteen inches in depth, and the same in diameter. At the bottom Pomp began to lay dry fuel, to which he set fire, and kept it burning till the hole was half filled with glowing coals. Next he placed a pot upon the fire, and poured into it several pints of water. While waiting for this to boil, he drew forth the "Jack" from his pocket.

"Now, Jack," said Pomp, *sotto voce*, "I hez got to go through de preformance ob a solemn cer'mony, which am dersigned fur de benefit ob de livin'. Ef you ware eber cautious an' perticler in yo' life, I wants you to be so now, at dis presunt time. It am only on de mos' solemn 'casions dat we zorts to dis proceress ob reindivernation. I ar' a gwine to sacerfize to de fire-god, who am under de control ob de good Lo'd. But dis fire-god dwells on de yearth, an' I wants his help nex' Friday. I hez got to go through a fiery trial on dat day, an', darfo', I makes a burnt off'rin' to de fire-god. You mus' git de benefit ob dis sacerfize, so you 'll be expired

wid wisderm, an' ken anser my questions widout a mistake. We mus' pray fust."

Uncle Pomp then lay flat on his back, with his head toward the West, and with his huge hands crossed upon his breast, in the attitude of a corpse. Looking straight up at a star glittering in the zenith, he lay motionless for at least ten minutes. An observer, standing close by, might have seen that his lips were working rapidly, though not a word could he have heard. The prayer finished, Pomp took from his sack a bundle, which he carefully unfolded.

"Now, Jack, 'tention, if you please. Here am de saddle ob a frog, which am de fust ingredurunt ob dis sacerfize. Here am de middle portion ob a black snake; also, two whole lizerds, an' one groun' scoriun; nex', here am seben bess-bugs, corspondin' to de seben days o' de week. Here am one jay-bird, wich am a wickerd, winged fowl, becaze he hez unication wid ole Satin ebry Friday. Here am two turky aigs, wich am ter regularte de proceress ob cookin'. Dem two aigs I hez ter eat. I now places all dese ingrediunces in dis pot ob bilin' water, an' I mus' stan' on my head zackly five minits, neider mo' nor less, longer nor shorter."

Having said this, Pomp emptied his offering into the pot, and immediately put his head on the ground, and threw his feet against a tree, which enabled him to maintain his attitude. When the five minutes, carefully counted by his watch, had expired, he resumed his natural position, and lifted the pot from the fire, remarking, as he did so—

"De fire-god likes dis off'rin' neider done nor zackly raw. He wants no bread neider, becaze he am a hom-niverous bein'. Now I'll stir up de coals, an put dis article into de fire, whar it can be unvoured by dat

onviserble bein' ; an' as it am a disappearin, I mus' go through de decantation. So here goes."

At once the flames flashed up, and Pomp looked at them with the most intense interest. Then he said, in a low, solemn tone—

"O, fire-god! I now gibs you de inf'mation dat de life ob a human bein' am in de uttermos' peeril. I needs yo' help nex' Friday, dat I may go through a fiery trial. I wants fire an' steam in my bones an' mussels, fur it am a mos' dangerous interprise. I may lose dis life o' mine, but I ar' a gwine to make one mighty effurt to sabe a innercent man frum a ignerminorous deaf, wich am by no means desarved. I repeat, O, fire-god! he am a innercent inderviduwal, an' he mus' not perish, ef de combernation ob sperital an' bod'ly powers ken sabe him. You mus', ef de good Lo'd'll suffer it, gib me de help ob steam. I thinks de Lo'd wo'nt objeck in dis instance, whar a innercent pusson's life am devolved. I hez offered you dis sacerfize fur de sake ob yo' good will. I hez a kinman ob yourn along wid me, dat am also in need ob wisderm an' de unspiration ob knowledge, dat he may gin true an' correck ansers to my questions, so I'll know whedder to hev proper conferdence in her. Now, while you am a unvourin' dis meal, wich am cooked 'cordin' ter yo' taste, I'll perpoun' de question dat am in'spensible in dis bizness."

Taking the string of the ball between the thumb and first finger of the right hand, he said—

"Now, Jack, you mus' be serpemely cautious, becaze eberything 'pends on you. By no manner ob means mus' you be guilty ob no sort o' varication. Ef eber we did want de truf, since our zistence begun under de sun by day an' de moon by night, de 'casion am arrove. Now, Jack, arter you hez witnessed dis off'rin' to de fire-god, how ken you be so unvoid ob all exc'lent moral

princerpul as ter perpetate a falsehood? In de fust place, am dar iny pusson, livin' or dead, near here? Ef dar am, reverbrate in iny d'rection you please?"

The ball vibrated.

"All right. Now lissen, Jack, to dis question. How will it do to persuade a good many honest inderviduuals ter jine me in a comp'ny, an' go to de jail, break down de do', an' run off wid de pris'ner? Ef dat won't do, do n't reverbrate."

The ball remained motionless.

"You am right, Jack, becaze I hez no time to do dat. You am right, sho'. Wal, dar am but one mo' plan I'll perpose."

Pomp held the ball close to his mouth, and whispered something.

"Whut sez you to dat? Ef you think 't will do, reverbrate three times to de Norf, an' de same number ob times to de Souf."

The ball made the required vibrations.

"You am right, Jack," said Pomp, slowly. "Yo' 'pinion zackly corsponds wid mine. You am right, sho'. It hez got ter be done, life or def."

Uncle Pomp gathered up his pot and sack, and made his way back to town, fully bent upon attempting one of the most daring feats ever suggested to a human mind.

There are few negroes in the South that have the noble disposition of Uncle Pomp, but they all have his superstitious notions, to a greater or less extent. If left to their own government, there is no doubt that they would relapse into the barbarism of Africa. Are they qualified, and will they ever be qualified for the enjoyment of political equality with the white race? Is not the day rapidly approaching when, for their own good, they will have to be deprived of at least some of the

civil privileges which an ebullient fanaticism so recklessly conferred upon them? Do the Northern people desire to see the Southern States converted into an Africa? That is the question which will have to be faced, sooner or later. It is known that the black population is increasing more rapidly than the white. In the course of time, unless there is a change, the negroes must obtain control of every State government, and the white people will be crowded out. Will such a state of affairs be to the *commercial* interest of the North? Can the United States afford to permit the richest cotton district in the world to become the exclusive possession of a race of natural barbarians, among whom it will in the future be dangerous to travel? This is the question. Only let the white people leave here, and not many years will elapse before the South will be a wilderness. To prevent this, the white people must have full and complete control of the State governments. What will the North do? The South is powerless.

We wish here to say, once for all, that in order to deprive the negro of some of his political rights, we do not advocate any resort to violent measures. We do not propose to directly draw any "color" line. That which we desire can be accomplished without making any distinctions whatever between the whites and the blacks. The Constitutions of the States can easily be amended, so as to require a *property* qualification to exercise the right of suffrage. This, of course, would deprive a great many whites of the privilege of voting; but such an amendment would put the government into the hands of those to whom it rightly belongs. There would be no injustice in such a measure, because property ought to have the controlling influence in shaping and directing the administration of the government.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

### A DARING ABREPTION.

“Time draweth wrinkles in a fair  
Face, but addeth fresh colors to a fast  
Friend.”

At last, the fatal Friday arrived. Early that morning Langdon again called at the jail, and inquired if the prisoner desired the consolations of religion.

“I do not say,” he remarked to Bathie, “that your name is Jones, or that you are the same man with whom I became acquainted in this very jail. I care nothing for that. The probability is, you will, in a few hours, stand in the presence of your Maker. I have come to pray with you. Shall I do so?”

Bathie did not seem to hear him.

“What is the use of this?” asked Langdon. “We know you can talk and hear, for you did talk when you were arrested. Do you wish to die without even acknowledging God?”

But it appeared that the strange prisoner could not be shaken in his resolution to preserve silence to the end. Langdon looked at him sorrowfully, and walked off without uttering another word.

Baalbek was teeming with human beings that day. They began to pour in from every direction at an early hour. For the week past many had been looking to this occasion with lively anticipations of pleasure. The farmers' boys had been promised a holiday, on the condition that they would labor with extra diligence till Thursday. The consequence was, that, for many miles around Baalbek, the boys had put forth the most strenu-

ous efforts to crowd the tasks of five days into four; they worked with a will. And now the glorious day had arrived. For ten miles around the farmers and their families were up before day, and by the time it was light, they were on the road to Baalbek. By nine o'clock it was estimated that there were two thousand persons in town and at the gallows. Some had come a distance of twenty miles, impelled by curiosity, to witness the last agonies of a death by violence. Such a spectacle was revolting to many persons who, nevertheless, attended, denying that they had come for the sole purpose of seeing the "hanging." People seem to be drawn to the spot where the gallows stands by a strange sort of fascination. Shall we censure our fellow-men for the manifestation of such a disposition? Shall we denounce them as savages and barbarians? In our opinion, they do not deserve abuse, when we consider the motives by which they are actuated. We cannot believe that they are generally attracted by the morbid desire to gloat over the cruelties of the gallows. It need not be denied that there are some low natures which love to witness suffering as suffering; but these are akin to the brute. The large majority are impelled by the wish to see how a fellow-being will meet death when he is in the full enjoyment of all his corporeal and mental energies. Few care to see a man die under the griping hand of disease. Indeed, most people prefer to be absent from such sorrowful scenes. To die from this cause is but the common lot of humanity. This is quite different from that death which is demanded by the Law, and deliberately inflicted by its agents. Such a spectacle is not to be witnessed many times in the course of a person's life. It is a rare exhibition. A human being departs from the shores of time under unusual circumstances. He is as full of vigor and

vitality as any of the spectators, and they have the curiosity to see how one of their number will deport himself in the midst of such horrible surroundings. It is a proof that they do not really love to witness suffering as such, that they would vote for the pardon of the criminal, or, at least, for a commutation of his sentence, if it were left to themselves to decide. They have sympathy for the unfortunate wretch, and would willingly see him extricated from his awful situation, if it could be done. Some, who go to witness the spectacle, cannot look on when the terrible tragedy is enacting, and before the "drop falls" they turn their heads away; some, mostly females, have been known to drop down to the earth, in a swoon. But, whether we can explain the motives which induce people to go, it is a well-known fact, that nothing "draws" crowds like a "hanging." The rich, the poor, the educated, and the ignorant—yea, all classes of society are represented on such awful occasions.

A large crowd had collected in front of the Baalbek jail, and were trying to peep through the narrow, grated window, that they might catch a glimpse of the doomed victim. Bathie could hear their laughing and talking, as he lay in the iron cage. This was a foretaste of a disgrace that caused him to shudder. Perhaps, some of his old misanthropy returned, as he listened at the strange tones of mirth on the outside. It was certainly enough to darken his soul. Was his death to furnish entertainment for that motley host? We wish we could give the thoughts which passed through his mind; but we cannot. Yet we may easily imagine how a man of his refined sensibilities would feel, when he heard the yells on the outside, mingled with the boisterous laughter, and knew they were impatiently waiting for him to afford sport for them by his death.

Two o'clock came. The Sheriff and his deputies entered the jail, and in a few moments made their appearance with the prisoner. The vast crowd was now hushed into profound silence. All were eagerly looking toward the victim, who, however, paid no attention whatever to them. He seemed to be entirely absorbed in his own reflections. The prisoner entered a carriage, attended by the Sheriff and two deputies. Then the vehicle moved off, followed by a dense crowd, which, from a distance, appeared like a wave rolling on after the carriage. A drive of fifteen minutes brought the party to a beautiful grove, one mile from the courthouse of Baalbek. And here was another assembly of at least fifteen hundred persons, packed and jammed like herrings around the scaffold—that awful cynosure which attracts human flesh with the force of a mighty magnet.

The carriage came to a halt, and in a moment more the inmates were pushing their way through the crowd, which was composed largely of negroes. They ascend the scaffold, and Bathie's eye, at one glance, takes in the ocean of sable faces, variegated, however, with many a Caucasian countenance. At this point in the proceedings the Sheriff presented a flask of brandy, and told Bathie to stimulate himself, if he wished. The prisoner took as much as three or four tablespoonfuls, and returned the flask without speaking a word. He was then asked if he desired to say anything; but Bathie paid no attention to what was said. The crisis had now come. The Sheriff produced ropes for the purpose of binding the victim's limbs. At this moment a scene transpired which, for a short time, seemed to benumb the very senses of the people, and paralyze all their energies. They looked on in stupid wonder, as a figure of gigantic proportions, in mask, rushed, almost like a

streak of lightning, up the rude steps of the scaffold. In a twinkling, the Sheriff and his deputy (for only one was on the scaffold) were hurled from the floor to the ground. They were so startled and amazed that the object of the huge stranger did not make an impression upon their brain till they found themselves in the dust among the astonished crowd below.

"Come, let's go!" exclaimed the giant, handing Bathie a large revolver and a glittering bowie-knife. The prisoner, fortunately for him, comprehended the purpose in an instant, and lost no time in stupor resulting from the suddenness of the movement. Indeed, he acted as if it were a preconcerted affair, for it was he who had knocked the deputy from the platform. The brandy added considerably to his strength, and he was now ready to begin the struggle for life. Leaping down the steps with the giant at his side, and brandishing the glittering knife, Bathie plunged into the crowd, which, in confusion and fright, cleared the way, and then closed in behind the fugitives. Our readers need not be surprised that no attempt was made at re-arrest for several moments. The crowd appeared to be stunned. Nobody was prepared for anything of this sort. No one felt it to be his especial duty to arrest the prisoner. Indeed, many were perfectly willing that he should make his escape, if he could; and others thought it nothing but fair that he should have a chance for his life. So, they did not put forth a hand, but got out of the way, and let the two furious men pass. There were other reasons for opening a passage, which were probably more cogent than those already given. The gigantic man, who looked like a hideous Goliath, and who appeared to be a match for three or four ordinary persons, was quite a powerful reason for allowing the right of way. This huge figure shoved people right and left, as if they had

been children. No one cared to come in contact with those gleaming knives and cocked revolvers. Besides, as previously stated, the crowd was composed mostly of negroes, who did not appreciate the necessity of vindicating the majesty of the law. They regarded it as an affair of the "white folks," and looked on with staring eyes and wide-open mouths.

In a few seconds the Sheriff and his deputy were on their feet. As quickly as possible they mounted the scaffold, and looked eagerly around. There was a scene of the wildest confusion. Men were yelling like Indians, and running about as if deranged. The Sheriff endeavored to speak, but he could not make himself heard. Presently he saw the giant and the prisoner mounted on two powerful horses, and riding off at full speed. He pointed with his hand, and wildly vociferated—

"Catch him! Catch him!"

His words were borne scarcely twenty feet from his lips. What was one feeble voice amid a deafening tornado of senseless yells? The officer could not make his way through the crowd without the greatest difficulty. He and his deputies were soon swallowed up in the surging mass, like mere corks dropped into the storm-lashed waves of the ocean. It was to no purpose that he flourished his pistol, and loudly called for help. So far as the Sheriff and his deputies were concerned the fugitives could have made their escape without the least trouble. Indeed, they could have ridden off at a brisk trot, and soon have been beyond the reach of successful pursuit. When the officer had made his way to the outskirts of the crowd, and procured a horse, the fugitives had a good start of ten minutes, and must have been more than a mile away. But it so happened that there were twenty-five or thirty white men who, at some

distance off, had observed the whole scene. They at once took in the situation, and one of them, who was a well known influential citizen of Baalbek, promptly assumed the leadership, and calling several persons by name, cried out—

“Come on! follow me!”

Instantly they started; but they had to go around the crowd. When they reached the road which the fugitives had taken, they found themselves a hundred yards in the rear of the two desperate men on a race for life. And now began a chase which was long talked of in the town of Baalbek. It seemed that the fugitives must be captured; for the awful excitement and the tremendous effort which Bathie had made produced a sudden, violent sickness. He was weak, from long inactivity, and by the time he had mounted his horse, his strength was almost exhausted, notwithstanding the stimulus of the brandy. He was seen to reel in his saddle. The giant reached out and stayed him, as they were riding off, and said—

“For God’s sake, hold on.”

Bathie seized the horn of his saddle with both hands, while his brave rescuer took the reins and guided the horse. On account of this sickness the pursuers were gaining on the pursued. But in a few minutes Bathie was partially relieved, and though his limbs were in a tremor, he was able to straighten himself, and take control of his horse. Rushing through the cooling air was as invigorating as a draught of water, which he so much craved. But there was no time to think of water. Every energy must now be put forth to regain the lost ground. For a little while nothing was heard but the rapid clatter of the horses’ feet. Presently Bathie said—

“Take to the woods.”

“Not yit. Keep wid me,” answered the guide.

On and on, and on they flew, for a mile further. They climbed a steep hill, and as they turned down the other side, they were completely hidden from their pursuers.

"This way," exclaimed the guide, as he dashed off from the highway into a narrow, dim path, which was scarcely perceptible. This path made a sudden turn around a small but dense thicket, that entirely concealed the fugitives from view. When the pursuers reached the top of the hill, they looked down the road without noticing the path, and dashed on, thinking they would soon come in sight of the pursued; but not seeing them, they suddenly came to a halt, in order to search for tracks. Finding none, they returned to the top of the hill, and looking about, they presently discovered the path. But their number was now reduced to only five or six. The rest had given up the pursuit, because their horses could not keep up, and they had returned. Bathie and his guide were making good use of every moment of the time which their pursuers were losing. They followed the path for only a short distance, and then turned into the forest. Soon they arrived at a creek bottom, which was covered with canebrakes. After going half a mile as rapidly as they could through the cane, the guide paused, and listened intently.

"Bress de good Lo'd!" he exclaimed, "dey am loss our track."

"Some water," said Bathie, in a feeble voice.

"De crik am close by," answered Pomp, "let's go to it."

In five minutes they paused on the bank of a beautiful stream of clear water. Pomp rode in, took a cup from a sack suspended from his shoulder, and presented to his master the coveted beverage, which was greedily swallowed.

"How does yer feel now, arter dat orful perfo'munce? De water am excepterbul an' restorin', am it not?"

"I am feeble, Uncle Pomp," said Bathie, "but I think I will be better presently."

"Dar am no doubt ob it. De 'citement am sufficerent ter make anybody sick, 'specerally one like you, who am had no exercise fur so long a time. But, soon's possible, we mus' be er gwine. 'T won't do ter tarry long here. We'll hab ter trable slow, too; fur de hosses am er inspirin' wid oneasiness. Dey hez had a long, hot race, I 'clare. Umph! warn't it orful! Oo—oop! it makes me sick ter think about it."

"Uncle Pomp," said Bathie, "I am too sick to talk about the affair. I feel as if I were in a curious dream."

"Yes; it do 'pear ter me, too, more like er dream dan a actual tangerbilty. But doan talk now, Mas Baffie. Jes' ride arter me. We'll go slow. Dem fellers neber can foller us. Hit's not long tell dark. Den we'll hab a good res'."

Accordingly, Pomp took down the stream, and Bathie followed, though so weak he was trembling in every limb. At length, to his great joy, the sun disappeared behind the forest trees, and they came to a halt on the bank of the stream.

"Now, demount," said Pomp, "an' I'll try ter make you as cumfurtible as de care'mstances ob de 'casion will permit. I'll make you a cup o' coffee, while you am a' restin' on dis sadil blanket. Put dis sadil an' my ole coat under yo' head, fur a piller. Dar, now. Lie down, an' res'."

Bathie dropped down on the rude bed, which to him felt more comfortable than a couch of down to a king, and in a few moments was buried in profound sleep. Pomp soon kindled a fire, and then drew from his capacious haversack sufficient rations to last for several meals,

with moderate economy. In about two hours he thought it advisable to awaken Bathie, that he might partake of the hot supper which had been prepared. Bathie, when aroused, felt greatly refreshed, and was ready to do justice to the smoking coffee, and the broiled ham and toasted bread that lay, temptingly, before him. With avidity he devoured the meal and drank the invigorating fluid. It was the first supper which he had really relished for many long and weary weeks. As soon as it was finished he rose to his feet, with the tears streaming down his cheeks. Without speaking, he threw his arms around the negro's neck, and wept upon his huge breast, which was heaving with deep emotion. Pomp understood it.

"O, Mas Baffie!" he exclaimed, in a slightly husky voice, "bress de good Lo'd, yo' am safe once mo'. I prayed fur dis rerturn to libity wid all de faif I had. Sometimes I almos' despar'd ob eber speakin' ter you agin in dis worl. But thank de bressed God, you am in my arms as you ware when you ware a leetle boy. You ware in de very jaws o' def; but de dear Lo'd, bress 's holy name, put it inter my ole head ter try ter snatch you as a bran' frum de burnin'. It ware a orful thing ter ondertake ter accomplerish, but dar ware nuffin' else ter do, an' I had made up my mine, ef I could 'nt save you, to die wid you. I ware a gwine ter fight to de las', and I could 'er done so wid a clear conscience, too; becaze I know'd de cause ware jes' an' right."

"Uncle Pomp," said Bathie, with the humility of a whipped child, as he sat down on the blanket, "I know not what to say. I just do not know how to thank you. Language is too powerless to express my gratitude. My mind is in a state of confusion. It seems to me, I am in a dream. My thoughts float vaguely in my mind. I try to recall the scene. There was that

great crowd, with their staring eyes all concentrated upon me—there was the horrible noose which I thought would soon strangle me to death. I was trying to realize the fact that in a few moments I would be standing in the presence of my blessed Redeemer. The next thing I saw was the rush of a giant, whose purpose I instantly comprehended, and as soon as he struck the Sheriff, I almost involuntarily sent the deputy after him. Next, we were in a surging mass of humanity. I could see faces and wild eyes, and I was ready to strike down the first man that should lay hands on you or me. I felt the old war spirit come over me, and we went bravely through the yelling crowd. It was like a charge. I felt myself pushed on a horse, and things began to swim before my eyes—I got blind, and for a few seconds there was a blank—yet I could feel, we were flying off. I grasped something ——.”

“Dat ware de horn o’ de saddil, sah.”

“I did not really know. I felt somebody take hold of my arm once, and it must have been your hand, was it not?”

“It ware, sah. I b’leve you’d a’ fell off ef I had ’nt a’ studded you.”

“Uncle Pomp,” continued Bathie, in tones more tender than any in which a man ever wooed his wife, “I have read a great deal about deeds of heroism; I have read about men standing alone and fighting an army, but the feat which you have performed surpasses anything I have ever read. It was thought a great thing, when Horatius defended the bridge over the Tiber by himself, but he could not have done what you have. My dear old friend, your exploit is akin to a miracle. Surely, you must have been inspired by the good Lord himself. To bear off a helpless prisoner in the face of two or three thousand people, is a performance which

can be recorded of only one man. You are without a rival, and will be to the end of time."

"Mas Baffie," said Pomp, with twinkling eyes, "dar am one impawtent carc'mstance wich you am demitted altogedder."

"What is that?" asked Bathie.

"Doan you member de day you lef de cave, I begged you ter take dis insterment along wid you?" asked Pomp, pulling the Jack from his pocket.

"Yes; I remember it," said Bathie.

"Wal, ef you 'd paid iny tention ter my advisement, you neber would 'er got in dat differculty. You doan seem ter have iny conferdence in dis Jack; but lemme tell ye, yo' gratertude am ju ter dis very Jack. I 'ar mo' proud ob her at dis presunt minit, dan I hez bin all my life togedder."

"How is that, Uncle Pomp?" asked Bathie, with as much respect and gravity as he could assume.

"Wal, sah, dat very day you lef' I insulted wid Jack, an' axed her ef you ware in iny peeril. She tole me you ware, an' dat you ware in de han's ob yo' inemies. I immejuntly went to town, an' foun' it ware truc. Las' Tuesday night I prefawmed a high caarnerville fur Jack, so dat she mout be expired wid wisderm. I den axed her ef de plan wich am jes bin instertuted wid sich melliferous success would do ter rely by, an' I noticed she ansered widout de leas' hesertation; an' from dat minit I did n't hab nary doubt ob final success. I went right straight along, jes as ef it had ter be so, an' you see it am all worked out right. 'Cordin'ly, if yer hez iny gratefulness to spar, gin poor Jack some on it."

"How can I do that?"

"Wy, sah, by not makin' ridercule ob her, an' by sometimes insultin' wid her, wen de wisderm ob man am ob no 'vail."

"Very well, Uncle Pomp," said Bathie, who now had no disposition to shake the negro's faith in the supernatural power of his talisman, "I will hereafter treat Jack with all due respect. According to what you say, 'she' has placed me under obligations which I can never discharge. My dear old friend, I owe everything to you. I ought to be your servant the rest of my days."

"Doan 'ploy dat kine o' langwidge ter me, Mas Baffie. You am a born gen'leman, an' I ar' de sarvunt. De good Lo'd made us dat way. Niggers ware put here ter sarve de white people, an' dey ought ter fulfil de will ob dar Maker. I knows what am my place. Freederm am no blessin' to de nigger, becaze he doan know how ter manidge fur hissself. It ware de wus thing de Yankers could a done fur 'em, to sot um free. Dey am jes' like a herd o' sheeps widout iny leader. Some on 'em hez done outgrow'd dar close, an' 'sults de white folks, jes' ter see how much freederm dey hez got. Wen we ole fo'-de-war niggers dies out, I doan know whut am ter become ob de oncomin' gination. I spects dey 'll hab ter be put back in ter slabery agin, to make um know dar places."

"I am, myself, afraid they will, Uncle Pomp. But never mind about that now. I do not think you appreciate the greatness of what you have done this day. I am utterly amazed when I think about it. The act looks more like that of a madman, than the execution of a deliberate, well-matured scheme. Was the plan entirely your own? Is any one else privy to it?"

"O, yes, sah. In coase I had ter insult wid some pusson. I talked wid yo' uncle 'bout it; but at fus, he ware ob de 'pinion dat it would n't work. But I gin 'im de inf'mation dat I could n't think ob no oder, an' dat I ware not afeard to try it. I could only lose my

life, wich am ob no great use. Ef dey had a hung you, I neber could a seed iny mo' peace in dis worl' nohow."

"Uncle Pomp, what can I do for you? I wish you would say. If money can reward you, just say how much you want."

"Mas Baffie, dem tears you weept on dis ole bres' am wuf mo' ter me dan all de money you am got. Dey proves dat you lub me; an' dat am whut I wants. You am bin good ter me all yo' life, an' you am de only fren' I hez eber had. I jes' know you'd a resked yo' life fur me at iny time. 'T won't be long afo' I'll be no 'count ter myself an' nobody else, dat am, ef I libs. You won't let me suffer wen I ar' he'pless, I know dat."

"Do not give yourself any anxiety about that. You shall fare just as I do, as long as you live. And if I should die before you do, my will leaves you more money than you can manage."

"Well, lie down agin an' rest, fur we mus' be a trablin' by midnight."

Bathie thought it advisable to follow the negro's injunction, and he again stretched himself on his saddle blanket, and was soon held fast in the embrace of deep sleep. Pomp, according to the fashion of his race, set himself against a tree, and nodded, waking every few minutes, like a cat. In this way he secured as much sleep as he needed. At midnight the moon was in almost full-orbed splendor, and the two fugitives mounted their horses and traveled till nearly daylight. Then they betook themselves to a dense canebrake, where they were safe from pursuit during the day. They traveled in this way till they reached the Mississippi River, where they met Bathie's uncle. That night two men might have been seen rowing up the "Father of Waters." Here we lose sight of them for a few days.

## CHAPTER XLV.

### THE SUDDEN RETURN.

“She never told her love ;  
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,  
Feed on her damask cheek.”

Mr. Moreing noticed with regret that a perceptible change had come over his daughter since Bathie's apprehension. It appeared that they had parted forever ; and yet she had not entirely abandoned the hope that he might somehow escape. The contest between pride and affection did not end suddenly with the disappearance of him who had caused it. The insight which she had had into the excellencies of his character, his lofty nature, his romantic disposition, his cultivated talents, his regal carriage, all rendered him, in her estimation, worthy of the highest badge of aristocratic distinction. We have ever maintained that circumstances generally make the man. His energies are like clay in the potter's hand, which may be shaped and converted into any sort of vessel. The molten sand, under the blower's pipe, may be transformed into the beautiful bottle, fit to receive *eau de cologne*, or it may be marred, and cast out to be trodden under foot of men. In the city, poverty may bring forth what Victor Hugo calls the *gamin* ; or wealth may take the same outcast under her wings, and make of him the brilliant statesman. In England “honest old Abe Lincoln” would doubtless have been a “rail-splitter” all his life. Hundreds of America's greatest men, who have made the world feel the impress of their genius, born under the flag of monarchic institutions, could never have emerged from the dark shades

of obscurity. But it is said that there are exceptions to all rules. *Exceptio regulum probat*, is a convenient subterfuge which has saved many a reasoner from logical inconsistency. It is generally true that circumstances make the man ; yet we are disposed to admit that there are some few men who make the circumstances. They have original powers of mind which enable them to rise above social restraints, and instead of yielding to the pressure of their environments and accepting the destiny of chance, they direct the current of events to their own advantage. Such men are not in harmony with their surroundings, and they make a sphere for themselves, into which they draw others. Bathie Beaumont belonged to this rare class of men. His nature could hardly have been changed by circumstances. True, poverty might have prevented the full development of his intellectual energies, but it could not have destroyed the native nobility of his moral being, that made him despise all meanness. He was naturally a gentleman. Long, daily association with him, instead of furnishing another proof that "familiarity breeds contempt," only increased Cara's respect for him. There are few men, like Louis XIV, who could calmly eat his breakfast with five hundred persons gazing at him, and who could "take his very emetics in state ;" but Bathie was one of the few whose *tout ensemble* commanded respect. There was that in his appearance which said, "thus far shalt thou come, and no farther." Is it wonderful, then, that a sensible woman, like Cara, should find herself warmly attracted toward such a being? *Nolens, volens*, her heart was impressed with the image of Bathie. The discovery, however, did not afford anything but painful pleasure. But why should it be painful? This was the question which she propounded to herself. He was the equal, she thought, yea, the superior of Mendojowski,

in regard to personal nobility. But the Count was a man of high rank, while Bathie was simply an untitled American citizen, who, in her country, would be spurned from her social circle. This was revolting to her pride. Yet the heart, throbbing with reluctant affection, pleaded for Bathie with all the earnestness of a barrister in a case involving life and death.

While this antagonistic process was going on Cara became melancholy. She had learned from Bathie's uncle the day on which he was to be executed. At last, the fatal day arrived, and she fasted, prayed, and wept. She awaited the visit of Mr. Constant, yet she dreaded to see him. A week passed off, and still she heard no news.

"What does it mean?" she asked herself. "Alas, I fear he is no more."

It was Saturday night, and the hour hand of Cara's watch pointed to the figure ten. She was trying to read. Every few minutes she would find herself looking at the page, while her thoughts were far away.

"Why should I care for his death," she said, "except as a friend? He could never be anything more to me than that. I wish he had been born in Russia, and had Mendojowskie's titles and honors. But why think of one who is now probably in his grave? Still he may possibly be alive."

At that moment she heard a slight noise at the door, and she turned her head. There stood Bathie, calmly looking at her. Following the promptings of her heart, forgetting all about rank, under the first impulse of joy, she sprang to her feet.

"Oh! Monsieur, is it you, indeed?"

"It is I, and no other."

She advanced to meet him, holding out both her hands, while her beautiful face was radiant with undis-

guised gladness. The manifestation of such joyful emotion caused Bathie's heart to palpitate with almost audible violence. Surely, he thought, he could not be mistaken. Her very conduct betrayed her, and was equivalent to a confession of her love. He threw his arms wide open, as if expecting her to rush into his embrace. But she stopped short; the left hand dropped to her side, and instantly the glowing, blushing expression was gone. Bathie felt that he was guilty of presumption, and his countenance fell. He recollected that he had no right to expect such an affectionate demonstration. But shaking off the chilling feeling which was creeping over him, he extended his right hand to meet hers, remarking, as he did so—

“You were not expecting me, were you?”

“I scarcely knew what to expect, Monsieur. If you were like other people, I might be able to anticipate events. But your life is such a strange one, I am not greatly surprised at anything that happens. But, pray, be seated, and tell me all about your wonderful escape; for I know it must be marvelous.”

“You will say so when you hear it. It seems like a dream even to me.”

“I must call my father first, and let him hear it too. He is asleep, but I will arouse him, for I know he will be overjoyed to see you.”

In a few moments Mr. Moreing made his appearance in the parlor.

“Thank the Lord,” he exclaimed, as he heartily grasped Bathie's hand, “I am so glad to see you again. From all I could learn, it appeared probable that we would nevermore meet on this side of the tomb.”

“About twelve days ago,” said Bathie, “an insurance officer would not have issued a policy for me, except for a premium equal to its face value.”

He then gave a clear but succinct account of his marvellous escape. Mr. Moreing listened in astonishment, but Cara almost trembled at the recital. Bathie finished by saying—

“And here I am again, glad to be in this safe hiding-place once more.”

“Uncle Pomp,” said Mr. Moreing, “is a diamond in the rough. I wonder why the Lord encased such a heroic soul in such a common body.”

“Uncle Pomp does not look common to me,” said Bathie. “I know what the inner man is. He has no romantic ideas at all. He does not fully comprehend the magnitude of the deed which he has performed. He did merely what he considered a duty, and he will not think of it as a heroic act. Indeed, he would much prefer that you should give all the glory of the feat to that senseless rag-ball, which he calls ‘Jack.’”

“Does he really give the credit to that ball?” asked Mr. Moreing, with a laugh.

“O, yes; he says he consulted with Jack about the plan.”

“What a superstitious being!”

“Yes; but no matter what other people may think, Pomp sustains a relation to me which few can understand. I would defend him with my life.”

While Bathie was giving an account of his strange escape, he was at the same time thinking of her who sat near him, listening with such palpably painful interest that several times he had to make a mental effort to keep up a connected narrative. What really was her feeling toward him? This was a question whose solution was destined to prove a source of vexing perplexity.

Again Bathie was brought into a difficulty from which he had endeavored to extricate himself by flight.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

### THE SECRET DISCLOSED.

“ Say that you love me not, but say not so  
In bitterness.”

For some weeks Bathie was in a state of pleasing, ecstatic suspense, and yet, annoying. Probably, none of the conditions which attach to humanity are productive of more thrilling thoughts, hopes and anticipations, as well as fears and little jealousies, than that of love. Before the sentiments of the fair one are ascertained, no subject of an earthly character affords a wider field for absorbing speculation, meditation and conjecture. Those who are advanced in years, and have passed through the scenes of that period at which the affections reach a climax and begin to decline, may laugh at such “ follies,” if they will, but such persons were once guilty of these very follies. They, therefore, from their own experience, know something of the feelings of the young man who has come in contact with the blindfolded son of Venus, but knows not whether the fair object on whom he dotes is stricken with a golden or leaden arrow. These cynical older people can remember some fair nymphs, resembling, perhaps, those described by Ovid, whom they vehemently chased, and who, so far as they were concerned, were metamorphosed into a laurel tree of disappointment. How the young man, in suspense, sighs, becomes melancholy, and loses his appetite. He seems to be absent-minded. He loves to read the poets, and may be, tries his own hand at poetry. Unexpectedly meeting the fair one, his knees smite each other, almost like Belshazzar’s. If she

smiles or looks beaming, he is thrown into a fever of delicious excitement. His emotions are in a state of effervescence, and he floats for a week afterward in the gold-fringed clouds of temporal felicity. He erects magnificent air-castles. He speculates extensively as to the possibilities of happiness with Thisbe in some snug little cottage, far away from the noisy din of cities. Recalling the scenes of our youth will enable us to appreciate the condition of Bathie. Seeing that he could not control his affections, he allowed them to flow out freely. He was under the impression that if he would permit the young lady to become aware of his condition, it would be the best way to arouse corresponding feelings in her. True, he thought, he might be doomed to drink the cup of disappointment, and his affections might be crushed, but he determined to enjoy the wild ecstasy of love for awhile, at all hazards. So, Cara became the central subject of his thoughts and meditations. If he tried to read, her image would flash up and enfeeble his attention. He could do nothing but think and dream of Cara. If he had possessed the knowledge that his ardent feeling was reciprocated, he would have been supremely happy. But here was the difficulty. All the encouragement he received was of a negative character. Cara did not avoid him, but she never adroitly made any opportunities for a *tele-a-tete*. They met in the parlor alone only when Bathie requested it. She was lively and cheerful, but was cautious, and she entirely concealed her real sentiments.

But this state of affairs could not last always. Bathie began to grow weary of this solitary, inward consuming, which, like a slow fever, was wearing out his heart. The ecstatic suspense, a certain period of which seems indispensable to secure reciprocity, became, at length, intolerable. Bathie determined that his should be

terminated *brevi manu*; for he had reached a point at which it was possibly as easy to struggle with disappointment as suspense.

One day he requested Cara to favor him with her presence in the parlor. Since his return she had never refused an interview whenever he desired it.

When they were seated, there was, for a moment, an awkward silence, as is usual on such occasions. Bathie was in a tremor—an internal fluttering.

“Miss Cara,” said Bathie, presently, “I have something of importance to say to you.”

There was a pause, and Bathie felt that this was a rather abrupt beginning.

“Say on, Monsieur. I am all attention,” answered Cara, with such *sang-froid* as caused Bathie to hesitate. But he had now partly committed himself, and must proceed.

“I doubt not,” he continued, scarcely knowing what he was saying, “that you have already divined my purpose.”

“Monsieur gives me more credit than I deserve. I have not acquired the art of mind-reading.”

“Do you remember,” continued Bathie, in desperation, “the picture of a lady I showed you on a certain occasion?”

“Yes; I recollect it distinctly, and it was a beautiful face.”

“I thought so, and I loved her of whom that picture was but a poor representative, with all the strength of my soul. For years I thought I could never love a human being as I did her. But I find that I am mistaken. I have met another, who has revived my buried affection, and inspired it with a strength surprising to myself. I have struggled against it, for the reason that I thought it useless. It has grown, day by day, in spite

of my efforts to resist. At last, I determined to leave this cave, in order to place a distance between me and the idol I was worshiping. I left in desperation, scarcely thinking of the danger I incurred. You are acquainted with the circumstances which brought me back. I am a captive, and it is useless to resist. Must I be more explicit? Need I say that you are the object I love with an intensity bordering on madness? How shall my long suspense terminate? In ineffable happiness, or in indescribable disappointment?"

"Monsieur, do you know to whom you are now speaking?"

"You are to me merely Cara Moreing. That is all I know, and that is enough."

"No, Monsieur, that is not enough. The time has come when you must know all. Excuse me for awhile."

She then left the apartment, and during\* her absence Bathie was in a state of deep perplexity. It was with the greatest anxiety he awaited her return. But when she re-entered he was dazzled. There stood before him the same figure of Cara in its majestic splendor, but now arrayed in a Court dress. The transformation was wonderful as well as entrancing, and Bathie gazed at the brilliant, sparkling, dazzling apparition with unfeigned admiration. If she was beautiful before, he could think of no term which would now describe her. He would have given the world to know that she loved him.

"Monsieur, you see me as I would be in my own country, if I had my rights. My name, I must tell you, is Cara Paulovitch."

"Is it possible that you are related to the present Czar of Russia?"

"He is my uncle, and my father is, of course, his brother."

Bathie sat speechless.

"I was under the impression that you belonged to the nobility," said he, presently, "but I had no idea you sustained any relationship to the Emperor himself."

"No; and you never would have known, I suppose, if I had not told you. When you first saw me, I was in disguise. You have read the history of Peter the Great. He often disguised himself, and he wrote a little book on that subject, a copy of which is now in my possession, and it has been of great service to us, enabling us frequently to escape our pursuers. I have studied the little book, and I could disguise you till you would not know yourself."

Bathie kept his seat without speaking a word. He felt hope withering, dying in his heart. How could he expect to wed one who might, in the course of strange events, one day become the Empress of Russia? At any rate, she belonged to the royal family. Was it not presumption in him to aspire to her hand?

"I am truly sorry," said Bathie, despondingly, "to hear what you have told me. Had I known this before, the probability is you would never have heard the declaration to which you have listened. But the fact that I addressed you while ignorant of your high rank ought to convince you of the sincerity and purity of my motives and intentions. I have dared to tell you that I loved you. You now know my secret. Will you pardon my presumption?"

"I do not consider it presumption, Monsieur. I would have informed you in regard to my rank long ago, but you remember you did not wish to know."

"Yes; and I take all the blame on myself. It is my fate, though, it seems, to commit blunders. I do not consider consequences. I must swallow my disappointment as best I can. No doubt you have often heard such confessions as I have just made. But I have

only this to say: you will never listen to one more sincere, and you will never find a human being who will love you more than I."

Bathie looked at Cara's face, as he uttered the last sentence. There was something in its expression which had a tendency to revive his hope. He rose to his feet, and spoke with all the energy of his soul—

"My Lady—"

"Do not call me that, Monsieur. Let there be no change in our manner. Call me just as you have always done."

"I will be delighted to do so, for I despise formality. May I dare hope that I have misconstrued your conduct? Why should mere artificial distinctions raise barriers between those who are otherwise equal? In the language of our noble Declaration of Independence, 'God made all men free and equal.' One man is no more exalted by nature than another. If I were one of the Lords of Russia, I would be no better than I am now."

"You deserve to be a Lord, Monsieur; and I wish you were," said Cara, timidly.

"If I were one," asked Bathie, eagerly, "might I hope to win your affections?"

"Love is not to be won, Monsieur, by the insignia of rank. Such love as that is too shallow to deserve the name. Yet, in my country there are artificial distinctions, as you call them. The lines are sharply drawn, and there is a wide chasm between the higher and lower classes. If one of the nobility marries into a rank beneath her, she loses caste, and loses her place in society."

"But," said Bathie, with emphasis, "if she does not lose honor, and secures her own happiness, could she not afford to lose caste. Is gilded misery, bedecked in

the gay trappings of fashion, preferable to true love, clad even in homespun?"

Cara made no answer, but only looked sad. Bathie drew himself up proudly, and continued, in a firm tone—

"I am truly glad that in this glorious land of ours there are no such unjust and foolish distinctions and senseless conventionalities. A tailor's wife once did the honors of the White House, and her husband was honored from the fact that he worked his way from the humble bench on which he cut and stitched, up to the Presidency of the United States. I do thank God I live in such a country. We have no aristocracy, in point of fact, but that of intellect. We have the best government on the face of the earth. God grant that it may endure forever!"

"I have no objections to your republican institutions, Monsieur. They, no doubt, suit the genius of your people. But fashion is a great tyrant, and we poor mortals have so much pride that we allow ourselves to be enfeathered. You have your customs, and in Russia we have ours."

"I thought you had so much independence of character, you would revolt against such a tyrant. Am I mistaken in my estimate?"

"I am the creature of circumstances," she replied, thoughtfully. "What do my individual opinions amount to? If I try to transgress the laws of the tyrant, and snap my fingers in the face of public opinion, I sink down from the sphere to which I have been accustomed; that is all. My father firmly believes that these 'artificial distinctions,' of which you speak so contemptuously, are necessary to the well-being of society. He is the last man to encourage any one, much less his own daughter, to descend from the sphere to which they are entitled by right of birth."

"Happiness, I suppose," said Bathie, with bitterness, "is a matter of secondary consideration, and is to be sacrificed on the altar of senseless pride, and on an assumption of superiority, based on merely the adventitious circumstance of birth? I, for one, recognize no such assumptions. I am as good as the Czar of Russia, whose tyrannical government I utterly abhor. You cannot imagine how ridiculous the assumptions of rank appear to an American, who is accustomed to recognize no aristocracy but that of moral worth."

"I thought, in one of our discussions, once, Monsieur admitted that his people were the greatest simpletons on the globe, in regard to rank. Did you not?"

"While that is true of a great many fools among us, yet there is a standard of true merit, established by the very nature of our institutions, which all are forced to respect."

"Monsieur may talk as much as he pleases against 'artificial distinctions,' and yet," said Cara, with a smile, "his very manner proves he deserves the compliment I have paid him. You are worthy to be a Lord."

"I might," said Bathie, showing a little vexation, "feel highly flattered under ordinary circumstances, but when my earthly happiness is involved, such language as you have just employed sounds like mockery."

"I meant no offence," exclaimed Cara, quickly. "But you speak against distinctions which Nature makes. I will make bold to say that your boasted Declaration of Independence utters a falsehood when it says that all men are born free and equal. You know that is not true."

"You put a wrong construction upon that noble document. It means they are equal only in regard to natural rights. Of course, we know that all are not equal in the strict sense of the word."

"Monsieur," said Cara, abruptly, "I belong to the

nobility of Russia without my own consent. Can I help that?"

"Certainly not; nor do I blame you for enjoying the privileges to which accidental circumstances give you the right. But why are we discussing such questions? If I understand you, you have made this revelation of your rank to show me the folly of my aspirations. I have loved in vain. If I have not misunderstood the drift of our conversation, you insinuate that your exalted rank makes a deep, impassable abyss between us. You would lose caste by accepting the proposal of an untitled American."

"Oh, Monsieur," said Cara, suddenly clasping her hands, "why do you speak so sneeringly? I cannot help being what I am."

"I beg your pardon. I will retract everything that I have said."

"Everything?" she quickly asked. "Will you really take back everything?"

"Why not? I think I understand you. Mine was a fond, foolish dream, but it is over."

"Monsieur," she said, looking at him reproachfully, "you are doing me injustice in your thoughts. You have too much pride."

"Allude to it no more," said Bathie, in vexation. "Perhaps I have too much pride. But must pride belong only to the nobility? Do you suppose that none can have nice sensibilities but those whom accident has placed in an imaginary sphere of exaltation?"

"O, Monsieur, why do you use such bitter words? What have I done to deserve such treatment?"

Immediately, to Bathie's surprise, she burst into a flood of tears.

"I beg your pardon," said Bathie, tenderly. "May I dare to hope I have misunderstood you?"

"You are angry with me," she said, presently, "without any cause."

"I am not angry," replied Bathie, mildly, "but I feel mortified at the thought that you look down on me."

"No, Monsieur, not upon you as an individual. You deserve to be a nobleman."

"What is the use of talking in this way? You know I can never be a nobleman, neither have I any ambition to be. Let us drop the subject, and never allude to it again. Let me forget my folly as soon as possible."

He arose, to take his leave.

"Do not go yet, Monsieur. I fear you have misunderstood me."

"Very well," said Bathie, reseating himself, "you can make any explanation you wish; but I thought I understood you."

"I scarcely know what to explain," said Cara, in confusion, "but it seems to me that you did not apprehend my meaning."

"Show me my error, then."

"I pointed out the difficulties," replied Cara, turning her face from the light.

"There would be no difficulties, if you really loved me," answered Bathie.

"Yes, there would be, and you do not know what they are. When I was twelve years of age I was betrothed to a Russian nobleman, and my father is very desirous that I should marry him."

"How can you do that, unless he comes here?"

"Father thinks, or at least hopes, that we will yet return to our own country."

"I do not know on what he can base such a hope," said Bathie.

"At any rate, Monsieur, he would oppose your proposal most strenuously."

Neither one spoke for several moments after Cara had made this remark.

"O, Monsieur," presently exclaimed Cara, in a manner which greatly perplexed Bathie, "I am so wretched."

"I do not understand you," replied Bathie.

"I will consider your proposal," she said, with a blush. "Leave me for the present. When I decide finally I will send for you."

"That is right," answered Bathie, greatly encouraged. "Follow the promptings of your heart, and I shall not murmur at your decision."

As soon as Bathie had gone, Cara bowed her head on the table, and remained in that position a long time. But presently she raised up, and then suddenly left the chamber. It is our privilege to follow her.

She immediately entered her father's room, and found Mr. Moreing poring over the *Life of Pericles*, as narrated by Plutarch. Taking a seat opposite to him, she patiently waited till he should close his book. Presently he looked up, and seeing her magnificent dress, he said—

"Why are you in this garb?"

"I put it on to impress Monsieur with a proper appreciation of our rank."

"He is a man," replied Mr. Moreing, in a half abstracted manner, "who undervalues rank, and who cannot be made to understand the importance of gradations in society. He belongs to the class of Americans who pride themselves upon their contempt of royalty and regal institutions."

"Yet, Father, is not his very *hauteur* of that kind which cannot be ridiculed?"

"I cannot tolerate this affected indifference, on the part of Americans, to social distinctions. They would blot out the lines between the higher and lower classes of society."

"But, Father, does not the class to which Monsieur belongs constitute the true nobility of America, that lacks nothing but titles?"

The question was asked in a way that made Mr. Moreing open his eyes, and gaze at his daughter in astonishment. He was alarmed.

"Cara, what do you mean? Do you intend to degrade yourself, after all my cautions?"

"What have I said, Father, that calls for such language?"

"I can see that you are disposed to apologize for Jones's plebeian origin."

"Do you apply the word plebeian to all Americans? Can there not be an untitled nobility in this country?"

"It is utterly useless to discuss such questions. Tell me plainly what you mean. I can see there is something weighing on your mind."

"Father, I have never concealed anything from you in regard to any important matter, nor will I deceive you now. I want your advice."

"Go on," said Mr. Moreing, kindly, though dreading to hear her confession.

"The truth is, I have lost self-control. I have been thrown with Monsieur, by the force of circumstances, and conversed with him day after day, till, before I was aware of it, my heart had passed out of my keeping. I struggled against it, but all in vain. He has just made a proposal."

"He was very impudent to do so."

"Not under the circumstances, Father. He was ignorant of our rank."

"Did you not promptly reject him?"

"O, Father, I had not the moral strength to do so. I felt as if my earthly happiness were bound up in him. I wanted him to see the impropriety of his suit."

"But did he see it?"

"I do not think he did. Father, do not be angry when I tell you I asked time to consider."

"To consider!" exclaimed Mr. Moreing, as much astonished as if a bombshell had exploded at his feet; "to consider what? In the name of reason, you are not hesitating as to the course you will pursue? Surely you are not thinking of accepting his proposal?"

"Oh! Father," she said, while the tears welled up to her eyes, "I do not know. I never was in such perplexity and distress."

"Cara," said Mr. Moreing, with sternness, "this will never do. Can you think, for an instant, of an alliance with an American plebeian? Dismiss this subject from your mind forever."

"That is much easier said than done, Father."

"It requires only a determined will."

"Yes; but the determined will is lacking."

"Let me manage the affair for you."

"I would rather you would not attempt it, Father, for you may wound his feelings. I will try to show him the impropriety of his suit, and I think he will at once abandon it."

"Promise me that you will discard him in some way. I care not how gently it is done; but you must reject him."

"I promise, Father," answered Cara, sadly. "It is hard to resist the pleadings of my own heart; but I will do it."

"The quicker, the better. Parley not with temptation. Remember who you are. You may be Empress of Russia some day. Do not, then, destroy your prospects by an alliance with a common American plebeian."

"I fear to reject him, Father; but I promise you I will do so, at all hazards."

Accordingly, the next day Bathie was requested to meet Cara in the parlor. It was with a desponding heart he entered the room where Cara was waiting to receive him. Her very face, he thought, was prophetic of crushed hopes. There was no smile when he bowed, and her expression was sad.

"Monsieur," she said, "I have sent for you to acquaint you with my decision."

"I think I can read it in your face," said Bathie.

"If Monsieur can do that, it will save me the trouble of making an unpleasant communication."

"It is no more than I deserve, for my folly," muttered Bathie, half speaking to himself. "I ought to have let my buried affections remain where they were. It were far better that they should cling to an idol of dust in the darkness of the grave, than to be trampled under foot by one who has so lightly rejected me."

"Not lightly, Monsieur," said Cara, with animation. "You do me injustice I am sorry if I give you pain. I will be your friend."

"On what grounds do you reject me?"

"What would be gained by telling?"

"Could I possibly remove the grounds of your objections?"

"No, you could not."

"Have you consulted with your father?"

"I have."

"Your decision is final?"

"It is."

"I submit. Let us part good friends."

"Part? What mean you, Monsieur?"

"For a long time," said Bathie, with deep solemnity, "I have been very happy in your society. I have thought of scarcely anything but you. True, I have been in suspense; but that did not destroy my happiness.

I fed on hope, and I flattered myself that my great love would not be in vain. But my hopes are crushed, and my fond anticipations are blasted. I must now appeal to the sympathies of Anteros. I cannot remain here, where the sight of your beautiful face will only tantalize and madden me. I go in search of the lake of Lethe."

While Bathie was thus speaking, he saw that Cara was deeply troubled, and he imagined that her face was a shade paler.

"Will it not be dangerous to leave?" she asked.

"I am not in the habit of taking dangers into my calculations, when I once make up my mind to do a thing. However, I can leave with safety, I think. The yellow fever is spreading all over the country, and I can go where I please without molestation."

"But I do not want to be the cause of your quitting your place of concealment."

"I shall leave," said Bathie, firmly, "and I never expect to return."

"O, Monsieur, must you indeed go?"

"I must, and I suppose we part forever. I shall try to make my way to Europe, and there I expect to pass the remainder of my days."

"Monsieur, I cannot bear the thought of an eternal separation. I would ——"

The sentence was not finished. The cherry lips quivered, the crystal tears filled her eyes, and her utterance was choked. Bathie looked at her in confusion as well as astonishment.

"Miss Cara," he said, with tenderness, "I believe we could be happy, if you would only give me the right to protect you. I have an abundance of this world's goods, and we could go to Europe, and live in splendor and in a style becoming your rank."

"O, Monsieur, do not persuade me. It is to no purpose. I must be firm."

Bathie had good reasons to believe that she loved him, and he did not, therefore, like to give up his suit.

"O, Miss Cara," he said, earnestly, "let me persuade you to yet reconsider your decision. One false step now may cost you your temporal happiness; and is not happiness preferable to the rewards of ambition?"

"My friend," said Cara, "you only give me pain by your urgent persuasion. I again tell you plainly, that what you desire can never be."

"Then," said Bathie, with firmness, "right here we part forever."

"Now, Monsieur, let me persuade you not to leave here."

"Why should I stay?"

"For your own safety, and my ——."

"Your what?" asked Bathie, in surprise.

"I hardly know," she answered, in embarrassment, "but I do not want you to leave."

"If you will only give me any ground to hope that at some future time you may reconsider your decision, I will remain."

"It would be wrong to deceive you," she replied, looking serious and sad. "I have decided, once for all. What you ask is impossible."

"Be it so, then. Farewell forever, and may God bless and protect you."

"If you will go," said Cara, "promise that you will write to—to—us—occasionally, and let us know where you are."

"Yes; I will do that."

They shook hands, and Bathie left the parlor, feeling as if he must plunge into the abyss of despair.

This occurred in August, 1878.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

### THE FIEND OF 1878.

“What are these,  
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire,  
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,  
And yet are on it?”

Many of our poets have described the pleasures of the imagination in glowing and eloquent verse. It is very important, however, that the imagination should have pleasant subjects on which to exercise its power, for it is capable of making its owner shudder by the hideous deformity of its creations. Now, let the kind reader exercise the powers of his imagination, that he may appreciate the present chapter, or at least understand its caption.

We easily form the most exalted conceptions of the celestial inhabitants. What think you of an angel? In all pictures which we have ever seen, this supernatural being is always represented in the shape of a female, notwithstanding the fact that every supernatural apparition mentioned in the Scriptures was of the masculine gender. Why this contradiction of Holy Writ? Because, to the human eye, a female angel is certainly more beautiful and lovely than one of the opposite sex. Woman is universally, though it may be tacitly, admitted to be the highest and most perfect model of the beautiful. When the wisest man of earth would select a metaphor which should present religion to the human senses, he wisely chose woman. He wrote a book which fools ridicule, which the corrupt heart misconstrues, and which the wise and pure alone can

“sing with the spirit and the understanding.” Solomon employed a figure whose appropriateness would impress every nation, civilized and uncivilized. He was speaking in the universal language which the pious of all ages and all peoples would understand. In every land, woman is admitted to be the symbol of beauty. Hence, all pictures of angelic creatures represent them in the guise of women of surpassing loveliness—clad in long, white robes—and with snowy pinions projecting from under well-rounded arms and extending gracefully down to the feet. They do not, however, inspire us with reverential awe. We feel like drawing near to such beings and heartily shaking them by the hand. But the poet has never yet conceived a more lofty ideal.

But cannot our imaginations embody the elements of hideousness, and transform them into the shape of a monster, which we call a *Fiend*? Angel is the zenith; Fiend is the nadir. Let us, by the power of fancy, give a “local habitation and a name” to the cause of the *yellow fever* epidemic of 1878, which sent thrills of horror throughout the civilized world. The newspapers, in poetic language, spoke of the fever as the “yellow fiend.” Let us employ the figure known in Rhetoric as personification.

Away off in some dismal swamp, rendered more gloomy by filthy marshes, look through the field-glass of imagination at a colossal monster, resembling those pictures of Satan which we sometimes see in Bibles. A nauseating spectacle demands your attention; but look steadily. His eyes glow like coals of fire. For hands, he has long claws. His feet are like those of a huge ape. Enormous bat-like wings are attached to his sides. His face is simply terrible to look upon. If you approach near enough, your olfactories make you aware that a sickening odor is emitted from the frightful Cali-

ban. What is it? People call it by different names; but the truth is, nobody knows. His color is a dull yellow. Do you ask what it is that gives him that peculiar saffron hue? If you have the courage to approach near it, and place your hand upon it, withdraw it, and it has the color of the fiend. Apply your microscope, and you discover that the hue is produced by countless hordes of animalcules. The little beings, according to the theory of one school of medical men, silently work their way into the blood, and the result is *yellow fever*.

One day in August, 1878, the unsightly monster just briefly described issued forth from the swamp where he had taken up his winter abode, and stretched out his filthy pinions. He is invisible and noiseless. On the 11th day of August he appears in the little city of Grenada. He moves slowly, and with silent tread. The most acute sense of hearing cannot detect his footfalls. He throws out his long wings and arms, shakes off the animalcules, and passes on. The invisible insects crawl over the streets, and begin their horrid work. In a few hours the frightened inhabitants are flying in every direction from the unseen foe.

But the monster goes on. He reaches the city of Memphis, whose sanitary condition invites his presence. On the 13th of August a lady was the first victim to fall. After this the awful fiend, in rapid succession, visits places too numerous to mention in a volume like this. He was all along the shores of the "Father of Waters," and then from Florida, up as far North as the conditions of the atmosphere and the limitations of the climate would suffer him to go. But wherever he went scenes of horror occurred, which it is useless to attempt to describe. The whole country was thrown into a wild panic.

It was in this time of general confusion, dismay and

distrust, that Bathie left the cave. As he floated down the Linden river in his skiff he soon discovered that he could go through the country unmolested, just so he did not stop at any town or house. There never was a more favorable time for a fugitive to escape. The legal authorities had established quarantine regulations to suit their own notions and exigencies. Upon every road leading into the little towns there was a sentinel, armed with a double-barreled gun, who was ordered to use it in case his authority was resisted. Bathie was suffered to pass on down the river unchallenged. Nobody seemed desirous of holding any communication with him. In three or four days after starting Bathie stood in need of certain articles of food, which could be procured only by landing at some town. He had accidentally lost half of his rations in the river. He determined that he would land at a village not far from the western bank of the Linden river. Accordingly, rowing to the shore, he fastened his boat, and was approaching a house in the suburbs of the town, when he perceived a man working in a strange sort of way at the door. Drawing nearer, he discovered that the man was busily employed stuffing cotton in the cracks. This individual, so intent upon his employment, presently turned, and seeing a stranger gazing at him, looked frightened.

“Who are you?” he cried out, in alarm.

“I am a traveler.”

“Do n’t come near me,” cried the poor fellow. “What do you want?”

“I want food,” said Bathie.

“Where are you from?”

“Up the river.”

“Been near the fever?”

“No, sir.”

The man seemed to be greatly relieved. At that

moment a loud groan was heard in the house. In answer to Bathie's look of inquiry, the man said—

"You are 'nt safe here. That's my wife's mother. She's just got back from a visit, and has a chill. We feared it might be the fever, and so we quarantined her."

"May I ask," said Bathie, "for what purpose you are stopping those cracks?"

"Why, in these days it won't do to run no risks. I'm stopping up the cracks to confine the infected air, in case she has the disease." (*En passant*, many foolish things, similar to this, were done while the epidemic prevailed.)

"Are you not afraid," asked Bathie, "the lady will suffocate, this hot day?"

"Well," said the man, deliberately, "she'd better suffocate than the whole town should die of yellow fever. If she's got it, she'll be certain to die. Thar ain't no use o' losin' my whole family."

Again Bathie heard a groan, as of some one in the deepest distress.

"Do you propose to let the lady die, without an effort to relieve her?"

"Do n't know what to do."

"You, John," exclaimed a voice from the inside, "open the door. You're killin' me."

"I'm afraid to," replied John. "Do you want to give the whole town the fever?"

"You are cruel," said Bathie, with rising indignation. "Open the door. I will go in, and see the lady myself."

"Who are you?" cried the fellow, with a look of pitiable fear.

"Open the door, instantly, or I will break it down," said Bathie. "I shall not see a fellow-being murdered in any such way."

"You may open it yourself, if you want to," said John, producing a key, "but I ain't a goin' to expose myself, and give the fever to my wife and children."

Handing the key to Bathie, John immediately took to rapid flight. Bathie entered, and found a lady of about fifty years of age, writhing in anguish. He questioned her, and soon ascertained that she had an attack of *cholera morbus*. She pointed to some bottles on the mantel-board, and examining the labels, he found one which contained the proper remedy. In a little while after he had administered a dose the lady was restored to her usual health. Bathie was on the point of entering into conversation with her, when the frightened John returned with three men, all armed with shot guns. Having lost all sympathy, and animated only by the desire of self-preservation, they cried to Bathie—

"Leave here this minute. It's agin the regulations of the Committee for strangers to come in the lines."

"I will go, instantly," said Bathie, with a sneer. "I have no disposition to linger among such people as you are. I will shake the very dust off my feet. But do not let that man murder his mother-in-law. She is well now."

"Yes, I am well," exclaimed the lady, angrily. "John was a downright fool to lock me up, as he did. I do believe the gump was going to let me starve to death."

"Well, I was afraid of the fever," replied John, looking sheepish. "You had one of the symptoms."

"You're a fool for the want of sense," replied the indignant lady. "See here, how he's gone and stuffed cotton around the windows. He was trying to smother me; and I would have died, had n't it been for that gentleman."

There was a laugh at John's expense.

"We are sorry," said one of the men to Bathie, "that we have to command you to leave."

"No apology is necessary," answered Bathie, contemptuously. "You could hardly induce me to stay."

Bowing, mockingly, to the frightened men, he got in his skiff, and pursued his journey. His intention was to replenish his stock of provisions, and push on to New Orleans. For this purpose he attempted to land at several towns, but he found guards, who leveled guns at him, and peremptorily ordered him to move on. Thus it was at every town and village on Linden river. Before he reached the mouth of that stream his stock of provisions was entirely exhausted. Must he die of absolute starvation with plenty in sight? As he sat in his skiff, in the middle of the stream, he endeavored to explain his fearful situation, but people would not listen. Fear had deprived them of all sympathetic impulses. The one all-absorbing desire to escape the terrible scourge, had destroyed all regard for suffering strangers. So Bathie was compelled to move on with an empty larder. At length he emerged into the Mississippi river, poorly prepared to continue his long journey, but he must move on. He determined to push on as rapidly as possible to Vicksburg, where the quarantine was abolished. Not knowing but that the towns on the bank were in the same condition as those along Linden river, he deemed it a useless expenditure of his strength to go to the shore. The sun was pouring down his hot beams from the brazen sky, which made Bathie fearful of sunstroke. He got into the main current, so as to husband his physical resources as much as possible. Hour after hour he floated down the stream, which seemed to partake of the universal gloom. The river was deserted. Presently, Bathie felt himself becoming deathly sick. The trees

on the shores seemed to be engaged in a wild dance, and a curious darkness was creeping over the face of nature. He had to turn loose the oars, and fall to the bottom of the skiff. The world faded from sight, and he knew nothing more.

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Those who dwelt in the infected districts in 1878 remember what a scarcity of food there was in the plague-stricken towns and cities. All commerce was suspended. It became necessary, therefore, to send provisions to the sufferers, and steamboats were loaded and men volunteered to conduct them down the river. It was in one of these expeditions of mercy the noble Lieutenant Benner lost his life.

When Bathie fell back into his skiff, one of these relief boats was in sight, coming down the river. Fortunately for him, he was picked up in a few moments after he became unconscious. His was a case of sun-stroke, but not very malignant, and some hours before the boat stopped at Vicksburg he "was himself again." As the steamboat was not going any further, he concluded to go into the city. As he had had the fever years before, he did not apprehend any personal danger from that source, nor did he believe any one would think of arresting him, since the energies of all the living were entirely absorbed by one single purpose.

Bathie, therefore, at once left the boat, and started into the city. It was some time before he saw a single human being. All the citizens who could possibly leave had fled, and the houses all appeared to be deserted. He went to the hotel once kept by Mary Smith's father, but the whole family were gone, and the house was no longer open for the accommodation of travelers. He walked up stairs, and along the halls, without meeting any one. He could occasionally hear groans from some of the

rooms, and could catch a glimpse, through a half-open door, of a patient tossing on his bed, attended by a solitary nurse, probably sound asleep. Again, he went into the streets, and as he moved along slowly he would now and then see a hearse, or rather a wagon, loaded down with coffins, on its way to the cemetery. The stores were all closed. Every person whom Bathie saw was in a hurry, and had no time to answer questions. As he was passing the lofty court house, whose tower commands a view of the whole city, he discovered a negro man, sitting on the steps which ascend the high hill on which the building is situated. Going up to this son of Ham, who appeared to be perfectly contented in the midst of universal death, he said—

“What are you doing here, Uncle?”

“Wal, Boss, I is a doin’ nothin’, but restin’.”

“Have you been at work?”

“No, sah. Dar is no wuk to do, jes now.”

“Can you tell me where I can get something to eat?”

“Somefin ter eat,” replied the negro, with a grin, “is mighty hard ter git jes now. It’s no use ter try at de hotels. De folks is done all run off, an’ lef’ us po’ niggers to starve.”

“Do you live in the city?”

“O, no, Boss, not reg’lar. I lives in de country. But I hearn dey was a payin’ big wages fur nussin’ de sick, an’ I thunk I’d come to de city, an’ try my han’, but dat kine o’ wuk did n’t suit dis nigger. I did n’t onderstan’ de feber. If it ’ud a bin chills, I might a know’d whut ter ’v done. But dis yaller feber gits away wid me, an’ so I quit.”

“You are doing nothing, then?”

“Jes’ so; nothin’ but restin’.”

“How do you live? What do you eat?”

“O, I draws frum de gubermment, long wid de balance

on 'um. De comp'ny called de Howards atten's to dis business."

"I will give you twenty-five cents to conduct me to the headquarters of the Howards."

"Cart'nly, Boss; I is willin' ter make a dime er two hones'ly."

"Why do you not go back to the country, then?"

"I is afeard ter, Boss. De country folks 'ud run me off, ef I wuz ter go back now."

Without saying more, Bathie followed his guide till he halted in front of a building, which needs no description, and said—

"Go in dar, Boss, an' you'll fine 'em."

Bathie at once entered and offered his services to the president of the noble Howard Association. He was informed that a nurse was much needed at a house on a certain street. Without delay, he made his way to it, and on entering, beheld a sight which filled him with horror and amazement. In one room there was a beautiful girl, about sixteen years of age, in the first stage of the fever. In an adjoining room lay the bodies of both her parents, who had just died. A little three-year old boy was pulling at his dead mother, and crying out—

"Get up, Mamma. You have slep' 'nough."

The sight caused Bathie to brush the tears from his own eyes, though he was not much given to the "melting mood." He persuaded the little fellow to go into the room where his sister was, so that he could conveniently take care of both. As he approached the bedside of the girl, she said—

"They have sent you to nurse me, have they?"

"That is my duty," replied Bathie.

"Well, you may go back. Let me alone. I have nothing to live for."

"Here is this little boy, your brother, is it not?"

"Yes; poor little bud! They are all gone but me and him. He, too, will die. Look, he has the fever now. I know the symptoms."

So it was. The child was shivering.

"Save him," said the girl. "As for me, it makes no difference. Let me die."

"O, no," said Bathie, gently, "you must not give up to die. That is sinful. None of us must wish to die, till our Heavenly Father speaks the word."

"You are a Christian, perhaps, a minister?"

"I am no minister, but I hope I am a Christian."

"I wish I was one before I die."

"You can be if you wish to."

"I do wish to. What must I do?"

"Just give yourself to the Lord Jesus."

"I do it, then. Here, Lord, I give myself to Thee."

In a moment she fell into an uneasy slumber. Bathie took the little boy, wrapped him in a blanket, and placed him by his sister. Then he wrote a note to the president of the Howards, requesting that a physician be sent immediately. In an hour, a doctor came. When he entered, both men looked hard at each other, as if they might have met before, but neither made any sign of recognition beyond a bow. Bathie recognized his old enemy, Clarence De Lancy, who, it seems, after the war, had turned his attention to medicine. He, like many others, had nobly tendered his services to the suffering city of Vicksburg, among whose hills he had once heard the thunders of battle. Bathie knew not what might be the feelings of De Lancy toward him, and he did not think it prudent, at that particular time, to claim acquaintanceship with his *ci-devant* friend. De Lancy examined the two patients, and speaking to Bathie, as though they had never before met, gave his directions, and left.

Bathie nursed his patients closely till they both passed the crisis. One morning the girl, who was convalescent, said—

“I will be up in two or three days, but I might relapse, and I do’nt want you to leave us. I have no one to stay with me.”

“Have you no relatives?”

“None at all. They are all dead, and sometimes I wish I had died. This world appears to me so dark and gloomy.”

“Dry your tears,” said Bathie, kindly, “and look to God for comfort. I know you must feel sorrowful; but the Lord will raise up friends for you.”

“You have been very kind to me,” she said, “and I do not know how I can repay you, unless you have the fever. My father was wealthy, though, and I can give you money.”

“I do not want money,” said Bathie.

In this way they had many long conversations, and Bathie made the time pass off pleasantly. His patients improved rapidly, and became very much attached to him. But while he was thus employed in relieving distressed humanity, the sign-board of destiny pointed to a dreaded change of direction in his now peaceful career.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### IN DANGER.

"Alas! misfortunes travel in a train,  
And oft in life form one perpetual chain."

Sometimes people feel tranquil and secure when they are standing in the very shadow of a great calamity. Not a cloud can be seen above the horizon, and they eat, drink, and enjoy, when all at once the storm breaks upon their heads, and they are suddenly overwhelmed by the most grievous misfortunes.

Bathie had at last come to the conclusion that he had not been recognized by De Lancy, and was not, therefore, dreaming of any near peril. He experienced a sense of happiness arising from the consciousness that he was discharging a sacred duty by contributing what he could to the relief of suffering.

De Lancy called every day to see the two patients, and at last, when they were up, he one morning said to Bathie—

"I do not think there is any necessity of your remaining here longer. Your patients have been well nursed, and are now safe. If you like, I will send you to another place in about two hours."

"But I don't want him to leave us," remonstrated the girl, whose name was Verinne Colton. "We can't stay here alone. I'm afraid."

"We will make some other arrangement for you," replied the Doctor. "We have great need of this gentleman elsewhere." Turning to Bathie, he continued, "I wish you would remain here till I send a vehicle to carry you to the place where you are needed."

Then he went out, while Bathie looked after him, beginning to feel a little suspicious. There was something in De Lancy's manner that he did not altogether like. When he had disappeared, Verinne said—

“I don't like that doctor at all. It is right mean of him to make you leave us before we are fairly out of danger.”

“But there are so many others who are worse off than you. They must not be neglected.”

“If you take the fever,” she suddenly said, “will you be sure to let me know?”

“If I can, I will,” said Bathie.

“If you take it,” said Verinne, “I will have you brought here, and I will nurse you till you recover.”

In a little time after this Bathie saw De Lancy approaching, followed by two men, and his suspicions were again aroused; but if he had any intention to escape, it was too late now, for in the next minute they were in the room. De Lancy walked up to Bathie, and touching him on the shoulder, said—

“You are my prisoner.”

The two men, who were officers, had their pistols drawn and ready for instant action. Bathie perceived that resistance would be sure to result in bloodshed. He merely said—

“By what authority and for what purpose do you so unceremoniously arrest me?”

“What is the use of feigning ignorance, Beaumont? You know who I am.”

“I do not, unless your name is Clarence De Lancy, once my friend.”

“Yes, once, but not now. You thought I would not recognize you, but I did. I was waiting only for your patients to get well.”

“Is this a time,” said Bathie, “to be seeking revenge,

when cries of distress and suffering are ringing in your ears?"

"I deny that I am seeking revenge," said De Lancy. "It is even-handed justice I seek. Yes, sir, justice demands that, under any circumstances, I should arrest my brother's murderer."

The girl, who had been looking on and listening in amazement, almost shrieked out—

"Murderer! I don't believe it. He is a Christian gentleman, to whom I am indebted forever. You are no murderer, are you?"

"It is true," replied Bathie, "that during the war I killed his brother, as he says, and I have ever since regretted it."

"You have no right, Doctor," she exclaimed, with energy, "to arrest him for that. I think more of him for it. It was in war, sir."

"You know not what you say, young lady," exclaimed De Lancy, with quivering lip. "It was not in legitimate warfare. If it had been, I should not murmur. But that man murdered my brother before my eyes, a poor unarmed boy, too. He killed other men, who had thrown down their arms and appealed to him for mercy."

"Where was all that done?" she asked.

"Not a great distance from here."

"What were you and your brother doing there?"

"We were fighting for the Union."

"And he was fighting on the other side. What business had you in Mississippi? See here, Doctor," continued Verinne, facing him with flashing eyes, "if you think you can come here and arrest our soldiers twelve or fifteen years after the war is over, you are mistaken. I will go right straight and have you arrested."

"You understand nothing about the matter," answered

De Lancy. "There is a reward offered by the United States government for this man's arrest."

"So it is money you want, is it? If that is all, I'll pay it myself. He has risked his life to save mine."

De Lancy gazed so fixedly into her face that a deep blush spread over her handsome features, and she was confused.

"Come on, Beaumont. I will not bandy words with a school-girl," said De Lancy.

"Will you be kind enough to tell me where you are going to take him?" asked Verinne, wiping tears from her eyes, which it was no longer possible to restrain.

"To jail, of course," answered De Lancy.

"You may think I can do nothing," said Verinne, "but I will show you."

"Very well," replied the Doctor, with a smile.

When they had descended to the hall of the lower story, one of the officers produced a pair of handcuffs.

"What is the use of this indignity?" asked Bathie, turning to De Lancy. "I shall offer no resistance, nor attempt to escape."

"Do your duty, officer," said De Lancy.

"Hold out your hands."

"So be it," replied Bathie, presenting his hands. "I could have prevented my capture, if I had desired, but I cared not to spill your blood."

"No;" replied De Lancy, "you have done enough of that, and dastardly too."

"It is no indication of bravery" said Bathie, with flushed face, "to insult and abuse one whose hands are tied."

"It is as brave as to shoot a man who has thrown down his arms," said De Lancy.

"Do as you please," replied Bathie. "You have me in your power. Take your revenge."

Nothing more was said, and the party moved off. In a short time they were at the jail. As De Lancy was about to leave, after seeing his victim safely confined, Bathie said—

“Stop, De Lancy, I want to speak a few words to you. Hear me before you go.”

“I do not care to have any intercourse with you,” was the stern reply.

“I want to tell you something which, perhaps, you do not know. It is in regard to your sister, with whose fate you may be unacquainted.”

“I should not be surprised to learn that you had murdered her, too. If you have, tell it. It can be no worse for you.”

“You seem,” said Bathie, “to cherish a spirit of unforgiving animosity and hatred toward me.”

“If I do, it is justifiable.”

“Listen, then, and I will tell you what became of poor Genie. It is more painful to me to relate it than to you to hear it. One evening during the siege of Vicksburg I led a beautiful and accomplished girl to the altar.”

“Not my sister, I hope,” said De Lancy.

“Hear me through, then judge me. We joined our right hands, and pledged our faith. Just as the minister had finished, and pronounced us husband and wife, a shell from your lines entered the house, and my bride fell to the floor, a corpse, at my feet. That girl, whom I loved with all my heart, was your sister, De Lancy. It would have been well if it had killed both of us, and such was my wish at the time. But sometimes we cannot get rid of life when we would. I had many opportunities to lose mine, and I used to wonder why the enemy could not put an end to an existence for which I cared nothing. I swore vengeance against the whole Federal

army. I was maddened. I acknowledge it was wrong; but I did it in the heat of anger. I have regretted it a thousand times since. But I was impelled by blind fury. I was urged on by some demon. How many lives I destroyed will never be known in this world."

"Is that anything to boast of?" asked De Lancy.

"I am not boasting, God knows," replied Bathie. "I only relate facts. After the war, I had to take refuge in the wilderness."

"Where did you hide?" asked De Lancy.

"That I cannot tell."

"Did you not murder the man who dived down in Linden river after you?"

"God being my judge," replied Bathie, "I never saw the man. He must have drowned."

"Were you not in a cave?"

"It matters not where I was. I want to tell you that I have repented of my grievous sins. I was once an Infidel, but now I am a Christian, and I will be resigned to God's will, whatever may happen. I ask no mercy at your hands. If you are animated by the spirit of revenge, and if my blood you must have, I can only say, with one of old, 'as I have done, so God hath requited me.' There is one other circumstance of my history I would like to relate."

As De Lancy, though he did not speak, raised no objection, Bathie briefly gave an account of his trial and two escapes. Then he added—

"I have now told you all. You can do as you please. I have nothing in particular to live for. When I stopped in this place, and saw what suffering there was, I concluded to remain, and do what I could for my fellow-man. If it be God's will that I should die on the scaffold, I shall submit without a murmur."

While Bathie was speaking, De Lancy stood with his

head bowed down, but he made no remark after his victim ceased. Presently, without looking at Bathie, he turned and went his way.

When the next morning dawned, Bathie felt a chilly sensation, but at first he paid no attention to it, as he was under the impression that he would not take the fever the second time. But soon he had reason to change his opinion. The fever rose, and his bones ached, and he had to admit the fact that he was a victim of the scourge.

When the keeper of the prison made his appearance with his breakfast, Bathie informed him of his condition.

“Will you take off these handcuffs?”

“Certainly,” said the jailer, “though I do it at my own risk.”

In a moment Bathie was freed from his shackles, only to be fettered with chains which, though invisible, were stronger than steel.

In about two hours afterwards Verinne made her appearance, in a buggy, at the jail. She had determined to make some sort of effort to procure his release, but not knowing what steps to take, she concluded it would be advisable to hold a consultation with Bathie; and this was the object of her visit to the gloomy prison. When she arrived, she asked to see Thomas Jones.

“There is no such person here,” replied the jailer.

“You must be mistaken,” she said, in surprise.

“But I am not,” answered the jailer.

“Was there not a man brought here yesterday by Dr. De Lancy?”

“O, yes; but his name is Beaumont, and he has just taken the fever.”

“So much the more reason why I should see him. He nursed me while I had the fever, and I must nurse him. I want to carry him to my house.”

"You can't do it without permission from Dr. De Lancy. I have sent for him, though, and am expecting him every moment."

They had now reached the cell where Bathie was confined. He was lying upon a rude couch, in the incipient stage of the fever.

"Good morning," said Verinne. "So you have the fever."

"Yes; good morning. I was not expecting you so soon."

"I am here, anyhow," she said, with a smile. "I am going to carry you home with me. Do you think you can ride in a buggy?"

"I think so."

At this moment De Lancy came in, and looking hard at Verinne, said—

"You here!"

"I am here," she replied, in rather a defiant tone, "and I ask the privilege of taking this gentleman to my house, where he can have proper attention. You know that I am under obligations to him, and I want to repay his kindness."

De Lancy made no reply to her, but turning to Bathie, he said—

"You think you have the fever?"

"I am no physician," answered Bathie, "but my opinion is that I have it, if I may judge from the usual symptoms."

"I do not want to give room for the charge that I treated you cruelly," said De Lancy. "You shall have a fair chance for your life, and shall have the advantage of a nurse. I will release you on *parole*, on the condition that you are not to try to escape, when you are convalescent. Do you agree?"

"Certainly."

"Then you can take him," said De Lancy to Verinne. "I will call this evening."

"Thank you," she said, with unfeigned joy. "Now, come, let us go."

Bathie at once arose from his couch and got into the buggy with Verinne, who drove to her residence in a few minutes. We need not enter into the particulars of Bathie's sickness. He did not have a very malignant attack of the disease; and with good nursing he soon passed the crisis, and had nothing to do but gradually recover his health and strength.

One day, as Bathie was reclining on an invalid chair, Verinne came in, and said—

"I must leave you by yourself for awhile. I have just learned that the family of my Sabbath-school teacher are down with the fever, and I must go to see them."

"That is right," said Bathie. "If I were able, I would go with you."

"No; you must not go," she answered, emphatically. "I do n't want you to relapse."

"No; for I should dislike to put you to any more trouble."

"You have been no trouble to me. It has been a pleasure to nurse you."

"I will be able to leave in two or three days," said Bathie, "and I suppose I will have to go to jail."

"Let us not talk about that till you are well," said Verinne. "Do n't think about it, now."

"That is advisable," said Bathie. "But go on, and see your teacher. What is her name?"

"Miss Mary Smith."

"Indeed?" said Bathie, in a tone of surprise.

"Yes; do you know her?"

"I knew one Mary Smith, whose father had a hotel in this place."

"I suppose it is the same, then. Her father had the best hotel in town; but people said he got to gambling and drinking, and he lost all his property. Miss Mary is a good lady, but she has such a sad face, and she hardly ever even smiles."

"I think it must be my old friend," said Bathie. "But you can find out. Ask her if she is acquainted with one Bathie Beaumont."

"I'll go right now," said Verinne.

At once she left. Going along the street for three blocks, she turned to the left, and advancing a short distance, stopped at a very humble building situated at the foot of one of those hills among which Vicksburg is situated, and which constituted her natural fortifications during the War of Secession. On entering, Verinne found the whole family prostrated, except her friend Mary, who still preserved the marks of youth, notwithstanding the flight of time. To Verinne's annoyance, she also found Dr. De Lancy the physician in attendance. It seemed that chance was bringing old acquaintances together. The doctor did not, however, seem to be animated by any feelings of ill-will toward Verinne, for he spoke in a pleasant tone, and asked—

"How is your patient?"

"He is doing very well," she answered, "and will be able to be out in a short time."

"Who is your patient?" asked Mary.

"It is an old acquaintance of yours, I suppose—Bathie Beaumont. Do you know him?"

Mary gave a slight start, and looked a little wild, Verinne thought; but in a moment she was as tranquil as usual, at least externally.

"Yes; I am acquainted with him. You say he is at your house, sick?" asked Mary.

"Yes; he has had the fever, but he is getting well."

But he will have to go to jail as soon as he is able, unless Dr. De Lancy relents."

"Go to jail!" cried Mary. "What for?"

"Dr. De Lancy can tell you more about it than I can," answered Verinue.

"May I ask what for?" inquired Mary, looking at the physician.

"For murder," replied De Lancy, solemnly. "This young lady abused me roundly for arresting him the other day. But now I will tell you all about it, and you may judge whether I have done right or wrong."

Very briefly he related the circumstances of Bathie's life, with which our reader is acquainted.

"Dr. De Lancy," said Mary, in tremulous tones, "I was present on that fatal night. Before that time, as you well know, Bathie had a noble disposition. But in a single moment he was changed. I feared he would become a raving maniac. I heard him make the fearful vow of vengeance, and I warned him. It was all in vain. He was under the impression that the shot was fired purposely. You ought to make some allowance for him, when his reason was trembling and tottering on its throne. Remember, too, it was your own sister whom he loved —."

Mary paused. Her utterance was choked.

"He told me, himself," said De Lancy, presently, "that he had been tried for another murder, and had twice escaped jail."

Mary's father now raised up, and said—

"I never did believe that Bathie was guilty of that murder. In fact, I could have sworn that he was not guilty. They had only circumstantial evidence, Doctor, and it was not sufficient—no, sir, it was not sufficient. I was there when they tried to hang him—yes, sir, I was there."

"You had better not talk, now," said De Lancy. But Mr. Smith paid no attention to the injunction.

"I was there, I say. I saw old Pomp when he came up with the two horses, and I suspicioned something, then. I felt so sure that Bathie war'nt guilty, I determined to help him all I could, as soon as I found out what he intended to do. I stood thar and watched. I saw old Pomp with his mask, ha! ha! ha! I know'd him, but I would'nt say nothing. When him and Bathie started down the scaffold, I helped them clear the track. I jerked men out of the way, and I was ready to down the first man that laid hands on him. You see, Doctor, I believed he was innocent, and I did'nt want to see an innocent man hung. If I'd been put on oath, I'd have sworn that Bathie war'nt guilty. It was a little strange, Doctor, how he escaped the first time, but I've always had my suspicions about it. The cook, you see, turned him out, and nobody suspicioned who the cook was but me and the old 'oman, and neither of us would tell it—no, sir."

"Hush, Papa," interrupted Mary. "He is flighty, and ought not to talk; ought he, Doctor?"

"By no means. He must be kept quiet."

"O, yes; I'll be quiet," said the sick man, with energy. "I know the importance of it, Doctor. But if I'd a been a witness in the trial, I'd a swore, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that Bathie was innocent."

"Hush, Papa," said Mary.

"Why, Mary, you don't believe he was guilty, do you? O, no. What would Bathie want to kill the man for? It's an awful thing to kill a man for money. I—I should think—would you not think so, Doctor?"

"Yes, sir; but you must keep quiet, if you want to get well."

"Of course I want to get well. Who wants to die, Doctor, if he can help it? It's bad enough to die; but it's worse to kill a man for his money. Bathie never killed that man, Doctor. I wish I'd been on the jury that tried him. I'd 've stuck to it to the last that Bathie never killed him. Thar warn't inducement enough, you see. The lawyers made that p'int, too; but the jury was a set of fools. Thar was three black niggers on the jury, that slept nearly all the time. While the witnesses was a giving in thar testimony, them fool niggers was a nodding. I wish the Yanks could see the mischief they've done, in allowing niggers to vote and set on juries. Why, it's scand'lous—it's outrageous; the idea of a white man's bein' tried for his life by cornfield niggers that do n't know the difference between the legislature and the penitentiary."

"Papa, do n't talk any more."

"My tongue goes off in spite of me, you see. Mary, you've been a good child all your life. Do you know that I sometimes suspicion that you love Bathie Beaumont?"

"O, Papa, do hush," exclaimed Mary, pleadingly. "You must stop talking."

Dr. De Lancy, seeing Mary's embarrassment, and having done all he could, rose to go.

"I will be back to-morrow," he said. "Mr. Smith, you must keep quiet."

"Yes, yes; certainly. You're the doctor, and you ought to know. I do n't know how I'm ever to pay you, Doctor. Your men broke me up during the war, and I ain't responsible for being poor."

De Lancy, turning to Verinne, said—

"I would advise you to go now. You can be of no service here."

"Company," said Mary, in confusion, "seems to make

my father talk. Come back, Verinne, after awhile. I hope he will be better."

De Lancy and Verinne both left. When she returned, Bathie said—

"How did you find the family?"

"They are in a pitiable condition, and Mr. Smith is out of his mind. He says you were tried for murder, and when they carried you to the scaffold, he helped you to escape."

"How?"

"He pushed the men out of your way."

"I was not aware of that," said Bathie, "but I am very much obliged to him. I must try to see the family to-morrow."

"I do not know that you would be welcomed, under the circumstances."

"Why not?"

"Because Mr. Smith talks so. He says things which seem to be unpleasant to Miss Mary. He keeps talking about you, and insisting on it that you are innocent."

"And so I am," said Bathie.

"I believe you."

They then changed the subject of their conversation to another topic, which would be of no interest to our readers.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

### AN AWFUL CONFESSION.

“Blood hath strange organs to discourse withal ;  
It is a clamorous orator.”

When the fiend of 1878 was depopulating cities and towns in the South, many people had to remain in the plague-stricken districts, from various circumstances. All physicians were expected to stay, at all hazards, and be it spoken to their honor, they stood to their post. Hundreds fell all along the line of battle, nobly and desperately contending every inch with the unseen foe.

But there was one class in regard to whose course there was much hot controversy. We allude to Ministers of the Gospel. Many expressed the opinion that the clergy had as good a right to save their lives by flight as any other class of citizens. However, others thought it was their duty to remain along with the physicians. This latter sentiment at first prevailed, and to it many a noble man of God needlessly sacrificed his life. Thus fell John McCampbell and young Haddich at Grenada, Bowman and Slater in Memphis, and many others, to whose memories we have not space to pay a passing tribute.

In submission to the public sentiment of the day, we find our minister, Langdon, about whom nothing has been said for some time, at Vicksburg, manfully fighting the plague. How came he there? It happened in this way: Langdon had been true to Mary Smith since their first meeting during the war. He had kept up a correspondence by letter for some years, urging her to appoint the day for their nuptials. Several times during

the year he would visit her, and plead his cause with eloquence and earnestness; but invariably the same result would follow. Mary would manage to put him off. Any man, except one who had made up his mind to love but once, would have given up in despair. Not so with Langdon, however, for, it seems, he had determined that if he could not win Mary, he would remain a bachelor to his dying day. He was greatly perplexed by her inclination to postpone, but he believed that she would ultimately yield to his wishes. Thus, in this fruitless perseverance, years rolled away.

Langdon paid Mary a visit in August, 1878, and while he was in Vicksburg the fever broke out. On his return home, when he reached the suburbs of Baalbek, he found that the quarantine was established. The guard had orders to let no one enter the town. He learned that he would have to remain in the quarantine station fifteen days, this being believed the period in which the fever would be developed if he had absorbed its germs in Vicksburg. Langdon had good reasons to think that if he took the disease, people would fly terror-stricken from the town, and would leave him to die from sheer neglect. Under these circumstances he resolved to return to Vicksburg, where he could have proper attention in case he should fall a victim to the scourge. Besides, he was glad of an excuse to return to the spot which contained all that he held dear in this world.

On his arrival, he offered his services to the Howards, and entered upon the dangerous work of alleviating human suffering and distress. It is a fact, which medical science has never explained, that there were many persons upon whom the disease had no effect. Some, who had been driven to desperation and despair, by the loss of their families, tried to contract the disease, that they might die; but they remained unscathed, envying

those who were falling like Autumn leaves all round them. Langdon was one of the class who were exempt. He plunged boldly into the thickest of the fight, but like some fortunate soldiers of a hundred battles, he received not a single wound.

The next morning following the day that Verinne had visited Mary Smith, Bathie said—

“I am going to see the Smith family. I feel perfectly able to walk. Would you like to accompany me?”

“Perhaps,” replied Verinne, thoughtfully, “I had better go. Miss Mary may have it herself by this time.”

Accordingly, both soon made their way to the humble dwelling, and Mary herself met them at the door. A look of glad surprise flashed over her fair features, as her eyes rested upon Bathie. They shook hands in silence. Mary could not speak. After leading the way into the room, she motioned to them to be seated.

“How are all, this morning?” asked Bathie.

“Oh, heavens!” cried Mary, “all dead except my father, and I have little hope of his recovery. Neither have I any for myself. I am waiting to be attacked. I know I shall die, and I do not care.”

“You should not talk so, Mary,” said Bathie, in tones tremulous with sympathy. “You may yet have a noble destiny to fulfill, and you must not wish to die till you have accomplished your earthly task. I assure you, I sympathize with you. I know what you feel, and it is useless to offer words of consolation. Human philosophy in such an hour is vain, and I can only point you to the source of true comfort above.”

“Bathie, have you become a Christian?” she said, earnestly looking at him.

“I have,” he answered, emphatically.

Mary clasped her hands, while the tears were streaming down her cheeks, and exclaimed, with deep fervor—

“Lord, let thy servant now depart in peace.”

She was completely overcome, and buried her face in her hands, and cried aloud.

“Mary,” said Bathie, in that tender tone which years before had aroused the deepest emotions of her soul, “I wish I knew how to comfort you.”

“It is useless, Bathie,” speaking familiarly, as she had done when they were children, and making an effort, with all her strength, to be calm. “I know you would, if you could; but some sorrows strike too deep ever to be mitigated by anything of a temporal character. Besides, I do not need it. I feel that I will not have to endure the trials and afflictions of this world much longer. Why, then, should I weep? Let us go into the other room. Two of your acquaintances are in there. But, pardon me, one of them you may not wish to see.”

“Who are they?”

“Mr. Langdon and Dr. De Lancy.”

Before Bathie could reply, Langdon was standing in the door.

“Miss Mary,” said Langdon, “your father desires to see you.”

He had his eye on Bathie while saying this.

“Excuse me a moment,” said Mary, as she rose and went out of the room.

“I do not know,” said Langdon to Bathie, “whether to speak to you or not. Do you know me?”

“Certainly, I do—Mr. Langdon,” said Bathie, rising, and offering his hand.

“You are the most remarkable man I ever met,” said Langdon, looking hard at him. “Shall I talk about the last time I saw you?”

“There is no particular necessity for it,” answered

Bathie, drily. "We can find other things more interesting, at least to me."

"May I ask you one question?"

"Certainly."

"Were you ever in Baalbek *twice*?"

Bathie understood his meaning, and replied—

"I do not care to talk on that subject."

They both relapsed into silence, and we will thus leave them, and follow Mary into the next room, where her father, De Lancy and a nurse were the only living persons. As she advanced to her parent's bedside, he said—

"Mary, were we not talking about Bathie?"

"That was yesterday, Papa."

"Was it? Well, maybe it was. But I've been dreaming about him. I wish I could see him once more. I've something to say to him."

"He is in the next room, Papa."

"Bring him in here, right away," cried Mr. Smith. "Let me see him."

"Must I do so, Doctor?" she asked.

"Probably it may be best," answered De Lancy. "At least, it can do no harm."

"Very well. You shall see him, Papa."

"That's right. Bring him quick."

In the next moment, Bathie was standing by the sick man's bedside.

"Is it really you, Bathie?" asked Mr. Smith, reaching out his trembling hand.

"It is I, Mr. Smith."

"Well, it's been so many years since I saw you—no, it's not been long, either. I remember, now. The last time I saw you—don't you mind it?—you was a flyin' for life. You know when it was? Of course, you do. I was thar, Bathie, and I helped you all I could. I tried

to keep the Sheriff back, and to open a way through the crowd. Did you see me?"

"No, sir."

"No, I s'pose not. You'd no time to look after old acquaintances under such circumstances. I'm so glad you got away. Would n't you like to know why I'm so glad?" exclaimed the raving man, gazing wildly into his face.

"Yes, sir, if you want to tell."

"If I don't tell, they may catch you again. Do you mind how you escaped the first time? I've always had my suspicions about that, Bathie. You mind that cook? Yes?—that cook, sir, was *her*," pointing to Mary.

"O, Papa!" exclaimed Mary, "how can you say that? You have no proof of it."

"Proof enough, Bathie. She was gone from home about that time, and got back in two days after you made your escape. Was n't that noble, Bathie? Where is thar another woman who would have done that much for you? The time has come, when you ought to know this. She risked everything for you, and you've never thanked her for it."

"How could I," said Bathie, "when I did not know she was the person?"

"Papa's mind is wandering," said Mary, hastily. "That is a mere conjecture of his."

"Do not deny it, Mary, if it is true," said Bathie, turning, and looking earnestly at her. "You shall lose nothing by confessing it."

One fitful gleam of joy shot through Mary's swelling heart, even in the midst of her sad surroundings. Why might she not be happy yet? She made no reply, but looked confused.

"No, do n't deny it," said Mr. Smith. "I'm sure

Bathie 'll think none the less of you for saving his life; will you, Bathie?"

"On the contrary, I will think more of her!" exclaimed Bathie, so emphatically, that Mary felt repaid for what she had done.

"I know'd you would," said Mr. Smith. "I always thought you was a gentleman. You've said what I wanted you to. Both of you may be happy yet. But you'll always be in danger, unless I tell you something else, and I'll tell it before I die."

"Papa," said Mary, "you have talked enough. You do not know what you are saying."

"Yes, I do. Let me alone. Do you want Bathie to be in danger of the gallows as long as he lives? Get away. I must tell it. But, Bathie, you promise me that you'll think none the less of Mary for what I'm goin' to tell you."

"Nothing that you can say," replied Bathie, "will ever make me esteem her less. I owe my life to her, and to her it belongs."

Again poor Mary felt her heart wildly throbbing, though she did not know in what sense to take his last remark.

"That's enough, then," said Mr. Smith. "I'm the only one," he continued, in a calmer voice, "that can positively swear to your innocence, Bathie. I well know that you never killed that man. I know it—I know it."

Then he paused.

"How do you know it?" asked Bathie, who began to feel that a mystery was about to be revealed. "Tell us."

"Thar's the black vomit," said Mr. Smith, as he threw himself back on the bed, after ejecting that certain indication of approaching death. "Yes, that's it. I must be quick. I know it—what was it? O, yes; I

know you did n't kill that man—I can't live, and I must acquit you—I know it because—because I—I—I *killed him* myself!” almost shrieked the dying man. “Thar, you have the truth, so help me God.”

At that moment, poor Mary's senses reeled, and she reached out, to grasp support. There was a deep groan, as if her very soul was leaving its tenement, and she sank to the floor. Verinne, who had been listening in painful wonder, rushed to her, and attempted to raise her up. With De Lancy's and Bathie's assistance she was borne into the next room, where, in a short time, she regained consciousness. After this, all noticed that, while her eyes were red and wild, an expression of indescribable agony and despair settled upon her face. She said not a word, but lay motionless, gazing vacantly at the ceiling of the room. De Lancy said to Verinne—

“Stay with her till we return.”

He, Bathie and Langdon went back to Mr. Smith's bedside, who had said nothing after his confession. Bathie desired the proof of his assertion.

“You say you killed him, Mr. Smith. How can I be able to prove this?”

“Feel under my pillow, Bathie, and get my bunch of keys. Yes, that's the one. Now, draw out that little trunk under my bed, and unlock it. Yes, you've opened it. What do you see? I don't want to look.”

“Here is a bundle of clothing,” said Bathie.

“Look in that bundle, and you'll find some papers, a silver watch, and two rings. They all belonged to that man, whose name was Thomas Jones. He stayed about a week with me when I kept a hotel on —— street. He was a horse-trader, and had sold out entirely. I discovered that he had a good deal of money, and when he got ready to leave, he told me that he had business at Baalbek, and that he was goin' to walk. I told him

that I had to go to that very place myself, and proposed that we should travel together. The Devil—I know it was him—put that notion in my head. So, we started one mornin', before day. I deceived my own family, and not one of 'em knew where I was going, and I reckon they never suspicioned me. We traveled along together, and the man seemed to have all confidence in me. The second day, while we was a restin', right where he was killed, I saw a hickory bush, and I asked him to lend me his bowie knife to cut it down. When I got the stick trimmed, I went close up to him, and—good God!—I struck him, and stabbed him with his own knife—in the heart, I thought. I felt in his pockets, but I knew the money was in the bundle which he carried on his shoulder. I thought I heard some one coming, and I snatched up the bundle, never thinking about the knife, and I took to the woods. You know the rest, Bathie. My God! I know I'm goin' to torment, and I'll meet that poor fellow. I won't ask you to forgive me, Bathie. It'll do no good now."

"Ask God to forgive you," cried Langdon.

"It's no use now. Too late—too late—I'm bound for the lower world. All the prayers in the world can't prevent that. I've sinned away my day of grace. It's no use to talk to me now. Bathie, Mary has nothing in the world. Won't you promise me that she shan't suffer, while you live."

"I promise, cheerfully," replied Bathie. "Do not give yourself the least uneasiness on account of that."

"Then, I die satisfied—that is, as well satisfied as a man can be that is goin' right straight to torment."

From that moment Mr. Smith began to sink rapidly, and in about two hours he passed into that eternal region from which there is no return. After his awful confession, Mary saw him no more. Either that, or the

breath of the unseen foe, had paralyzed her sensibilities, and she was perfectly indifferent to everything. Bathie and Verinne took their leave, promising to return in the evening, though Mary made no request of that sort. Indeed, she said not a word, but lay on the bed with her eyes closed. The nurse and Dr. De Lancy thought she was asleep. But they soon had reason to know that their impression was false.

## CHAPTER L.

### A SAD SCENE.

“Death lies on her like an untimely frost  
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.”

It was three o'clock in the afternoon, and there was not the slightest breeze stirring. The very sky seemed to have assumed the saffron hue of the ubiquitous fiend, and the sun's scorching rays appeared to be tinged with pestilence in coming through the infected atmosphere. Nature partook of the general gloom, or at least, so appeared, to those who lived in the shadow of death, and who heard the wails of anguish which ascended from every inhabited house. It was the Reign of Terror—the Carnival of Death. The city of Vicksburg had once withstood the assaults of mighty armies, but the invisible foe, with his pestilential breath, in a few hours had scattered her children to the four winds, and struck with paralysis those who remained.

Bathie was seated in an easy chair by the window, looking down the almost smoking and deserted street, meditating upon the strange, sudden turn which affairs had taken. His face indicated that his thoughts were of a serious character. But he was not alone, for Veriune was in the room, trying in vain to read.

We must not be surprised that Bathie was still at her house. The plague had made it necessary to dispense with the ordinary rules and regulations of social intercourse, and people had to adapt themselves to the awful circumstances by which they were surrounded. The scourge brought strangers together, and made them intimate, in the dark shadow of death. Delicate, timid

females were often attended by masculine nurses. Indeed, the sick were fortunate if they could procure the services of any sort of nurse. Besides, we are creatures in whose opinions there is little that is positive. Our ideas of modesty and propriety are merely relative notions, which are greatly modified by circumstances. Imminent dangers, especially, soon level those nice distinctions established by fashionable society. In the presence of such awful scenes as occurred in the Summer of 1878, people forgot their pride, and became as little children. Nobody, therefore, thought it improper that Bathie should remain under the same roof with a young girl and her baby brother, and an old negro man and his wife, who acted as cook. People had to do as best they could, and stay wherever they could find shelter and the means of sustaining life.

Verinne was in the room, as we have said, endeavoring to confine her attention to the page before her eyes, but she was thinking of the strange things she had heard that morning. While she and Bathie were occupied in the way we have just described, they were both startled by a scream in the street. Bathie had scarcely time to look out before he was amazed and dumbfounded by an apparition which made him turn pale.

Mary Smith had suddenly sprung to her feet and rushed out of the house, before her purpose could be divined. The hot finger of the Fiend was pressing upon her very brain, and she was transformed into a maniac; and yet she recognized her friends. Her memory was not impaired, and all her past life seemed to stand out before her. With a superhuman strength, she flew up the street, her feet seeming to scarcely touch the earth, and her long hair streaming in the wake of her rapid flight. She was followed by both De Lancy and Langdon, but she easily outstripped them. On and on she went till

she reached the house of Verinne, and without pause she burst into the room, and stood before Bathie, fastening her wild, swollen eyes upon him, as though she would penetrate into the very depths of his soul.

"Sit down," said Bathie, scarcely knowing what to do, so great was his surprise.

"Yes, yes," she answered, speaking rapidly, "I will, but I must sit by you. I have come to tell you something. Now be a good boy, and listen to me," she said, with the pitiable playfulness of a crazed, but affectionate woman. "The demon of destruction is grasping me, Bathie, and I am held in a vise. How hot his breath is. I cannot shake him off, if I would—let him do his worst. But give me your hand, friend—brother—yes, brother. How does that sound? Bathie, you have never loved me."

"I have loved you," said Bathie, in confusion, "with all my heart, as a sister."

"Sister!" she exclaimed, mockingly. "You have made me hate that word more than any other in the English language. It has made a great gulf between us. I used to try, with all my power—I went almost beyond the limits of modesty—to make you understand that I was no sister."

At this moment De Lancy and Langdon entered, and looked on, and listened in amazement; but Mary did not appear to notice them, and went on in her wild strain—

"You would call me sister, Bathie, and I had too much delicacy to explain to you what I felt—what has become of all my modesty? It is all gone. I cannot help but expose my feelings. It is gone on before, and I am going after it, and will recover it on the other side of the beautiful stream of Death—it is beautiful to me, for Death is my friend. But I had something to tell you. Do you want to know what it is?"

"You are not conscious of what you are saying, Mary," replied Bathie. "You must go into the next room, and lie down. You are very sick—too sick to talk. Here is the Doctor, come to see you."

"I do not want any doctor, but you, Bathie. As soon as I leave you I shall take wings and fly away, beyond the skies. Let me alone, and I will talk quietly. I have something to tell you, and I must tell it."

"What must I do, Doctor?" asked Bathie, appealing to De Lancy.

"Let her tell what she desires to, and she may become more quiet," said De Lancy.

"You are a sensible Doctor," spoke out Mary, with a maniacal laugh. "Yes, let me tell it, and relieve my mind. Bathie, Bathie, you do not know what a treasure you have thrown away. You never cared anything for me, except as a sister. But I loved you—yes, oh, my God! more than any woman ever loved a man, and you would not see it. My eyes betrayed me, but you turned coldly away from me. I was modest—I tried to be so. I tried, too, to hide my violent love. Oh! God knows what this poor heart has suffered! I tried to crush down my affection, and trample it under foot. I endeavored to love another, whom you recommended. Yes, I tried to love him for your sake, and tried to make up my mind to marry him; and when I was about to tell him that I would be his, the light would seem to fade out from the world, and I felt that I was floating off on a dark sea—floating, drifting, drifting, further and further off, into the black, horrible darkness—Oh! I could not do it. I put him off, and lived on the feeble hope that you would discover my deep, unfathomable love for you, and you would change. You were accused of murder, and condemned to an ignominious death. I determined to practically demon-

strate my love, by dying for you, if necessary. So I disguised myself as a negro cook. You remember it? Yes; you escaped. I thought you would certainly try to find me out, and come to me. Was not that proof of my love? What more could I do? But, Bathie, you never even thanked me for what I did. Had you no gratitude?"

"I did not know it was you," replied Bathie, in a quivering voice. "I asked you, and you refused to tell who you were."

"You might have known; but you did not try to find out."

"Yes, I did, so far as I could. I could not come to you without running into danger. I had to hide, to save my life."

"Why did you not write to me, Bathie? You knew I would not betray you."

"I was not afraid of that," replied Bathie; "but it was perilous to write."

"Oh, Bathie, say that you did not love me—except as a sister."

"I did love you as a sister."

"And this is the return for my deathless love? I did not want to be your sister, and I was in hopes that you would understand me after awhile. But it is too late now, too late."

"No, it is not too late, perhaps," cried Bathie, now willing to make any sacrifice to save the poor, raving girl.

"What do you mean, Bathie?"

"I have been very dull of comprehension, Mary. But I understand it all now. I mean, if you will try to get well, you shall be my wife, and we will yet be happy."

"Do you mean that, Bathie? Are you in earnest? Do not deceive me!"

"I assure you, I am in earnest," answered Bathie.

"Only get well, and you may appoint the day for our marriage whenever you choose."

When Bathie said this, Mary looked closely and searchingly into his face with her wild eyes, and examined his expression attentively for a moment.

"Yes; you are in earnest. But I am dreaming, Bathie. This is not real, is it?"

"Yes; it is real."

"Who knows, then, but we may be happy for many years to come. But this horrid demon must be exorcised somehow. Where is that good Doctor? O, yes, there he is, and there is Mr. Langdon, too. You must forgive me for deceiving you. Do you know I am engaged to be married?"

"Yes; I understand it all," replied Langdon.

"You will not think hard of me, will you? I tried hard to love you. You are worthy of any woman. But the truth is, another had previously taken possession of my heart. I could not help it. He has come back after long and weary years, and asked me to be his, and I must yield to the decrees of stubborn destiny. It is so ordered. You will not grieve because he has claimed my hand and heart, will you? You ought not to begrudge me a little happiness, after so many years of patient waiting, watching, praying, hoping, and weeping."

"If you ever to expect to fulfill your engagement," said De Lancy, "you had better let us try to cure you. You have the fever."

"Yes, I know, good, kind Galen," exclaimed Mary, quickly. "What must I do?"

"You must get to your bed at once, and keep quiet," said De Lancy.

"Why, yes. So I must, faithful Æsculapius. You are correct. Where shall I go?"

"Here," said Verinne, rising, and taking Mary's hand, "follow me."

"I will. Lead thou on, little angel."

In a moment poor Mary was lying down, with the hot fever drying up the blood in her veins, and sapping the throne of reason.

"Where is Bathie?" she cried, starting up in alarm.

"He must not leave me again. The naughty boy has disappointed me so much. Find him, will you?"

"Lie down," said Verinne. "I'll call him."

"Do, my angelic girl."

Bathie was soon by the bedside.

"There, sit down, my long-lost one. You are so kind. Give me your hand."

She grasped and clasped his hand with the energy of madness, and lay very still for a long time, with her eyes tightly closed. The minutes dragged slowly by, and the watchers waited anxiously. All knew it was a most malignant case. Presently Mary raised up.

"Bathie, where are you?" she cried.

"Here I am."

"O, yes. Now I remember. Poor Bathie! You will be so lonely when I am gone."

"But you must try to live," said Bathie.

"It is all in vain, my poor Bathie. It is useless to resist longer. The demon is dragging me down. Did you not ask me to be yours?"

"I did, and you agreed to it."

"Poor Bathie! It can never be on earth. My only love, let us meet in the Golden City, where there is no separation, and we will live forever in undisturbed happiness. I can hold out no longer. Oh! God! I come to Thee."

These were the last words poor, raving Mary ever uttered. In five minutes afterward she ceased to

breathe. The pure spirit had taken its eternal flight to the glorious City of Love and Light, where God wipes away all tears.

Thus another entire family, in the space of a few hours, was blotted out from the earth.

The parties in that room sat for several minutes, without speaking a word. De Lancy was the first to speak. Turning to Bathie, whose head was bowed, he said—

“Would you have married her, if she had recovered? or were you deceiving her in order to aid her in overcoming the disease?”

“God being my judge,” said Bathie, with tears streaming down his cheek, “I would have fulfilled my promise. Such love as hers deserved some reward, and I intended to devote the remainder of my days to her happiness.”

“You did not love her, though?”

“Only as a sister; but if she had lived she never would have known that I did not.”

“You are under arrest, too, you know. How did you expect to get out of that difficulty?”

“I did not think much about that. I believed the Lord would extricate me, somehow. But that would not have prevented my fulfillment of the engagement.”

“Bathie,” said De Lancy, in the familiar tone which Bathie had heard in their boyhood, “let us be friends again. I forgive you, as I expect to be forgiven. If you had been the hardened wretch I took you to be, I intended to let the law take its course. But this last exhibition of your magnanimity and your willingness to be sacrificed, in order to secure the happiness of a poor, obscure girl from a degraded family, has completely disarmed me. Let us be friends.”

Bathie grasped the extended hand.

"God bless you, my dear Clarence, for this. It is so like you. But I must tell you that I would have been the hardened wretch you took me for, had it not been for the humanizing influence of the Christian Religion. It is that which has saved me. Is it not wonderful how Religion can purify the soul, and eradicate evil desires and bitter animosities from the heart?"

"It surely is," replied De Lancy.

"Another thing I will tell you, dear Clarence. I thought you were relenting. I knew you would soften, when you heard all. O, if penitence could atone for the past, I knew you would forgive me, with all your heart."

"So I do," replied Clarence. "You are now free, so far as I am concerned. I do not know that any one else has any personal interest in having you arrested. If you will be a little prudent, no one will trouble you."

"No; I do not think I will be in any great danger. But I want to say something in regard to poor Mary Smith. You say she is from a degraded family. You give me more credit for magnanimity than I deserve. Mary was worthy of any man—at least I deemed her worthy of me. I have known her from childhood, and she was a noble, high-minded woman, having none of her father's nature. I do not believe it is right to hold an entire family responsible for the transgressions of one member of it. But I will see you again. I must now attend to burying her remains."

Bathie procured the best coffin that could be had, and early the next morning he and Verinne and broken-hearted Langdon followed Mary's corpse to its last resting place. Langdon could with difficulty go through the burial services. They were the only persons present, except the gravediggers. In a few moments the work was done, and the party turned sorrowfully away.

There was many a similar funeral in that fatal year.

## CHAPTER LI.

### THE EAVESDROPPER.

"I know not why  
I love this youth ; and I have heard you say  
Love's reason's without reason."

The long, hot, terrible Summer of 1878 passed slowly away, and at last the coveted frost, so fervently prayed for by the world, made its appearance, in the month of October. People looked into books of Science, to learn something in regard to the nature of frost ; and others inquired of their more learned neighbors at what figure of the thermometer it could be reasonably expected. The thermometer was eagerly examined late at night, to ascertain if the mercury was falling to the required degree. The famous 10,000 Greeks retreating from Persia did not cry out with more joy, "the Sea! the Sea!" than did the people of the South exclaim, "the Frost! the Frost!" Little children ran out into the yards, and gathered it up as if it had been a precious treasure, and hastening to show it to their parents, in childish glee, vociferated, "Frost!" "Frost!" On that glad morning nothing was heard but the cry of "Frost!" "Frost!" Who could blame people? The South had passed through a fiery ordeal, compared with which the horrors of war were but a trifle. When the Refugees returned to their deserted homes, their hearts were filled with surprise and grief. Did you ever see a battlefield immediately after the fight, and gaze at the bloody corpses lying in every conceivable position, and sometimes piled upon each other till they formed a barricade of decaying flesh? It was horrible. Yet the havocs

of the Fiend of 1878 were greater. For hundreds of miles throughout the South the unseen foe waged his awful warfare. The results were visible in thousands of shallow graves, in hundreds of once happy homes, from which the last inmate had been carried; in orphans, poor and helpless, living on the charities, not of a "cold, unfeeling world," as the phrase used to be; for the world is more benevolent and beneficent than cynics believe. Never was more general and practical sympathy manifested, than during the widespread scourge of 1878, as orphan asylums all over the land will testify.

But we must dismiss this topic. Our story is not ended, and probably the strangest portion of it remains to be related.

Bathie was free to go where he pleased, without fear of molestation. Langdon's testimony at the next meeting of the Court at Baalbek, in connection with the mute evidence of the murdered man's papers, at once established Bathie's innocence. The detectives, who had once hoped to enrich themselves by securing the reward of \$50,000, had ceased to look for the victim, when, after years of watching, they could not obtain the slightest clue to his place of concealment.

Bathie, with a sorrowful heart, bade farewell to Vicksburg, and returned to his uncle's, near the cave of Hegobar. He had written once to Cara, according to his promise, informing her where he was, and stating that he would remain at Vicksburg till the plague should disappear. To this letter he received no reply, and he did not write again.

The very day he arrived Pomp came to his room, and after they had talked a short time, Bathie said—

"How are our friends in the cave?"

"Dey am in the 'joyment ob a very good state ob

healthness, sah. None ob dem complains in my presence, wich hez bin much scarcer sence you imparted from dem."

"You do not seem to like their company."

"Wal, dey am not ob my sawt, and dey doan know 'zackly how to import demselves to a cullud pusson. De young lady, specially, am not been like she used to ware wen you ware dar."

"How is that, Uncle Pomp?"

"Well, sah, my 'pinion am dat wen you went away you tuck de heart of her 'long wid ye, ha! ha! ha! ha!"

"What do you mean, Uncle Pomp?"

"I hez used de plaines' words," replied Pomp, with gravity, "dat de diction'ry ob langwidge ken furnish. P'r'aps, do, you 'll imprehen' my signication mo' clearer, if I says dat de young 'oman's 'fections follers you jes' like a houn-dorg on de track ob de har. Does ye imprehen' de signication ob dat?"

"O, yes, Uncle Pomp; I would be a simpleton, indeed, if I could not understand such plain language as that. But tell me what are your reasons for thinking as you do."

"I hez rezins, divers an' vayous," replied Pomp, with solemnity.

"Give me some of them, and let me be the judge of their strength."

"We hez difrunt ways ob lookin' at subjees, you knows. Some rezins mout 'pear very correck to me, dat mout have anoder sawt ob aspec to you, 'cordin to difrunt varieties ob thinkin. We am not all instertuted alike."

"That is so, Uncle Pomp; but, after all, truth is truth, and men cannot differ about it, if they are honest."

"No, sah; but dey mout differ 'bout what am de truf.

De sun ar' shinin'. Dat ar' a truf dat no man dat hez de instertution ob vision can dispoot. But here am anoder doubtful truf: whedder de stares dat looks like big sparks o' flame am de inbodes ob humern bein's, dey can't tell; yit somefin am de truf, but men differs about whut it am—ha! ha! ha! ha!"

"Well, have it your own way; but let us have your reasons for what you asserted just now in regard to the young lady."

"I doan want hit my way," quickly exclaimed Pomp, "onless it am de correck way. I doan like falseness 'bout iny subjec'."

"I will admit your position to be correct; only give me the reasons for what you said."

"Would it gin you joy er sorrer, ef de rezins am good," said Pomp, with a merry twinkle.

"Why are you so inquisitive?" asked Bathie, who would not take offence at the old man for anything in the world, hyperbolically speaking.

"I only wants ter know whedder I'd make ye mo' happier, or oderwise—ha! ha! ha!"

"Well, Uncle Pomp, if your reasons are good, I confess my extreme vanity will have a tendency to make me feel happier."

"Ha! ha! ha! ha!—I think so, an' hez bin a thinkin' so fur a long time. It 'ud be nateral, too. Good-lookin' young folks, wen dey meets togedder day arter day, 'quires a mouty strong feelin' fur each oder. Dar am nothin' mo' nateral dan dat. She am a mighty nice 'oman, sah—one ob de ilegint kine. She am no po' scrub, sho' 's you born."

"Uncle Pomp, tell me, do you really think she cares for me?"

"She could n't well hep it, 'cordin' to de scrap ob philosarphy I's jes gin you. But I knows you hez got

away wid her 'fections. I hearn her an' Mas Morein' a talkin' about you one night—I sho' did."

"What did they say?"

"I could n't tell a word dey spoke, becaze dey ware a talkin' in dat outlanderish langwidge o' Rusher."

"How did you know they were talking about me, then?"

"Becaze, dey called yo' name, now an' den, an' I watched dar faces ter see whut it ware dey ware a sayin'. Mas Morein', he'd git kinder vex'd like, an' de young 'un got ter cryin'. I know'd it ware somefin' mighty close ter you, or she neber would a cried so."

"Is that the best reason you have?"

"Yes, sah, dat am a good rezin, I thinks. De rest o' my rezins am not worf tellin'."

Bathie felt a little vexed at this downfall of his suddenly re-awakened hopes, but he said nothing.

"Is n't you agwine ter see dem, sah?"

"Yes, Uncle Pomp, you have given me so much encouragement," said Bathie, with a laugh, "that I will go to-night. I suppose they do not know I have returned."

"No, sah, I specerlates not. You only 'rived this mornin', an' dey am not had time ter hear ob it yit."

"We will go to the cave to-night, then. You go in at the water entrance, and open the other door for me, without letting her know that I have come."

"Yes, sah, I onderstan' dat," replied Pomp, with a broad grin. "You am a gwine ter 'sprise de young 'oman, an' cause her ter be a Juders Carrot to herself—ha! ha! ha!"

"Never mind about that."

"Ha! ha! ha! ha!" laughed Pomp, as he rose and went off, shaking his head knowingly, and saying to himself—

“Mas Baffie can’t fool dis nigger. Dat geerl am got away wid his heart, an’ ef my knowlidge ob humern natur’ am not mightly at fault, it am six fur one an’ haf a dozen fur tother. It ’ud be a good match, too.”

About eight o’clock that night two figures were cautiously walking along the bank of Linden River. They were, of course, Bathie and Pomp. The old man, when they had reached the proper place, made a dive, his clothing being securely wrapped in an oilcloth which Bathie had provided for that purpose. When he came to the surface, and landed in the cave, he again donned his garments, which were perfectly dry. Then, he slyly admitted Bathie through the other entrance.

“She am in de parler room,” whispered Pomp.

Bathie cautiously moved to the door and peeped in. A light was burning, but no Cara was to be seen. She had gone to her father’s room while Pomp was admitting his master. He heard the two engaged in earnest conversation. Bathie had no disposition to play the part of an eavesdropper, and he intended to rap on the door, and make himself known at once. But he heard his own name pronounced, and involuntarily came to a halt, or rather his great curiosity caused him to pause, and listen. A part only of their conversation was heard by him.

“What is it now, Child?” asked Mr. Moreing, as Cara entered his room, and took a seat with a cloud of gloom on her fair brow.

“Father,” she said, “I can no longer stay here. I will die of *ennui*. Let us leave.”

“I am almost afraid to abandon such a safe retreat,” slowly answered Mr. Moreing.

“Pomp says that he has not seen a detective in a long time,” said Cara. “We can disguise, and go to some city.”

"Where do you wish to go?"

"I do not care. Suppose we first visit the city of Vicksburg."

Mr. Moreing looked at her with a frown.

"Cara," he answered, with a little sternness, "I caution you. I do wish you would banish that man Jones from your mind."

It was at this point Bathie had paused.

"I cannot do it, Father. That is the plain truth."

"You know you can never marry him."

"No; not so long as I have my present feelings. There is only one thing, however, that prevents it."

"What is that, pray?"

"Pride, pride," she answered, in a bitter tone.

This was all that Bathie overheard; for he began to feel ashamed of playing the part of eavesdropper. So he at once retreated, as noiselessly as possible, to the parlor, resolving to change his programme. Beckoning to Pomp to follow, both went to the mouth of the cave.

"Uncle Pomp," said Bathie, "I wish you would go back, and inform them that I have returned from Vicksburg, and would be glad to call to-morrow evening, but do not let them know I have been here to-night. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sah; I sho' does."

"Go back, then, at once, but do not throw out the slightest hint in regard to my having been here to-night."

"No, sah; I hez de knowlidge ob aidin in sich matters as dese."

Bathie immediately returned to his room, with his heart in a state of the most violent agitation. He had heard enough to revive his withering hopes.

"Pride, is it," he mused, as he was walking along. "What a foolish passion it is in the human heart. It is

this which caused angels to fall. It is this which lost Paradise to the human race. It is this which filled the world with misery and suffering. Well might Pope say—

“Of all the causes which conspire to blind  
 Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,  
 What the weak head with strongest bias rules,  
 Is pride, the never-failing vice of fools.”

Poor, puny man! what is he, and what has he to be proud of? His symmetrical form shall go down into the grave, and become food for loathsome worms. His noble blood shall evaporate into the mist of degradation itself. Royal birth is nothing in the dark and Silent City, where all must lie on the same level. None can distinguish between the dust of the prince and that of the peasant. The body of Dives is no more honorable in the still Necropolis than that of Lazarus. O, how silly and contemptible is pride! It is no wonder that the Lord hateth a proud look! I do wonder if this proud lady will persist to the last, and sacrifice her happiness to the foolish passion of pride? That miserable vice is the legitimate offspring of aristocratic institutions. Such a cruel, despotic government as that of Russia ought to be wiped out from the face of the earth. It is an outrage upon the civilization of the Nineteenth Century. I do hope that the Nihilists will at last prevail, and will establish free, republican institutions like ours, which have no tendency to beget and foster a spirit of senseless pride!”

While Bathie was thus meditating, Pomp was having an interview with the inmates of the cave.

“I s'pose,” said he, after they had asked him a few questions, pertaining to their own affairs, “you'd like to hear some news dat I calls mighty good?”

“I should like to hear anything,” said Cara, “that will furnish food for thought.”

"I doan know," said Pomp, deliberately, "what char'cter ob thought de news which I ar 'bout to 'unicate mout have a inclernation to interduce," shaking his head wisely.

"I do not understand you," said Cara.

"Wal, Missis, news, as I hez allurz observ'd, hez diffrunt effecs 'pon diffrunt peoples. Hit depens 'tirely on de constertution ob dar natur's. Some folks 'joys news more dan oders. But frekerntly what am news to one am no news to anoder. De carc'mstance ob de case hez a great 'eal to do wid de effecs wich am perduced, specly by a sud'n 'unication, wen a pusson am not perpar'd, or am not in a correck frame ob mind to 'ceive it."

Our reader has no doubt observed that Pomp took some delight in tantalizing his hearers. In this respect he bore a strong resemblance to Sir Walter Scott's Andrew Fairservice, who annoyed and vexed Mr. Frank Osbaldistone no little. This was not to be attributed to any mean disposition on the part of Uncle Pomp; but he desired that his news should have a decided effect, and he greatly enjoyed the state of excited curiosity into which the expectation of news threw his auditors. This state he prolonged as much as possible by learned moralization, whenever the subject would admit of it. Pomp perceived that Cara did not comprehend his last remark, and he went on—

"De news wich went a flyin' durin war times ware somefin worf listnin' too. Dem ware orful times. I hez noticed de folks, wen de news ob a big battle 'ud come. O, how de po' wimmens 'ud wring dar hans, wen dey'd hear dat dar husbun or son had fell in de fight."

"I suppose it was fearful, Uncle Pomp," said Cara; "but never mind now. That is all past, and cannot be helped. What is the news which you have to tell us?"

“Wal, den, not to retain you through too much period o’ time, dat news am dat a certain man hez got back from anoder war—a big fight.”

“What war?” asked Cara.

“De war wid de yaller feber, in coase.”

“And who is the man?”

“It am Mas Baffie Beaumont.”

“Mr. Thomas Jones?” asked Mr. Moreing.

“Dat ware only a ’sumed name. His real name am jes’ what I dernomernated it.”

“Where is he going?” asked Cara.

“I doan kno’, Missis; but he am so res’less dat he won’t stay no whar long.”

“Is he coming to see us?” asked Cara.

“Dat ’pends on care’mstances. He telled me to ax ef a visit ’d be ’cordin’ to de dictates of yo’ ’greeable will.”

“Tell him,” said Cara, “that we will be glad to see him whenever it may suit his convenience to call.”

“He’ll make his ’pearance to-morrer night, den, ’bout eight o’clock.”

Pomp then left, shaking his head sagely, and saying to himself—

“Hit am agwine off very well, dis bizness am. I could see dat dar news ’fected her to a extent dat ware beyant de bouns ob concealment. Ha! ha! ha! she tried to be mighty oncarned like; but she can’t fool dis nigger. I wonders whut dey ware a sayin’ wen Mas Baffie ware a listnin’ at de do’. I wish dey’d quit talkin’ dat outerlanderish Roosher. I can’t onderstan’ a word ob it.”

In a little more than half an hour Pomp knocked at Bathie’s door, and was admitted.

“Well?” said Bathie.

“Whut am de pertickler pint ye want infermation on?”

“What did they say to my proposed visit?”

“Wal, as to dat,” replied Pomp, deliberately, “Mas Morein, he said nothin’, but looked a mighty heap, an’ peared ter be in a deep study ’bout somefin—I could n’t tell whut. Frum his impartment, do, I arrove at de conclusion dat he war n’t a carin whedder you made de visit or not. I ar’ fearful he am struck wid some degree of suspicion, wich am very ongrateful, contem-  
platin’ whut we’s done fur ’im. Dar am some folks in dis worl’ dat am destertute ob all de feelins of charurty an’ neverlence.”

“Well, never mind about him,” said Bathie, impatiently; “what said the young lady?”

“In coase, she am de main party in dis transaction,” said Pomp.

“What did she say?”

“She said it ware ’sistent wid her desires ter have de visit, an’ she peared mighty glad, too—jes’ as I ’spected. De geerl am all right. Hit’s de ole man, whut am agwine ter be de hinderin’ differculty.”

“Well, good night, Uncle Pomp,” said Bathie. “I must now retire.”

“Good night, thank you, sah. May de Lo’d bless you.”

## CHAPTER LII.

### THE SUDDEN DEPARTURE.

“Of all affliction taught a lover yet,  
’Tis sure the hardest science to forget!”

At eight o’clock the next evening Bathie gave the customary signal at the mouth of the cave, and was admitted by Mr. Moreing himself.

“Is it you, Mr. Jones?” asked Mr. Moreing.

“It is, sir, and I am glad to see you.”

“I am glad you have escaped the fever,” said the Russian, as they shook hands, “but I was not expecting you to return so soon, when you left us.”

“I am a sort of cosmopolite, Mr. Moreing, and there is no accounting for my movements. I am here to-night, but I do not know where I may be in the course of the next forty-eight hours. I go just as the notion strikes me, Quaker-like.”

“I have something to say to you before we go further,” said Mr. Moreing, rather abruptly, “and I hope you will receive it in kindness.”

“Say on, Mr. Moreing. I will receive it in the spirit which animates you.”

“I have a favor to ask of you, and it is of such a nature that I do not want you to misconstrue my motives.”

“I shall endeavor not to do so,” replied Bathie, with civility.

“We are under obligations to you for allowing us the use of your retreat. We probably owe the preservation of our lives to you—at least, we owe it to you that we have not been captured. If I could discharge our obli-

gations by any pecuniary consideration, I would gladly do so."

"Do not consider yourself under any obligations to me, Mr. Moreing. Indeed, I am under obligations to you. So, by mutual consent, let us say no more on that head."

Mr. Moreing appeared to be a little embarrassed, and he paused as if at a loss for words to express what was in his mind.

"I hope," said Mr. Moreing, deprecatingly, "that you will have no ill feeling toward me, when I make known my request."

"I hope you will give no grounds for the exercise of ill feeling, for I am sure I do not desire our pleasant relations to be disturbed, and they shall not be, unless you choose to destroy our friendship."

"That is the very thing I wish to avoid," quickly exclaimed Mr. Moreing. "But some young men are rash, and take offence when none is intended."

"I think I have passed that age, Mr. Moreing."

"Very well, then. I wish to say that Cara is my only child. You know what her rank is. When she was quite young, she was betrothed to a nobleman of high rank. As dismal as our prospects may appear at present, I still live in the hope of seeing my desires accomplished. The favor I have to ask of you is not to attempt to thwart my purpose."

"Please explain yourself," said Bathie, coolly, but politely. "I want to be certain I understand you. Do not leave me to guess at your meaning."

"I will be plain. I would be under greater obligations to you than I am already, if you would treat my daughter as a friend, and only as a friend. You understand me?"

"O, yes, that is sufficiently explicit; but I cannot

understand why such a request as this should come from you."

Again Mr. Moreing seemed to be slightly embarrassed, but he replied—

"It comes from me because I know, if you want me to be plain, that two young people thrown together day after day are apt to form strong attachments, when, if they had no such intercourse, it would not be the case."

"Your meaning is," said Bathie, bluntly, "that you do not want me to visit your daughter."

"Well, only occasionally, as a friend, you know."

"Tell me, did Miss Cara ask you to make this request?" said Bathie.

"No, not exactly. But I can say, with truth, it meets her approval."

"Do you want me to return without seeing her? Is that it?"

"O, no, no. I did not say that. I merely desire that you shall not address her."

"Does she desire this, also?"

"My opinion is that she does."

"If so, what is the use of your request? She could tell me that my attentions were disagreeable."

"But I want to spare both of you trouble and—and—and embarrassment."

"I assure you, sir," said Bathie, "that I shall not cause Miss Cara the least annoyance by any importunities."

"No," replied Mr. Moreing, "I think you have too much independence of spirit for that. Let us go, then, and have a friendly chat."

The plain language which Mr. Moreing had employed was not calculated to increase Bathie's friendship for him, and he did not feel like entering into conversation with a man who could make such a request. He began

to feel a little suspicious of Mr. Moreing; for he had heard on the previous night the young lady's confession from her own lips. He determined, therefore, that he would learn from Cara herself whether she thought about the matter just as her father did. True, she had affirmed that she could not sustain to him the relation which he desired, but she might yet change her views, especially since Mr. Moreing himself admitted that she loved him. It remained to be demonstrated which would gain the victory, Love or Pride.

Cara met them in the parlor, and appeared to be perfectly self-possessed, and greeted Bathie only with the warmth of friendship. Indeed, if he had not overheard her confession the night before, he would have concluded that she had full control of her affections. But knowing how she secretly felt toward him, he determined to make himself as agreeable as possible. Accordingly, he gave a graphic account of the Fiend and his horrid work, and he noticed that Cara listened with the closest attention. He threw into his voice all the mellifluousness of a man who was trying to make an impression in the presence of a third party. His breast heaved with thrilling emotion when he observed that several times she blushed, looked down, and turned her head aside.

Presently Mr. Moreing made it convenient to leave the parlor. In the progress of their conversation, Bathie said—

“I fear you have a lonely time here.”

“Were it not for my silent friends there,” she said, pointing to some books which lay on the table, “I should be tempted to commit the deed which admits of no repentance. But those kind companions are always ready to entertain me.”

“How much longer do you expect to remain here?” inquired Bathie.

"Not much longer."

"Where are you going?"

"I know not. We may have to keep traveling, to elude the spies who may be watching for us. But I am glad to know that you can go where you please, without being disturbed."

"The sense of freedom is strange to me," replied Bathie, "after so many years passed in evading the hands of injustice. It is like a dream, that I can mingle with my fellow men, without having to watch them. I hope the day is not far distant when you too will enjoy the same privilege."

"I do not know about that," she answered, sorrowfully. "Sometimes I almost despair of ever being anything but a fugitive."

"Why should not you and your father become citizens of this country, and claim the protection of the government?"

"In my hours of despondency," said Cara, "I have sometimes suggested that to him; but he thinks the Russian government is the best in the world."

"I do not know how he can possibly think so," rejoined Bathie, with animation, "for to me it seems the most despotic government on the face of the earth. I would not be a subject of the Czar for any consideration."

"Any consideration, Monsieur, is a very comprehensive term," said Cara, with a blush. "Is there nothing on earth that could induce you to change your political relations?"

Bathie's feelings were wrought up to such an extent that he determined to avail himself of even any hint which would furnish him an opportunity of ascertaining the state of Cara's mind. Had she not cleared the way by this last question, whatever might be her meaning? Accordingly, he said—

"True, I have used a sweeping assertion, because the only thing which could have the least influence in inducing me to swear allegiance to the Russian government appears so utterly intangible, that I did not think it worth while to make any exceptions."

Cara hung her head on hearing this, because she well knew what Bathie meant; nevertheless, she said—

"May I ask what that is, Monsieur?"

"I should think you might apprehend my meaning, without my being more explicit."

"You still, then, regard that thing of which you speak as unattainable?" she asked, with a blush, yet looking him in the face.

"It is with you to say," answered Bathie. "You once informed me that there could be no relation between us, except friendship. I have the same feeling toward you now that I had then. How is it with yourself? Can you, will you, give me any foundation on which to build a hope of ultimate success?"

"Monsieur, you know what my father's opinion is, do you not?"

"I do; for he volunteered to give it to me this morning."

"He did?" she exclaimed, in great surprise. "What did he tell you?"

"He told me what you once did yourself—that is, you were betrothed to a Russian nobleman; and he informed me that he desired the engagement to be consummated. If you want to know all, he further requested me to treat you only as a friend, and said that such a course on my part would be desired by you. If this be true, I can never be a subject of the Czar."

Cara appeared to be greatly embarrassed.

"Monsieur," she said, in a hesitating manner, "I am so peculiarly situated, that I am very unhappy. I know

your sentiments toward me, and I am conscious that I have given you reason to think that I entertain very great respect for you. Your friendship has placed me under permanent obligations. But I love my father very dearly, and I cannot trample his wishes under my feet. He has not concealed it from you that he has ambitious views. Unfortunately for me, I am necessary to the execution of his schemes. I cannot act freely, Monsieur. Filial duty is not to be utterly ignored. We must consult the interests of those near and dear to us, even at the sacrifice of our own pleasure."

"Does filial duty demand that you shall sacrifice yourself to ambition? On the other hand, should not parental love strive to promote your happiness?"

"My father thinks that he is working for that very thing."

"But," said Bathie, "are you not to be the judge of what is necessary to your own happiness? Do you propose to surrender the keeping of your heart to your parent? Does he know better how to secure your happiness in this respect than you do?"

"I did not say that, Monsieur. But, *cæteris paribus*, might I not regard the wishes of a dear parent?"

"I do not see how that can be. No man can serve two masters. Are the affections so ill balanced that the choice of a companion for life may be left with perfect safety to a third party?"

"It is not a question of affection, Monsieur."

"What is it, then?"

"Have I not been sufficiently explicit? I am not well acquainted with the person to whom I was betrothed. But father is like a drowning man catching at straws. He believes that he will yet see his magnificent dreams realized, though our prospects now may be dark. I am not-free to act."

“Why can you not do as you like? If you will become mine, I have ample means to enable you to go in a style befitting your rank. You will have no title—that is the only difference.”

“Would you have me disobey my only parent, and incur his everlasting displeasure? I could hardly be happy without the friendship of my father.”

“I know not what more to say, then,” answered Bathie, in despondency. “Is there any condition on which you would consent to be mine? Speak plainly. I have been in torturing suspense long enough.”

“You might have ended your suspense by not returning, Monsieur,” she said, looking at him with a dubious expression. “I hardly expected you, after what you said. I informed you distinctly that what you desired could never be. You ask if there is any condition on which I would comply with your request. Have I not intimated that there is?”

“What is it? Let me understand it clearly.”

“Well, then, my father never will give his consent to an alliance with any one below my rank. If you could go to Russia, and become a subject of the Czar, and receive a title from him, I do not believe my father would interpose any objection.”

“That is certainly a wild scheme,” said Bathie, in surprise. “The condition appears to me impossible of achievement. I do not care for rank sufficiently to seek it. But I do not know how to seek it under existing circumstances. Why, your proposal reminds me of the tasks of Hercules. You must remember that the days of magic have passed away. I have no magical ring or lamp, to call up, by the simple process of attrition, some powerful spirit that can remove palaces. Why, surely, you do not mean what you say,” he added, looking

searchingly into her face, to ascertain, by its expression, if she were really in earnest.

"Yes, I do, Monsieur."

"Well, if that is the condition," said Bathie, surprised at her proposition, "I may as well abandon my suit."

"You can do as you please," answered Cara. "I have never encouraged you to persevere."

"I understand, then, that I am again rejected," said Bathie. "If this is your unalterable decision, so be it. I bid you farewell, never more to return."

"Now, Monsieur," said Cara, "do not be rash. Let us not talk about it any more at present; but let us take the subject under advisement for a few days."

To this, Bathie gladly consented, and returned to his uncle's, intending to call again before the expiration of the week.

As soon as Bathie had gone, Mr. Moreing went immediately to the parlor, where Cara was still sitting, engaged in anxious and painful thought.

"Cara," he asked, at once, "did he mention the subject which is so distasteful to me, and I hope to you, also?"

"You mean marriage, Father?"

"Certainly."

"He did."

"And the result was what I had a right to expect?" said Mr. Moreing, interrogatively.

"You expected me to discard him?"

"What else could you do?"

"I could have accepted."

"But you did not, though!" cried the father.

"I did not discard him."

"I can hardly believe my own ears!" exclaimed Mr. Moreing, frowning, and looking at her in the utmost

amazement. "You do not tell me that you have agreed to marry an untitled American plebeian!"

"Do not be too hasty, dear Father. I merely agreed to take the subject under advisement."

"What is the use, Cara, of tantalizing and deceiving the poor fellow in that way? It is wrong to act the coquette. You well know you can never marry him."

"Father," said Cara, timidly, "suppose Capt. Beaumont—for that is his name—could go to Russia and receive a title of rank from the Czar, would it be a *mesalliance*—our union, I mean?"

"Yes, it would; because you cannot elevate common blood by legislation or artificial processes."

"I have heard you talk much about blood," said Cara, slowly, "but I confess I cannot see that there is any natural difference between persons who are equal in talents, education, and, I may add, wealth."

"I am surprised to hear you talk so," said Mr. Moreing, in a tone indicating vexation. "You belong to the Royal family, and have in your veins the blood of a long line of illustrious ancestors. Shall a descendant of Peter the Great degrade herself by marriage with an untitled foreigner? Think about it."

"Do you believe that the blood of kings is different from that of other people? Does not the Scripture say we are all of one blood?"

"Originally, I say yes. But, Cara, it is useless to argue against what is. These distinctions of rank exist in spite of all we can say or do."

"I begin to believe," said Cara, "that they are senseless distinctions."

"It seems," said Mr. Moreing, sternly, "that you are determined to disgrace yourself. It is my duty to try to prevent it. We must leave here at once."

"What for?" she asked, in alarm.

"To cure you of your folly. If you will only separate yourself from Jones, or whatever you call him, you will recover your senses. We must go, at once, unless you are disposed to rebel against my authority. If you choose to do that, you can stay by yourself. I shall not remain to witness your degradation. It is no use to try to argue the question with me. You must now choose between me and Jones. If you see proper to renounce your father's friendship, in order to secure a plebeian husband, you must take the responsibility alone."

"O, Father," said Cara, with tears in her eyes, "how could you be so cruel? Would you really go off, and leave me alone?"

"I will, most certainly," answered Mr. Moreing, with a stubborn firmness that Cara had never before witnessed. "You are so infatuated, that you seem to have lost your very reason. If you will follow my advice, you will be brought to your senses. Decide, for I leave in two hours."

"I cannot bear to part from you, Father. I will go with you, if I have to sacrifice all my own preferences. It may be wrong to put my judgment against yours."

"Now you are talking like yourself," said Mr. Moreing, kindly. "Let us, at once, fly from temptation, child."

Cara said no more; but with a heavy heart she began packing up her wearing apparel. Her pride, and the fear of losing her father, at the moment outweighed her affection for Bathie. But it is hard for a woman to crush out from her heart a love which has molded and controlled her thoughts for years. It was a severe struggle, but it appeared that Pride had gained the victory.

"Where are we going?" asked Cara, while she was making the necessary preparations for their departure.

“To New Orleans.”

At the appointed hour, all three were ready. They were so completely disguised, that Bathie could not have recognized any of them, except Cara. In a moment, they were floating down Linden River in a skiff which Bathie had used, and the cave was left in its natural darkness.



"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Pomp. "Dat am plain 'nuff, ter my comperhension. De geerl wants you ter foller her. In coase, she do."

"What makes you think so?" asked Bathie, who was willing that his own conjectures should be confirmed.

"Wy, sah, whut did she say anything 'bout de ole mask fur, onless she wanted you ter foller? She tole you dat, so's you'd incognize her."

"That is my opinion, too, Uncle Pomp, and I shall follow her to the end of the world."

"In coase, I ar' gwine to comp'ny you?"

"O, yes. Let us go, and start as soon as possible."

Accordingly, Bathie and Pomp started the next morning, and in due time were in the Crescent City. Bathie was without any settled plan of operation, and was vaguely trusting to accident to bring him and Cara once more together.

The next morning after his arrival, followed by Pomp, he stepped into a cigar store, and while he was lighting a Havana, he heard Pomp talking at the door.

"No, thank ye, sah, I ar' much 'bleged to ye; but I doan want ter smoke dis mornin'."

This language was addressed to a huge image of an Indian, standing near the door, holding out a bunch of cigars.

"I hez seed yo' folks of'n in my day," continued Pomp. "Am dar iny ob yo' tribe wid ye in de city?"

As there was no answer, Pomp stepped back a pace or two, and narrowly surveyed the silent Indian, from head to foot.

"Pr'aps yo' doan comperhen' Anglis'? I ken talk Injun some. *Chickamafena*. Does ye onderstan' dat? Whut! yo' doan imprehen' yo' own mudder tongue? But ye need n't ter grin so at my onpronouncin' ob yo'

langwidge. I may hab furgot some on it. But it seems ter me yo' ought ter onderstan' Anglish by dis time, spec'ly ef ye am in de seegaar bizness. How yo' 'spect to carry on bizness wid successerfulness widout speakin' ter folks, spec'ly when dey 'dresses ye civ'ly? Wich tribe does ye b'long ter—de Chicksaws or de Choctaws?"

No answer.

"Bress de Lo'd! I b'leve de ole man's deaf as a mile pos', or am 'shamed ter speak ter a nigger. But I'll gin ye to onderstan' dat I'se a 'specterable inderviduwal. I hez as much 'sperience an' wisderm as ye, ef yo' am got on a red coat an' blue briches. Yo' am drest up very well, but dat am no rezin wy yo' should treat peoples onciv'ly. I doan want none o' yo' seegaars, an' yo' need n't keep pokin' 'em out dat way. How much does ye ax fur de whole bunch, iny way?"

All this talk producing no response, Uncle Pomp walked all around the image, looking at it critically and slowly.

"He am a reg'lar Injun—no mistake 'bout dat, sho'; but I b'lieve de ole feller am deaf an' dum' bof. Ef he am not, he am de mos' onmannerdly Injun ever I seed. But I'll go closer, an' gin 'im anoder trial."

Putting his tremendous mouth close to the Indian's ear, he cried out, in a loud voice—

"Beg' pard'n; but I did n't know yo' ware so hard o' hearin'. How's yo' healthiness?"

Bathie, fearing that Pomp would attract too much attention, went out of the shop, where he had been heartily indulging his risibility, and said—

"What are you doing, Uncle Pomp?"

"I'se tryin' to talk wid dis Injun chief, but not a word ken I git out'n 'im."

When Bathie told Pomp what the Indian was, he looked silly and shamefaced.

"Come to my room," said Bathie.

When they had entered, Pomp said—

"Wal, Mas Baffie, I 'clare I tuck dat ter be a ra'al reg'lar Injun—ha! ha! ha! It ware a sharp chap dat hew'd 'im out."

"Do not act in that way any more," said Bathie, kindly; "but never mind, now. We must begin the business which brought me here."

"Yes, sah. Whut am it ye want me ter do?"

"I do not know; unless you go over the city, and keep your eyes open. You will know Cara, if you see her?"

"Yes, sah, I will, sho'. I'll jes' walk 'bout ober de town, till I fines her."

"Do not stop to talk to the Indians."

"No, sah. I ain't er gwine to do dat foolish thing no mo'. But I doan spose I ar' de fust individuwal dat's bin 'ceived by dat Injun. He's nuff to 'ceive de very electk."

"Do not get lost, either," said Bathie.

"I thinks I hez too much in dis upper cranium fur dat. I hez foun' my way fru' de swomps, whar dare ware no paf. How, den, ar' I gwine ter git loss right in de big road, wid houses on bof sides, an' folks a trampin' day an' night?"

"Yet, if you do not understand the streets, it may puzzle you to find this hotel again."

"Doan be oneasy 'bout dis individuwal," said Pomp, as he went off, shaking his head.

Immediately he struck out boldly into the street, and afterwards went from street to street, as if he were as well acquainted with the geography of New Orleans as the oldest inhabitant. He paid no attention to the men whom he met, but looked closely at the faces of the females. This was his only plan. Thus employed,

Pomp walked, with long and rapid strides, till late in the afternoon, when the pangs of hunger very forcibly reminded him that he had missed his dinner. Presently he muttered—

“T wont do fur dis inner man ter suffer much longer fur de neces’ries ob life. I’ll now take myself back to de hotel, an’ git somefing to rerlieve de onexternal gnawings afo’ I perceeds funder in dis bizness ob lookin’ fur a missin’ ’oman. But de question that now needs ’sideration am, wich am de way ter de hotel. Dese streets ’pears ter be ’zackly all alike,” scratching his head vigorously. “I looked at um, as I walked along, wid all de power ob oculism, in order dat I mout know ’em agin, but I ar’ somehow got mixed up. I shall be onder de neces’ty ob axin’ some un ’bout dat hotel.” As a negro man passed, Pomp cried out—

“Hello! Mister, ef yer please, I’d like ter intain some inf’mation ob ye.”

“What is it?” asked the negro. “I’m in a hurry. Talk as fast as ye can.”

“In coase, I allurz talks as fas’ as de orgin of insperation will allow an’ de carc’mstances ob de case demans. De piece ob intellergince wich I ——”

“I hez no time to fool with you,” interrupted the negro, and walked off, leaving Pomp staring after him in amazement.

“I ’clare,” said Pomp, “dese town niggers hez loss all dar manners. I know’d dat thing o’ freederm ’ud make fools out’n ’em. Dar heads ’ll bust wid de big head. Dey am no mo’ fit fur votin’ an holdin’ office dan a mule. Umph!”

Pomp addressed several more “cullud pussons,” but some laughed at him, and others merely turned their heads, and passed on.

"Wal, dis beats de Jures," cried Pomp, in vexation. "Whut fools niggers am! Umph! But I mus' git out o' dis somehow. O, yes," he suddenly said, "now I hez it. I'll look fur de ole Injun. Ef I ken fine him, I knows whar I ar'."

Again Pomp started off, like a man who was in earnest. With his thoughts centered on the Indian, and his eyes anxiously looking before him, he pressed onward. He walked the remainder of the afternoon, and the sun was disappearing behind the houses. Twilight came on, and Pomp felt foolish. Everybody was in a hurry, and it was useless, he thought, to ask questions. He was beginning to resemble a wild man. What, then, was his surprise and joy when he perceived Bathie coming toward him.

"Wy, bress de Lo'd, Mas Baffie! I—I—I—"

But Pomp did not care to acknowledge that he was lost; so he abruptly broke off—

"But whar am you a gwine?"

"I am going back to the hotel."

"Wal, I'll turn back, an' go wid you," said Pomp, glad that Bathie had not forced him to expose his real situation.

The next day was also spent in fruitless search. Without going into particulars, we will say that a week passed off, and Bathie was beginning to sink into the Slough of Despond. Why did not Cara let him know where she was? How could she let him know? These questions, propounded to himself, caused him to suddenly spring to his feet. He had not inquired for letters at the Post Office. Forthwith he sallied out, and in a short time reached the office. Two letters were handed to him. Bathie opened one, and read—

“MONSIEUR:—We are at —— Hotel. Father is determined that we shall not meet again, if he can prevent it. Can you call to-night, at ten o'clock? I will be in the parlor, and Father will have retired to rest.

“CARA.”

Bathie then opened the other, and read—

“MONSIEUR:—You did not call as I requested. You certainly did not get my note. It is too late now. We start in two hours for New York city. I do not know whether you are following us, or not, and I do not request you to do so. Good-bye. CARA.”

“I have nothing else to do,” said Bathie to himself, “and I will follow her to the ends of the earth, if there is a shadow of hope.”

The cause of the last letter was this: The very day on which it was dated Mr. Moreing hastily entered Cara's room, and, in visible agitation, said—

“Whom do you think I met just now?”

“I have no idea,” said Cara. “Who was it?”

“Old Uncle Pomp.”

“Uncle Pomp!” said Cara, with secret joy.

“Yes; and, of course, Jones is not far off.”

“I do not know, Father,” she said, carelessly.

“You are not corresponding with him?” said Mr. Moreing, looking suspiciously at her.

“I know nothing about his movements whatever,” said Cara, in a tone of such indifference that Mr. Moreing's suspicions in regard to her were at once dispelled.

“I should not be surprised,” said he, “if Jones is following us. We will, therefore, leave here on the first train for New York, if you have no objection.”

“I will do whatever you think best, Father.”



Accordingly, they were, in two hours afterwards, on the train going North.

Bathie, now satisfied that Cara was doing all she could to bring about another meeting, also went, as fast as steam could carry him, to the city of New York.

## CHAPTER LIV.

### THE QUARREL.

“I care not for her ;  
I hold him but a fool that will endanger  
His body for a girl that loves him not.”

A balloon may ascend up into the air with grace and dignity, but the descent is frequently attended with great danger, as is abundantly verified by the sad fate of many aeronauts. So it is with a story. The reader sometimes has his imagination elevated, by thrilling scenes, to the highest point to which it can ascend ; and now it requires all the skill of the novelist to let the imagination back to the earth without jar or disappointment. Sir Walter Scott, in our humble opinion, has seriously marred “Rob Roy,” by its rather abrupt termination. The descent, we think, is too hasty. A dozen pages more would have placed “Rob Roy” beyond the reach of the shafts of criticism.

We have reached a point at which we might bring the history of Cara Paulovitch to as abrupt an end as the author of Waverly did that of Die Vernon. But we must be cautious, and “make haste slowly.”

Arriving in New York, Bathie’s first objective point was the Post Office. He fully expected to receive a note from Cara, giving him the necessary information in regard to her locality. He was most bitterly disappointed, when told that there was nothing for him. After this, all he could do was to wait till he should hear from her ; for to find a person in the surging masses that rolled along the streets of New York, was as impracticable, almost, as to search for a piece of coin dropped in a lake. There is no better hiding place for

a fugitive than a large, crowded city, that swallows all kinds of persons, and affords a more secure retreat than the pathless forest. Mr. Moreing well knew this, and at once took lodging at a private house. Bathie might have spent the remainder of his days in watching for Cara, and it would have been a mere accident if he had met with her. Instead of attempting this, he went to the Post Office day after day. But each day he returned to his hotel in a state of impatience and disappointment. His conjectures as to the young lady's silence culminated in the conclusion that she was not to blame. He had no doubt that she had endeavored to give the desired information. He believed that her father was the person deserving censure. This conclusion of Bathie's was justified by the fact, too. For on the next day after their arrival in the city, Cara wrote a few lines, informing Bathie where she might be found. Mr. Moreing was standing on the street when he saw Rajah approach the iron letter-box, and hastily deposit a missive. Mr. Moreing patiently waited till a person unlocked the box, and took out the contents, and this person he followed till the letters were carried to the office and distributed. He then inquired for letters, giving two names, Jones and Beaumont. Cara's note was delivered to him, which he read, and then he went immediately to Cara's room. He handed her the note, at which she glanced, and, looking at him, said—

“ Well ? ”

“ You are deceiving me, child,” he said, in vexation.

“ You wrote that ? ”

“ I shall not deny it, Father.”

“ What do you mean, Cara ? ”

The lady made no answer, except to burst into tears. Mr. Moreing waited patiently till she became sufficiently tranquil to converse, and then said firmly—

“Cara, we must come to a distinct understanding. I do not like the idea of your practicing deception upon your father. You are of age, and now I want you to say plainly what you intend to do. I am in receipt of the most startling news from Russia. The Nihilists some time since threatened to take the Czar’s life. I would prevent his murder if I could, but I am powerless. I am expecting every day to get the news of his death. As soon as it occurs, we can return in safety, for the Czarovitch is our friend. Now, in view of this, what will you do? If you will marry Jones, I shall return to Russia alone, and I shall disinherit you.”

“Oh, Father! how can you be so cruel?”

“That charge I emphatically deny. I am thinking more of your interest than my own. But I tell you, if you marry that plebeian, I will certainly cast you off.”

“Father,” said Cara, suddenly, “let me manage this affair. Let me see Monsieur once more, if he is in the city.”

“That would be merely laying a trap for yourself,” replied Mr. Moreing, more kindly. “Why do you want to see him?”

“I can hardly give any reason, but I want to see him again.”

“You are no baby, Cara. I have tried to prevent your disgrace. You know what my decision is. Now do as you please. I shall not interfere any more.”

Having said this, Mr. Moreing left the room, and from that day he was true to his word. Cara was thrown into confusion by this course, so totally unexpected. She was under the impression that her father would watch her, and try to prevent a meeting between her and Bathie. But now, since he had left her to do just as she pleased, she hesitated. For a day or two she wavered; but, at last, woman-like, determined to follow

the promptings of her heart. Accordingly, she wrote another note to Bathie, which found its way to the office, and then to Bathie's hands. He lost no time in making his way to her place of abode. Cara did not manifest the cordiality and joy at seeing him which he had been led to expect. She seemed greatly confused, embarrassed, and troubled. After the greeting, Bathie said—

“Why do you look so gloomy?”

“Monsieur, if this meeting had my father's approval, I might appear happier at seeing you; but, as you have every reason to believe, he would have violently opposed this interview, if he had been consulted.”

“You are old enough, I should think,” answered Bathie, concealing his vexation, “to decide for yourself. You have encouraged me to follow you, or I never would have done so. I am not of the class who persist when there is no hope. How much longer am I to be tantalized?”

“Do not be cruel,” she said, deprecatingly. “If you knew all, you would not talk as you do.”

“If it is anything I cannot know,” replied Bathie, “or which you choose I shall not know, I cannot offer you sympathy. I have more than once asked you to give me the right to share your thoughts, and to protect you; but you have put me off from time to time, till disappointment is becoming intolerable. This state of things cannot exist much longer. I ask you now to end my suspense somehow.”

“Do not be too hasty, Monsieur, or you may force me to say something which you will regret.”

“Perhaps you will regret it as much as I. The worst you can do is to reject me. That may shock me at first, but it shall not crush me. I trust I have sufficient manhood to endure the trial.”

Both parties began to warm up in this senseless quarrel, and both were using words whose effects they dreaded. Neither could tell exactly how it had started. All that Bathie could remember was, that Cara had received him rather coldly, and he at once became provoked; and all that Cara could remember was, that Bathie used some sort of cutting words which aroused her anger. Neither, probably, intended that the quarrel should be anything more than what is customary among lovers—a temporary misunderstanding, which would make reconciliation all the sweeter. In answer to Bathie's last remark, Cara, with quivering lip, and with her dark eyes flashing, said—

“No one shall accuse me of any lack of spirit. If you can stand such a trial, I assure you I can. I have always tried to keep the sources of my own happiness under my own control.”

“What am I to understand by that?”

“I give you credit for sufficient capacity to understand the grammar of your own language. I do not know how to make my meaning more comprehensible.”

“Cara,” said Bathie, dropping the prefix.

“You have no right,” she quickly interrupted, “to address me in any such familiar style. I shall not permit it.”

“You reject me, then, do you?”

“It would seem that you are courting rejection,” said Cara.

“No, I am not; but I have been a football for your amusement long enough. I shall entreat no more.”

“If you expect me to entreat,” she rejoined, with considerable warmth, “you will find that you are mistaken.”

“Am I to understand that I am rejected?” asked Bathie, rising.

“You have insulted me,” she exclaimed. “Go, then! Leave me!”

She buried her face in her hands, and Bathie was under the impression that she was weeping. A moment elapsed, and she looked up again, but Bathie, to her surprise, was gone.

It was a foolish meeting, a foolish parting, and both so thought it. Who was to blame? Both. Who felt the consequences? Both. Bathie, under the first impulse of vexation, mortification, disappointment, and jealousy, determined that he would quit the city by the first train, never more to return. In a few hours afterward he and Pomp were rapidly speeding away.

Week after week passed away. Cara believed that Bathie, on reflection, would repent of his folly, return, and offer the necessary apology. But month after month rolled by, and he came not.

One day Bathie said to Pomp—

“I am going to leave this country, to travel. Do you want to go?”

“You am a gwine to furren parts, am you?”

“Yes; that is my meaning.”

“In coase, I ’ar boun’ ter go. No oder inderviduwal ken look arter yo’ baggige like me. But I does wish you an’ dat furren ’oman could ’range matters, an’ settle down at home, an’ quit dis runnin’ bout.”

“But that cannot be, Uncle Pomp.”

“I ’ar mighty sorry, but I s’pose it can’t be he’ped now.”

In the year 1880 Bathie and faithful Uncle Pomp were sailing on the ocean to Europe, where in due course of time we will meet them again, under exciting circumstances.

## CHAPTER LV.

### THE LAST FLIGHT.

“Thinkest thou  
That I could live, and let thee go,  
Who art my life itself?—no—no—.”

In the beginning of the year 1881 the Nihilists were quite active in Russia. Several unsuccessful attempts had been made upon the Czar's life, by his ever-watchful enemies. Active and severe operations commenced in 1878, when a secret organization, called the “National Government,” was formed, which attempted to excite the people to insurrection. General Mezentzoff was killed in August, 1878, and so many others of high rank, in different towns of the Empire, that there was universal alarm. In 1879, 3500 fires broke out in St. Petersburg, nearly all of which were attributed to Nihilist incendiaries. In April of that year an attempt to assassinate the Czar was made by Solovieff, who fired four shots at him, but missed his aim. The would-be assassin was hanged. In November, 1879, an effort was made to blow up the train on which the Emperor was expected to arrive at Moscow; but the effort proved abortive, from a change in the programme—the Czar was not on the train. Even as early as 1867, while he was in Paris, riding in the Bois de Boulogne with Napoleon III, he was fired at. Another attempt was made on his life by a man who entered the imperial apartment in disguise. The fourth attempt was made in the Winter Palace. There was a terrible explosion, which killed several persons, but the Czar again escaped. The monarch was in danger every moment. He knew not

who could be trusted. The world was expecting, every day, to hear the news of his death, and at last the fatal blow was struck. On the afternoon of Sunday, 15th of March, 1881, the Czar was returning from a parade in the Michel manège, when a bomb was thrown beneath the Royal carriage, and exploded, breaking through the back of the vehicle, but without injuring the Czar, who alighted, to examine the extent of the damage. At that moment, a second shell was thrown, which exploded close to his feet, shattering both legs, and otherwise injuring him, so that he died in less than two hours. He was at once succeeded by his son, who assumed the title of Alexander III.

Mr. Moreing had been watching all these thrilling events with the most profound and exciting interest. So certain did he feel that the day of his temporal salvation was drawing near, that he crossed the ocean, and was in Paris at the time of the Czar's assassination. It is but a reasonable and charitable supposition that his emotions were those of mingled joy and sorrow.

As soon as the news of Alexander's death was confirmed, Mr. Moreing, as we shall call him to the last, no longer took any measures to conceal himself. He at once directed a letter to the new Czar, stating where he was, and asking the removal of his disabilities, that he might return and take possession of his estates. With impatience he awaited the reply, and at last the answer came. However, it was not addressed to Mr. Moreing.

One morning, four men, well armed, presented themselves at Mr. Moreing's door, and producing written authority from the new Emperor, ordered him to surrender. Cara was also arrested. Both were charged with complicity in the assassination of the late Czar. Mr. Moreing was perfectly astounded at this startling accusation.

“What are you ordered to do with me?” he asked, with a tremor through his whole body. “Am I not to see the Czar?”

“We must put these on both of you, before we answer any questions,” said one of the men, producing two pairs of handcuffs.

“Oh! my God! my God!” exclaimed Mr. Moreing, looking upward, while the cold perspiration streamed down his face. “Why am I thus treated?”

But it was madness to resist, and he held out his trembling hands to be shackled. Poor Cara looked on as one struck dumb. She spoke not a word till one of the men approached her with the cuffs, which aroused her from her temporary stupor.

“Villain!” she almost shrieked, “how dare you offer me such indignity!”

“It is not me,” replied the man. “I am only acting under orders, and I advise you to submit without putting us to the trouble of employing force.”

“Oh! blessed Lord!” exclaimed Mr. Moreing, now crying like a child, “what has she done to deserve this? Cara, poor child! they can put us to death. Then we will meet where we shall part no more. There is no peace for us in this world. Daughter, make no resistance. Let them fetter you before my eyes! Oh! Father of Mercies! that I should ever live to see this!”

His grief was pitiable.

“What is the charge against us?” asked Mr. Moreing, when the cuffs were secured.

“I don’t know,” replied one of the men. “We arrest you on a ‘government order.’”

“But have you no idea?” asked Mr. Moreing.

“I have no official information,” was the reply, “but I have heard.”

“What is it, then?”

"It is said that you were in correspondence with the Nihilists while you were in America."

"It is a falsehood!" exclaimed Mr. Moreing, manifesting a spirit of indignation.

"Do you deny that you received papers from the Nihilists, while there?"

"They may have sent papers, but I deny corresponding with them in the sense you mean."

"Anyhow, some of them have been arrested, and they acknowledged to the Czar that they kept you posted. The Emperor might, then, very naturally suppose you were in league with his enemies."

"It is not true. I have had nothing to do with the affairs of the Nihilists."

"I know nothing about that," was the rejoinder, "nor am I authorized to try your case. I have my duty to discharge; and I have to inform you that it is a disagreeable duty, too."

"Will I not be permitted to see the Czar, and have an opportunity to vindicate myself?"

"We have no instruction to take you to the Emperor," answered the man.

"Am I not to have a trial, either?"

"They don't have trials by jury now."

"Good Heavens!" cried Mr. Moreing, "am I condemned without a hearing?"

"So it seems. But I have said enough, and too much. Let us be going."

"Going where?" asked Cara, in alarm.

"To prison, for a few hours, and then we'll start for Russia."

"Lead on; we can but obey," said Mr. Moreing.

The party immediately left the hotel. They had advanced but a few paces from the door, when they met Bathie and Pomp. They might have passed without

recognition had not Cara spoken. With wild joy, expressed, however, in a strangely altered voice, which Bathie, nevertheless, knew at once, she said—

“Oh! Monsieur! Monsieur! can you ever forgive me? Do you know me?”

“Heavens above!” cried Bathie, turning back, and walking with the party, “is it possible? Can it be you, Miss Cara?”

“I wish it were only a dream, Monsieur, but it is a horrid reality.”

“I would thank you,” said one of the captors, in the Russian tongue, “if you would not accompany us, and would not converse with my prisoners.”

“The streets are free,” replied Bathie, in the same language, “and I shall go where I please. You have nothing to do with me.”

“I shall report you, sir. You have laid yourself liable to arrest.”

“I defy the Czar and all his minions,” exclaimed Bathie, indignantly. “His abominable government is a foul blot upon the civilization of the age. It is an insult to the nations, and an outrage upon the natural rights of humanity. I am a citizen of the United States, and I demand to know by what authority you have arrested this lady.”

“And I decline to give information about the Czar’s affairs to one who has no right to ask it.”

“You will stop right here, and give the explanation I demand, or I shall have the Nihilists on you in less than half an hour,” said Bathie, with such determination that the men looked at him in astonishment and fear. “You are not in Russia now, and I shall not be trifled with.”

The officer in command seemed to think it would be the wisest and safest way out of the difficulty to comply with the demand.

"What is it you want?" said he.

"I want to talk with this lady a few moments."

"Be quick about it, then, and let us go."

"Miss Cara," said Bathie, in English, "what does this arrest mean?"

She told him, in a few words, all she knew in regard to the affair, and added—

"They will put us to death, or send us to the horrible mines of Siberia for life."

"Not you, surely!" exclaimed Bathie.

"They make no distinctions in Russia. Many a girl of twelve years of age has been sent to Siberia. O, it is a cruel government!"

"Cara," said Bathie, with all his fond affection returning—"but may I call you Cara?"

"It matters not, now, Monsieur, what you call me."

"You remember what occurred in New York," said Bathie; "will you forgive me?"

"Certainly; if there is anything to forgive, I am the one to ask forgiveness."

"Then we are reconciled. I have only one question more. You see that this accursed government of Russia is your enemy. You can never live in your own country, in peace. If I can rescue you, will you fly with me to the United States?"

"I will," she said, in a low tone.

"I will save you, then, or I will lose my life."

"Save my poor father, Monsieur," she said, eagerly; but suddenly checking herself, she continued, "but, it is useless. You can do nothing. You will, in all probability, lose your life without benefiting us. No; go, Monsieur, if you love me. Let us alone. Go back to your own country, and be happy."

"I shall never go back," said Bathie, firmly, "unless you are with me."

“How can I go, and I in chains?”

“God’s curse ought to rest on any government that treats women in this way,” cried Bathie, with the hot blood of indignation mounting to his face. “Only say the word, my dear Cara, and I will bear you off, in the face of these villains. I can do it easily.”

“O, no; that will never do,” she said, with energy, but in a low voice. “Do nothing rash. Take time for reflection.”

“Come,” said the officer, “I think you have talked long enough. Let us go, if you please.”

“Cara, my dearest, let me take you from these villains. If they once put you in those cursed mines, how can I ever even see you again? Now is the time.”

“No, Monsieur, do not attempt it. You may make matters a great deal worse for us; because the Czar may relent. Besides, these four men are not all the enemies you will have to overcome. They would have a little army in pursuit of you in an hour. That will not do, Monsieur.”

“What must I do, then?”

“I will tell you,” said Cara. “Disguise yourself, and follow us, and I will try to find means of escape. Keep as near us as you can with safety.”

“Go on,” said Bathie, to the officer, “I have nothing more to say.”

Accordingly, the party again moved forward. Bathie went along the street, in the opposite direction, for a short distance, then suddenly turning, followed on, keeping the captives in sight. After awhile they stopped in front of a prison, the door of which was soon opened, and the party entered. Bathie’s feelings of indignation, together with his love for the fair but unfortunate Cara, aroused him to desperation. In his heart fresh hatred was excited for the despotic government of Russia, which could

arrest delicate and refined females on suspicion, and cast them, like felons, into loathsome prisons. Yet hundreds had been treated in this way, some of them being mere school girls, snatched from their homes without warning, and hurried into Siberian exile. Under these circumstances, Bathie expressed the heartfelt wish that the Nihilistic movement might be blessed with a full measure of success. At the same time, he thanked God that he was a citizen of the United States, the land of the free and the home of the brave. There is no comparison, he thought, between the two governments. One is light, the other is darkness. One is the exponent of the highest political conditions to which man can attain; the other is an exemplification of barbaric despotism. O, what a splendid heritage is the government of these United States, with her glorious, free, democratic institutions! God bless the Union! *Esto perpetua!*

But Bathie had now to turn his attention to a subject nearer his heart. How was *his Cara* to be saved? Was it possible that his *second* love must be buried in the grave? ~~He would rescue her, or he would lose his life.~~ And having thus made up his mind, he thought no more of personal danger.

Fortunately for Bathie, many Nihilists were flying for life, from Russia, into other countries, and he had formed an acquaintance with several of them in Paris. After stationing Pomp at the jail, to take observations, he hunted up his Nihilist friends, and acquainted them with the situation.

"It is useless," said one of them, "to attempt the rescue here, because we would have to fight the French government. My advice is, wait till they start to Russia with the prisoners, and attempt the rescue on the way."

After some discussion this opinion finally prevailed.

The Nihilists agreed to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's notice. Then Bathie and two others disguised themselves, and returned to the jail, or rather to a spot near it, where they could observe without attracting particular attention. At night they drew near to the doors, determined that the prisoners should not be spirited away under cover of darkness. They need not, however, have put themselves to the trouble of watching the jail, if they had only known the programme of the captors. For the next day it appeared that they had no intention of acting in secret. It was known early the next morning that they would start to Russia under a strong escort of French soldiers. It is reasonable to suppose that Bathie's threat in the street, when he forcibly detained the four men, had suggested to them the propriety of applying to the French government for protection, which was readily afforded, as the civilized world was horrified at the assassination of Alexander I.

The announcement that a distinguished Nihilist and his beautiful daughter would be escorted from the city, brought a great many curious people to the prison, to see them start. It also gave Bathie and his friends time to make preparations to follow. They boldly disguised themselves in the garb of Russian officers and soldiers. This idea was suggested by seeing a number of uniforms exposed for sale in a second-hand clothing store, which had been taken by the Turks from Russian soldiers in the war of 1877, and were sold to French traders. It was a bold game; but Bathie, who cared nothing for personal danger, determined to play it. There were six in his company, besides Pomp, who went along as servant.

That evening Mr. Moreing and his daughter were brought forth, and placed in a carriage. Fifty soldiers

marched in front, and fifty in the rear. Bathie and his little company followed at a respectful distance.

No event occurred on the route worthy of narration. The parties traveled on, day after day, till at last they reached the frontier of the Russian empire, and here they were met by a company of Russian soldiers, who took charge of the prisoners.

After this they traveled on for many long and weary days, till they came to the confines of Siberia; and then Bathie had no doubt in regard to the sort of punishment poor Cara would have to undergo.

At length, one day, the carriage stopped; and how Bathie's heart sank, when he saw Cara and her father descend into the darkness of the mine! How could he ever hope to reach her in such a place? But Bathie was not the man to shrink from anything which he undertook. So he stayed as close to the mine as he could, without exciting suspicion, devising schemes. Fortunately, he appeared to the keepers of the mine as an officer of the Russian army, and he was not molested. Several weeks had passed away, and he had had no opportunity of communicating with Cara.

One day a corpse was brought up from the depths, and Bathie, on drawing near, recognized the pale emaciated features of poor old Mr. Moreing. He had sunk under the infirmities of age and the weight of his grievous misfortunes, and Cara was alone.

Bathie was deeply affected, but it was necessary to conceal his emotions. He felt that he must act at once, or Cara would soon be beyond all rescue by man. With an assumed indifference he said to the keeper—

“This man had a daughter in the mine?”

“Yes.”

“What is her condition?”

"She is fading away," replied the keeper, "and must soon go as he did," pointing to the corpse.

"Could not an effort be made," asked Bathie, "to procure a mitigation of her sentence?"

"I do not know," said the keeper. "Her sentence is for life. Yet, if she had friends, something might be done."

Bathie turned away, sick at heart, and went to his quarters to consult with his friends, whom he had hired to remain with him.

"She must be out of that mine in twenty-four hours," he said. "The crisis is here. I have determined upon a *coup d'état*, which will be followed by success or bloodshed."

Bathie then explained his plan, which was bold, but simple. The next day he presented himself before the keeper, with a paper in his hand, and said—

"I have just received an order for the removal of that lady we were talking about yesterday. It seems that her friends have been at work."

The keeper read the order, looked at Bathie, and shaking his head, said—

"It has no seal."

"Let me see," said Bathie. "Why, sure enough, it has not."

"You will have to return it, and get the seal affixed," said the keeper.

"Why the probability is," said Bathie, carelessly, "the woman will be dead before that can be done. It is a pity that should be, on account of a little informality. I will tell you what. You see I am directed to remove her to —, which is healthier, and the work of a different character. Suppose I take her there, and return the order to receive the seal. I am an officer, and will be responsible for her safe-keeping."

If the reader knows in what estimation and reverence a Russian officer is held by all subordinates, he will not be at all surprised that the keeper accepted this proposition without hesitation. Bathie was dressed in a Colonel's uniform.

"Very well," said the keeper. "I will deliver her up to you. When do you want her?"

"Immediately. I have brought a carriage to remove her, as I did not anticipate any difficulty."

Accordingly, the keeper went down into the mine, and in a short time returned, accompanied by Cara, who was at once placed in the carriage. As Bathie, who had kept his face concealed from her, got in, and sat by her, he whispered—

"For your life, do not speak."

The vehicle drove off, and not a word was spoken for half an hour. Then Bathie turned his face toward her.

"Cara!"

She turned her lustrous black eyes upon his face, and said—

"Oh! Monsieur! God bless you!"

In a moment she was in his arms, and was weeping upon his breast.

"Cara, my own darling, you are safe. No earthly power shall ever separate us. You are now mine."

"I am," she answered, in tones which thrilled Bathie's whole being. "You have saved me, and I belong to you."

"Is it from gratitude you say this?"

"Not a particle of gratitude, as you mean it. You know I have loved you for years. Your God shall be my God, and your people shall be my people. But are we safe?"

"I apprehend no danger for the next month, and by that time we will be beyond the reach of your persecutors."

"The Lord be praised!" And again she wept tears of joy and sorrow.

"Oh, if my poor father were only alive, and with us, I could be so happy."

"He is better off, dearest," said Bathie, trying to console her. "If he had lived, and made his escape, he would have dragged out his few days of existence in grief and disappointment. The Lord knows best."

"And God's will be done," she said.

"It shall be the aim of my life," said Bathie, "to make you happy. When we get to the United States we will have a beautiful home, and spend our days in peace. We have both led sorrowful lives, but I trust there is much unalloyed felicity in store for us yet."

"You can scarcely imagine," said she, "what I have suffered in that horrid mine."

"My poor darling!" said Bathie, as a tear stole down his cheek, "your face tells the story of hardship, suffering and anguish. And they had these delicate hands at work, did they!"

"Yes; and from morning till night."

"Well, never mind, darling; you shall see the difference between the meanest and the best governments in the world—that of Russia and that of the United States."

Little more remains to be told. Bathie and Cara made their way, without difficulty, to the heaven-favored country—the United States, and are, at the present writing, living in a beautiful and elegant home, on the banks of one of the prettiest rivers in the South. They go very little into society, but are contented with the pleasures of home.

Uncle Pomp is with them—a hale, hearty old man.

Langdon is yet at Baalbek. He is a bachelor, but a cheerful Christian; yet there is a tinge of sadness in his expression, and in the tones of his voice.

Of any other parties mentioned in this story we can give no account. Like thousands of their fellow-beings they have disappeared in the rolling and tossing ocean of humanity, which resembles the Atlantic or Pacific, in that it is never still.

In conclusion, the Author indulges the fond hope that the Reader has not gone through these pages without moral benefit.