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ONE SHILLING & SIXPENCE

SENSATION

TRIALS

CHIEFLY IN HIGH LIFE

AND
CAUSES CÉLÈBRES.

MURRAY & C^o. 13, PATERNOSTER ROW.

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SENSATION TRIALS,

OR

CAUSES CÉLÈBRES

(CHIEFLY IN HIGH LIFE),

&c., &c.

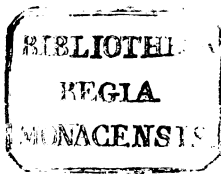
BY CIVILIAN.

“The more conspicuous in the social clan,
The more degraded by the felon’s ban.”

IMITATION.

LONDON:
MURRAY & CO., 13 PATERNOSTER ROW.
1865.

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PREFACE.

IN the exhibition of their Penal Code, there can be little doubt but that our forefathers erred on the side of very great severity; for instance, to steal a sheep, was a capital offence. The doom of such malefactor was DEATH. The like punishment awaited the crime of forgery, &c. All this was wrong; there is no warrant for it in Divine law, and this being so, man, with a finite intelligence, had clearly no right, for any guilt short of murder, to take on himself to administer indefinite retribution.

By a species of national recoil or revulsion of moral feeling, we have, it seems to me, glaringly drifted into the opposite extreme. Suppose an atrocious murder to have been committed: society, it is true, bewails the homicide's victim; but its tears, when the convict is sentenced, are yet more abundantly shed for the homicide himself!

Detected Cain (when hovering on the awful confines of another world), with all the guilt of blood upon his head, obtains—strange be

▲

it spoken—more sympathy than awaits the memory of immolated Abel. Not a few men entertain a vague feeling, something very like a sentiment of regret,—as it were (what I cannot translate) a *desiderium capitis*,—when the more than ordinarily foul perpetrator of a vile murder is most righteously condemned to the gallows. They would save him if they could.

Ere the time of trial, society half forgets the victim; that victim may have been, like one of Homer's characters, a man of blameless life, and the sole prop of his family; he may have been hurled by some roving thief,—who, forsooth, men (as a forlorn hope) argue did not meditate murder, but merely robbery with violence!—into the presence of his Maker. Yet days glide on; an interval, more or less long, very properly elapses between the crime and the trial of the criminal. As in Townley's case, the dark deed is a nine days' wonder. The English world deplored the fate of his young victim; but on the day of the arraignment the homicide had his turn of pity. His able advocate knew how to awaken the sympathies of a not unforgiving audience. As he proceeded in fervid periods of glowing eloquence and

forensic declamation, men appeared to be comparatively oblivious of the bitter and bloody fate of that poor girl, doomed to death in the lonely wood, by a most vindictive and, in this case certainly, predetermined assassin. They half ignored the dance of a violent death upon that pure threshold of early life. Forgetting the inevitable scripture, "Whoso sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," men are over merciful; they behold another life trembling in the balance, so a moiety of England, or, if not a moiety, still a very large section of it, are not unwilling to strain "the quality of mercy," to save that life. Their mental argument would seem to be, the homicide's victim is gone beyond recall—shall we therefore sacrifice this man in cold blood? Shall we hurl him, with this gigantic sin upon his head, into the presence of eternal Judgment? Shall not we rather let him live out his three-score years and ten in sorrow and penitence, and so, it may be, repent and be forgiven? But punishments are not framed on a vindictive code of deliberate barbarity; they are simply intended to be *deterrent*. In a case of murder, what adequate retribution except death can be awarded? Surely your homi-

cide, guilty of murder by "malice aforethought," could not, after a few years of assumed good conduct, armed by a chaplain's certificate, be let loose upon us, to walk abroad—an emancipated Cain—without a brand on his brow, by which the sons of men should know him! Would you incarcerate him in a moral tomb, a human heir-loom, consecrated to darkness and solitary confinement? Would you let him vegetate all his life, without the light of a human countenance? Would you immure him within stone walls, through which, at intervals, he might hear the voice of the priest or his warder, but never see their faces? Or would you, sparing the mind, degrade the body by periodical lashings? Either of these courses would revolt society. In the case of robberies with violence, it is true, flogging has been found to be absolutely necessary as a preventive. The cowardly bully or athlete of the "Guilt Gardens" cared very little about a little temporary imprisonment when he might live (as compared with Lazarus) on the fat of the land. But his brutal nature was keenly sensitive to the lash; and so these *garotte* attacks are comparatively arrested. But stripes are not an antidote for murder. Take

away the fear, or rather possibility, of death—judicial death—and what life would be secure?

Nothing, again, in cases of wilful homicide, can be more unsatisfactory than the present *uncertainty* attending the carrying out the last penalty of the law. The assassin is tried before a jury, found guilty, and the judge endorses the verdict. Scarcely, however, is the sentence pronounced, ere the public out of doors constitutes itself into a roving commission to try him over again. Judæus Apella is for once incredulous. He picks up waifs and strays of extenuating gossip—scraps of facts which are not only not evidence, but which will not bear any strict inquiry. Cain is from day to day arraigned before a many-headed, irregular, and most illogical tribunal—men who talk so long about the convict's innocency that they would verily almost doubt the evidence of their senses. His wealthy friends, as in Palmer's case, or a powerful national confederation, in that of Müller, provide the sinews of war. Lawyers rush about in cabs, and the Press is made the vehicle of ingenious theories and unsatisfactory deductions. Meanwhile, the convict is buoyed up

with the hope of a reprieve—aware of the efforts made on his behalf, his mind is unsettled—he keeps protesting his innocence, and goes almost into the presence of his Maker with a lie upon his lips! Given, after much doubt and immense pains, a conviction; supposing, again, the judge or judges to most perfectly acquiesce in the verdict; supposing these men, trained for a generation of time to weigh evidence—who have intently watched every phase of the trial—who have rigidly scrutinized the demeanour of the witnesses, their bearing under the ordeal of cross-examination; supposing they go the length (after the verdict of *guilty* is recorded) of saying they are singly and severally as satisfied of the prisoner's guilt as if they had seen *with their own eyes** the felon commit the murder; still, despite of this, there is a last appeal to what, by a sort of national figure of speech, is termed the "clemency of the Crown." Now, Serjeant Parry very forcibly put it to the jury in a recent celebrated case, that they held an exceptional and almost "transcendent power." To some

* A form of expression more than one judge has of late years adopted.

extent this is so, but not altogether. Beyond this "transcendent power"—beyond the powerful array of painstaking judges, eloquent and impartial—over-riding the conviction of the jury, the feeling of the public and the concatenation of facts inexorably tending to one conclusion—beyond the feeling of the Press and the moral certainty entertained by the reflecting portion of mankind—there is still another court of appeal, a supreme bureau of *cassation*, in which the *ipse dixit* of one Secretary of State wielding an important office, with an Atlas-load of other work on his shoulders,—an able and powerful-minded man, but, maybe, with no more legal education than belongs (Junius tells us) to every English gentleman,—one who has not *heard* the trial, nor witnessed the bearing of the criminal, nor tested by ocular observation the evidence of witnesses; but who has no doubt carefully perused the judge's notes, and who, after all, derives his light and inspiration from that judge's personal impressions. Still, this one man, subject only to the voice of public opinion, wields the terrific power of life and death over every convicted murderer in these dominions!

We have been told somewhat cynically to believe nothing we hear, and only half we see. In cases of murder, it is very clear there is a class of persons to whom seeing is *not* believing; who grope and flounder so long about,—*doubting* even longer than Lord Eldon,—till I verily believe, if they had *seen* Cain murder Abel, they would persuade themselves that the evidence of their own eyes was a 'dream' or illusion! Better indeed (till his confession), for instance, to deny even ocular proof and the common sense of your understanding, than not to believe in the reiterated innocence of Müller!

Nemo repente fuit turpissimus,

So why not reprieve him, without "an alibi clock," on the mere ground of his previous good character? The Satiristsaid:—

Hispida membra quidem et duræ per brachia setæ,
Promittunt atrocem animum.

Is not the *converse* equally true? Could such an insignificant *physique* and mild demeanour argue a man guilty of one of the most atrocious murders of our times?

Stern as some of our judges are, there are others who cannot curb the exuberance of their overflowing pity. They expressly decline to identify themselves with the law—

they inform the prisoner that they are mere ministers of an Act of Parliament, and interpreters of a code of justice. Resulting from all this, it appears to me, overwrought sensitiveness—this, as it were, exaggerated criminal philanthropy, we have come to such a pass, that no equally civilized country is tarnished by viler murders or disfigured by more social crimes than the England of the present time. In the face of all this it is plain that fear of punishment—punishment sharp and inevitable—is the sole barrier we possess against offences waged by the militant corps of guilt—offences whether they be the murders of our Palmer-worms, the burglaries of what S.G.O. terms the “guilt gardens,” or the felonious manipulations of Roupell, *et hoc genus omne*.

Oderunt peccare mali formidine pœnæ.

But remove this fear, which in my humble opinion the philanthropists do to much too great an extent, leaving thereby the offshoots of these “guilt gardens” the chance of what they are prone to think a brilliant career of undetected war against society for a longer or shorter period—a civil war, in which, when (it is a mere

question of time) they are taken prisoners, they are reserved simply as hostages; when they are over tenderly cared for, educated, warmed, fed, and in every respect, (except the loss of liberty, and they gain something by this loss,) better kept than the sons of honest labour. When a whining gait, and a crafty affectation of lip-salve repentance is nearly sure to gain the facile ears, of the powers that be; leading, thereby, in the rich man's case,—and I grant that *there* confinement and want of liberty is torture,—to his being restored to the bosom of his family, and in the case of a scion of the “guilt gardens” to a position of renewed guerilla warfare with his previous captors. Hence, with all this melodramatic sympathy for murderers, with all this *dolce far niente* of well-warmed and ventilated prison-houses with their regular meals and airy dormitories, not to say prison hero-worship,* how can we

* *Apropos* of this, I find the following extract in a highly-respectable Dorset paper:—

WILLIAM ROUPELL, THE CONVICT.

“A paragraph went the round of the newspapers a short time ago, concerning the honours paid in Australia to Robson and other convicts by their fellow prisoners. It is remarkable that the same spirit manifests itself at Portland towards Mr. Roupell, the late member for Lambeth. Roupell some time ago was sent from Millbank Prison to the works at Portland; and his uniform good

wonder that crime, despite an increased education, prevails to such a lamentable extent?

Side by side with the more vulgar crime of the "guilt gardens," we have most astounding revelations of guilt in high places.

conduct in prison entitled him to receive, as early as the convict regulations allowed, a first-class certificate, with its attendant privileges. But Roupell is set to the usual task work on the fortifications. He tells, however, his friends who visit him that his fellow-workmen, whenever they have got a chance, are eager to help him to get through his task in order that he may leave work before them on the days on which visitors are allowed among the convicts. Roupell is to be seen as neat in person, in his prison garb, as he used to be while he was a member of the House of Commons. On the men breaking off work for the day, a number of pails of water and napkins are placed for them, with which they are to wash and clean themselves; and two or three prisoners use a pail among them; but however pressed they may be for time, they set aside one of the pails, declining to use it until Roupell has washed in it, and they always reserve for him a clean napkin. Many of Roupell's old friends go down at stated times from London to see him, and they describe him to wear the same cheerful, serious look which marked him in the House. He never speaks to them of the past, but discusses the questions of the day, showing still the master passion for politics."—*Sherborne Journal*.

N.B.—A translation or paraphrase of the Latin, &c., will be given in an Appendix.

GENERAL REMARKS ON CRIME.

CHAPTER I.

WHETHER or no Carlyle's definition of "Latter Days" be a proper one to denote the epoch at which we live upon "this best possible" earth, or whether—*pace*, Dr. Cumming—the world be yet in the mere vigour of its meridian manhood, I think no one can but admit that these are extraordinary times—extraordinary not only in the lights of intellect, art, and science, which embellish and adorn civilization, but even still more remarkable in the development of crime—which would seem, in my idea, to be the result of a curious ultra-sumptuary code of social morality. More readily than at any previous period of the world, men pardon and forget all things. You can "live down" almost anything, IMPECUNIOSITY excepted. And so we have, for good or evil, a stupen-

dous system of speculative adventure manifesting itself in our marts of commerce. We have the dazzling *prestige* of immense successes, counterbalanced by equally disastrous failure. We adulate luxury, glorified by honest triumph; but at the same time we too frequently bow the knee to the same successful Baal when the rise and progress of the altar is, to say the least, questionable! Who, for instance, too closely scrutinizes the antecedents of ostentatious magnificence? The "*oportet habere*" is realized—what more would you have? To have succeeded (our wise men aver) is the grand touchstone. It is the practical solution of the world's mystery, the one valuable Eureka, of modern, if not "proverbial," philosophy.*

Extremes meet. Never since the good old times when our Horatian friend Plancus was consul, was there more magnificent extravagance in those modern Capuæ—Mayfair or Brighton—never more abject, remorseless, gnawing misery, and its twin Achates, festering iniquity, in our eastern "guilt gardens."† The march of crime and

* See Victor Hugo's wonderful apostrophe to "success"—quoted from "*Les Misérables*," hereinafter.

† I speak here of a socially degraded, and not a starving, populace. Men do not pine for material hunger,

its grim and inevitable attendant, pauperism, has kept even terms with the efflorescence of pomp and luxury. No little leaven has corrupted a huge mass. Emerging, so to speak, from the average groove of criminal notoriety—from the brazen brows, low foreheads, and rank and file of police courts and the prison yard, men of vastly superior education have stood forth as supreme or very dangerous culprits, in the war against society.

A Rugeley surgeon has exchanged (profitably for awhile) the art of healing for that of poisoning. Bankers have not been content with the large but legitimate gains of a commerce that has made many of them rich among our merchant princes; but over-trading and over-spending, instead of facing the fate they have incurred by adverse circumstances, they have cast probity to the winds, and in lieu of striving to redeem their

as they did in Paris when a foolish queen wondered "the reason why," if pauperdom could not procure bread, it did not buy buns! But, reader, I refer to that portion of a London mob whom you may see or read of at (say) Müller's execution—vile, degraded, and such as (Macaulay says) in large cities, "hangs on the skirts of revolution." It was the "guilt gardens" that wished for a Charter, or rather the sacking of the shops, one certain 10th of April. I commend this to Lord Amberley's attention.

position by integrity and industry, have carried on Sybaritish establishments with the principal of their customers. And these sinister occurrences coming, if not "in battalions," still less "not singly," have entailed for a time a very general want of confidence; they have sown broadcast, far and near, the seeds of misery; and, in many cases, the result of that planting, has been absolute ruin.

Lawyers, interpreters of a species of black art unknown for the most part to the laity, have abused their trust, and converted the abstruse and complex science of which they should have been the honest expositors, to their own proper benefit.

The Bar has furnished at least one amazing scandal, and witnessed the startling collapse of a great forensic luminary.

Nay, mounting still higher the social ladder, Parliament has turned out into the sterile pastures of the Chiltern Hundreds, to the tune of the Rogue's March, more than one broken pillar of the Constitution, that has enfeebled by its support the sacred hearth of the British Senate, and disgraced the vestibule of the best club in Europe. Of course, the members of the painted chamber and country gentlemen with "old blood in their

veins" (as Macaulay mentions) and some real belongings, have not exhibited themselves in the light, or rather the darkness, of knaves, and thus rendered themselves amenable to criminal jurisprudence; but it is too plain a fact that, treading on the skirts of these—aping their betters in a truly cringing courtier-like, or Simian fashion, are men,—Anglo-Bohemians, as it were,—who consider it to be their peculiar wisdom to be rich "at any price." These social Pariahs audaciously assume the airs and deportment of wealth, and strut along, peacock-like, in their pilfered plumage, till they are found out, dishonoured, and degraded. They spring up, mere fungi, from an inodorous soil, and perish for the most part just as rapidly. Who will say that the past fifteen years have not out-Heroded all other similar cycles in the fearful expansion of crime? Crime, too, not only manifesting itself in the festering hotbeds of the eastern guilt gardens, but springing up in zymotic fashion among the apparently highly placed—men who kept (as the saying goes) bankers, owned, or had the semblance of owning, their "places" in the country and their mansions in town—supercilious arbiters of elegance, who would have thought the

world even nearer its end than Dr. Cumming thinks it, if their families were seen in Bondstreet between August and Easter.

● * * *

These few ensuing pages are intended to exhibit in a sort of retrospective group not a few representatives of modern guilt. With one exception—that of Catherine Wilson (and Müller's case from the political element latterly imported into it)—they are all personages of superior instruction. Men whose talent might have carried them, especially in these days of enterprise, very far in almost any field of honourable exertion, but whose subsequent fall must have been like that of Lucifer. What for instance must be Roupell's lucubrations at Portland, cogitating on "what he is, and what he might have been." *

After all, it strikes me, there are quite as many or rather many more *undetected* lepers among us, but happily for them, though equally unhappily for society, "a blot is not a blot until it is hit;" such is the adage, and it is clearly consonant with truth.

* This would seem to bear out Napoleon's saying, "la force cède aux qualités civiles," and extend it even to criminal hero-worship. William Roupell may surely say, "*Flectere si nequeo Superos, Acheronta movebo*"!

There are who say, "murder will out," as in Eugene Aram's case. But does any serious observer believe that every Cain, Palmer, Wilson, Dove, or Borgia, or a tithe of them, because Aram did, meets his doom in this world? The assassin of little Kent (the Road murder) for instance: a very able journal observes, "Is the murderer of John Saville Kent breathing the air of decent society?" Does, I may further inquire, he, she, or do they—accomplices before or after the fact—listen, forgetting that night's domestic tragedy, from a stall at the opera to the thrilling strains—the meretricious blandishments of "La Traviata"? Does he, she, or do they smile *sub rosâ* in their sleeve at the faulty revelations of detectives, and at the blundering defects in their sagacity therein displayed?

* * * *

Alas, there are more works of darkness carried out successfully, as far as present aims go, than are "dreamt of in our philosophy," although some few have pointed a moral and adorned a tale by their ghastly exodus from life on the scaffold, or by their almost entire social eclipse—*les voici*, to speak for themselves. Pilloried in the pages of the

Press, our homicides occupy a gloomy niche in the temple of enduring infamy; passing from life by a violent death, they are chronicled among those dead alike dishonoured by all nations. And for our lesser sinners—grand however in their proportions and startling in their sphere—we regard them like broken idols found in the ruins of a Pagan shrine; we only wonder at the gullibility of the dupes who trusted them, just as we marvel how intelligent men could have cried, “Great is Diana of the Ephesians;” or that the Egyptians should have worshipped cabbages instead of eating them.

“Felix nimirum quibus nascuntur in hortis
Numina.”

A MODERN AND MODEL BANK.

A SKETCH.

“Cursed be the Bank of England notes, that tempt the
soul to sin,
Cursed be the want of acres—doubly cursed the want
of tin.”

BOOK OF BALLADS.

“— et digito mendicat Pollio nudo.”*—JUVENAL.

“Implentur veteris Bacchi, pinguisque ferinæ.”

VIRGIL.

“Loaves and fishes.”

CHAPTER II.

How well I remember (many people thought it the *avant-courier* of the end of the world) the downfall of a famous bank not a hundred miles from a leading thoroughfare. It was, I think, in point of time, one of the first of those, so to speak, sensation thunderstorms (criminal and civil) that subsequently burst with such violence and rapidity upon the commercial world. It heralded many other catastrophes, and was the forerunner of bankruptcy and lofty back-sliding on a grand scale—the financial crisis,

* Perhaps, however, prisoners wear rings or kid gloves in Newgate? It seems they peruse “Silvio Pellico,” and gloat over “Gil Blas” in Pentonville!!!! (See Townley’s case).

sooner or later the inevitable result of absolute pauperdom, and drained and over-drawn coffers—that swept away in a monstrous fiscal maëlstrom the long tottering edifice, was not altogether unforeseen by the wise men of the East who occupy their daily business in the regions of Capel Court, Cornhill, and Lombard Street. Eastward-ho the great bankers' autographs would not have been negotiated on the easy terms graciously accorded to what the City articles of our daily journals call "first-class paper." The questionable if not perilous situation of the about to be stranded bank, was in a measure foreseen, and what they call in City parlance, duly "discounted."

Westward-ho, however, the plausible partners succeeded in suppressing (among their customers and others) every murmur of this ultra-Temple Bar scandal. So much so that a great lady novelist, and woman of the world, potent in word-painting, is said to have devoted many pages in one of her fascinating works to the delineation of the head of this (unfavourably) famous firm. The world followed suit, and hailed this sleek Tartuffe as the Phoenix of bankers, and the very best of honest and good men! What monstrous

probity on the one side! what marvellous faith on the other! To borrow a metaphor from a recent metrical exposition in the *Times*, what a grim Pike, what egregiously transparent (yet, after all, how could they suspect the man?) gudgeons! What ravenous wolves in sheep's clothing, and what come-and-eat-me lambs! No one felt so secure as large balance-having-Dives that his hoarded argosies and securities for value were as safe as though immured in the sacred coffers of the Bank of England. Apparently the capital and social standing of the eminent firm was equalled if not surpassed by its members' personal expenses, and by their expansive philanthropy. But, then, we always expect bankers to be rich. Who ever heard of a poor Quaker, a (*soi-disant*) pauper banker, or a fishmonger, who told his customers he retailed musty turbot? So from his abundant hoards,

“dulce est magno tollere acervo.”

Our capitalist was so good—so vastly beneficent—always overflowing with charitable notions and the milk of human benevolence, winning as it afterwards turned out such world-wide fame by the largesse of other people's money! How the arch-banker must

have gloated, *imo pectore*, on this profitable (by proxy) charity! What matter to him whether when his well-known and munificent name appeared as a great donor—in printer's ink—whether the donation was abstracted from the account of large balance-having-Dives, or some poor widow, who, with a family to support, reposed such implicit faith in this admirable Crichton of money spinners? How kind it was in him to take care of her money? Let us hope his feelings became hardened by degrees, and it was long ere the bland, portly, pious, nay almost holy man, was absolutely indifferent to the consequences—whether she whose olive branches pined or rotted in the union or the gutter—so that he who condescended to take care of other people's money (how benevolent it was of him!) might quaff his old port or feast on his venison, and figure as the subscriber of twice as much as an honest nobleman with indisputable revenues. Do we not always notice that the gentleman-but-virtual pauper, in your neighbourhood, the man who as a rule sometimes pays you before your money is due (a mere prelude to at last not paying at all), who is painfully irregular in the discharge of his weekly bills—do

you not observe (*Hunc Tu Romane caveto*) that this fellow will give twice as good a Christmas box as a real Dives, in order (such is his wisdom) to draw a doubtful cheer from Lazarus? Be just before you are generous, and avoid the policy of the unjust steward. Ah! what a wily fisherman of men the great banker (practice makes perfect) became—using Charity as a stalking-horse—just as Cromwell (according to Voltaire*) made his way with the Bible in one hand and the sword in the other, the banker preserved the even tenor of his way—advancing with speculation on the one side and philanthropy on the other. Oh, financial hypocrite, with your prodigious phylacteries and most costly broadcloth, how you must have smiled at being servilely kotooed to your very heart's content. Did your ears never tingle at this gross flattery? Or, was the incense of this grovelling idolatry for ever grateful to your nostrils? Did you not laugh in your sleeve, or it may be shiver, *surgit amari aliquid*, when descending slowly from your well-hung chariot leaning on the arm of your powdered, broad-shouldered, and obsequious lacquey? Did you never think of Judas, surnamed

* Siecle de Louis XIV.

Iscaiot, when seated at one of those grand dinners with good men at your table—that magnificent mahogany groaning with plate and viands served by sons of Anak in the costume, or uniform, or cloth of pampered menials, and where you complacently prated of your bewitching Burgundy, or gracefully sniffed the *bouquet* of your Lafitte, or recommended, *risu sardonico*, that matchless pine, cutting it with those white undulating digits? Did you never think in church, where like Oily Gammon and William Palmer, you used to go? Did your mind never wander there, for instance, from the decalogue to your victims? I do not know if you were classic enough to have read or heard of the sword of Damocles—or had your heart become as hard and as evil as your digestion was good, and was this (as the Frenchman said) your happiness? Did you never think of the “inevitable hour” when you would in a social pillory figure as the “observed of all observers,” no longer heading an alms list—a modern and model Mæcenas of the poor—but the downcast and sorry denizen, the evicted weazel of a criminal dock, a jackdaw among gaol-birds upon your deliverance; a living theme of dazzling degradation on

whom glowing counsel might flush their forensic eloquence, a half-captured quarry whom attorneys would hunt down with Cuban perseverance, and finally, if not a Cumming, were you not prophet enough to cast your own horoscope? Could you not foresee the day when a grave judge—maybe in your recent palmy days a taster of your Burgundy and panegyrist of your pines—would feel it his duty to sentence you to that doom, which, to the lasting honour of this country, awaits every convicted malefactor, whether he be a Lazarus in rags, who has filched a loaf to stave off his hunger, or whether he be a magnificent banker, clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring never so sumptuously every day, but who has manipulated bank vouchers, and, by betraying his stewardship, been, while it lasted, great upon the earth.

* * * *

You, like other well-nurtured sinners, in these our days, have passed through an ordeal, truly, justly, properly, terrible to men of mind, position and education. If you are spared to arrive at the "*una senum facies*," the epoch of old age, you can never be "*Laudator temporis acti*." It is to be hoped

you are come forth from the burning, fiery furnace, a "sadder, wiser and better man." "One man in his time plays many parts." *Certes* you have done so. If, on the one hand, you have revelled in the pomp of luxury, you have, on the other hand, been the unwilling sharer of the common room of gaols. The *Liberté fraternité et égalité* of promiscuous crime : its hail-well-caught-good fellowship of licentious language, the frightful slang of the prison-house, is no secret to you. Law is no respecter of prisons or personages. You have been "*unus a multis*" with pilfering caricatures of womankind, and flash cracksmen have been your mates. If a disciple of Lavater, you have had ample time to study the type of visages who, committed at our police courts, are sentenced at the Old Bailey. You doubtless thought yourself a hero more "sinned against than sinning;" you made in your generation a decided 'sensation,' and of a verity you had your reward!

* * * *

I have alluded to your case in general terms. "*Esto felix ! usque ad senectutem*" and may you never—lamenting or dreaming over the indigence of your victims—say

"———— mutato nomine de me
Fabula narratur."

THE RUGELEY SURGEON— WILLIAM PALMER.

CHAPTER III.

“ ———— nulla acconita bibuntur
Fictilibus.” JUVENAL.

THERE are degrees of comparison in all things. It has been the fashion to call the massacre committed by Müller one of the worst of modern times. If there are any stages in the infamy of these two murders, I think Palmer's the more atrocious case. It was not as if his enemy had done this, “it was his own familiar friend.” Men have been poisoned, and “worms have eaten them” for lucre before, and sad be it said, will again in this our day; but the various incidents of this horrible tragedy were so remarkable, the evidence of the skilled witnesses were so painfully conflicting, so illustrative of the adage, when “doctors differ who shall decide?” the testimony of other characters subpoenaed at the Old

Bailey brought to the surface, and made patent in the world-wide notoriety of the *Times* and *Telegraph*, &c., the sayings and doings, and inner, or rather outer, life of the anomalous class of men who live—in many cases from hand to mouth—by wagering on the relative speed of race horses; the *entourage* and actors in the drama were what Paley would have called “contrary to experience”—respectable as they may have been in their own peculiar sphere of action, they were decidedly *sui generis*, and *caviare* to the steady-going multitude. Independent of all this, the antecedents of the stupendous criminal who awaited his trial were so remarkable in fact; and though extraordinary, without exaggeration, they were again so mystified and magnified by rumour and tradition, that he occupied for the time a bold foreground in the unanimous execrations of his countrymen. It was more than surmised that the young wife of this hardly middle-aged man had fearfully perished by poison, administered by slow and carefully measured doses, prepared by her own husband. He had so abused the science of medicine that he seemed merely to have turned his attention

to kill by poison, so as to successfully simulate disease. It was an undoubted fact, that the speculative husband had received a vast sum of blood money from a life assurance company, and the consideration he gave the shareholders of that company was, the death—by some means—of his own wife. He was a desperate gamester ; he would stake his money on a prize fight, on a trial for murder —“ guilty or not guilty ;” he would bet on the pace of a snail or a locomotive, provided any one would book an engagement with him ; he was a speculator on the speed of horses, yet the sanctity of human life, nay, that of his own family and his familiar friend, were equally *media* for investment. So that a horse, or in the hands of many “ an instrument of gaming ” (as the noble translator of the *Iliad* has it) by passing the winning post fast by a neck, or being what I think they call “ roped ” on a racecourse, or a wife, or a child, or a brother, or a friend, by their death, added or detracted from his ways and means of extravagance and profligacy. It may have been a misfortune that all his children, save one, perished in early infancy ; anyhow these suppositions are surmise ; let us import the style of a Scotch verdict—“ Not proven.”

In an extraordinary yet a very interesting *brochure* of that time, the Palmers were, perhaps, with one or more (I hope) exceptions, what was expressively, but somewhat unfavourably, summed up an eccentric lot.

As in the days of Horace, so now *Fortuna non mutat genus*. There is much moral taint to be derived from early impressions and hereditary example. Though, by no means, so dark a miscreant as William Palmer, another felonious William was not happy in his home associations. The veneering of opulence could not in any way mask many floating rumours of somewhat unsavoury repute. The brother over whom, or rather over whose life, this surgeon without patients, effected a monstrous (in all senses of the word) insurance, was anything but a steady liver. In fact, quite the reverse. Doubtless no feelings of sublimated sorrow weighed down or depressed the soaring spirit of William Palmer when (having obtained an assignment of another £14,000 policy) he saw that brother pay the great debt of Nature! There was, moreover, a sort of anomalous or 'Decayed Gentleman,' one Bates, whose life he wished to have assured, or insured at a still more monstrous valuation.

It turned out this "gentleman-at-large" was a mere stipendiary hanger-on at his stables. This little scheme (providentially for this pauperized or decayed gentleman) however, fell through. But, as regards the fraternal policy (this already reckoned heritage of another £14,000), the directors, who rarely or never dispute payment for a policy without very cogent reasons, declined—with more justice than in the Campden House case—to pay the reiterated black-mail.

It seems, then, that although this ghastly malefactor had complacently supervised the decay and death of a young and devoted wife—his children, and his brother, yet these grave and fast-recurring losses did not paralyse or even curtail his vast faculty or "large excitement" for low enjoyment. He was still a more than small lion in his really little way, and held in a sort of doubtful honour in a nameless species of undefined awe in his own set. A hail-good-fellow well met, among dubious Bohemians of the uttermost of outer gates—rampant among seedy toppers at *auberges* and second-rate taverns affected by men who prate of the 'Leger and the Cup.' But the curtain rises on the first act of the drama. How little do

any of us know what the morrow may bring forth? What seems to be the greatest of boons may be, in truth, a most awful bane—a trite remark, but when more *apropos* than in the case of John Parsons Cook and his shortlived triumph at the famous Shrewsbury races?

The man died, and here is the indictment: “The prisoner, William Palmer of Rugeley, aged 31, was indicted for having at Rugeley, county of Stafford, on Nov. 21st, 1855, feloniously, wilfully, and with malice aforethought, committed murder on the person of John Parsons Cook.”

There was, at the instance of the prisoner’s advisers, a special act of Parliament to remove the *venue* of the trial to the Central Criminal Court, by reason of the not unnatural prejudice against the then alleged prisoner in his own county—where, most righteously indeed, he was then held, like the prophets, in no honour.

It is but a few years since, but the three Judges who tried the case, Lord Campbell who presided, and his colleagues Baron Alderson and Mr. Justice Cresswell—the subsequent Rhadamanthus of the Divorce Court—have all passed to their great account.

The then Attorney-General Cockburn, who led for the Crown (and who, on that memorable occasion, surpassed himself in his brilliant and masterly analysis of the evidence) is now Lord Chief Justice of England—Mr. Serjeant Shee, whom Lord Campbell then complimented as one of the most distinguished advocates at the English bar, is at length promoted (as he very long since ought to have been) to what the *Times* calls the *sedes, discretæ piorum*—Mr. Edwin James, the disbarred of England and elect of America, has been the hero of a monstrous scandal, and in fact, in his own person, has become very conspicuous. Little did the writer of these Sketches think, when he voted for “*Punch's famous Ex Q. C.*,” then a candidate for Marylebone, what would be the sequel of his very chequered career.

But to return to Palmer. Long before the crash came, his affairs were almost hopelessly involved in bill transactions. He had forged his mother's name, and with marvellous effrontery in open court, admitted that he had forced his deceased—or murdered—wife to write ‘Sarah Palmer’ for him. He duly—but not without difficulty—received some £13,000 by that wife's death, and with this

ill-gotten booty he liquidated some of the most pressing of his engagements. This, however, was but a mere sop to the insatiate Cerberus that was devouring him. He floundered yet deeper in the mire; and though a well-timed fraternal death arose, and might have opportunely served him, the offices refused to pay (as has been observed before) the mortuary compensation; and so the interest of his enormous floating paper and "bills" swamped him. Here are the "*ipsissima verba*" of Mr. Attorney-General Cockburn. "You will therefore understand the pressure which naturally and necessarily arose upon him—the pressure of the liabilities of £11,500, which he had not one shilling in the world to meet, and the still greater pressure which arose from the consciousness that the moment he could no longer go on—that his mother would be resorted to for payment—the fact of his having committed these forgeries would at once become manifest and known, and would bring on him the penalty of the law for that crime so committed."

On the 13th November, 1855, the Polestar of poor John Parsons Cook's destiny won what is called a 'Handicap' race, at Shrewsbury; she was favourably weighted, and won

(one of the witnesses told us) 'easy.' After the fashion of racing men, who vote, as a rule, a payment by cheque as an "unhealthy" proceeding, he carried his money about with him in bank notes. It so happened that in a fit of illness, in all human probability, brought on by poison, administered by Palmer, he (Cook) had confided the money he had about him, amounting to some £700 or £800 to a betting agent to take care of for him, and so there was an opportunity for tracing the abstraction of this sum and its probable manipulation and appropriation by Palmer. When Polestar had won, the stakes and bets amounted to a sum of £1,020; so that, after the settling day at Tattersall's, his available resources would seem to have been some £1,750. Ere, however, the racehorse had passed the winning-post fourteen days, the owner had gone "to that bourne from whence no traveller returns." It reads like a romance; but it was clearly and abundantly shown, that while the victim of these diabolical machinations was racked upon his bed of suffering—perishing most miserably and painfully under the basilisk eye of his destroyer—Palmer kept running to and fro to London; he had actually contrived to receive Cook's poor

winnings and appropriate them to payments "on account" of his own personal liabilities.

Rumour—faint at first as in the days of Virgil, bruited about the strange facts of the case. Gossip, retailed in holes and corners *sotto voce*—hints, innuendoes, coincidences, and oblique references to curious antecedents, massed themselves into facts, and very palpable deductions. Palmer was the only living soul who had tangibly profited by Cook's disappearance. His ready money and his betting-book were alike gone; but he left behind him a very stern and determined Nemesian in the person of Mr. Stephens (his father-in-law), a most resolute, wary, uncompromising man, who seems to have had an intuitive perception of Palmer's true character. It strikes me, however, forcibly, that if a financial crash had not supervened—had his friends produced but one half the sum * that must have been lavished on and swallowed up in this monster fourteen days' trial—it would have been hard even for Cockburn to have convicted this crafty conspirator. When, however, it was found that the betting-book was gone—that Palmer, although he

* The defence was said to have cost £10,000. Probably this is much exaggerated.

had received the proceeds of the bets, pretended "to know nothing about it"—another *Non mi ricordo* gentleman:—when it was clearly proved that Palmer, penniless before, had dealt with a sum of money accurately corresponding with Cook's little capital—when, above all, the £700 or £800 which the betting agent had given back to Cook, had mysteriously disappeared when he himself was incapacitated by reason of sickness from dealing with it—when the links of this chain of evidence were welded together by a master hand, there was undoubtedly a very strong case. It got into the daily prints; a quiet Salopian county town became infamous in our annals. Whole columns in the daily and weekly prints intensified the excitement; the imitator of Borgia was talked of in Clubdom and coffee houses; foreign journals expatiated on the "Rugeley poisoning case;" and the whole system of the turf somewhat innocently, yet certainly, suffered a reflex blight from the taint of Palmer-worm.* The day of trial arrived; the court was crowded to suffocation; Lord Derby and other peers took their seats on the bench;

* See letters in the *Times*, by some correspondent who adopted this signature.

and never, perhaps, was there such a strange antithesis of evidence. Of a verity, doctors—paid advocates in the witness-box—never differed in opinion so much as their grave and far-fetched dogmas. “Epilepsy,” “tetanus,” “*angina pectoris*,” *cum omnibus morbis et quibusdam aliis* were considered to have carried off poor Cook. But all these theories and post-mortem speculations were in vain; and there was no appeal from the firm, discriminating, and evenly-balanced summing up of the Chancellor biographer of his predecessors of the Great Seal.

And so they found the formidable and much-dreaded surgeon of Rugeley “Guilty;”^{*} and the Act of Parliament giving the power of the last sentence of the law being carried out either at Newgate or in Staffordshire, the judges determined that, for the sake of example, the sentence should be effectuated in his native county, or at any rate near the scene of his terrible wrong doing; and so, on the very evening of his sentence—in the

* It struck me at the time, in all the huge mass of evidence adduced, the opinion that did most and went furthest with the jury who doomed Palmer to the scaffold, was that of the late eminent Sir B. Brodie, who said, on cross examination, “Perhaps I had better say at once, that I never saw a case in which the symptoms that I have heard described arose from any disease.”

first-class compartment of a carriage attached to the mail train—like Eugene Aram, with gyves upon his wrists, and in charge of two stalwart warders, he was conveyed—his last journey upon earth—to Stafford Gaol.

* * * *

Who shall attempt to fathom or pourtray his thoughts through that winter's night? On—by the rapidly fading city, with its myriad lights in and about its environs, dancing in the distance—flashing like a grim leviathan sweeping on wheels of iron through wide-spreading fields, villages, and small towns—through the long and dank tunnel, for a time its "darkness visible" relieved by a glow-worm-like lamp—over the tall embankment, across the viaduct, looking down on the smiling, star-lit stream—stopping here and there to refresh itself like a weary giant, who, being refreshed, hurls his vast bulk onwards, onwards, rejoicing—arresting its progress to set down and take up pilgrims for the turmoil, the pleasure, the business, the "battle of life"—now halting to deposit mail bags, or, may be, view the burly guard throw them forth at some minor station, and receive in exchange other "messengers of life and death" in the network wings of the giddy,

whirling, modern Meteor that monopolizes locomotion.

• • • •

*"Nox erat in terris sylvæque et sæva quierant,
Æquora."*

Mark the antithesis

"At non infelix animi!"

No pining, puling love dream,—but a man doomed to a violent judicial Death.

For him the interest of life was over—it was his last journey in this world—the same ground he had so often traversed—but then his destination was the mart of men or the stirring race-course. Now he was in bonds, and his brief resting-place was the jail, and his only respite—Death. What an eventful journey it must have been to him—how pregnant with horrible thoughts and terrible reminiscences. Did he, I wonder, think of his wife and children who were dead, or of his still surviving child? Did the burning words of the Grand Chief Justice ring in his ears? Did he brood on other murders than

* Here is part of Lord Campbell's remarkable speech :—

"William Palmer, after a long and impartial trial, you have been convicted by a jury of your country of the crime of wilful murder. In that verdict my two learned brothers, who have so anxiously watched this trial, and myself entirely concur, and consider that verdict altogether satisfactory. The case is attended with such cir-

that of John Parsons Cook? Or did he steel his cruel heart with a firm determination to "die and make no sign?" Well, none but the Omniscient knoweth. All we know is,

"He left a *murderer's* name to other times,
Linked by no virtue, yet a thousand crimes."

circumstances of aggravation that I do not dare to touch upon them. Whether it is the first and only offence of this sort you have committed, is certainly known only to God and your own conscience. It is seldom that such a familiarity with the means of death should be shown without long experience; but for this offence of which you have been found guilty, your life is forfeited. You must prepare to die; and I trust that, as you can expect no mercy in this world, you will, by repentance of your crimes, seek to obtain mercy from Almighty God.

"Now, I hope this terrible example will deter others from committing such atrocious crimes, and that it will be seen that whatever art, or caution, or experience, may accomplish, such an offence will be detected and punished. However destructive poisons may be, it is so ordained by Providence that there are means for the safety of his creatures for detecting and punishing those who administer them. I again implore you to repent and prepare for the awful change which awaits you. I will not seek to harrow up your feelings by any enumeration of the circumstances of this foul murder."

Then followed merely the dread sentence of the law.

SADLEIR—TREASURY LORD AND M.P.

“Cannarum vindex et tanti sanguinis ultor
Annulus.” JUVENAL.

CHAPTER IV.

“Avenging banks and much encumbered land,
A silver milk jug found on Hampstead sand !”
(Imitation.)

I BELIEVE it is a boast of the members of our Legislature, that the House of Commons is about the most select club in Europe; I am far from saying that the exception impugns the ordinary truth of an almost admitted rule. One or two “modern instances” have been, however, no common place exceptions. Sadleir was, I have no doubt, the cynosure of his own constituency; his antecedents were possibly quite respectable; there was nothing that I am aware of exactly recorded against him in the unwritten but very convincing book of public opinion. He was intended—I am not sure if he was

actually qualified—for the honourable position of advocate. Like another worthy one—Roupell—to be hereafter mentioned, he had been at one time plodding, persevering, and always pushing; one who did not allow his brilliancy to be obscured, but telling the world and his wife blatantly enough that he was a wonderfully clever fellow. So, by degrees, as mankind are apt to do, if you tell them the same thing often enough, folks began to appraise the future legislator at pretty much his own valuation. Thus he went on his way rejoicing, crouching and cringing at patrician vestibules; crawling like any Jesuit along serpentine passages; making himself useful in dark corners, mindful by an intuitive perception of the theory we read in Rokeby:—

“ — the great
Have often need of what they hate!
Thus in their train we often see
Useful unscrupled men like thee.”

After this fashion Sadleir emerged from obscurity into the light of day. He bloomed and blossomed as a rising man, and ultimately became a full-blown Lord of the Treasury. He was great also in the Lombard-street bank parlour. An astute conveyancer of encumbered estates, he knew the

secrets of so many a prison-house; thus he became—reversing the saying, “*Sic vos non vobis*”—visibly rich.

The apparent lord of much treasure, the owner of an imposing rent-roll, a man of consequence and mark among his parliamentary compeers, he had thereby added more than a cubit to his moral or social stature. He was a politician born, with a native tact for “trimming;” knowing exactly what to say at the right minute, and comprehending at a glance (what is still more valuable) what to leave unsaid. We should in those days just as soon have thought of an entire aberration of any given fixed star, as the sudden and total eclipse of Sadleir. Well-a-day, how a certain set looked up to this reputed Cræsus with his Hyde Park mansion, his liveried lacqueys, and his well-ordered “*en menage garcon!*” How many a Mayfair maiden would—ay, and with the sanction of any one of the seven Belgravian matrons—for the mere asking, have taken pity on his single blessedness? Did not all London know of his “Star and Garter” banquets, his festivals at Blackwall, and his Sundays at Greenwich? How the waiters fawned before him! How the *chef* lectured his myrmidons when the

great diner-out was known to be coming! Well do they remember that dark, wily, bright-eyed, well-combed man, whose language was so eminently given him to mask the thoughts of a miniature Talleyrand!

* * * *

He seemed, in a word, from many circumstances, to have become quite a fixed planet, equally in the parliamentary sphere, as also in the outer frontier of the upper ten thousand. He was possessed of that sort of usefully-dangerous versatility that would make him considered just as worthy of preservation by the Whigs as detrimental of demolition by the Liberal Conservatives—a tenacious barnacle, that would hang on somehow on the good ship Revenue, whether Bright or a him-succeeding Cromwell was in power. His lot was *da capo*, of course, like that of other men—he was mortal. He might have died by a fall from his horse in the hunting-field, or from the effects of such an accident in the street, like the late Sir R. Peel or Sir C. Cresswell; he might have paid the debt of nature full of years; it might have been his lot to perish, like Percival, by the bullet of some vindictive parliamentary assassin, or by a blow dealt by some foreigner (aliens are very

precocious in crime just now, as has been just remarked by a learned judge in sentencing a third foreign murderer to death within four months) like Mr. Briggs; he might have slumbered placidly from sleep into death, like many have done—poor Thackeray, for instance—by a happy euthanasia—that cherished dream of Sir Walter Scott; or he might have married, been respected, and died, like Leech, almost in the meridian of his days, “with a children’s party in his house.”

But—*che sara, sara*—exile, penury, and the “*nil durius in se paupertas habet quam quod ridiculos homines facit,*” and in any case most certain and inevitable degradation, stared this financial Catiline, of really low estate but lofty aspirations, in the face. Well, then, the end came.

Guilt for awhile was glorified—it walked erect—superb—affecting an aristocratic mien. Pure gold paled before mosaic; Clubdom bowed the all-but-gartered knee to Baal. But the mosaic, when apparently most brilliant, had within it dross and the elements of dissolution. The scoffing fiends of remorse gibbered in his craven visage, and harried him to his felonious, dishonoured grave. Sejanus, however, would

not take his punishment—he would not be dragged through the mire on the tin-kettle of public opinion. So this diner-out—this Treasury Lord and lord of other persons' treasure—this Guloseton of river dinners—this prince who ruled town and country discounts—this more than director of a bank—this whilome rival of Morny in being *presque le plus grand speculateur de l'Europe* determined to rid the world of his presence by a terribly startling exit into eternity. It was suicide or shame, posthumous or living infamy. He elected the former. He had decided the momentous question, "To be or not to be." He had lavished his thousands; nothing remained but the ghost of former follies; and the *Nessun maggior dolore*. All he had to bequeath to the world was the legacy of infamy—something novel or strange for the *profanum vulgus* to prate about. He is credibly described as having called for a silver cream-jug, and pretended to occupy himself in the manufacture of a hair dye, and so he wandered forth to Hampstead Heath, and perished miserably by his own hand on the bleak moor.

* * * *

The corpse was undoubtedly the corpse of

Sadleir, it was proved convincingly by a faultless chain of evidence; nevertheless a curious thing got abroad, viz., that somehow a body was hired in London so exactly like that of Sadleir in life, that it should pass muster for his person; that his confederates—he must have paid them handsomely—duly conveyed the *fac simile* corpse and the silver cream-jug to Hampstead Heath, where it was duly found as recorded in the prints. Sadleir having paraded his purpose and glorified his remorse, took himself off to America loaded with argosies. Newspaper paragraphs went so far as to say he had been seen in San Francisco, which, I am credibly informed, is a city of excitement, wherein mankind sink or swim by “bogus,” “black cat,” and “felt hat” speculations. It is needless to say, sensible people reposed little faith in this “strange story,” anyhow—
Credat Judæus Apella, Non ego.

REDPATH.

CHAPTER V.

“THE LUXURIOUS.”

“REDPATH AT FAULT AGAIN.—The *Perth Inquirer* of the 28th September reports that the notorious Redpath, who for a length of time has enjoyed a ticket-of-leave, has been returned to the convict establishment for twelve months, in consequence of insolence to the Rev. Mr. Bostock; and he richly deserves the punishment. This fellow, who is constantly referred to in all discussions relative to the convict system in Western Australia, as having been treated with undue leniency, seems never to have fully appreciated his proper position, but has behaved in all respects as if he were a free man of unblemished character, without a past to deplore or a future to achieve. The case which resulted in his punishment was a very flagrant one. Mr. Bostock had interested himself in the formation of the Working Man's Association at Fremantle, of which society he was president, and it was in connection with its affairs that the circumstances arose which eventually led to the receipt by the rev. gentleman of a highly insulting message from Redpath, who was one of the members. The resident magistrate at Fremantle recommended that some notice should be taken of the matter, and his recommendation was backed by the Comptroller-General, the result being that the Governor ordered Redpath's return to the penal establishment for a year, as a hard-labour prisoner.—*Sydney Herald*, Jan. 1865.”

REDPATH was a criminal of another *castè*, the world saw him living *en prince*. Was

not his domicile also noted in the records of the Court Guide? He was nomenclatured the "Luxurious." A denizen of a Regent Park House—the owner of a "Place" and suburban retreats—rejoicing in his houses and his pleasure boats, *et hoc genus omne*. Gamesters prate of a martingale that will (they say) theoretically carry all before it at Baden, or elsewhere, but somehow practically never does. Redpath certainly carved out a new line, and bamboozled directors and sub-directors with an ingenuity worthy of a better cause. It was shown when he came up for judgment—quite the reverse of a Daniel—that he did not live with his great friends, he simply lived *on* them. He did not illuminate the world as a legislator, although no doubt he would have been easily elected—say at Barum, Gatton, or Old Sarum, where there is, or was, an enlightened constituency open to solid and tangible conviction. He was, I believe, a big and burly "muscular Christian"—and one of those who would derive the *minimum* of physical punishment from what is called penal servitude. Moreover, he was just the sort of man to gain the ear of the prison chaplain, and by a hypocritical affectation

of repentance deceive the authorities. No doubt he is, or, but for his own fault, might have been, remarkably well off now; and the story did go, that he is reposing on his laurels, and living luxuriously with his *placens uxor* on the *débris* of the plunder he made when the sun shone—and when, in reply to counsel's cross-examination, one of the directors of the Great Northern Railway answered, "I know no more about it, sir, than you do."

I have dealt with the "muscular Christian" in my epilogue, which is the reason of my remarks in this place being brief. *Apropos* to all this, I cannot help quoting from GRANTLEY BERKELEY'S LIFE AND RECOLLECTIONS, this neat antithesis—about the best parallel in the first volume of that work (page 205):—

"But a couple of hundreds a year cannot be made to run a fair race with more than as many thousands, including a perpetual watch movement in transactions with tradesmen, vulgarly called 'unlimited luck' and Tomkins, finding he cannot rival Lord Augustus comfortably out of his own resources, helps himself to those of his employer. The villa at Sydenham cannot be kept up any other way. Mademoiselle Pauline's extravagance cannot be kept down, and his own private expenditure can neither be kept up nor down. The result is, that he saves the firm the trouble of writing its name in connection with transactions of which it has no knowledge. Gentility is all very well, and fashion is not a bad thing,

under appropriate circumstances ; but as a well-known fable assures us, frogs cannot swell to the dimensions of oxen ; so small people cannot attempt to be great without running a similar risk. That the line must be drawn somewhere, every one must admit, and Tomkins may thank his stars that it isn't drawn round his neck." (This was just the exact position of the rope some 50 years since.)

“ The end of the race is, that while Lord Augustus merely outruns the constable, a detective outruns Tomkins ; the former, after a sufficient disgrace and rustication, gets his debts paid ; the latter comes to a settlement—goes, I should say certainly—but it is to a penal one. Lord Augustus may, in the fullness of time, marry, take a religious turn, or be converted to Popery, and become a pillar of idolatry, extremely steady, from plinth to capital.”

DR. SMETHURST.

CHAPTER VI.

——Populus me sibilat, at mihi plaudo
 Ipse domi, simul ac nummos contemplor in arca.
 HORACE.

THE Smethurst trial was a very curious affair. The man was an undoubted—I presume I may say admitted—bigamist. Anyhow, he went through the usual ordeal of prison discipline for that offence, nor do I remember that he ever wrote to the papers to try and show himself in the character of a connubial martyr; nor do I recollect his bringing an action against the judge who sentenced him, nor the public prints that reported the case. Our Home Secretary was induced to think him innocent, so of course the man is legally purged, and is innocent, but I merely advert to this case the more particularly because when a qualified medical man is even—like Cæsar's wife—*suspected* of dealing with poison, his knowledge of the subject renders

him doubly difficult to detect, and so immeasurably much more dangerous to society. The facts deposed to were of a very remarkable character, and in my idea more than prove the verity of Lord Byron's apothegm,

“Truth is stranger than fiction.”

That the lady perished by some strange disease, miserably, slowly, painfully, is clearly evident. There was a trial. The jury—no special pleading can alter that fact—brought in a verdict of “Wilful Murder;” but medical testimony, as represented mostly by one very eminent authority, suggested that in certain cases incident to married ladies there is a rarely-occurring, but certainly recognized disorder that partakes of the very symptoms the lady was shown to have experienced before her death; and so the Press (and conspicuously the *Daily Telegraph*, which always throws the weight of its great ability into the scale of sympathy for the convict, as long as there is a rational doubt to be entertained as to the theory of his innocence) intervening, a humane legislature gave him the benefit of the doubt. And Smethurst was accordingly reprieved and entirely exonerated from the awful circum-

stances of imputed homicide and the deliberate finding of the jury. It is the aim of forensic ability in the present day—and the practice is carried to wonderful perfection,—to render circumstantial evidence as nearly exhaustive as possible. Counsel dovetail facts so cleverly as to show there is no outlet for the admission of any other theory—that the prisoner at the bar—and he alone of all the human race—could have been implicated in the crime. They naturally made a strong point of Smethurst's paramour having bequeathed to him absolutely her little property. So that a *soi-disant* husband, who was no husband, would alone derive any personal benefit from her death. This, too, under curious and very painful circumstances, and this by a will, the execution of which was delayed till Sunday, when she was, if not *in extremis*, still in a very low and sinking state. This will, strange to say, was "settled" by a Chancery barrister of similar name to that of Dr. Smethurst—but a letter to the *Times* bearing the signature of that gentleman, satisfactorily explained his acquaintance with his medical namesake—with whom he had, it appeared, no earthly relationship. It was merely, therefore, a curious coincidence of

identity of name. But the *exhaustive* process somewhat failed when a very eminent physician adduced parallel instances of deaths from undoubtedly natural causes, as I have said above, supervening in the case of ladies who were in a somewhat similar state of health. And it is on this account, when an apothecary or a doctor—although, in the Home Secretary's opinion, the case failed in complete proof—does betake himself to the dark deeds of a Borgia (which Smethurst did not do) that he is so supremely terrible to society—for his art, perverted to an evil purpose, enables him (if he be a fiend in human form) to *prepare the body for the reception of poison*—and to regulate the period of dissolution by slow and measured stages, so as in many cases to supersede or, perhaps, never excite suspicion, and very frequently procure a burial certificate without an inquest. I cannot repeat too often, Smethurst was no murderer—but he was a bigamist, and this whole episode in his life is a “strange story.”

Reprieved, he escaped—after having been found “guilty” by a jury of his countrymen—after the judge had put on the black cap and passed upon him the awful sentence—

of the law; thus, it may not be too bold a metaphor to say, walking through the valley of the shadow of death—he was again arraigned on a charge of bigamy, and after being consigned to and undergoing a year's imprisonment, he had those nerves of iron that permitted him to enter (voluntarily this time) the Court of Law, as the litigant for the small sum obtained by bigamy, but unquestionably bequeathed to him by his departed paramour in solemn form of law.

It surprised some people (principally those unlearned in the law) to find that his claim could not be resisted successfully in the Court of Probate—but few persons will, I opine, envy him the satisfaction of thus having won—certainly *sine gloria*—his inheritance, taking with him the late learned judge's withering quotation which forms the motto of this chapter.

“Ay, let them hiss, the babbling mobs of Rome,
I hug myself and count my hoards—at home.”

ROUPELL.

CHAPTER VII.

“SOIT dit en passant, c’est une chose assez hideuse que le succès. Sa fausse ressemblance avec le mérite trompe les hommes. Pour la foule, la réussite a presque la même profil que la suprématie. Le succès, ce Ménechme du talent, a une dupe : l’histoire. Juvenal et Tacite seuls en bougeonnent. De nos jours, une philosophie à peu près officielle est entrée en domesticité chez lui, porte la livrée du succès, et fait le service de son anti-chambre. Réussissez : théorie. Prospérité suppose capacité. Gagnez à la loterie, vous voilà un habile homme. Qui triomphe, est vénéré. Naissez coiffé ! tout est là. Ayez de la chance, vous aurez le reste. Soyez heureux, on vous croira grand.

QU’UN NOTAIRE SE TRANSFIGURE EN
*Dorure est or **

* Modern Translation—“GUILT is gold.”

Roupell, Redpath, Robson, Sadleir, Palmer, Catherine Wilson—*et hoc genus omne.*

DEPUTE, qu'un faux Corneille fasse *Tiridate*, qu'un eunuque parvienne à posséder un harem, qu'un prud'homme militaire gagne par accident la bataille décisive d'une époque, qu'un apothécaire invente les semelles de carton pour l'armée de Sambre-et-Meuse, et se construise, avec ce carton vendu pour du cuir, quatre cent mille livres de rente, qu'un porte-balle épouse l'usure et la fasse accoucher de sept à huit millions, dont il est le père et dont elle est la mère les hommes appellent cela Génie, de même qu'ils appellent Beauté la figure de Mousqueton et Majesté l'encolure de Claude. Ils confondent avec les constellations de l'abîme les étoiles que font dans la vase molle du borbier les pattes des canards."—*Les Misérables*.

Ecce iterum. Here we have another legislator, a man who is said to have paid some nine thousand pounds for the dubious honour of representing Lambeth in parliament. The *Globe* states that up to March, 1862, he was looked up to as one of the wealthiest commoners in England. His car of triumph, drawn round the streets of that murky, but money-spinning Borough, made

one fancy what might have been the progress of a Roman conqueror. And yet what a winter of desolation must have centred in this man's heart all the while—what a living incarnation he must have been, of the adage *volto sciolto pensieri stretti*. Of a truth, he did not carry “his heart upon his sleeve, for daws to peck at.” He was the reputed owner of a metropolitan domain—naturally enough the idol of a mother, a mother somehow constituted sole executrix in virtue of a will he now avers to have been forged, having committed (by his own confession), that dastard crime in the sacred mortuary presence of a dead father, and before his very remains were cold! Here, again, as in Palmer's case, we have the terrible results arising from *science* wedded to guilt. Palmer was a qualified apothecary; he had studied, and was shown upon his trial to have made notes of the effects of poison. Roupell had been brought up to the law; he was familiarly acquainted with the common run of practice; he, as Sadleir did also, understood (to the uninitiated) the jargon of deeds, covenants, wills, conveyances, and he stupendously abused that advantage. We are driven between the

horns of this dilemma. Which of Roupell's perjuries is the true one? Did he bear false witness against the Almighty when he propounded a will he now says was forged, or when he subsequently bore testimony with the hope of benefiting his brother? Unless it were true, what ineffable effrontery to thus parade his guilt in open court; and yet in such a tangled web of counter and conflicting possibilities, who shall say his word should be taken to oust a purchaser, for consideration, from his property. Did he—*alieni appetens, sui profusus*—having exhausted luxury, aim at the social resurrection of his family? Did he fancy that, by a revolting cynicism, after having carved out, mortgaged, sold, demised, assigned, or otherwise disposed of all the lead-smelter's real property, he could by his bare unsupported testimony—the word of a self-admitted perjurer—recover all these scattered heirlooms and let loose another rampant scion of the Roupell breed to riot among us?

By his own showing, whether his testimony were true or false, he stood convicted, and of course his sentence was penal servitude for life. His expectation no doubt is—and

it is founded on undeniable precedents—that he will soon get a ticket to take leave. Then it may be readily surmised that, having quitted the society of felons, he will, in virtue of some pre-ordained family compact, be paid a comfortable allowance—of a voluntary nature—by his affluent relations. And though he will, in England, never under his own name degrade with his unabashed presence any society of *gentlemen*, still he may yet live to have his satellites and favourites who will applaud him to the echo in the tavern parlour, and drink his health (so valuable to society), exactly as long as he defrays the publican's score. Is it not more or less a farce, or rather a most serious practical joke against society, to condemn a man to penal servitude (say he numbers 30 winters), *for life*, when the judge, jury, prisoner, and audience perfectly well know that, if he plays his cards with only one tithe of the judgment with which he concocted the conspiracy for which he has been hunted down, the same convict will, if he have means (as Roupell probably will have), be perfectly able to pay his taxes like an honest man. What, under this ticket of leave system, is there to prevent Roupell, or Redpath, or such

a one depositing ten thousand pounds under the name of James Plantagenet Stokes at the London and Westminster Bank, and when presented with a ticket to leave, drawing principal and interest, and beginning life *de novo*?

I would give our judges (say when three agree and sit in banco together), the power in certain cases—as in this flagrant instance, OF ABSOLUTELY, ETERNALLY, AND IRREVOCABLY INTERDICTING THIS TOO FACILE TICKET OF LEAVE.

* * *

However, so far, not one except the lawyers have largely profited by Roupell's voluntary, and—as he would say—disinterested revelations. For after all—and who in this balance of counter-probabilities could blame them—the jury could not agree whether Roupell, ex M.P. for Lambeth, lied when he *said* he concocted a will, or when he propounded that cunning instrument for his proper benefit. He did not send in his “conscientious qualms,” anyhow, to the chancellor of public opinion till he had spent the money.

CATHERINE WILSON.

CHAPTER VIII.

———illa venena Colchica,
Et quidquid usquam concipitur nefas
tractavit.

THE sketches of the previously-referred-to criminals which I have thus grouped together as *dramatis personæ* on the stage where *causes célèbres* are discussed, have all, with the above exception, purposely belonged to the more educated classes. Some have been aristocrats of crime, others patricians in social wrong-doing. But Catherine Wilson—that low-lived Brinvilliers—who expiated a series of murders on the 21st of October, 1862, is so remarkable a case, and, like that of Müller, happily so far removed from merely vulgar criminal experience, that I shall make its introduction an exception to my rule, which is, not to reproduce ordinary episodes—however lamentable—from the calendar of guilt, but

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rather to chronicle and comment on extraordinary crimes; crimes which are made even more remarkable by the position and previous status or standing of the accused or guilty person. The story of her life is so ably told by Mr. Justice Byles in passing sentence, that I venture to quote it *in extenso*.

“CATHERINE WILSON,—

“It is very seldom that I think it any part of my duty, in a case of this or any other description, to express either concurrence with or dissent from the verdict of a jury; but upon the present occasion I am bound to say that in my opinion the jury could not have arrived at any other conclusion than they have done, consistently with the facts that were laid before them. I never heard a case where it was so clearly proved that a murder was committed, and where the excruciating pain and agony of the victim were watched with so much deliberation by the murderer. The greatest care was taken during the progress of the trial that nothing should be improperly introduced into the inquiry, and that you should not be prejudiced by anything that had happened before; but now that the jury have delivered their verdict, and there can

no longer be any fear that their decision should be in any way improperly influenced, I think it right that the jury should know, and that the public should also know, what sort of person it is that the avenging arm of the Law has at length overtaken. I find, then, that about the year 1853-54 you were employed in the capacity of servant or house-keeper to a person named Mawer, who lived at Boston, in Lincolnshire, and that this person was in the habit of taking colchicum. He made his will in the month of April, and by that will he left to you the whole of the little property he possessed. He died in the month of October following. I will say no more about this case, except that it is quite clear that at this time you were perfectly well acquainted with the nature and effects of colchicum. In the year 1856 I find that you were living with a young man named Dixon, and that you came to London and went to lodge with him at the house of the deceased. Dr. Whidborne was called in to attend him. He was not allowed upon the present trial to state any of the circumstances connected with the illness of this person; but I may now state that it appears by his deposition that Dixon was suddenly taken ill

with violent vomiting and purging, that his symptoms were exactly the same as those of the unfortunate woman, Mrs. Soames, and that he died very speedily afterwards, you yourself representing that he had died of galloping consumption, but, upon his body being opened, his lungs were found perfectly healthy. About the year 1859, I find that you were in the habit of visiting a Mrs. Jackson, who also resided at Boston, and that you were aware that she drew from a bank in that town the sum of £120, and that this sum was in her possession. She was taken ill with the same symptoms and died in four days, and after her death the money was nowhere to be found. It appeared that upon this occasion you produced a promissory note, apparently signed by two persons residing at Boston, for the amount that was missing; but it was proved that both these signatures were forged. In the month of October, 1860, I find that you were connected with a Mrs. Atkinson, who resided in Kirkby Lonsdale, and that she came to live with you at your residence at Kennington, and it appears that you were aware that she was in possession of a considerable sum of money. On the 19th of

that month, Mrs. Atkinson was taken ill—again, the same symptoms—retching, violent purging, vomiting, and great agony, and in four days she was dead. If the jury had acquitted you upon the present charge, you would have been immediately put upon your trial for this murder. I have read the depositions in the case most carefully and anxiously, and the result upon my mind is, that I have no more doubt that you committed that crime *than if I had seen it committed with my own eyes*. In 1861, I find that you were living with a man named Taylor, and that he was attacked in the same manner as the others to whom I have alluded; but that, fortunately for him, remedies were immediately resorted to, and he recovered. Again, I find that only in the present year (1862) you were tried in this court for an attempt to murder, by the administration of sulphuric acid to a woman in whose house you were residing. You were acquitted upon that charge; but, although this was the case, there is too much reason to believe you were guilty of this crime also, and I am informed that the learned judge who tried you felt it to be his duty to sum up the case most unfavourably to you.

“ These facts, I regret to say, render it extremely probable that the startling statement made by Dr. Taylor in the course of his evidence is correct ; and that, in the midst of apparent prosperity and obedience to the law, a dreadful crime and vice is rife in this Metropolis—the destruction of life by SECRET POISONING.

“ Your life is in the hands of the Crown ; and I think it right to inform you that, if I am consulted in reference to your case, I shall not feel myself justified in interfering, and that I cannot hold out to you the slightest hope of any commutation of your sentence.”

This is the plain speaking of a judge, who, to quote the saying applied by an able west-country paper, “ bears not the sword in vain.” This female ogress,—this more than counterpart of the murderess Manning,—duly underwent the sentence of the law.

The pith of this case would seem to be, that (in the opinion of our eminent toxicologist, Dr. Taylor, endorsed by a most able judge) a system of secret poisoning was rife among us ; that in the familiar, homely, and apparently affectionate intercourse of life—not only in high places, or in stately mansions, as in the Borgian epoch—but through the length and

breadth of this favoured land, in middle-class and even in poor domiciles, HOMICIDE—perpetrated owing to the foul lust of lucre, in the guise of poison simulating disease—stalks fearfully, yet fearlessly, along! There is a good deal of this in the wild yet very powerful tale of “Monte Christo;” and who may doubt, after reading the career of Catherine Wilson, that the chapter in that romance bearing upon poisoning details may not have some—perhaps a great deal—of foundation in fact? Bulwer, an ex-Cabinet Minister, signified his views to this effect long before Dr. Taylor, in his brilliant novel of “Lucretia.”

Palmer, Dove, and this most terrible ‘Child of Night,” Catherine Wilson, in the brief space of some fifteen years, or less, illustrate too painfully the guilty prevalence of poison in different grades of modern society.

MADELEIN SMITH.

CHAPTER IX.

“Rumour, that tints with specious hue
The much that's false with something true,
Had whispered——”

IF Dublin has introduced to our notice the preliminary of, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary *causes célèbres*, though partaking of no criminal incidents—I allude of course to the Yelverton trials—the sister capital, or Modern Athens, furnishes an episode in her Law Courts that created an equally large excitement in Caledonia's Crown side Records—and, indeed, I may say, stirred up amazing interest through Great Britain. Up to the last year, at least, when the author of these papers happened to be in Glasgow, the name that appears at the heading of this chapter was a household word. As in Paris the Faubourg St. Antoine is called *la terre classique des révolutions*, so Blythwood Square has an air

of deep romance about it—as being connected with what in future days will be a remarkable social *esclandre*. Its corner house is the cynosure of every cabman's eye—and if he drive you in that neighbourhood, the shilling-a-mile Jehu will not fail to stop his vehicle and indicate with an off-hand patter of particulars, the once residence of the remarkably-named lady who was for a time the heroine of a true, but nevertheless very sensational drama—a drama connected with terrible incidents. Her family seem to have moved in a very respectable sphere of Glasgow society, and when a daughter of the house, about whom there was not a little scandal, came to be arraigned on a criminal indictment, excitement among all parties knew no bounds. She was arrested, as will well be remembered, on a charge of having deliberately poisoned the man to whom she was affianced. Of course all sorts of rumours circulated; and the *spargere in vulgum ambiguas* was more than usually carried into effect and practice. The Court was crowded to suffocation. The *promessi sposi* had been known (as I have said) in Glasgow society; and it was, as part of the case, understood, more-

over, that those burning and passionate love letters, the from-day-to-day written inner life of the betrothed, would be read and expatiated upon in open Court. This, of course, was enough to account for the feelings of curiosity and intense excitement.

The verdicts were

“Not Guilty,”

“Not proven,”

“Not proven,”

on the three issues of the Record, and the Lord Justice Clerk endorsed the verdict.

Nothing in the whole case seems to me so remarkable as the self-possession of the woman, married too, before God, to one man, yet affianced to another! Madelein Smith, whether naturally gifted with stoic indifference—nerves of iron—or sustained by the consoling consciousness of innocence, yet was, in that great assembly, the one person apparently un-moved by the proceedings. Without a tremor, she could calmly hear her powerful advocate open his oration by stating in the style of Tacitus—concise and true—“The charge against the prisoner is the charge of murder, and the punishment of murder is death.” Her aspect was unchanged—placid as marble. She

gazed confidently, but not boldly, round the Court—yet what a tide of suppressed passion must have surged within that bosom, although externally she showed no sign! What an eternity of time those ten days must have seemed to her!

* * * *

L'Angelier's fate created little sympathy—he seems to have been silly, pretentious, vain, and selfish beyond the class of even the most frivolous Frenchmen—and it is only wonderful how an accomplished lady could have intended to link her future to a man of such doubtful antecedents. However, we must not wonder at this and such anomalies.

“Nay, curious fool, be still,
Is human love the growth of human will?”

But, however this may have been, he was judged by that world “which knows not how to spare,” but which at the same time rarely judges unjustly with feelings of unmixed and unmitigated contempt.

Naturally, under such circumstances, there was a reaction of feeling in favour of the lady—and this sentiment was enhanced by the consideration of her youth—her marvellous demeanour in Court, and the recollection of

her social position. The entire narrative is sensational in the extreme—nay, almost unparalleled in our celebrated trials. Men of the world knew on the one hand

Furens quid fœmina possit,

but a tragedy like this was a conception surpassing the doings of a *Brinvilliers*, and the jury refused to entertain it. In a complete report of this trial, I find the following powerful remarks in an introductory notice from the pen of J. Morison, Esq. :—

“ But the excitement, if it were possible, became greater on the eighth day of the trial, when the Dean of the Faculty came to make his appeal to the jury on her behalf. Great things were expected of him, nor did he disappoint that expectation. It is impossible that any one reading any report of his speech can form any adequate conception of the effect it had upon those who heard him. The look—the tone—the action—these no reporter can convey. For the time he fairly carried everything before him, and, as with quivering voice, he painted the anguish and despair of the unhappy girl in her attempts to recover those fearful letters which contained such damning evidence of her shame—as he indignantly denounced the man who refused to listen to those passionate appeals and who determined to keep the letters ‘as an engine of terror and oppression,’ and as he painted with the hand of a master the horror and remorse which must for ever haunt the jury, if they were to convict her, and her perfect innocence should be afterwards established—more than one of the jury, as well as many of the audience, were dissolved in tears.”

MÜLLER.

CHAPTER X.

Raro antecedentem,
&c.

HORACE.

MÜLLER was, after all, but a very vulgar criminal. He was a ruffian who confessedly perpetrated perhaps one of the most determined crimes of modern times. He aimed at being an Adonis in his small way—and no doubt imagined that the possession of a gold watch and chain would add to his appearance as a *flaneur* on the Broadway. I should not advert to the case at all but for the monstrous sensation it provoked amongst us, and the almost romantic incidents with which the chain of evidence became connected—a little child playing with a paper jewel-box, ominously labelled Death—a reference to a jeweller of that name—to a cabman with not much more or less for or against him than belongs to the means of those who live on cabdom—the flight over the broad Atlantic, lingering, protracted, and slow—the

pursuit—hot, rapid, and earnest—a nation's purse against a vagrant's pittance—the fear of Confederate capture and the forced release of the German miscreant—the boarding the vessel—the capture—the prison of New York, equally ominously called the Tombs—the examination—the “sensation” speech of the prisoner's counsel in New York, whom the committing magistrate did not omit to compliment—the journey home—how we were told this meek-eyed man, with the taint of murder on his soul, beguiled his leisure by calmly reading “Pickwick”—the excitement when the vessel was signalled—the journey to London—Bow Street—and finally the grand climax of the trial and the execution of the convict. England would have incurred all this cost and followed up the clue with equal perseverance in any case of murder; but there were about this terrible drama many features of all-absorbing and paramount interest. If there was one spot in the wide world in which, apart from accidents on the rail, a first-class passenger might feel himself secure from being “done to death,” it would certainly have been the padded compartment of one of our company's carriages; but all the public—for are

we not a nation of travellers as well as shopkeepers?—awakes to a very clear idea that it was no longer so. With a mere plank covered with blue cloth between himself and others, within the limit of a few seconds a man in the full possession of his faculties—the steady-going father of a family, apparently as blameless as most of us can hope to be in the relations of life—was foully robbed and so injured that he died without speaking. All the nation, and particularly that part of it who, as the *Daily Telegraph* puts it, “wore guinea hats and broad cloth,” had an intense and personal interest in seeking out and punishing the atrocious assassin—this founder of a new type of crime, as contrary to previous experience as it was alarming.

But what gave a peculiar sensation to the whole tragedy was the wonderful excitement of Fatherland, and their much-reiterated belief in Müller's innocence. There is certainly no case in my recollection where the facts have been so fully proven—not one single link was wanting in a very minute

* A little *brochure*, published by Messrs. Murray, informs us—“It is considered 139 millions of persons travel by rail annually.”

chain of circumstantial evidence. Ocular witness of the murder could scarcely have been more cogent and convincing. Still, many affected to doubt—it is much to be regretted. Fatherland broadly stated, in an accredited representative of its press, that Muller was a scapegoat offered to Denmark—a victim for sacrifice, doomed to be strangled in hatred or revenge for German victories and Denmark's defeat. Everything, short of *pressure from without*, was resorted to, and it is even said that a telegram from the King of Prussia supplicated a reprieve at the hands of our Queen. It was not to be; *che sara, sara*. Whatever chance Muller might have had, if he had prayed for grace on the grounds that the foul act was wholly *unpremeditated*—that he merely meant to rob and not to kill the man—he lost, through the bad advice of his countrymen, or his own inflexible obstinacy. The English Government judged boldly for itself, and refused to be biassed by alien Protection Societies or moved by a monarch's telegram—which were assuredly mis-timed and out of place;* so, with a lie upon his lips, redeemed, however, by the

* As much contrary to etiquette as the First Consul Napoleon writing personally to George IV., without the same brilliant excuse for it.

confession, "I did it," almost as the breath was passing from the body, the German tailor expired in the presence of a howling mob of London ruffians, leaving behind him to all time an infamous memory.*

* I quoted Lord Amberley in reference to the "mob" at London executions. I of course supposed he had a decent respect for his own published opinions, but recent vacillations "have changed all that." The *Saturday Review* estimates the embryo statesman thus: "Still people may be pardoned for amusing themselves with the little dogs who stray into the course before the Derby is run off." Really his "retracted retractions" justify this *critique* on his marvellous political elasticity!

F

THE BRITISH BANK.

CHAPTER XI.

“*Ecce iterum Crispinus.*”

HORACE.

THE decline and fall of the British Bank followed closely on the heels of a previous ruin. Rotten banks—and indeed I may say commercial firms that overtrade—are like the card edifices piled up by the children in our nurseries; the displacement of one card in the structure causes many others to collapse or crumble. Great and all important in this most un-British institution, conspicuously figured another legislator, an Honourable M.P. for the brilliant borough of, let us say, Dupesbury. Except in virtue of positive financial unfitness, or by reason of that somewhat occult, not to say incomprehensible, process, known to schoolboys as “*ut lucus a non lucendo*,” it seems entirely impossible to discover for what earthly cause this afore referred to Honourable Member should ever have been gazetted as a bank-

director. He certainly appeared to have had a very limited supply of what is called the "circulating medium;" but—what seems to be a *sequitur* to such want among modern *anthropophagi*—he had a capital substitute for it in a most elastic command of the next best thing to ready money—and it is first cousin to Aladdin's Lamp, *while it lasts*—CREDIT. (Surely money qualification should be done away with, now that all England is becoming a nation of innkeepers, and dabbling in limited companies for breeding guinea-pigs!) But to become a member of a board of directors, it still seems to be voted necessary and orthodox for an incoming Atlas, aspiring to that serene and self-imposed dignity, to go through the form of "opening an account." Here, however, occurred a hitch in the house of the commoner of Humphrey, who, like the mythic duke of that name, hailed somewhere from the county of Gloucester. He had no balance to pay in, or, what was practically the same thing, that he chose to pay in; but he somehow became possessed of a small cheque, if I remember right for £18 7s. (Was it the lucky proceeds of some card-winnings at the club?) Be this as it

may, this imposing voucher was, it transpired, duly and deliberately "paid in" by way of going through the antiquated form of "opening" an account, and so obtaining—with more success than, alas! the Confederate generals—a basis for future strategic proceedings. He (I take so plain a fact for granted) entered his ordinary signature in the bank books, and the precedent was—I also assume as proved—often repeated on pleasant and profitable slips of printed pink paper. To show convincingly—for is not one fact better than ten declarations?—how valuable a customer he must have been to the shareholders of this truly "British" institution, it turned out when the Honourable M.P. for Dupesbury was on his examination that the same day when he "opened" an account, paying in the magnificent voucher for £18 7s., he also most sagaciously OPENED an account of quite another character—to wit a discount account—and on the very same day (the £18 7s. cheque must surely have budded enormously) he discounted bills to the quiet tune of £2,000.

A cleverish bill discounter used to say that this "strategic" proceeding—*i. e.*, paying in

367*s.* and on *the same day* getting discount for £2,000—was about the most able stroke of financial success that had come under his—not over scrupulous—notice. And I quite agree with him. Certes, he was a plausible adventurer. What shall we think of his co-directors? In the face of all the widespread misery and anguish he and others wrought upon confiding customers, are we to say, *de mortuis nil nisi bonum?* Or rather shall it not be after my motto, *Sejanus ducitur unco spectandus*, which may be translated—

Dragged on a hook to make the reader stare,
And bid the town of bubble banks—beware.

SECOND BOOK.

There is a vast gulf—between the Crown and civil side.

Longo sed proximus intervallo—criminal consequences and personal actions.

Nevertheless, morally speaking, many of the most revolting episodes in human nature are “shown up” in courts where there are no penal consequences, and where the loser has only to write a draft for the taxed costs.

The green or black curtain is, for a while, fallen on our tragedies, or most serious dramas of social delinquency; the preceding cases bear the impress of felony, fraud, or misdemeanour. Some of the prisoners have been “guilty,” others “not guilty,” and “non-proven;” but all have been “upon their deliverance.”

The curtain rises again for some sensational acts of a “Comedy of Errors,” less grave in their *dénouement*; but still not without their very startling effects on the men and times in which we live and move.

“The weakness, the folly, and the credulity of mankind are exemplified in our Courts of Law, with a boldness which fiction dares not emulate. A column of Divorce Court cases reveals vices which would be held to outrage all probability if hazarded in a three volume novel; the romance of the ROUPELL case seems equally beyond the possibility of an actual occurrence, whether we believe or disbelieve the story of the convict; and now this *cause célèbre* in the Bankruptcy Court, whereof Colonel Waugh is the Hero, comes to tax our capacity of belief in the impudence of an adventurer, and in the blind credulity of his dupes.”

Leading article in the “Times,” August, 1863.

CIVIL DEPARTMENT ;
WITH
COMMENTS
ON
BANKRUPTCY, LUNACY, DIVORCE,
ETC.

Chapter I.—Waugh.

Chapter II.—Wyndham's Case.

Chapter III.—The Divorce Court : Lothario *v.*
Beatrice.

Chapter IV.—The Yelverton Imbroglio.

Chapter V.—Money Lenders : Kitedom.

WAUGH.

CHAPTER I.

When I've done pitying aged men,
 Cast out of home by Waugh's device,
 Forced to begin hard work again,
 And sell it for a sordid price :

When I've done pitying sad-eyed wives,
 Thrust from lov'd hearths to shame and need ;
 And girls, once gay, whose poor young lives
 He turned to slav'ry by his greed :

Then will I pity Waugh who sulks,
 That law denies him change of air
 If there's no felon in the hulks,
 To claim what pity's left to spare.

Punch, August 8, 1863.

—————“ Dicique beatus,
 Ante obitum nemo, supremaque funera debet.”

OVIN.

THE Roman poet must of a verity have had a miraculous colonel of the ilk of him who is the subject of these remarks, when he speaks so truly of man's destiny in saying you cannot appraise it till death. To compare reptiles with leviathans, or snails with express locomotives, read Byron's "Ode to the Great Napoleon ;" and mark

the vicissitudes between woe at Campden House, and woe on an eleemosynary stipend of 20s. a week—obtained not without special pleading and difficulty. Reader, who shall prate or prophecy of your last Exodus—or the third Napoleon's—or mine—or his own? It is comparatively easy to write of the Cæsar that was; but who shall tell us the future of the Cæsar Imperial that is?

* * * *

The ups and downs, to use a plain figure of speech, in the life of the subject of our comic satirist's metrical commentary, may possibly have been, and very likely were, apart from his financial vagaries, those of a good and virtuous man. Whatever his shortcomings—and we all have a moral or mental *deficit* somewhere—he certainly effectively carried out, to say the least, one apostolic canon; if he had any sublunary virtue it was conviviality. He was “given to hospitality.” I should fancy he had a huge bump of that organ, somewhere protruding out of his cranium.

His exploits were so remarkable, his career so chequered, and on the whole the characteristics of his case so abnormal, that I must fain include his case in a gallery of

heroes, whose worthy or unworthy lot it has been to make a sensation among us—and to have been at least the subject of one or more leading articles of the *Times*, and other journals.

Disraeli, in one of his early romances, tells us that a man must either be born with “talent or a million.” Certainly the great political luminary who has *successfully* played so many parts (excluding, however, his celebrated tournament with O’Connell *calidâ juventâ*) has made *his* talent, one way and the other, worth the interest of a million!

Waugh’s talent—if it did not amount to genius—was of another order. I presume he passed through the subaltern grades which lead to the dignity of Colonel, without provoking, one way or the other, much comment, or doing any one thing by way of omission or commission to particularly distinguish him from the common herd of men who frequent the Army and Navy, or United Service, Clubs, or who soar like Dædalus into the regions of the Carlton. Well, our “honest old soldier” (*non meus hic sermo*) is reported to have retired into private life on an income of some £400 a

year ; which, I am credibly informed, a certain Scotch widow, with a native sagacity worthy of Caledonia in her palmy days, considered a “fairly decent competence,” provided it was paid regularly every quarter. I am not aware, nor is it of much consequence to inquire, whether or no the gallant and retired “old soldier” ever saw much service ; but I daresay he may have helped to “roll the thunders of Assaye,” or fought at some equally great battle. Some one paraphrases Demosthenes in singing—I am told it is not Hudibras, but it is after that great master—

“He who fights and runs away,
Will live to fight another day ;
But he who is in battle slain
Will never rise to fight again.”

I am positively certain this does not apply to the Colonel under notice, nor to any other Anglo or Indian colonel ; for British pluck does not incline military men, or even civilians, in that direction. But it would seem, whatever the amount of his martial prowess, the Colonel had retired into private life and softly subsided upon what he intended to be rose leaves and laurels. He had married, rumour used to say—but it may be rumour was mendacious, magnified matters,

or knew nothing about it—a wife with means. I do not for one minute say the Colonel was a fortune-hunter; but there are men in the three favourite professions—black, blue, or scarlet—who, relying on their supposed good looks, their good fortune or luck, their Corinthian birth, or their brass worthy of Corinth, determine on making a connubial *coup d'état* part of a strategic system. They covet a something very desirable, the possession of a secured domain in a ring fence. I suppose if in this case it were so (as to the ring fence), the lady's means were secured, and no doubt the trustees had taken (as prudent men of the world should take) very good care that the funds comprised in the parchment deed, settled by careful counsel, and prepared for such by experienced solicitors, should be all right.

Those better versed than I profess to be in such mysteries, inform me these instruments (since mankind have all more or less taken to limited companies, to be directors, or to dabble with shares) can be legally framed so as to exonerate the fund in trust from the engagements, or even possible bankruptcy, of the intended husband. So it is plainly advisable, and obviously politic,

to make—to use a sporting phrase—for a speculative man, a hedge against adversity. This was, or might have been, if duly inserted, as the sequel showed, a useful clause. If they did not do so, it was their own fault, or that of their advisers learned in the law of England. I just, *en passant*, throw out the suggestion for the benefit of future butterflies of enterprise and fashion, remembering that the *Times* leader, from which I have quoted, observes with much point (it reminds me of the adage, “faint heart,” &c.), “If a man would prey upon his fellows, audacity seems to be the only requisite for temporary success.”

The interest of the fund so settled (if there were any such fund) and the £400 a year, would no doubt have very comfortably maintained the conjugal Waughs and their olive branches (if they had any) in respectability and comparative affluence. They might have taken up their domicile in almost any part of Great Britain. They might have blazed among the minor luminaries of Bath—they might have been conspicuous at Cheltenham—they might have launched into the dissipations of Leamington. But *est modus in rebus*.

There is a sort of colloquial talk about the difficulty of driving a gig, or writing a leading article ; but it is far easier to do the one or the other than to emulate the easy-going opulence of a Rothschild with the interest of a marriage settlement (supposing there was one) and a Scotch widow's jointure provision. The ex-miles was, however, an audacious pioneer. Like Cæsar, *nil actum reputans, si quid superesset agendum*. Had he only been a small adventurer he would in all human probability have feebly and sordidly failed—men would merely have sneered and sneezed at microscopic speculations, while they fell prostrate before, and grovelled at, and absolutely all but adored, a gigantic programme. Its proportions were princely—certainly imposing, and one might have said portentous. *Omne ignotum pro mirifico*. *Non meus hic sermo*, but a true narrative.

It seems there are—somewhere in the fox-hunting county of Dorset—a few “dirty acres” of land surrounded by tidal water, and consequently, in strict accordance with geographical definitions, dignified by the name of Branksea “Island.” Our “honest old soldier” (*non meus, &c.*) very naturally

coveted the position of landowner, and the somewhat fading tradition of those feudal honours the possession of the earth's soil in England is supposed to convey. The purchase-money is stated in the *Times* to have been only £15,000. By the way, the hereditaments included the ruins of a castle, with possibly legends enough to have added another flight to the soaring fancy of the hero of Cervantes.

It is all very well for the *Times* to call it a "mud bank" (see article, August, 1863), but I have no doubt it was and is a desirable property; a "happy valley," whither the Rasselas of military life might have retired (like Thackeray, *post tot discrimina tutus*) amid the bleak undulating hills of a cold county. Some cynic tells us, "if you want to find out the value of money, try to borrow some," and this was the gordian knot the "old soldier" had to cut. It is a matter of history—with all the piquancy of romance—the consummate success with which he effected the operation. Earl Russell's alleged capabilities as to commanding the Channel Fleet, or performing a most formidable operation was nothing to it! It seems, this transaction, with all

its consequences to its unfortunate shareholders, brought him into connection with the London and Eastern Banking Corporation; whither, good brother that he was! he had gone on some monetary business for his sister. Closeted with the manager, he seems, according to the *Times*, to have dilated in glowing terms on the capabilities of the Dorset islet. What an acquisition—such a sanguine enthusiast of visionary property—the man would have been to the late George Robins, had he been content to earn his £300 a-year thus modestly! He boldly stated that the dirty acres in Dorset, surrounded by tidal water, for which he was to give £15,000, were really worth £70,000!* *Argutæ præmia linguæ.* “Gift of soft sawder!” He seems in a brief space of time to have become, *inter alia*, as the lawyers have it, a director, and thus he was exalted upon a pedestal whence he might, by his adroit and personal leverage, materially influence the advances of the whole corporation. It suited not, however, the prompt and “rough” character of our “honest old

* See *Times*.

soldier"—true to the traditions of his class in being "short, sharp, and decisive"—to have to beat about the bush, or cool his heels in the vestibules of supercilious money-lenders, for a miserable bagatelle—a little matter of £15,000 sterling. So it would appear—if it were not true, a romance-writer would only qualify for St. Luke's by writing it—that a duly certified (very) civil engineer was found to affix his name to what I believe is called a "specification," that the "dirty acres" in Dorset, surrounded by water, were an improvement in point of value on Cariboo and California; and that, too, on almost the *Home* Circuit, and, as it were, in a compact water-fence. The substratum of the "dirty" acres was ALUM; and was not "alum," any day of the week, worth all the faded charm of a like weight in gold? The product of the Branksea (qy. Bankruptcy?) islet was henceforth to do everything short of paying off the National Debt, or liquidating in specie the Confederate bonds. At any rate it was a circulating medium that Miles passed off very efficaciously. This man of alum, then, took Campden House on lease, and London by storm. He astonished (and it is no

easy matter) West End upholsterers by the prodigal nature of his orders for furniture, and he startled out of their repose the upper ten thousand (nor is this a more facile performance) by the ostentatious magnitude of his expenses, and the fabulous brilliancy of his entertainments. What BLONDIN (poor fellow, I am sorry *he* has come to grief, for it seems his wit in making a fortune was inferior to his judgment in keeping it) was on the high rope, Waugh was at the banquet-table. They were *Arcades ambo*, both in their way loftily grand performers before the public. Each in their own way *sui generis*. I do not admire, though honest and wonderful in its way, sensational rope-walking. When I went to the Crystal Palace to see Blondin walk from the middle transept—gazed at by thousands of *lorgnettes*, and the upturned gleam of those myriad eyes—it would have given me an enduring sentiment of horror had I seen him falling, as fatally as Lucifer did morally. But his demise could only have injured himself, his wife, his child. But I more strongly deprecate the Colonel's doings; his extravagant orgies, given by a military Amphytrion with money borrowed

from a bank of which he was director—a bank, which, under his partial directorate, came to “grief,” causing, as the *Times* has it, “The ears of the nation to be filled with the wail of its victims.” His example, short, sharp, and decisive as it was, undoubtedly is a dangerous precedent in a commercial country like this, when we read of a man raising £144,000 hard cash on a Dorset islet, no doubt a good sort of property, but for which the consideration money was £15,000—and himself—again observe—a director of the advancing corporation!

Be this as it may, there stands the fact in its native verity. I have already referred to and quoted Victor Hugo on “success.” Waugh was its incarnation. The *élite* of the world—the quintessence of patrician London—raved and rallied round the man who was reported to be even richer than King Hudson, in his most palmy of palmy days. The dinners he gave were only equalled (to draw another parallel between *London and Rome*) by the prodigality of Vitellius. Great ladies petted the Colonel, as they did the afore-said monarch of the rail. The nearest approach to his gorgeous orgies was the

Imperial hospitality at Fontainebleau. To sum up, he was about the best personification of Midas concerning whom we have any veracious chronicles; and his chronicles—are they not written, with all the immortality of the Historian Thucydides, in the annals of Printing House Square? He never (voluntarily) left

“The goblet brimmed with every costly wine,
And all that mote to luxury invite.”

He had the best of *chefs*: his plate was not unworthy of the Kensington Museum, or a conqueror's *buffet*. The stately livery—the tall stature of the lackeys; the odour of almost priceless flowers; the truly English beauty of the women; and the birth—the *sang azur*—of the men. Those varied lamps of nightly illumination—the *Persici apparatus* which Horace hated—added by their combined *entourage* glory to, alas, the since fire-gutted Campden House!

FINIS CORONAT OPUS.

Daily Telegraph, March 29, 1865.

(Before Mr. Commissioner Goulburn.)

RE WILLIAM PETRIE WAUGH.—This bankrupt, with whose name, as Colonel Waugh, the public is familiar,

appeared before the Court to-day, and applied for his certificate under the Act of 1849. He was described as of Branksea Island, Dorset, and also of Little Abingdon Street, and 10 Upper Grosvenor Street, brick and tile maker, also trading under the style and firm of the "Branksea Clay and Pottery Company." The balance-sheet, prepared by Mr. Charles Brown, discloses the following figures, viz.—Dr.: to unsecured creditors, £58,257; creditors holding security, £260,343; creditors to be paid in full, £31; profit on trading account, £5,967; statement of affairs, surplus, October 1, 1852, £8,577; total, £333,177. Cr.: by debtors, £1,165; property in hands of creditors, £185,281; trade expenses, £4,123; sundries (including legal and professional expenses, commissions, interest, discount, gifts, donations), £51,069; farm expenses, £11,536; losses, £24,095; Mrs. Waugh's jointure account, £3,594; church account, £7,256; domestic and personal, £44,555; cash balance, £500; total, £333,177.

Mr. Sargood, for the bankrupt, applied for his certificate.

Mr. Linklater, in representing the assignees, took occasion to refer to the period at which the adjudication was pronounced, also to the circumstance of Colonel Waugh leaving England for Spain, and the proclamation of outlawry which followed. He also alluded to the bankrupt, as was alleged, returning to this country to surrender, which resulted in his arrest by the official liquidator of the Eastern Banking Corporation. With regard to the estate, Branksea Island had been sold for about £30,000, which was less than the amount for which it was mortgaged. Then he (Mr. Linklater) found that the furniture and articles of virtu at Branksea and Hyde Park, which were estimated at £39,500, realised by sale about £8,000. Altogether, with the carriages and horses, and such like, the total cost of what might be termed the personal and domestic expenses, capable of disposition, reached the sum of £90,000. However, the most had been done towards realising the estate, and he was now instructed by the assignees to offer no further opposition to the bankrupt obtaining his certificate, his clients thinking that the twelvemonth's imprisonment which he (the bankrupt) had undergone was a sufficient punishment for the wrongs he had committed.

His Honour said, under these circumstances, he would grant the certificate applied for, which would be of the third class.

Certificate accordingly.

The court was very crowded during the proceedings, and the case appeared to excite much public interest.

Who shall say we do not live in extraordinary days of speculation? "After Derby," said a notable peer, "the deluge." Well, after bankruptcy—a certificate.

So moons wax and wane, and this "best of all possible worlds" wags on!

COURT OF BANKRUPTCY, *Basinghall Street, April 29.*

IN RE COLONEL WAUGH.—An announcement was made this morning that Colonel William Petrie Waugh, formerly one of the directors of the London and Eastern Banking Corporation, and who very recently obtained his certificate of conformity under an old failure, had again been adjudicated a bankrupt. It would appear that shortly after the final sitting Colonel Waugh was arrested at the suit of one of his own servants, in respect of a debt contracted pending the former proceedings, and being without the means of payment he was conveyed to his old quarters in Whitecross Street. In his petition he is described as of 17 Gloucester Crescent, Camden Town, in the county of Middlesex, agent, and of Whitecross Street prison, in the city of London, a prisoner for debt. No statement of liabilities has yet been filed, but they are believed to amount to about £2,400.

Times, May 2, 1865.

THE TENANT OF FELBRIGGE HALL.

CHAPTER II.

LUNACY.

“De Lunatico inquirendo.”

“Quorsum hæc tam pulida tendent.”

PENSTUS.

“People will dwell upon the marvellous trial which occupied a month of solid time: which absorbed the revenue of years: which elicited the eloquence and acumen of able advocates: which rivetted the public attention, in spite of all its sickening tedium, through half the winter. * * * Now—whether Wyndham return to his wallowings in the sensual mire, or whether he find his way back to Felbrigge, sadder and wiser, to count how much the lawyers and harlots have left him of wealth and health—the principle at least is asserted for which we touched all this pitch at risk of defilement. Folly is bad, but it is not mad: sin may be frenzied in its degree, and the right of punishment yet be vested in Nature and her laws.”—*Daily Telegraph*, Jan. 31, 1862.

THIS so called *cause célèbre*—I should write it *cause infame*—is but another verification in point of our motto, that “truth is stranger than fiction.” It is certainly no romance at all; it is a very disagreeable, nay, disgusting, reality. Reform has done much in our day for the law courts; it

has ventilated the ermine-ridden halls of the Court of Chancery. Men who have not yet passed Dante's "half-way house of life" have—tell it not to the mis-doubting shade of the great and grim Eldon, whisper it not in the east-wind-affected corridors of "Bleak House"—seen the end of an equity suit, and actually enjoyed some of the estate, and contrived to spend a little of the money. The mode of dealing with real property is somewhat simplified, though Lord Westbury's great and comprehensive registration scheme finds little favour with the conservative policy of conveyancers, and the wise gentlemen of Lincoln's Inn.

The court so ably organised by the late Sir Cresswell Cresswell has removed matrimonial squabbings from two subordinate jurisdictions, with an *ultimatum* at the House of Lords, to what seemed to be a land of promise for the divorce of pauperdom; viz., a court which is becoming day by day and trial by trial more and more expensive; though perhaps even yet less costly than the cumbrous machinery of three tribunals. It nevertheless has its litigious *clientèle*, who, with a perseverance only second to

religious quarrels, extend their domestic revelations over many days, and prove (by the aid of counsel) their mutual lives to be—after the fashion of French novels—of the earth, very earthy. Well, all we can say is, a ten days' trial in one court is better than thirty days before three conjugal judges. However this may be (and I shall add a few remarks under the heading of divorce), a master in lunacy has what Sergeant Buzfuz—in the famous Pickwick trial, *apropos* of Sam Weller's situation—calls, “plenty to eat and little to do.”

All things are relative. One man considers a county court judgeship, or the post of stipendiary magistrate, the *ne plus ultra* of his aspirations. Probably a Cairns or a Palmer could despise, as Bethell did, a puisne judgeship. *Non cuivis*. For the calibre of the men who aspire to it, it is a “fat” appointment—that sort of dignified recompense Government has to bestow upon an old and tried supporter. And the mantle of its honours never fell on a more amiable worthy man than the author of “The Diary of a Physician,” and “Ten Thousand a Year.” But how does the thing work? Given, an ill-educated—

(what he might have learnt at Eton would have saved him :—

“ *Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse ferus* ”—

headstrong, wayward, impetuous, yet weak youth ; led about by every blast of new doctrine, or the counsel of the last interested speaker. Let him be known to be rich—more than suspected of being generous—and suppose him to be thought what the Gauls call a “ milch cow,” with cash acres and rent roll in exactly inverse ratio to his cerebral development ; let him be clearly and confessedly eccentric—given to go about his pursuits and pleasures unlike other people—suppose he affect the company of the myrmidons of Bow Street, and have a more than sneaking fondness for the uniform of a railway guard ; let him stray, like other prodigals, about the purlieus, now perhaps somewhat purged, of the Haymarket ; let him make strange noises, after the manner of much-quoted Squire Western ; let him cultivate a taste for driving coaches and taking half-crowns from easy-going passengers ; let him fill his chambers with all the expensive lumber that the West End

kingdom of credit, "writing down something in a book," as Theodore Hook has it, will cart into the rich man's household with such disinterested complacency; let him "cap" all this pernicious folly by espousing a bride of dubious antecedents, and let the sayings and doings of his married life out-Herod his *en garçon* exploits. Well, the next of kin, who are naturally, and morally, and very properly shocked at these hairbrained proceedings, are sorry for the young man, thus spending his substance in riotous living; so they, sensibly enough, looking at matters by the light of their own worldly prudence and matter-of-fact wisdom, aver that their young relative, "must be mad;" and, in our day, when, as the lawyers say, the estate will bear it—in other words, where the silly prodigal is possessed of a fine landed property, with contingencies "looming in the future," they can, it seems, put in motion all the costly machinery of the suit *De lunatico inquirendo* before a master in lunacy. *Means* will fee advocates and counsel. *Means* will elicit (here again in the witness-box) the cunning deductions of monomaniac experts—those dangerous casuists who profess to explain, as it were,

by a sliding scale, the eccentricities of imagination and the abnormal vagaries of mankind! *Means* will lubricate the wheels of the private inquiry office; will enable salaried spies who print their whereabouts in the *Times*, to hunt up a garbled farrago of filthy gossip for the consideration of the Lords Justices of Appeal. Having obtained affidavits—conscientious enough, no doubt, on the part of the appellant, but cruelly *ex parte* as against the defendant—they drag the matter into Court. The cause is heard before a tribunal of illimitable power, but subordinate (as regards the standing of the judge) direction. Forensic eloquence, and the interminable production of witnesses from all parts of Europe, prolong the cause, in fact, almost indefinitely. It is sport to *Nisi Prius*—death to their quarry, bankruptcy to his prospects. After this monstrous exposure there should surely be a change in the administration of our jurisprudence in the imputation of wealthy lunacy. *This* prodigal of property, mind you, *narrowly escaped the monotonous* repose of a private asylum. However profligate our future spendthrifts may be, there should be stronger ground than in a case like this, for

the enormous confiscation of their estate, and its huge partition among lawyers and witnesses to fight the battle of possible inheritors, and arbitrate the "to be or not to be" of transparent folly and stark staring madness. Who, with any experience of town, could not tell of many cases of rich men committing *mésalliances* with those "dangerously dear" enchantresses whose domicile is "under the shade of St. John the Evangelist?"* But I never heard that matrimony (however near prudes may think it borders on moral insanity) with a pretty horsebreaker was a leading link in a chain of evidence all but rendering a commission *de lunatico* absolute. To instance one example; Lola Montes, † *soi-disant* Spaniard, but really the truant of a Clifton school, broke as many hearts as horses. The case, unless reporters err, came before the police magistrates, but I never heard that Mr. H., though a man of

* This subject is treated more fully in Book V.

† Lola Montes eloped, when a girl of about sixteen years, from a boarding school at Clifton. She fled without a bonnet some two miles or so, escorted by Mr. James, to whom she was afterwards married. They went to India, and as might be expected, repented of their *escapade* "at leisure." This the author *knows* to be an accurate account of her *début*.

fortune, by reason of his attempted marriage was pilloried before an Ex-Q. C. in lunacy!

As it was, but for the splendid exertions and "severely classic" peroration of Sir Hugh Cairns, the next of kin might have prevailed over the tenant of Felbrigge Hall. It will be much too bad if, on such comparatively light grounds (as compared with the power and consequences conveyed by the mighty *fiat* of a commission), so gross a slime-bequeathing scandal be again allowed to leave its trail behind it.

A Dublin correspondent to the *Belfast News Letter* furnishes a graphic sketch of Mrs. Windham, *née* Agnes Willoughby. He writes:—Although that *cause célèbre*—the Windham lunacy inquiry—has occupied so much of the attention of the public, I have not, as yet, seen the fact mentioned in any of our journals that the heroine of the "romance"—as it is most inappropriately termed by the London papers—was a constant attendant at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, during the series of operatic performances, at the close of the month of September last, in which Signor Giuglini and Madame Titiens were the "particular stars." I have read no description of the syren who bewitched the owner of Fellbrigge Hall. I would fain supply, by a hasty pen and ink sketch, the want of the photograph which the jury were not fortunate enough to see. 'Twas Saturday night; the house was crowded from the pit, the region of critics, to the gallery, "the abode of the happy gods," to hear the latest creation of Verdi's genius, *Un Ballo in Maschera*. In the second act, during the singing of the beautifully voiced terzetto, *Consentimi O Signore*, the attention of the fashionables in the boxes was attracted by the entrance of a party into the right-hand stage box on the "first tier." A young lady, a decided *blonde*, with deep blue eyes, and a pro-

fusion of bright, fair, wavy hair, simply but elegantly arranged, advanced to the front of the box with a rather *prononcé* air. She was of middle height, and her features were intelligent—*piquante* and pretty rather than handsome. She stood for a moment at the box front, and as her eyes “of heaven’s own tint”—Saint Kevin would probably think “of most unholy blue”—glanced confidently round the house, an attendant removed from her shoulders a black velvet mantle trimmed with magnificent sables, which even a Russian millionaire might have envied. Her fan and bouquet—of choicest flowers—being duly deposited on the cushion, she turned round, ere she took her seat, and displayed to the best advantage, certainly, one of the most exquisitely fitting dresses I have ever seen. Her figure is remarkably good, and shown by her dress of rich white silk, made *a la Raffaele*, and cut square, rather low, and but half concealing a very fair well-shaped bust, and revealing a beautifully-rounded arm. Confining her hair, which she wore in a plain, full, broad braid or band, was a coronet of sky-blue velvet, ornamented with diamond stars. Her necklace, earrings, brooch, and bracelets were of diamonds, with a radiance so brilliant as almost to light up her graceful figure. These were, doubtless, some of the jewels purchased at the cost of £14,000 for the enchantress. Many were the inquiries, “Who is the lady in the stage box?” By and by ’twas whispered round the house, “Her name is Windham; she is very wealthy; is a frequent denizen of that stage box during the present engagement.”

She certainly made herself completely at home, and took care, while arranging her chair so as to command a view of the stage, the sheen of her diamonds should not fail to dazzle—and doubtless, fill with envy—our Irish maids and matrons, who would not, indeed, have envied her had they but known all. Anon, with pleasing *abandon*, she leaned on the dark velvet cushion, and thus adroitly accomplished the double purpose of displaying the whiteness of her well-turned arm and the varying brilliance of the valuable gems which adorned it. Occasionally she changed her position, walked across the box, entered into an animated conversation with a gentleman, apparently a military man, who accompanied her and seemed to discuss the merits of some jewels of

price—if we may judge from the vari-coloured light they reflected—which she produced from her portmonnaie. Your correspondent often thought of her “most labour-some and dainty tiara,” of her *espièglerie*, and spoke of her *ensemble* as being evidently that of a remarkable person long before he heard of the fair “Agnes Wyloughby” of the endless Windham case. In good truth, she is one well calculated, *primâ facie*, to turn wiser heads than Windham’s. There is one personal charm in which, I understand, she is defective, and that is, in not possessing a voice “sweet and low”—that “most excellent gift in woman”—and of the power of which delightful quality the “blind old bard of Scio’s rocky Isle” sang in tuneful accents 2,000 years ago, when he told how the sweet-voiced Helen led captive old men and stern warriors, as she addressed them in winged words most musical. But now I must stop, or your readers will deem me one of those bewitched by “the pretty horsebreaker,” and it might end in some interested relative instituting “a writ *de lunatico inquiringendo*,” and thus stopping for ever the lucubrations of your Dublin correspondent. But fear not—

Brachia et vultum teretesque suras,
Integer lando ; fuge suspicari.

I really do not see anything suggestive of insanity in a man marrying a syren of this description ; I could name more than one peer who “has gone and done likewise.”

THE DIVORCE COURT.

CHAPTER III.

“LOTHARIO *v.* BEATRICE.”

—“uxorem, Posthume ducis ?”

JUVENAL.

MACAULAY tells us, among other things, in his introduction to his great book, that in adverting to the ordinary incidents of every-day life, he shall not, in his opinion, be descending from the “dignity of history.” So in like manner, when the annals of England during the nineteenth century shall come to be written—as, if the world last long enough, is sure to be the case—by an historian who may possibly date from some flourishing “Modern Athens” in the New World—say in the district of Cariboo, or in the now wilds of Tasmania—he will assuredly find no more remarkable social revolution than that brought about in the inner life of England by the operations of the Divorce Court; and the sayings and doings, virtues

and vices, of not a few of the husbands and wives of Great Britain will certainly present to the future Hume some most grave reflections on the manners and habits of a people. Nothing strikes me as more remarkable than that since the Act relating to divorce has received the Royal Assent, almost every—and even the best regulated—newspaper, *details sworn facts we used to think outré in Balzac's novels.*

There has always been in our happy land, a royal road by which a very wealthy man could put away from him a convicted adulteress. By royal road, I do not mean, however, the precedent made by bluff King Hal — or Bluebeard, as the burly Henry VIII. is sometimes called—but I refer to the House of Lords; for, till the Act of the 20 & 21 Vict., our hereditary lawgivers could alone finally dissolve the marriage tie. When we got a verdict there, we could—like Earl Russell—“rest and be thankful.” This in the good old times, was one of the privileges of “long descent” or great opulence. We are apt to boast now, as in the days of Homer, “that we are wiser than our progenitors;” and certainly it is very difficult to see the reason why a man should secure,

for, say £2,000, what it was morally impossible he should obtain, unless he could somehow raise that sum. It was, with a vengeance, one law for the rich, another for the poor; the one could repudiate an adulteress and marry again, the other was hopelessly and inexorably hampered to a harlot, till her death or his own. It was a curious and cumbrous proceeding, slow, costly, and expensive; and, next to a *Chancery* suit, in Lord Eldon's day, the best thing going for the family solicitor. Not long before the introduction of, so to speak, free trade in matrimonial dissolution, or a divorce court for the million (so at least its advocates professed it would be), one of our judges from the bench delivered himself of a most withering sarcasm at the expense of the then law which regulated such matters.

There was some wretched prisoner arraigned before him for having committed the crime of bigamy; it was sought to be shown in extenuation of the offence that the poor fellow had been first united to a low-lived Zantippe, who, to the graces or disgraces of the shrew, superadded a vile passion for drink, with a taste for adultery which

she lost no opportunity of indulging in ; her conduct converted her poor Petruchio's home into a perfect Pandemonium. So he may be pardoned for quitting his wife and marrying again—if the condonation of society, in this world, out of Turkey, ever did follow such a thing at all. At any rate the judge took this very rational and common-sense view of the matter. “Prisoner at the bar,” he said, “you have mistaken your course ;” so began his withering sarcasm ; and he then proceeded to tell him how he should have instructed his family solicitor to bring an action for *crim. con.*, and then, having obtained damages against what is now called the co-respondent, he should have instructed a proctor to take proceedings in Doctors' Commons, and thence “moved” the House of Lords, who, from “time to time during pleasure,” would advance the case, and in due course of events, if an overpowering array of facts were presented, annul the marriage. The judge wound up his sentence by incarcerating the bigamist, who had “mistaken his course,” for the term of ONE DAY. No man that I have read of, whatever the *mis-take* may have been as to the *course*, ever

got rid of a base wife so easily, or at so little expense. Nor will he do so in the days of divorce for the million.

The public prints expatiated on this philippic, this sardonic and ultra-judicial sneer at a costly sham. Being reported in prominent type, the glaring anomaly which all the world and his wife admitted, was made more transparent by the keen incisive sentences of the judge referred to. The matter became largely canvassed. It was whispered through the length and breadth of our land, this *animus* of a judge's comment. Abigails prated of it in mincing aspirates below-stairs; repeated it as they plaited my lady's hair; my lady detailed the floating *cancans* (*inter alia*) to her liege lord; my liege lord (peer or commoner) retailed the gossip in clubdom; clubdom re-introduced the matter of cheap divorce into the "circumlocution office;" and so, ultimately, it got into the best club in Europe, and finally—keeping many M.P.'s from early grouse-shooting—divorce for the million became the law of the land. The Act of 20 & 21 Vict. did not pass, as might be expected when religious opinions clash, without opposition.

There is always a party, moreover, whose theory and practice is *quieta non movere*. The action for damages for *crim. con.*, subsequent Proctordom—cool and costly—and the *fiat* of the Painted Chamber, had done very well hitherto. Turtle and venison, consecrated by an unimpeachable *chef*, whose salary is twice the stipend of a curate—hunters in the “Shires,” and a yacht at Ryde—had ever been among the appanages of fortune; and why not add to these undeniable advantages the right to extricate oneself from an Emily Faithless? Money is a well-known ingredient in making marriages, and why was Mammon to be powerless in unmaking? A simple matter of £2,000 could *always* cut the Gordian knot—but the sword to cut it was a patrician weapon that 2,000*s.* could never purchase. (By the way, can it now?) As De Tocqueville told us long ago, the world is steadily converging to democratic theories. Identity of practice in the Divorce Court is another proof that modern Doge-ship and Draconic oligarchy is dying out from among us—so at least said its patrons. Well, the late Sir Cresswell Creswell’s Court was established, and certainly its literature, as detailed in

the daily prints, whatever may be said of "cheapness being nasty," induces some not over creditable reflections on the married life of these "latter days." Couples throughout the length and breadth of the land came forward with the fiery haste of federal volunteers in early days, to narrate their mutual wrongs, and post-nuptial crimination and recrimination became inordinately multiplied in printer's ink. There was, indeed, an idea of signing a "round robin" not to report such details, but editors thought better of it. To get unmarried seemed at first so facile a proceeding that an elderly (young) lady of my acquaintance gravely told me—as exemplified in her own experience—that it was easier by far to get divorced when married, than to marry at all. However, just as our police courts have been seriously referred to by a transatlantic detractor as proving that we are a nation of shopkeepers, so we might with about equal truth be called a nation of physical wife-beaters.

Still the Divorce Court might be cited as showing that the liege lords of England were, in married life, the worst husbands in the world, as Mr. Sala tells us in his

admirable letters about the Americans, that our cousins are the best. Certainly there is not one mean, vile, debasing, or degrading human passion that these trials have not brought to the surface. It would seem as if men and women had contended for the palm of social infamy. Young, middle-aged, and old married debauchees, and single seducers of their familiar friends' wives, have jostled one another on the staircase of degradation. Cruelty, connivance, and condonation have had the changes rung upon them till they have become quite tedious. Like Boileau's poems (according to Byron), "monotony on wire." Wives have cultivated "jagged toe-nails" for their husbands' dormitory oblectation — husbands have flogged their better-halves by way of dragooning the inferior vessel into what wives think, with Hudibras, "a jest"—namely, "passive obedience;" sordid avarice, wanton passions, transparent mendacity, on one side or the other—or more probably on both—forensic licence rarely visited by judicial rebuke, stalk side by side, the familiar spirits of almost every case. There are not a few of these, that in the long array of conjugal infirmities have been

trumpeted to the world, that would "point a moral and adorn a tale"—but I only revert to a curious case, and I do so more especially as it would, from its peculiar features, appear to stand *per se* as something egregiously monstrous, and blacker than its blackest predecessors; and people say, not unlikely to lead to a reconsideration of the law of *cheap divorce for the million!*

A Lothario of forty became enamoured of the person, or purse, of Beatrice. Beatrice, it seemed, had "loved not wisely, but too well;" and not long after her marriage bore a child. Lothario accepted the situation, and became its master, and "all went happy as a marriage *belle*." Beatrice was a votaress of Diana, a first-flight woman in the hunting-field, in brief, a perfect Diana Vernon. It seemed her Lothario had "horsy" tastes, as far as buying and selling horses; he married Beatrice, very principally (apart from her principal, the amount of which he was ignorant of) because she rode well to hounds; it may not be uncharitable to infer he took out a licence to trade in horses, because Beatrice, in the opinion of a dealer, could "show" a horse well. After all, I do not see much in

dealing in horses ; it is little, if at all, worse than becoming a nation of innkeepers, as these illimitably limited Hotel companies are fast making us. If Beatrice had a *specialité* in this "shequestrian" art, why was not it to bring grist to Lothario's mill, or corn for his horses? He had married her for better or worse, and, of course, could make the best of the situation. Well, Beatrice *inter alia* complained of Lothario turning her out of the house with a horsewhip, &c., &c., and the case taking its turn in the court, made some astounding revelations town talk. The trial took ten days—divorce for the million with a vengeance! It was a very "*ab ovis usque ad mala,*" *running down* case—six of one and half-a-dozen of the other, as to hard swearing. It smacked of horses and horsewhips, and was of the horse, horsy. Something was said of the lady smoking (I read or dreamt I read it in the daily prints) a short pipe, with a dealer who made himself quite "comfortable," in those ever-comfortable quarters of a country house, the cosy housekeeper's room. The strange part of the case was, though they lived a very cat and dog life; though he was suspected by

his wife of intriguing with the abigails of the servants' hall; though something was said of "flouring" the stairs, so that Lothario might, when in quest of his paramours, leave his footprints behind him, just as poachers trace hares in snow; though, one might have thought (but then we have not the means of looking to the "settlement" of the settlements), a separation was the best thing for all parties. Whether from the therein *consideration* or otherwise, Lothario did not so consider it. No doubt, if no judge of horses, he was the best judge in this matter. Of course, as to the alleged cruelty, he denied it. Nothing like putting a bold face on the matter.

So Lothario told his solicitor to instruct counsel to plainly say the lady told fibs as well as smoked short pipes. Junius, somewhere in his famous letters, tells us that lawyers live by the indiscriminate defence of right or wrong; and this being so, we cannot blame counsel for trying to make what had an ugly shade of black seem equally white. On a brief, doubtless well refreshed, there was, too, a rather startling theory propounded, that 990 men out of every 1,000 would commit perjury rather

than betray a lady who had intrusted her honour to their keeping. This, however, is a "point reserved," into which I do not enter. But counsel were also instructed to place upon the record really one of the most marvellous pleas we have seen in modern times. Cæsar said his wife must not even be suspected; Lothario, like Gallio, cared for none of these things. What did it matter? He told us in the daily prints, that go trumpet-tongued to the end of the earth **WHAT** he believed his wife to be—he emblazoned her alleged concubinage, and made parade of her (by the jury) not credited shame, and then this chaste Lothario—this immaculate horse-dealer, who probably took out a licence relying on his wife's judgment in "showing" a horse—comes into court rejoicing in his magnificent antlers, makes specific ostentation of his wife's proceedings at Birmingham with one paramour, and infers adultery with another with marvellously little evidence; and, forsooth, because she—the mother of his children—has, to his sworn knowledge or best belief, done these things, he does not say, as any ordinary mortal, or as one not qualifying for St. Luke's would say; as

any one with the spirit of a man would demand, "Release me from a wife who has disgraced me." But he thunders to the world through the press, "*I will still cleave to the Die Vernon who brought me money—who can lead a hunting field, and smoke a short pipe with a dealer who makes himself comfortable in the housekeeper's room—who has left her smelling-bottle in a Birmingham chambre à coucher, and has harboured 'Lescaut' in her wardrobe.*"

* * * *

Well, the jury would not have it, and most people think no new trial will upset their findings. Had the man any lingering affection for his wife? Did he parade her alleged shame, not believing one word of it himself, but to make a case against her? Did it—and it is possible—proceed from "vindictiveness?" Did he determine to have the victim back? Were the marital rights to be re-purchased, like peace by the Quakers, at any price? It is a significant truism, LANGUAGE IS NOT LEGAL CRUELTY. Did Lothario, revengefully inclined, mean to gibber (non-legal) cruelties in his wife's ears during the midnight watches? To traduce her by a name, he,

last and least of all mankind, should employ towards her? To punish her, and make her young life one long-enduring winter, by the bitter taunt and flaunting sneer? To, with renewed assurance, consort with meretricious domestics, and point her out as a convicted adulteress, the minion of his scorn and hatred? So ended the *cause célèbre* of *Beatrice v. Lothario*, and I think the case, from the fact of a man wishing to keep his wife on the averred ground of her alleged duplicate adultery, is unparalleled in the annals of a court famous for prurient details.

THE *modus operandi* OF DIVORCE FOR THE MILLION MUST BE MODIFIED.

YELVERTON.

CHAPTER IV.

“Dare jura maritis.”

HORACE.

THIS case will be the last, though not the least, of the *causes célèbres*, to which I shall advert in these pages. Ireland has ever been famous in her law courts for the exhibition of romantic trials; the last few years especially have introduced many such to our notice. Yelverton's case, after all, came before a civil court of debt, and not before a criminal tribunal for alleged bigamy—a crime which is sometimes committed without, as in Smethurst's case, what are called “extenuating circumstances,” and visited with a longer period of incarceration than twenty-four hours. It, moreover, more or less remotely, and by a contingent train of circumstances, subjected him to the criminal charge of having married two wives, and so imperilling the status of the last wedded, and involving a rather nice, or nasty question, as to the legitimacy of their children; who, whatever Shakespeare may

say to the contrary, have, when able to form a judgment, a natural desire to be considered "honest madam's issue." I believe the gallant Major who has contributed his personal mite, or might, towards making the name of Yelverton famous (Reader, if you do not like that adjective or epithet, or do not consider it sufficiently expressive of that *kudos* to which the military officer is so largely entitled, you can change it, with my full permission, for yourself), hails from that very favoured portion of the earth's surface, called by its liberator,

"First flower of the earth and first gem of the sea."

In the course of nature and presumptive events the "hero of a hundred law fights" may join the bead-roll of Hibernian Peers. In the army, no doubt, he might have said or sung after Horace—

"Vixi puellis nuper idoneus,
Et militavi, non sine gloria."

which may be freely translated—

"Famous alike in lists of love and war,
A glorious warrior and a shining star."

However this may be, his fair fame became associated with an even "stranger

story " than that concocted by the author of Pelham for the amusement and edification of the world. *On dits* had no doubt been freely commented on, with all the additions and subtractions Madame Rumour could repeat, invent, or magnify, yet nevertheless they fell short of the facts. Those facts were marshalled before a Dublin Court of Law. At first sight the question raised seemed rather a *mesquine* one, and would not apparently have justified the high-coloured expectations formed by an impatient and crowded audience, or accounted for the *dramatis personæ* in the shape of a so imposing a bar to support the conflicting interests of either side. The issue was briefly this: *Did or did not the gallant Major owe plaintiff certain monies for the maintenance of the lady who has since written a book entitled, "A MARTYR TO CIRCUMSTANCES?"* By the way, a taking title, but a destiny to which many married and unmarried of either sex are liable! Still it was—has been, if it is not now—in a social point of view, to several proud families a most momentous investigation.

Just as in Warren's famous story of "Ten Thousand a Year," an action of ejectment for an outlying plot of ground virtually decided

the title to the Aubrey property, so the decision of this jury determined (though not without appeal) whether or no the lady had, as the Major's WIFE, any ground for pledging the husband's credit. Had he so sagaciously, so cannily crossed the Rubicon of seduction as not to wet his feet? Had he sailed so close as almost to touch the wind, without capsizing the craft that carried his patrician fortunes? Had he outraged the laws of God and man—played fast and loose with the exceedingly dangerous edged-tool, a Scotch marriage—and nevertheless ruined the lady's future, routed her lawyers, married money, steered clear of bigamy, and found himself happy and honoured ever after?

Every one knows the enthusiasm with which the lady's triumph was received at Dublin—how men hung on the lips of Mr. Whiteside, as, with gleaming eye, upraised arm, and with all the pathos of a perfect orator, he thundered to the world the lady's wrongs and the Major's non-military prowess. Hibernia's sons are fiery and impetuous, and more than others

“What man should ever be,
The friend of beauty in distress.”

* * * * *

And here again were those ardent epistles (ladies surely now-a-days study the word-painting of passionate love) poured forth from the inner life of each, and which many know, as Lord Westbury said the law lords did, "by heart," confessedly displaying talent of a very high order on the part of the lady.

Passing this romance, it certainly does seem strange in our happy united kingdom, when the limited mail will convey Her Majesty's lieges from London to Edinburgh between breakfast and dinner, without much discomfort, or fatigue, or peril (always provided there may be no Müller or maniac for your fellow traveller—in which case you may as well try to arrest the motion of a rotatory planet as the onward progress of the train), that the law of England and the law of Scotland should be at issue on so many points. Marriage in England is at least very properly environed by ceremonial observances; and a man must take his (incomparable) bride-elect, his better half, for better or worse, either before witnesses in a church or chapel, or at any rate, before a properly constituted officer. Down or up north this is not so—it is scarcely safe for

a widower or bachelor to be in company with a spinster or widow for the space of half an hour alone—some one is sure to ask his intentions; and if he kick against the pricks, he is pretty sure to be coaxed or intimidated into matrimony. The gallant Major, however, had ventured into the net, confidently hoping he would succeed in breaking through the meshes, which the lady, but too sanguinely, imagined would hold him in her, or their, toils. The Irish trial was but the “murmuring prelude” to a perfect hurricane of litigation. The name of Yelverton was cursorily mentioned from time to time in our London law courts, but the main *venue* was in Scotland; in an inferior court the cavalier prevailed—a fact that somewhat counterbalanced the Irish defeat—but an appeal was forthwith lodged at a superior tribunal, where, to the joy of universal womanhood, and nine-tenths of mankind, the lady again conquered, thus winning the legal rubber. Accordingly, the “pursuer” (as the plaintiff is called on the other side of the Tweed, in this case somewhat appositely) had the vantage ground. There remained, however, the House of Lords—that last sublunary resort

of vindictive, desperate, or disappointed suitors—and the Yelverton case excited more attention than perhaps any other tried by that august assembly, since the “*non mi ricordo*” exposition of Queen Caroline. We all remember that Court’s decision, in which it was so remarkable that Lords Westbury and Brougham were in a minority, and that these pronounced in favour of Mrs. (Longworth) Yelverton, and that Lords Wensleydale, Chelmsford, and Pemberton declared the alleged previous marriage void. The Tory Ex-Chancellor objected to the opinion of Lord Brougham being read in his absence, so the world lost the advantage of reading the no doubt lucid arguments by which that conclusion was arrived at; the very man, too, so ably versed in Caledonian law. But it was generally felt that the summing up of our brilliant Chancellor was a masterpiece of clear logical deduction.

So apparently ended this remarkable case, in which a lady of position, great talent, and personal accomplishment, fell a victim to the machinations of a man who could only hope to gain his case, by emblazoning that very creditable detail of events which

led to self-acknowledged seduction. We read in the prints there was vast jubilation—bonfires and other civilised or barbarian rejoicings, knocking together of tin pots and cans, and other ululations worthy of Goths, Ostrogoths, Vandals, or Feejee Islanders—over in a wild part of Ireland, in honour of this close shave, and in sympathy towards a man who “had quieted the conscience of the lady” by a mock marriage, in the presence of a priest, and before the altar of the Almighty. However, again, contrary to the voice of the prophets, it seems this senior wrangler of seduction, who slipped in a successful sentence, when he wrote that he was “wedded to a club easy chair,” prevailed. But the world deeply sympathised with the victimised lady, who seemed to find little consolation in the permissive suggestion given her “to marry again.” Were all her labours to culminate in so unsatisfactory a conclusion? Was she to feel, as Byron puts it *apropos* of men’s pursuits,

“Man has all these resources—we but one,
To love again, and be again undone.”

Although I have said that the resort to the House of Lords is the last appeal

upon earth, still it would seem that this indefatigable and inevitable PURSUER has another die to throw—*adhuc sub judice*—down in Scotland. Whether or no, before judgment is extracted, shall this most successful and belauded-in-Ireland-by-his-satellites, man be “examined upon oath?” It is reported in the newspapers that the pursuer’s application is resisted by the Solicitor-General in the Scottish Court of Session, mainly on the ground that the granting the application would require Major Yelverton to answer questions in a way that might subject him to the criminal charge of bigamy, and might imperil the status of his present wife and the legitimacy of their children. It is certainly an awkward dilemma, however it may be decided by the learned judges.

Everyone, now-a-days—it is the fashion of the age—gets a testimonial; it is the rule, and not the exception, for every other curate and dispenser of railway-tickets to be “plated” on leaving for a benefice or better situation. Why not testimonialise Yelverton in and for that he has betrayed a lady to whom he had paid attentions under the roof of a general officer, and who confided her honour—after a marriage in Ireland—to his

keeping; in and for that he astutely floundered through the meshes of the Scotch marriage laws; not, however, without injuring his scale and fins, and becoming a "leviathan" of mark to all time, whether as an officer, husband, or peer? After all, could he have done much better for his happiness than acknowledge his marriage with Miss Longworth?

NOTE.—All England hears with universal sympathy that this lady is seriously ill. Alas! is it a case of desperation, alluded to in Goldsmith's lines, ending thus:—

“ To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom, is to die.”

A CHAPTER.
DE RE "VAMPIRE."

THE circumstance of the publication of these papers having been from one cause and another somewhat delayed, suggests to their editor the notion of making a few remarks about the bird, beast, or biped, termed a "vampire." This anomalous ogre is socially described as a "monster," that flaps its huge wings, thereby inducing a sort of placid and deadly lethargy, during which the victim has all or many Elysian dreams, like those of the opium-eater, exceedingly pleasant while they last, but suggestive of much counter-irritation, or psychological reaction. Some commentators (*Buffoon*) among us, term the vampire, or creature of prey, a kite; they say its talents or talons belong rather to the kestral tribe; not indeed the royal and soaring eagle, but that ignominious *bas étage* of the falcon family, that gathers round inodorous carcasses. Virgil described his poetical conception thus:—

"Monstrum, horrendum ingens cui lumen ademptum."

Now KING KITE is generally supposed, and I believe without much poetic fancy, to have the two eyes demanded by "popular prejudice," and to have the knack of keeping these optics pretty wide awake to the main chance. In fulfilling the traditional task of "blood-sucking," or preying kite-like or vampire-like on the vital blood of his victims, he frequently exhibits talents that would make him worthy to be a disciple of *Æsculapius*. The class, after the manner of Boz's *Nickleby*, are heirs of the ark in its civilised state, at once the fawning slaves, parasites, and high priests of luxury. They have their peculiar mission, like the spider. Both occasionally toil, both spin webs for flies and butterflies, insects of air and the butterflies of Mayfair. To be sure, there is this difference and distinction; the spider catches flies, because it is its nature; spiderdom must live, but vampiredom or kitedom must do more than live; kitedom must have its *cuisine*, its *chef*; kitedom's womankind must have their acres of crinoline, their 50-guinea *bouquets*; kitedom's *confrères* must have port worth three guineas a bottle. Well, it is not a question of, "What will he do with it?" but

rather, how he is to get it. It is no romance, but a reality; 600 per cent. is a good hedge against the death of a man of 36 in health—the calculation is found to pay on a large scale. Nothing so good as a *forged acceptance*, known to be *forged*. Somehow this sort of apparently fragile security is sure to be “taken up;” here the discounter is never “taken in.” Come the worst to the worst, prodigal must go in for “the fatted calf;” and the governor, who has probably a batch of daughters to marry, would rather write a cheque on Coutts than see his hopeful progeny in a criminal dock! There are I believe three ways (till the good time coming, when they prate of altering the law) by which you can proceed against your brother, when you think he slanders you; if you are a “prince, potentate, or peer,” or otherwise recognised big-wig, you can move the Court of Queen’s Bench for a rule *nisi*, to show cause why a criminal information should not issue. “Argus,” of the *Morning Post*, tried to thus obtain a rule *re ve* some doggrel lines. I believe, however, that he failed, the judges considering that the doggrel was not worth the “wax candles.” You can pillory your slanderer criminally,

and so, unless he can what is called justify, or prove the exact truth of all his allegations, you can win your cause without being liable to any personal queries, which might possibly be of a nature (such is the license of counsel), to provoke those calm philosophical and philanthropical sentiments, which every man except OILY GAMMON lays claim to. Or you may succeed—if you have sufficient attributes of the *preux chevalier*—who I take to be the modern volunteer, you may bring your case forward by a civil action, where in other words, so to speak, you wager the stakes of costs and damages on the *fiat* of a jury, subject to the little amenities of “points reserved,” inevitable bills of costs, possibly “bills of exception.”

The moral of this is leave “kitedom” well alone—it is not a pleasant thing for a fisherman to put his hand in the mouth of a large pike—a winged bittern is sometimes dangerous to the eyes of the sportsman’s spaniel—an *uxor* is not always *placens* to a husband caught *flagranti delicto*—a leaky craft, and a lee shore, with breakers ahead, is not an agreeable prospect—but all or any of these “miseries of human life,”

are better than an action with a large-balance having capitalist, of shrewd brains, and a capital *locus standi* in his profession.

Well, dear Vampire, adieu.

“Donec eris, felix, multos numerabis amicos.”

While “flats” are born every minute, and you have money to lend, you will be happy, and no man will dare to say a word against you. As for the snared fly challenging the spider to single combat, it is too absurd—as well might a “viper bite against the file,” or Labienus tilt against Cæsar.*

Ave Kitedom.

* (“Le propos de Labienus.”) This discourse of Labienus is the most severe satire on Julius Cæsar administered in modern times. It ends thus: “The book of Cæsar is the costume of the condemned criminal; it is the greeting, or *moriturus te saluto*, of the pinioned victim to the mob, as he walks to the scaffold. It is the desire of admiration on the last day. Cæsar was so dirty that Calcraft would have none of him; he washes his face a little to embrace death.”—“Le livre de Césâr c’est la toilette du condamné, c’est le salut du supplicié à la foule, en marchant au supplice. C’est la coquetterie du dernier jour. Césâr était si sale que le Courreau n’en eût pas voulu; il se débarbouille un peu pour embrasser la mort.”

BOOK THIRD.

Chapter I.—Constance Kent at the Confessional.

Chapter II.—Pelizzoni.

Chapter III.—Secret Poisoners and Poisoning.

Chapter IV.—A West Country Suicide and Coroners' Inquests.

Chapter V.—Ticket of Leave, *alias* A Passport to Plunder.

CONSTANCE EMILIE KENT.

CHAPTER I.

CONSTANCE KENT AT THE CONFESSIONAL.

“And, oh! that pang, where more than Madness lies
 The worm that will not sleep, and never dies;
 THOUGHT of the gloomy day and ghastly night,
 That dreads the darkness and yet loathes the light,
 That winds around and tears the quiv’ring heart!
 Ah! wherefore not consume it and depart?”

“Years all winters.”

BYRON.

“Quis se quoque fugit?”

HORACE.

“There is a mystic spell
 That bids me *write*, although my lips rebel
 ’Gainst e’en Religion’s sealed Confessional;
 The voice of Conscience urges from within
 These dark upheavings of unheard-of sin;
 I cannot quell the masterless behest
 That bids me cleanse that charnel-house, my
 breast!”

“The Parricide.”

HOW THE ROAD MURDER WAS COMMITTED.—“The perpetrator of this deed being still unknown, we cannot represent the murderer otherwise than as an ‘impersonal figure.’ It may be that soon after midnight this figure, whose apparition will henceforth be associated with the spot until the memory of the crime shall have faded away, emerged from its apartment or place of con-

cealment, to execute the fell purpose of destruction on which it was resolved. With cautious and measured steps it moves to and fro upon the landing, to assure itself that all is still, and that no impediment exists to baulk or stay the execution of the murderous design. Slowly and stealthily it wends its way down the staircase, through the kitchen, where a knife is seized. On, through the back door, to the small building hidden behind the trees. Here the arrangements are deliberately made, and the sharp weapon of death is laid down ready for use. Returning the same way, the figure re-enters the house, re-ascends the stairs, again lingers on the landing, and crouches at each chamber door with eager attention. Hearing only the breathings of deep slumber, it opens the nursery-door, peers in and around, and noiselessly enters the room. The child sleeps in his cot; the nurse sleeps soundly too. Without fear of discovery, without question of accounting easily for being found there if the inmates should awake, the murderer approaches the cot, and, burning with a deep and cherished revenge, glares upon the victim as he sleeps. The unconscious child, half-waking, half-asleep, is lifted up, and is folded in the blanket, which had been first withdrawn. Unobserved, the figure steals out of the room, and draws the door together. The prey is now within the serpent's coil. There is no sound of alarm; no obstacle exists to frustrate the murderous intent. Down the staircase, bearing the fated innocent, the figure glides. A second time it treads its way in the twilight of a summer's night, past the dog, who barks, and hears a well-known whisper, and shrinks back into his kennel, on towards that secluded corner of the garden where the unfrequented closet is concealed under the shadow of the yew-trees. Its door is opened, passed and closed again upon the murderer and the victim. The child, still wrapped unconscious in the blanket, is laid down. The blanket's folds are raised; the knife gleams forth; the deed is done. It is a short and terrible drama. There is a pause; the muscles shudder and contract; and the limbs are drawn up, and stiffen in the agony of death. In an instant the knife is thrust into the side with the same ferocity with which the cat is seen to pounce again upon, and to mangle its quivering and dying prey. Then all is still. And now the body,

folded closer in the blanket, is forced through the opening in the closet seat, but not into the vault beneath, for the obstruction of a board prevents its descent out of sight. The murderer retires. Craftily and completely every trace of guilt is cleared away, and suspicion only tracks the retiring footsteps. Whether the mysterious figure re-entered the house to wait for and to watch the results of the foul deed, or wandered away elsewhere to indulge the emotions of a gluttoned revenge for some real or fancied wrong, must for the present remain a matter of simple conjecture."—*The Great Crime of 1860, by J. W. Stapleton, Surgeon.*

I OBSERVED in the earlier portions of this *brochure*, long since printed off, *apropos* of this melodramatic tragedy, the Road murder, which has become a household word, "Do, he, she, or they, accomplices before or after the fact, listen *arrectis auribus*, to the thrilling strains, the meretricious blandishments of 'La Traviata?'" I certainly little thought this Medæa of fratricide would form a melancholy episode in the "short and simple annals" of a High Church Home.

Out-Heroding sensation, even in these sensational days, we read these startling words: "I, CONSTANCE EMILY KENT, ALONE AND UNAIDED, ON THE NIGHT OF THE 29TH JUNE, 1860, MURDERED AT ROAD HILL HOUSE, ONE FRANCIS SAVILLE KENT. BEFORE THE DEED NO

ONE KNEW OF MY INTENTION, NOR AFTER IT OF MY GUILT. NO ONE ASSISTED ME IN THE CRIME, OR THE EVASION OF DISCOVERY." This is classic and concise English, severe as that of Tacitus. We entirely and utterly reject *in limine* the theories that this may have been the ranting emanation of a lunatic, or a sane person in a fervid outburst of religious zeal, immolating herself after the manner of Iphigenia at Aulis. Having reference to the lunacy of the first Mrs. Kent, mother of Constance, we may again avail ourselves of Mr. Stapleton's critical review, reprinted from the *Western Mercury*.

THE INSANITY IN THE KENT FAMILY.

"In 1836, soon after the birth of her son Edward, Mrs. Kent first exhibited symptoms of insanity. Upon their appearance, Mr. Gidley, of Sidmouth, her usual medical attendant, recommended Mr. Kent to take the advice of Dr. Blackall, of Exeter. In a general conversation which ensued, it was found that the unfortunate lady evidently laboured under various, though harmless, delusions, and manifested so much weakness and bewilderment of intellect, that her husband was advised to place her, at once, under the care of a constant and competent attendant. As she was not violent or dangerous, Mr. Kent was unwilling to take this important and irrevocable step. Of the affection which prompted his forbearance there can be no doubt; that he was wrong in his decision is no less certain. The symptoms which caused him so much anxiety progressed because they

were unchecked. Upon his return from church, on one occasion, he found her destroying some books of prints, the leaves of which she had torn out and burnt. At another time, she took two of her children from the house, and lost herself within a short distance of the premises; but she still continued to go, at times, into society; and though her delusions continued and increased, her peculiarity was not always such as to attract notice. Her intellect, however, continued to grow weaker. It was not discovered that she at any time contemplated murder or suicide; and the fact of a knife having been concealed under her bed appears to have occasioned little or no apprehension in this respect.

In the five years between 1837 and 1842, Mrs Kent became the mother of four children—Henry Saville Kent, born February, 1837, died May, 1838, of inflammation of the lungs. Ellen Kent, born September, 1839, died December, 1839, of consumption. John Saville Kent, born March, 1841, died July, 1841, of atrophy. Julia Kent, born April, 1842, died September, 1842, of atrophy. It is remarkable that only one of these four children survived its birth six months. That each sickly dying child was an index to its mother's health—that her malady was reflected and impressed on each—what pathologist will doubt? Bearing in mind the condition of this poor lady during the five years from 1837 to 1842, we neither wonder at nor regret the fate of these four children. In the last eight or nine years of her life, Mrs. Kent appears to have been little affected by bodily suffering or disease. But her mental disorder continued without melioration, and while she continued to reside at Sidmouth she gave birth to her two youngest children, who still survive her. Constance Emily Kent was born in February, 1844. William Saville Kent was born in July, 1845. About 20 years ago, and before the birth of his daughter Constance, Mr. Kent found it requisite, in consequence of the confirmed and increasing illness of his wife, to devolve the education of his elder daughters upon a competent domestic governess. His children had reached a period of life when they required both instruction and restraint, and their mother was unequal to the charge. In this contingency, Mr. Walker, a surgeon, of Sidmouth, recommended Mr. Kent to obtain the services of Miss Pratt

of Tiverton, who subsequently became his second wife. Mr. Kent engaged her to come to Sidmouth as the resident instructress of his children. Soon after this Constance was born; and as from that time Mrs. Kent became incapable even of managing her domestic affairs, that duty was, with her concurrence, placed in the hands of Miss Pratt. Of the youngest child, Constance, she seems to have assumed, from the earliest period, the absolute control and care. For many months after her birth great apprehensions were entertained that this child would share the fate of the four previous children of Mrs. Kent. That she struggled through the feebleness of her early infancy is due chiefly to the devotion and personal attention of Miss Pratt, by whom she was fed, nursed, and waited upon for months. By degrees her bodily constitution assumed that healthy development and growth which have bestowed on her the contour and command of a powerful physique. As she grew up, Constance manifested a strong, obstinate, and determined will; and her conduct, even as a little child, gave evidence of an irritable and impassioned nature. In 1848, when Constance was about four years old, Mr. Kent left Sidmouth, and took his family to reside at Walton, a small watering place on the Somersetshire coast of the Bristol Channel. There he remained till March, 1852, when he removed to Baynton House, about seven miles from Trowbridge in Wiltshire, and there, six weeks after her arrival, Mrs. Kent died, after a short and unexpected illness. It will be seen from this brief narrative that the madness of Mrs. Kent was of a mild character, though decidedly chronic and ineradicable."

Constance, then, grew up a girl of hot passions, of a determined if not vindictive temperament. There is no evidence to show that the second Mrs. Kent was a harsh stepmother. The evidence adduced from Mr. Stapleton's critique is entirely the other way. Still, the loss of a mother

at a tender age, is the ONE irreparable loss of life. The

“Est mihi, namque domi pater est injusta noverca.”*

is the *teterrima belli causa*. The girl was clearly mischievous, haughty, arrogant, and (in their hands) unmanageable: the father, annoyed by her demeanour, was possibly harsh. From all I read and hear it appears to me that Constance Kent might have been *easily led: she could not be driven*. In the meantime little Saville Kent, a fine engaging boy, was, as was natural, the idol of the house. Constance considered herself its scapegoat. It is clear to me, in an evil hour, perhaps in a burst of ancestral mania (of this more anon) she wrought her mind to fever-heat; anyhow it is plain, from her own deliberate showing she planned the most atrocious and determined massacre of an innocent known to our times. Always considered guilty by detectives† and sus-

* The poet Euripides, in his fine poem the “Alcestis,” when he wishes to describe a sea most perilous to mariners, terms it the “STEPMOTHER OF SHIPS.”

† As to the *acumen* of Detective Whicher, the following letter was addressed to the editor of the *Times*.

“THE ROAD MURDER.

“SIR,

“Will you allow me to state, in justice to Detective

pected by a large and shrewd section of the public; having apparently, and most naturally under the circumstances, no home at her father's house, the difficulty was to provide a refuge for this young lady. It appears a Sussex establishment thus described in the *Brighton Gazette*, "one of those peculiar, scarcely explainable institutions, the offshoots of the advanced High Churchism of the day," acted the part of good Samaritan. From local knowledge and personal observation, I believe the "home" to be one of very "pietistic" discipline. Auricular confession—conducted on a scale of precocious advancement, prevails to a great, some would say, alarming extent at Brighton, where the Rev. Arthur Wagner is much respected as the leader of that exalted hierarchy, or High Church, which is a conspicuous station on the ex-

Whicher, who was employed in the above case, and was very generally thought to have been wrong in his opinion as to who the murderer was (viz., Miss Constance Kent) that the last words he said to a friend of mine at the time were, 'Mark my words, Sir, nothing will now be known about the murder till Miss Constance Kent confesses.'

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,
"FOLKESTONE."

52 GROSVENOR ST.

("Times," May 1, 1865.)

peditious journey "from Oxford to Rome." It does not require a very deep knowledge of human nature, to conceive what an effect this stern routine of self-imposed asceticism and priestly influence, would have on a headstrong girl,—it may be sincerely repentant of the enormous sin of fratricide. The *furens quid femina possit* is as likely to lead to confession, under the circumstances, as to crime. Poor Mr. Kent! What a tremendous ordeal for a man to undergo! Of a verity, as Cowper sings—

"God works in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

About this martyr to circumstances many very idle people had their own theory. Who can fathom what he must have gone through, writhing under a sense of this mysterious complication of almost unparalleled wrongs? More than suspecting his daughter, and feeling, with the pious passion of a father, that it was not in human nature for him to *move* in consigning his own flesh and blood to an ignominious death on the *infelix arbor*.

Eugene Aram,* the sensitive scholar and

* See Hood's fine poems, "Eugene Aram's Dream," the two last lines being—

cultivated philosopher, must, in those fourteen years which elapsed between the murder of his victim, and his trial and ignominious death, have exhausted the very dregs of human bitterness; and who shall image to themselves the five years, "all winters," this poor girl must have endured. Outcast from home, an exile without holidays in a French *pension*, she seemed to have displayed brilliant parts and a cultivated mind. I read from the pen of a correspondent of the *Standard*, "she was considered amiable, kind, and affectionate, but reserved." The bulk of Englishmen look with considerable suspicion on the "confessional" in England. It appears, however, from the Rev. A. Wagner's evidence, he used no means to induce her to make this self-condemning and irrevocable confession. The quintessence of most sublimated High Churchism looms, I repeat, suspiciously at Brighton. Calling, as I have

"And Eugene Aram walked between
With gyves upon his wrist."

Also Bulwer's novel, "Eugene Aram," the work of his early youth. He never surpassed it, any more than Dickens has ever equalled the "Pickwick Papers," the prolusion of very early manhood.

known them call moderate views, "heresy," they stand or fall by that Romanist engine of priestly power, "auricular confession."

There, Sectarianism is fenced round by imposing phylacteries and a conspicuous garb. Stern in many of the details of life, they venerate the profession of their faith with ritual *formulae* and pompous propaganda—

"Cum sit tristi habitu, vultuque et veste severâ."

Into collision with people indoctrinated with this teaching, the liberated school-girl was thrown; the paramount necessity of confession to a priest became *very part and parcel of her inner life*. I can fully understand that no specific arguments are administered to proselytes of that gate to confess any *given* and *particular* or obliquely imputed sin; but the doctrine is enforced that the priest is the inspired apostle, under Providence, to hear, and in part condone sins on earth; and this, argued generally, in an able way, of course points to making a clean breast of *all hidden mysteries*. I can quite understand the effect of such a teaching on the "reserved" temperament of Constance. Whatever line of argument may be em-

ployed for the defence, there will be, unless I entirely misjudge my countrymen, a growing and sincere pity for the awful consequences the girl of 21 has VOLUNTARILY assumed. If ever there was a case where the plea of hereditary insanity could be raised, this is one; at any rate, unless I strangely err, she will not, in any case, suffer the pains and penalties of a violent death.

It is scarcely necessary to say that this episode in our domestic history has called forth a "leader" from every representative journal of the fourth estate. In a work that professes to embody or convey a synopsis of criminality in high places, CONSTANCE KENT must hold her place. I have read much that is weird and startling in her strange history, but few realities in life are so strange as the constructive fiction raised by one, a public writer of authority, to the effect that the maidendom of England are only reprieved or redeemed from being—like so many "Gulnares"—homicides by instinct. Some of us have young wives; others, younger daughters, sisters, &c., &c. Are we really to suppose these goodly blossoms of the tree of life are

assassins with a saving clause—infernal amazons of the Brinvilliers tribe, toned into discipline by mere chance, common-sense, or commonplace—merely “village” Hampdenesses for want of an adequate inspiration—and preserved, not by the “eternal fitness of things,” as Fielding puts it, but by mere fortuitous circumstance from forming—in a gentle virgin choir—a cohort just “going in” for a little massacre, like that of St. Bartholomew, * and that a callousness to every moral sense must in maidenhood precede the bloom of life, and the very flower of crowning grace, and love, and wifedom.

I can (*crede* divorce court revelations) believe that Messalina should have been vicious in her married life; that Lola Montes should have been vagrant in her

* To quote the language of the *Saturday Review*, April 29, 1865:—“We have preferred to argue the case on the supposition that CONSTANCE KENT presents a wonderful, and, we believe, exceptional case of human depravity. That is, we have treated her as a psychological monster, and we prefer this *rationale* of her crime to the suggestion which has been made, that all women pass through a physiological phase in which it is only by a happy accident that they do not all become murderers. Alas for poor human nature, if it is so! It is no pleasant reflection that all our maidens, our sisters and daughters, may be potential CONSTANCE KENTS.”

amours; that Zantippe should have been a classic Mrs. Caudle; that Cæsar's wife should be more than suspected. I can understand *why* conscientious ministers should hang about the anti-chambers of parturient Imperialism. I might ransack "all the ages" for similes, but I would fairly rather

"Believe a woman or an epitaph,"

as Byron has it, than I could be brought to suppose that my god-daughter, now bordering on "sweet seventeen," is merely saved from the precocious bump of destructiveness by the toss up of an imaginary half-penny. Well,

"Adhuc sub judice lis est."

Apropos of this confessional, I cordially endorse the views of a correspondent addressed to the *Daily Telegraph*, and to be found in the impression of that journal, May 3, 1865.

"SIR.—Will you allow me to inquire whether, in your estimation and that of your readers, the conduct of the Rev. Mr. Wagner in reference to that unhappy young person, Constance Kent, is entirely free from all question, or even censure? Surely it was hardly incumbent upon him, nor upon the 'Lady Superior,' to hand that young

person over, bound perhaps in the silken cords of a certain religious sentiment that may pervade the establishment at Brighton, in which she had sought refuge in her troubled life, to the tender mercies of the police in London. It is a great question whether the confession made by a repentant sinner to one of God's ministers ought or ought not to be perfectly inviolable. There are cases in which either course may be best adopted, but it should be always with the perfect sanction of the one chiefly interested. It may be assumed here that the confession of this young person was intended to be made public for the ends of justice; but is every minister who thus obtains a knowledge of the sin of one who is confessing to constitute himself at once into an unreflecting police officer, and deliver over the victim who had come to him as her spiritual adviser, we may almost say to the hangman?

"The laws of the country and society had been horribly outraged by the act of which this young person accuses herself. But what had a police-court in London to do with it? If the reverend gentleman felt it to be a part of his duty to hand her over to justice, the district in which the act was committed was the place, and there she was sent after undergoing the torture of an examination in London. But who was chiefly outraged in this world, and chiefly interested in the result of the confession? Was it not the father of the girl? and would it not have better become Mr. Wagner to say to the young person (whose sin you, in your excellent observations on the case, say remains still to be proved), 'You have confessed to a crime that renders your stay in this establishment impossible, and therefore you must depart, but not through my agency—even if asked—into the stern hands of justice. Make your confession to your father, and let him deal with the case as he sees fit. I will accompany you to his house and hand you over to him, and having done so I shall feel myself absolved from all further connection with the case?' There appears to me to be something revolting in the way in which this Minister and the Lady Superior have thrust themselves before the world in connection with this self-accused murderess; and whether my view of their conduct is the right one or not, I should gladly learn from your columns.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

"Dover, May 1.

"W. H."

L

ADDENDUM.

I HAVE lived to hear in my days an able clergyman bracket three pseudo-Divinities — Romanism, Spiritualism, Mormonism. This, I think, is rather unfair on the “Scarlet Lady.” I can comprehend a man being a Romanist, it is a matter for his own judgment and conscience. A certain knowledge of the world leads me to think adroit sleight-of-hand adventurers will adopt, as a thing that pays, Spiritualism, which appears to me to be a scheme for conjuring for value (?) received, money from the spendthrift pocket of “A,” to the money-spinning pocket of “B.” “Mormonism” has its worshippers among mankind. Were I a barrister I would accept a brief for “Romanism, Spiritualism, or Mormonism,” but my conscience is not sufficiently elastic to “go in” for airy and Romic, and *quasi* Mosaic “Excelsior” “pietistic” guardianship. Away with spiritual detectives, or *soi-disant* inspired spies, gloating over revelations of innocence

and guilt, and emblazoned with the incarnation of their triumph in our courts of justice!

The following letter from the Rev. Arthur Wagner appears in the *Times* :—

“ SIR,—As I have been most unjustly charged by a portion of the public press with committing the grave offence of betraying Miss Kent’s sacramental confession, you will, I am sure, allow me to contradict that assertion in the most public manner possible.

“ It was at Miss Kent’s own request, and by her authority, that I communicated to two persons only the fact of her guilt. These were Sir George Grey and Miss Graem, and the following document, written by Miss Kent herself and given to me a few days before Easter, proves that I have only acted in all I have done in accordance with her instructions. The note, which is entirely Miss Kent’s own composition, is as follows :—

“ ‘ Sir,—It is my particular request that the bearer now informs you of my guilt, which it is my desire to have publicly made known. ”

“ ‘ CONSTANCE E. KENT.

“ ‘ To Sir G. Grey.’

“ I may add that the written paper which Miss Kent gave to Sir Thomas Henry at Bow Street, was also, to the best of my belief, entirely her own composition. I never saw it, nor was I aware of her having written any paper at all, till she herself produced it in court.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

“ A. D. WAGNER,

“ Perpetual Curate of St. Paul’s Church, Brighton.

“ Vicarage, Brighton, May 10.”

N.B.—Any remarks I have made concerning the Rev. A. D. Wagner, must not be construed as impugning the man, but the *system*—which is utterly out of place and unfitted to England.

The following is not a flattering piece of word painting, as regards the personal appearance of Constance Emilie Kent.

“CONSTANCE KENT.—The following is an extract from a private letter received from Dinan :—‘I do not think that the London papers have mentioned in what part of France Constance Kent remained for some years. It was at Dinan. She went first to the convent of the “Sagesse,” then left it for a Mdle. de la Tour’s, where most of the English young ladies resort. I never saw her, but every one I know did, and all describe her as a flat-faced, reddish-haired, ugly girl; neither stupid nor clever, lively nor morose, and only remarkable for one particular trait, viz., *her extreme tenderness and kindness to very young children.* In the whole school in which she was a pupil, she was the one who would probably be the least remarked, if all were seen together.’”

PELIZZONI.

CHAPTER II.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

Fiat justitia ruat Cœlum.

THE *animus* of this little book has been *da capo* to show that our penal system is altogether inefficiently deterrent. I go the length of advancing as an individual opinion, that England would be unsafe to live in, if you entirely abrogate from the statute book the punishment of death. I am fortified in this conviction by the result at which the *Corps Legislatif*, or Paris Parliament, has arrived. I quote from the *Daily Telegraph*, April 10, 1865. "The abolition of punishment by death met with scant favour here. M. Jules Favre could only muster 24 supporters, against the overwhelming number of 225 adversaries." Now without going the length Lamartine does ("Les Girondins"), that there is nothing wise or good in the world that is not originated by

a Frenchman: putting aside this somewhat amusing trait of perhaps venial and patriotic egotism, I cordially endorse the common sense of the French populace, but by way of fairness I print the remarks of *Le Temps*:—

“CRIMINAL LAW IN ENGLAND.—(*Le Temps*—Paris: Liberal, April 24, 1865.) See what has happened to Pelizzoni. It seems that after the confession of Mogni and his being sentenced, there was only one thing to be done, to set the first prisoner at liberty, and, as there was no other way of saving him from the gallows, to *pardon him*.

“But would not this have cast a shadow on the way in which criminal justice is administered in England? Would not this have given too hasty a denial to the judge who, in sentencing Pelizzoni, had declared he had never in his life seen guilt more clearly proved? Would not this have been too deep a humiliation for the London police, an *interested party* in the cause? Would it not have been terminating too soon and too completely in favour of foreigners a discussion in which the English were on one side and the Italians on the other?

“This, I suppose, is what Sir George Grey said to himself, who is a politician and not a judge, and this is no doubt the cause for his wishing that Pelizzoni should again be brought before a court, no longer charged with having killed Michel Harrington, but with having wounded Rebbeck.

“What was wished, probably, was an opportunity of bringing the whole affair again on the carpet. It was hoped that, by a second hearing of the witnesses, they would at least be able to attenuate the effect of the verdict since given in his favour. Hence they did not confine themselves, in the third trial, to examining what concerned the wound received by Rebbeck, but all the details relative to the death of Harrington were—

brought up again, so as to throw the greatest obscurity possible on the point of who was the real murderer.

“People ask themselves what would have happened if, in consequence of this ingenious plan, they had succeeded in making it believed that the murderer was really Pelizzoni. There would then have been three trials, of which the third would have contradicted the second, as the second did the first; and then, I suppose, there might be a fourth contradicting the third, and so on! This would certainly—we must be excused for using the word—have been a fine hash!

“Happily we shall not see this. The police have lost the case, and this time for good. The evidence of facts spoke so highly in favour of Pelizzoni, and the eloquence of M. Ballantine served the evidence so well, that the jury wished to give their verdict without hearing the summing up of the judge.

“Now a great duty remains to be fulfilled if justice be just. Here is a man who has had to suffer much moral agony, a man on whom much undeserved torture has been inflicted, who has been made “to feel the coldness of death.” Is no compensation due to him? Will society be quits with him for having restored liberty to him after having deprived him of it without cause?

“To this question, I am sorry to say, the answer in England is, that the accused who is acquitted is considered simply as a suitor who has gained his case. You are innocent. Very good. Then prove your innocence at your own expense. If you are not rich, and your ruin be the consequence, it is very unfortunate. You may judge from this whether there has been any thought of indemnifying those unjustly condemned! On this, as on many other points, the English would do well to ponder.

“It is much to be regretted that, in England, where public opinion has lynx eyes, where liberty reigns, and where consequently there would be no danger in making prosecuting criminals a social function, there is nothing like our *public prosecutor*. This is a flaw which has been pointed out both by Lord Campbell and Lord Brougham. . . .

“It is also most lamentable, that when justice happens to commit one of those terrible mistakes on which the life of a man depends, the right of pardon is the only

means of repairing it. I know of nothing more revolting than this idea of an *innocent* man being *pardoned*. It is completing injustice by insolence. In 1844 Sir F. Kelly brought forward a bill establishing the right of appeal, and extending it to all cases. . . . The bill was rejected for fear it would be abused.

“When it is a matter of life or death no doubt the condemned man will always be disposed to take advantage of the last chance which the right of appeal offers, and this may cause delay. But what is this inconvenience in comparison to the evils of a hurried execution? *Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa est*. There would also be one very simple means of solving the problem—abolishing capital punishment.”

Public Opinion, April 29, 1865.

Per contra. I advance my own views with conscientious earnestness, yet somewhat diffidently, being aware many able men dissent *toto cælo* from my reading of this great NATIONAL question.

PELIZZONI is not a “high life” criminal, but his admission in this series is justified by its bearing, in the sequel, on our whole administration of criminal law.

SECRET POISONERS AND POISONING.

CHAPTER III.

THIS work having, as Byron hath it, “grown beneath my eye,” and considerably exceeded the bulk originally intended—and in fact so many crimes and *causes célèbres* having cropped up while the pages have been going through the press—I am induced to reprint the following note:—

“ SECRET POISONERS AND POISONING.

“ The *London Standard*, in an article on the recent ‘London Tragedy,’ has the following remarks, amongst others, on secret poisoners and secret poisoning:—

“ ‘Not a sound seems to have been heard from the narrow interior of that rickety hearse, as the cabman plied his way up Holborn Hill. Probably the rumbling of the wheels drowned any moans or cry which might have been uttered. Prussic acid, it is believed, was the agent of death. In the case of the Quaker Tawell, hanged at Aylesbury in 1845, miserable groans were distinctly heard. It is a mistake to suppose that death is invariably instantaneous. Dr. Christison describes the taste of prussic acid as pungent; Pereira represents it as bitter; and in a fatal case which occurred seven years ago the patient survived long enough to complain of the bitterness. A man has been known to smoke a pipe after swallowing a deadly dose of the poison. The

man in the cab, however, appears to have made certain of his prey by administering to each a mortal superfluity ; the bodies actually emitted a powerful odour of the acid ; he knew, to all appearance, what quantity was required to render the draught, as Dr. Taylor says, "like death by a stroke of lightning."

"We scarcely know in what light to regard the present event. Was it the case of Tawell repeated? Was this dreadful murderer resolved upon ridding himself of the woman and the children in order to indulge some illicit love? Or had he robbed them? Or was it a dark and dreary madness, contemplative and systematic, as madneses sometimes are? Or was this deed the bloody veil thrown over a still deeper crime? Such things have been. Not often, perhaps, in England. Poisoning is not characteristically an English atrocity ; it is Italian, and that from peculiar causes. It has been French in particular epochs.

"In a long list of executions, however, from 1724 to 1859, the prisoners are Eliza Fenning, of doubtful guilt ; Mary Anne Burdock, the Quaker Tawell, William Palmer, ———Dove, Peter Walker, and Catherine Wilson. Madeline Smith was accused, but not convicted. Dr. Smethurst was condemned and pardoned. Several of the notorious Essex poisoners, too, were hanged. We have never witnessed, however, such a scene as Fabius Maximus saw when 170 Roman ladies were publicly executed for a conspiracy to poison their husbands.

"We have had, in our history, no Tofania breathing death from behind her glass mask into the hearts of 600 individuals. We have not appealed, of late, to the law of petty treason in England, which punished poisoners by boiling them to death—the fate of the Bishop of Rochester's cook, and the poor girl, Margaret Davie, in 1541. But, nevertheless, from motives which we have only faintly indicated, have flowed the careers of men and women, who, even in England, have imitated Saint Croix, the Poisoner of Mecca, Brinvilliers, Lafarges, and the other famous criminals, whose acts are so constantly parodied in romance.

"The Abbe Fontana, indeed, mentions an instance bearing not a little resemblance to this black drama of Holborn Hill, in which a man, weary of his wife and

children, enticed them out for a country drive, and administered to each a potion so subtle and sudden in the doing of its deadly work, that when the carriage pulled up at the hotel door, all three were found sitting, as if turned to marble, dead and white, in exactly the same positions they had assumed when alive.

“‘In the mystery of this crime consists its greatest horror. Plainly speaking, there are murderers living among us. We may be elbowed daily by the fellows of Rush, Manning, Greenacre, Good, and Hocker. We may dine with Eugene Aram at Billingsgate or Blackwall. Who knows? Perhaps the slaughterer of that child at Road Hill still breathes the air of good society. Possibly, the sanguinary wretch who killed the girl in George Street, St. Giles's, may be mocking the police in Leicester Square. When will the ghost of Eliza Grimwood cease to walk ?

“‘We suggest these reflections because the police too frequently, after a brief interval of fussy exertion, relapse into apathy, are engaged in new investigations, and allow the most terrible atrocities to be forgotten. So it was in the case of Dove, until an accident aroused attention. So in the case of James Thompson, until a child caught the scent which the detectives had missed. And so it may be now, if the *Hue and Cry* whispers the secrets of justice into the ears of the criminal, and favours his escape, instead of accelerating his discovery and conviction.

“‘That Road Hill House mystery was a disgrace to our detective system. (I completely exonerate Inspector Whicher from the imputation.) That secret of George Street, St. Giles's, rebukes the boastings of our justice ; but, with those two murderers lurking still among us, shameful, indeed, would be the impotence of English law in its practical working were this monster of guilt to evade the consequences of his crime.’”

A WEST COUNTRY SUICIDE AND CORONERS' INQUESTS.

CHAPTER IV.

I COMMENCED this work by some general remarks, and I will close it in like manner. A case of suicide occurring in the county where I reside, leads me to make a few reflections (more especially when we consider the frequency of *poisoning* cases, many of which are referred to in these pages) on the facility with which deadly drugs can be purchased in this country. The affair created a vast "sensation" in the town where I am staying. About seven o'clock one evening, a lady fashionably dressed arrived at one of the hotels unattended. She had no luggage, but made some statement as to her boxes being left at the railway station. The landlady stated that she observed nothing remarkable in her demeanour. She retired to rest like any other traveller, but being unable to sleep, rang

the bell about two o'clock A.M., and asked for brandy; this was supplied to her. Towards the middle of the next day, the hotel-keeper, rather alarmed at neither hearing or seeing anything of her, knocked at the bedchamber door, and getting no answer they proceeded to try and force it open. This not being easily effected, in the meanwhile a mason procuring a ladder entered by the window. To the extreme horror of everybody the lady was quite dead. She had a carriage-bag with her containing various articles, but there was not the faintest clue to her identity. About the room were several papers labelled "poison," and it was of course surmised the lady had poisoned herself by the administration of some of those pestilent death-traps foisted upon the world as "vermin powders." I shall not print here which vermin powders I allude to, but one of them contains, I am informed, strychnine, about the most deadly poison known to science. What in the name of common-sense can be more absurd than our legislature laying an embargo on the sale of poisonous drugs, and yet sanctioning the fact that on pretence of wanting to destroy mice, or

beetles, and such like, any MAN, WOMAN, OR CHILD in these dominions can purchase powders containing three or four grains of strychnine for *threepence*!

In the case referred to, there was no suspicion whatever of foul play; yet the case was eminently suggestive. It first illustrates the marvellous utility of the publicity given to all the world by the *penny* press. When the *Western Morning News* and *Mercury* appeared at Plymouth, I am afraid to print how many inquiries were made for the particulars and description of this unfortunate lady. What does it mean? Are men's wives and daughters in the habit of leaving their homes clandestinely,—*disappearing*, as in the Borgian era, from their home sphere, disregarded and unnoticed, till, occasionally, they are discovered as the victims of suicide or death? This man's wife left her home—he did not appear to have been distressed at her absence (I should certainly object to my better half absenting herself without leave, in this free and easy manner)—on the Monday; Tuesday passed, no wife returned; still no uneasiness, though he said she was not *in the habit of leaving her home and*

business ; guess the husband's horror, when, on the Wednesday, late in the day, he took up the *Western Morning News*, read of the suicide, and immediately got into the train, it flashing across his mind that it might be his wife! And so it proved. Of course there was an inquest, and the jury demanded a post-mortem examination. The *viscera*, &c., were sent to Dr. Herapath, of Bristol, for analysis, and it was shown that the lady perished by the self-administration of arsenic. The whole system of coroner's inquests and coroners, demands, in my idea, a complete revision. In my judgment, a coroner should be a duly qualified medical man. How, otherwise, can he understand medical evidence? What knowledge can he have of the theory and effects of poisons; and without such knowledge how can he be an efficient chairman of the jury? The *Daily Telegraph* termed the case I refer to "the *mysterious* suicide." The empty papers found by the bedside contained strychnine: but arsenic was found in the lady's stomach. Had the coroner been a medical man, he could have seen and appreciated the difference between the *effects*

of these poisons. The one is rapid in its destructiveness, causes the human frame to "twitch" (see Palmer's case) and start in tetanic convulsions; the other poison lies *dormant*, is slow and lingering. The lady might have taken arsenic before she left Plymouth. Again, the law only allows two guineas for a *post-mortem* examination; and a chemical scrutiny is not procurable at the hands of a man of science for the money. Country practitioners, however able, as a rule, are not chemists. The search for poisons in the tissues of the body is a deep and subtle science; it requires a special training, and moreover, I am informed, very costly implements. I repeat—though I am sorry to be opposed to so great an authority as Professor Herapath—that the epithet "mysterious" was never more properly applied. In the case referred to, the Coroner legally disallowed Dr. Bird Herapath's expenses; and had not that gentleman volunteered, and showed the jury the result of his investigation, *they could have arrived at no conclusion whatever.*

“TICKET OF LEAVE,” *alias* A PASSPORT TO PLUNDER.

CHAPTER V.

WE reproduce the following :—

“THE TROUBLES OF A TICKET-OF-LEAVE, OR A ‘PIOUS
SIGH FROM A BURGLAR’S BOSOM.

“ ‘Infandum, Regina jubes, renovare dolorem.’
‘*Virgil.*’

“A correspondent in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, under the signature of ‘A Ticket-of-leave’ (who, however, excuses himself from complying with the usual rule of enclosing his card and address), indulges in the following piece of satire :—

“I venture to address myself to you on a question in which I hope to interest not only the readers of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, but the public at large. I ought to state that I and my friends in whose behalf I plead practise solely in the higher branches of our profession. And I call attention to this fact because from it arise the peculiarity and oppressiveness of our position. There is a very growing disposition in the country to make the Sunday a day, not of exclusive devotion to all kinds of religious exercises (though I *have* been where even that was the rule), but a period of perfect rest and healthy enjoyment. Even the very cabmen and omnibus conductors aim at securing this much for themselves, and those who have had greater educational advantages appreciate the value of leisure time in a still higher degree. But, through a ridiculous

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custom now very extensively followed, we are compelled to exercise our calling almost exclusively on the Sunday, that is, if we are to do it with any kind of distinction and success.

"What I allude to is this. The jewellers and gold and silversmiths have decided, doubtless on sanitary principles, to cut the City, and, instead of living in their shops, to dwell in suburban villas, and they not only do so, but they leave these tempting magazines perfectly unguarded from the Saturday evening to Monday morning, and when they do arrive it is often to make discoveries more vexatious than surprising. Now I am, I may as well state at once, a cracksman, or, as it is usually termed, a burglar, and what I complain of is that we are now driven to a systematic desecration of the Sabbath. Half-a-score of years ago there was no reason why we should choose one night more than another for our exploits, but at present we are cruelly tied to time. We have to make all our arrangements on Saturday, and spend the whole of Sunday in unremitting toil and anxiety of mind. What would be said if a law professing to be in the interests of morality were to be passed enacting that public-houses should be closed all the week and opened on the Sunday, or that cabmen should only ply for hire on the seventh day? Yet practically what we are subject to amounts to the same thing. There have been some very clever jobs done in the City lately; another has just been announced at Birmingham, and there are several more on the cards, if I read them correctly. Some of those concerned have been already taken up, some are still at large, and *one* (you can pardon this) will, I trust, remain so. I have been given to understand that tradesmen are in general strong Sabbatarians. Let them consider how much Sunday labour they throw on our shoulders by their present childish and thoughtless proceedings. It surely only needs pointing out to them to ensure some kind of reform.

"While in retirement we are taught to do no work on the Sabbath; in fact, it was in a certain institution, where the detestable crank system prevailed (now, I am happy to observe, in process of abolition), that I first learned to appreciate the luxury of a day of rest; but what avails that, if, as soon as we are at liberty to

recommence the practice of our calling, we have to work more on that day than on any other? Now, it is a maxim with us, that nothing is done well unless it is done quickly, and one night ought to be quite sufficient to complete any business thoroughly. This excessive facility is simply demoralising our best hands—it induces habits of laziness and over-confidence, as well as begets an irreligious cast of mind. If you marvel that a “cracksman” can write to you in this fashion. I reply there is no reason *per se* (you see I know Latin well enough to quote) why I should not write as good a letter and express myself as well as “One more unfortunate,” whose productions at the time they appeared were perused by myself and my friends not without interest and amusement. If my education was once in some respects defective, it has been greatly improved at the expense of Government, while my morals have been carefully attended to by clergymen of different denominations. I can give a very good account of most of the prisons in England, and of their chaplains likewise, and I can use my pen, and my tongue also, without having recourse to thieves’ slang.”

Many of our leading shops, and most of our conspicuous public and private offices, close at one o’clock on Saturday. “When the cat is away the mice will play.” I really, after all, despite of my previous strictures, rather sympathise with the “guild” or guilt of “cracksmen,” in and for that, having generally plenty (as a rule) of loose money—except when in *quod*—they can (having a classical turn, and being educated at the expense of the “Circumlocution Office”) find time, and enjoy *dolce*

far niente, to attend Bellew's week-day, and truly ecclesiastical readings, but have no leisure (owing to pressing engagements) to attend the reverend reader's sabbatarian divinity.

BOOK IV.

“ANONYMA,” OR THE PRETTY HORSEBREAKER.

“ — festinat enim decurrere velox
Flosculus angustæ, miseræque brevissima vitæ
Portio, dum sarta, ungenta, puellas
Poscimus, obrepit non intellecta senectus.”

Juvenal.

“ANONYMA.”

I SHOULD, with a native bashfulness which my readers will all appreciate, scarcely venture to trench on this delicate subject, but owing rather to articles in the *Saturday Review*, and a brilliant canonisation in the columns of the *Times*, this nameless, though not blameless lady, awoke, like Lord Byron, and “found herself famous” instead of *infamous*.

I am not, however, about to glorify the “Lady of the Camelia Flower,” or her (while it lasts) noble feats of horse-breaking horsemanship on the sleek steed “Prosperity”:—alas, too rapidly metamorphosed into the skeleton “Rosinante,” “Adversity!” I am not about to prate of her “rampageous ponies,” her blasphemous *argot*, her ribald chaff, her *gusto* for blue ruin. But I must draw her as she is—a great fact—that priestless madame of the park, whom so many well-born damsels affect to despise, but inordinately envy; whom

the *jeunesse dorée* of England (to their shame be it said) nods familiarly to in the presence of their mothers, sisters, and wives that are to be. I am not going the length of saying “Anonyma” creates the class of which Roupell and Sadleir (both unmarried men, by the way), are types, but she is a potential agent, inaugurating vices that culminate in crime. An able writer, when the subject of marriages in Belgravia was being ventilated in the *Times*, actually, aye, ably, argued that a *cottage ornée*, beneath the shadow of St. John the Divine, had its advantages, and could indeed be defended, if not in a moral, at least in a worldly point of view; he was, however, logically answered by this letter printed in a note:—

“ HETÆRÆ.

“ *To the Editor of the ‘Times.’*”

“ Sir,—The word which I have written above will not be understood by ladies—whom I do not address—or by mere ‘swells,’ whose intellect and conscience appear equally dull.

“ But educated gentlemen—and I think your correspondent ‘Beau Jolais’ is such—must bear with the inquiry addressed to them by men of their own class, whether, after all, Athenian and English society are to be judged by the same rule, unmodified by any change of time and circumstance. If it be so, we who were their school-fellows and College friends, and have taken Orders, have committed ourselves to an irreparable mistake.

“ In the growing suburban parish for which I exchanged my fellowship, there are quiet houses which present all the outward appearance of modest and well-ordered homes. The interior and the *ménage* may well be as comfortable and attractive as that which ‘ Beau Jolais ’ describes. He does not hesitate to tell you of his acceptance of his friend’s invitation to dinner. Let me put the case—it might on his showing fairly arise :—Suppose that I had known the two friends at college, and had been at the same set with them, could I have been asked to join this little London dinner? What would ‘ Beau Jolais ’ think of me if I had been a guest with him ?

“ The days are gone by when the old nonsense about ‘ the cloth ’ would pass current in answer to such an inquiry. When I left the schools at Oxford for the Bishop’s examination I simply took my part in the same life as my friends who chose their part at the Inns of Court, the hospitals, or the Government offices. I ask them on what principle they have devised a social system for themselves from which, by their own admission, they must shut me out ?

“ Your obedient servant,

“ A LONDON INCUMBENT.”

“ June 28, 1861.”

Since the publication of this letter four years have elapsed ; these four years have brought with them marvellous changes, but they have not changed the *status* (on the contrary, they have emblazoned it) of *Anonyma*, nor does the reeking cauldron of vice, in the Modern Babylon, bubble up one *iota* the less.

Yes, *modern Perditæ* are born,
Nor is “Anonyma” forlorn.

Sparkling a comet on the town,
 She wears of vice the golden crown !
 Dang'rous as adder in your grasp,
 In human chaplets like an asp !
 Arrested in her foul career,
 She weds a cabman—or a peer :*
 Whitewashed by sacerdotal bands,
 Mistress of mansion and of lands ;
 Or fest'ring, rotting to decay,
 In gaol or union, gasps away :
 Defiled by lust—debased by gin,
 Ephemeral cynosure of sin !
 Huge degradation's splendid wreck,
 With jewels on her arching neck :
 Preferring piety to drams,
 And wedded bliss to fleecing lambs,
 To objurgation, oaths, and zounds,
 And one ring fence to lawless bounds !

A. D. 1862, I cut out from some west country paper the following descriptive *resumée* of the “pretty horsebreaker.”

THE PRETTY HORSEBREAKER.

“Skittles,’ alias, Miss Walters, the leading attraction of the day among the frequenters of ‘Rotten-Row,’

* “Thus, to a most surprising, and year by year increasing extent, the better-inclined class become the wedded wives of men in every grade of society, from the peerage to the stable.”—Acton, p. 64.

in Hyde Park, has, it is said, gone to America, leaving many creditors to lament her departure. In the *London Times* we find the following advertisement, announcing the sale of her house in Park Street :—

“No. 34 Park Street, Grosvenor Square.—The lease of the very elegant and compact residence, suitable for the immediate occupation of a bachelor of fashion or small family of rank, being within a few yards of Upper Grosvenor Street, near Hyde Park. Messrs. Rushworth, Jarvis, and Abbot, will sell by auction, on the premises, this day, November 21, the lease of the above elegantly decorated residence, which has been entirely re-modelled and beautified within the last six months by a fashionable artist; the drawing-room is hung with cerise coloured silk, the woodwork finished in white and gold, highly enriched with gilt mouldings and ornaments designed with infinite taste; the walls of the principal bed-chambers are pannelled with blue silk, and finished with gilt mouldings, and no expense has been spared to render the house a model of elegance and comfort.’

“The *Morning Post*, writing on this subject, says :—

“A story used to be told of a jealous wife who, overhearing a friend tempting her frail husband to attend some public dinner by assuring him that he would find “all the delicacies of the season,” interposed with the startling remark, “Ask him to meet all the indelicacies of the season, and he will be sure to accept.” The same temptation, we fear, would prove successful with a very large portion of the community. Day by day the barriers of decent behaviour, in the eyes of the world, are being gradually broken down, without a remonstrance from those whose duty it is to keep them standing. Each year sees some marked distinction in the open habit of unseemly demerour which, the year before, if indulged in, was at least concealed from the public gaze. The result is, unrestrained license of opinion, with unrestrained license of word and action in expressing it; and a very flagrant instance of both, of bad taste in feeling, and bad taste in evincing it—has occurred in the very heart of our fashionable districts. Who so conspicuous to the world of London for the last three or four years as Cognita? Whose horses so flashy? whose carriage so dashing? whose attire so resplendent with every colour under the sun? whose cheeks so well

supplied with two of them? When she takes a chair by the side of the "Row;" when she canters down it on a "stepper;" or draws up her pony phaeton at "Flirtation-corner," is there anyone who attracts so much attention, or receives so much real homage, as Cognita? What matters it that but yesterday the gay butterfly was a grub? What matters it, for the present, that like a bubble from a quagmire, Cognita has been borne upwards solely by corruption to her present altitude? Cognita is now the fashionable Jezebel of the day. Cognita is held to be a fitting companion for the noblest in the land; and Cognita holds her court in the open air of London, as practically as any Sovereign of Europe in his capital. It is the "fast" thing to be able to bow to her! Old *debauchees* leer admiringly on her as she tosses her saucy head at them. Fresh-caught cublings of fashion are far more proud of a recognition from her, especially if any other young noodles are witnesses to it, than of an acknowledgment from the grandest of *grandes dames*. The last new depravity or blasphemy that falls from her lips is quoted like the *bon-mot* of an established wit; and Pylades, the fool, relates admiringly the precise amount which Orestes, the idiot, contributes to her establishment.

"But the flickering career of an *ignis fatuus* is proverbially short-lived, and Cognita, like all other noxious vapours, soon dies out. She is compelled to seek the shelter of other shores; and fires, as she retreats, a Parthian shot at the community which she has done nothing but outrage from the beginning, by carrying off with her a partner of her guilt and flight, and accomplishing the misery of a hitherto happy family. But Cognita, though she contrives to escape with a good deal, cannot carry off everything. The horses and the carriages, the snug little establishment, and the "furniture and effects" are not easily stowed away in portmanteaus. Consequently the latter are for sale, and are on view for a day or two previous. What is to be said for the good taste of the town, when it has been seen that there has been a perfect "rush" to secure "catalogues," and to obtain orders to view? that the wretched little residence, with its tawdry fittings and its gimcrack furniture, has been besieged by hundreds; that on the "last day" the attendance was overflowing, and that

day expectant visitors were compelled to wait outside until those within had qualified their prurient curiosity? This is no exaggeration of the truth. The excitement on the subject has been comically intense, and the rouge-pots and scent-bottles of the bad woman have commanded a far more careful scrutiny than would the treasures at South Kensington. The “library” was singularly characteristic. It consisted of a few volumes of the *Court Guide*, an odd number or two of the *Sporting Magazine*, an essay on equestrianism, and “Burke’s Peerage!” Quite a little stock-in-trade. Intellectual collection! Doubtless the sale of her “relics” will command fabulous prices. . . . Cognita has many sisters left; and it is truly to be looked upon as a serious evil, both on its own demerits and as an example, that it is upon such creatures as these that some of our rising generation can squander their time, their money, and their reputation.’

“Another London daily contemporary has the following:—

“The metropolitan Rigolboche has shown a clean pair of heels. Her house and furniture, her ponies and her phaeton, have been sold. Cunning auctioneers have turned the notoriety of the “lady going abroad” to capital account; and crowds have besieged a third-rate house in Park Street, to gaze upon tawdry and tasteless furniture, and snigger over a “library” which only contained a Peerage, a Court Guide, and a racing calendar. The dodge is not a new one. The Parisian *lorettes* are very familiar with it? and when one of the splendid harlots of the Quartier Breda wants a supply of cash, she very frequently flits to Baden or Homburg, while her sumptuous furniture is sold by auction. This manoeuvre is styled a *lavage*, and this rinsing-out of a fashionable courtesan’s kennel, generally brings very high prices for the articles of *vertu*, or vice, put up for sale.’

“Lashing the vices of the fashionable world, our contemporary continues:—

“However, it is time that the public should be enlightened as to the real name and character of the jade whose profligacy, whose impudence, and whose magnificence have been a topic of loose conversation in London for the last five or six years. The levanter or trans-

atlanticator had a slang name, that of "Skittles," given to her in consequence of some particularly scandalous feat she is said to have performed. Her other name was Miss Walters; and as "Miss Walters," her photographed *carte de visite* has been long exhibited by respectable West End shopkeepers—fathers of families, ex-churchwardens, and chapel-deacons for aught we know—cheek by jowl with virtuous English matrons, Miss Walters on one side, Mrs. Windham on the other, and some immaculate English duchess, or spotless concert-singer in the middle, seem to perfect the modern theory of juxtaposition in photographic portraiture. This woman Walters—for she has long ceased to be a girl—has been a fashion and a rage among dissolute and silly people. Our contemporary, the *Times*, took her up and made much of her as Anonyma: and her ponies went to furnish forth one of the abundant mares' nests of that journal.

"As "Skittles," or "Miss Walters," this bold and profligate woman has been for a certain time one of the lionesses of the world of dissipation, and has probably in her time squandered thousands, and brought many a prodigal son to the draff and husks. A showy horse-woman, a dexterous driver, and an incorrigible black-guard in her demeanour and conversation, her popularity in a "horsy," "fast," and "chaffing" age is not to be wondered at. . . . This "Skittles" seems to have been a great adept in that species of repartee which appears to consist in spicing filth with blasphemy, and many of her *mauvaises plaisanteries* have had immense success. However, she has run away with a married man; and most sincerely do we trust that she will never come back. This country is well rid of her; although there is no knowing for what retributive justice she is reserved—whether she will return to be more splendid and more insolent than ever, or what English slum she is doomed to walk, what gin palaces to frequent, what police cell to scream in, what workhouse to rot and die in."

Well now I come to the *result* of all this on society—it is an age of imperious luxury

and lessening nuptial alliances—here is the modest plaint of middle life, and who shall gainsay the writer’s experience?

“SOCIAL IMMORALITY.

“*To the Editor of the Times.*

“Sir,—I quite agree with every word of your able article and the letter of your correspondent upon the fearful consequences to society of the present state of things. But, Sir, when your correspondent goes out of his way to make a sweeping denunciation of the male sex, and says the flaunting vice of the age is ‘man’s crime,’ for which ‘man’ alone must look forward to an awful retribution here and hereafter, I beg to ask him to read the few lines following, and say whether ‘man’ is the only being to blame, or whether ‘woman’ has not also something to answer for.

“I am 35 years of age, of average personal appearance, gentlemanly manners and pursuits, 12 years established in a respectable profession; income £350 to £400 per annum (half of it is, certainly, derived from an official appointment), and I have been disposed to marry if I could. I do not wish, of course, to unite myself with a domestic servant without education or manners to render her presentable to my friends; so I have made several proposals to ladies of my acquaintance among the middle classes. I send you a reply to one I received only yesterday, as a sample, among others I have had, of what the foolish parents of this generation are storing up for the next. The lady has no personal objection to me whatever, but says (this is her own handwriting):—‘Before marrying you ought to have £600 a year. Your wife’s dress will, at the lowest, cost £100 a year; and no wife, unless she feels well dressed, can be at her ease.’

“Now, this is not a rejection by an offshoot of the aristocracy, who, from high connections, might claim some extra premium on account of the blue blood of the barons running in her veins, but a young lady living with a quiet old aunt in the Clapham Road. After recommending me very kindly how to procure a wife ‘more suitable to my position,’ she adds, ‘I think

you are silly not to go to balls, and *tant soit peu* affected to pretend you don't care for them. I do.'

"Do not these two extracts contain some explanation of Regent Street not being passable after dark by a respectable woman; of the daily illustrations in practice of 'the Bridge of Sighs' story; of those columns which disfigure our newspapers every morning, headed 'The Suicide Mania,' and, 'Another Case of Infanticide?'

"Yours most obediently,

"Church Road, Croydon.

"H. W."

Ascending the social ladder, I venture to reproduce the eloquent philippic administered by Primogenitus, A. D. 1861.

"THE BELGRAVIAN LAMENT.

"*To the Editor of the Times.*

"Sir,—I am not much in the habit of writing, still I hope you will let me write a few lines in the *Times* to explain to the world that the old 'heir-hunters' of Belgravia are just as much to blame as we are, if, in order to keep out of their way, we are forced to shelter ourselves among the 'pretty horsebreakers' of suburban London.

"You have no idea, Sir, of the persecution which we elder sons undergo at the hands of these women, especially if we are or are likely to be dukes, marquises, or earls. I do not say that it is not a pleasant thing to be young, healthy, and a man of rank and fortune; I admit that it is; but even such a position has its drawbacks. I am myself not bookish—in fact, I dislike every book except my betting-book, and I do not always relish even that small volume; and I do not care much about politics or high farming, yet; but I delight in hunting, shooting, fishing, and yachting; and, above all things, I like the society of young, pretty, and agreeable women. I firmly intend to marry some day—not yet; but when I do marry I intend to try and pick out a wife for myself, and not to have one forced upon me by scheming old women.

"When I left college I went, like other young men of

fortune and position, to all the best balls and dinners in London. I saw there lots of pretty girls, as attractive in appearance as the prettiest ‘horsebreaker’ in the Park, and, I dare say, admirably well educated. But because I was a *parti* towards whom their attention had been directed by their mothers, and because they knew that my tastes were all in the ‘sporting’ line, they would talk to me about nothing but horses and dogs, and shooting and racing; and, as they knew very little if anything, about such subjects, their weak and silly slang soon disgusted me, while their fathers and mothers perplexed and overwhelmed me with their insidious and desperate hospitality, and planned such palpable and obvious ‘plants’ for throwing me into contact with the special daughter they sought to force upon me, that I had at last no alternative but matrimony or flight, or worse. If I declined their invitations, they rated me publicly as proud or uncivil; if I accepted them, I was certain within a few days to hear that I was on the point of marriage with one of their daughters, or that I was behaving very badly in raising hopes which I did not seem disposed to gratify.

“What else could a poor fellow do under such circumstances, Sir, than what I did, and what many others similarly circumstanced have done? I entirely withdrew from unmarried innocence, and now associate only with such agreeable married women as will bear with me, and with ‘pretty horse-breakers’ who do not expect me to marry them, or even to fall in love with them, if I am not inclined to do so.

“I daresay that if we elder sons found, when we desired to return within the pale of ‘good society,’ that the loose lives we had been leading stood in our light in the slightest degree, we might pause before we made ourselves notorious with the ‘horse-breaking’ world; but we find, on the contrary, that the seven matrons of Belgravia and their 24 daughters are of a singularly forgiving disposition, and that whenever a good *parti* hoists the St. George’s ensign in earnest, and bears up for Doctors’ Commons they are far more eager to grant him full absolution for his previous sins than he can be to seek it. They, kind souls, have no horror of prodigal sons, so that they be elder ones; and in this, the year of our Lord 1861, the gambler, the *roué*, the

drunkard, the riotous liver, if he calls at the matrimonial mart on business, is as eagerly dealt with as if he had always led a creditable and useful life.

"I have no doubt that the seven matrons of Belgravia will raise a shrill and angry protest against what I have here said; but that it is true I can easily show. I beg you and your readers to recollect the early career of — and — and — and —; to remember the crapulous lives they led, the effrontery with which they paraded their vice, the distrust and scorn which was felt towards them even by their accomplices, and then what beautiful and distinguished girls they married the very moment they showed themselves in the London market—girls who had previously attracted and rejected many of the worthiest and best fellows in London, concurring with their excellent mothers that with their attractions and pretensions marriage without high rank and affluence would be utter defeat and disgrace in the battle of fashionable life.

"Is nothing of this kind going on just now? I scarcely venture to ask the question. I do not dare to answer it.

"Take a chair in Rotten Row to-morrow, Sir; look about you, and then tell us what you see there in a 'leader.'

"Who rides the best horse in the row? Who drives the most rampagious ponies? Whom do all the best girls ape in dress and deportment, and in equipage if they can; aye, and in talk, too? Who first set the fashion of the 'pork-pie' hat? Who restored the ancient chimney-pot? Why, one of our 'pretty horse-breakers.'

"If this be so, if the matrons of Belgravia allow it to be so, what wonder is there that we elder sons prefer originality to imitation? We thereby escape present persecution of a very horrible kind, and we know that when we 'come in' and wish to marry, an Indemnity Bill is ready for us, and that there is more joy in Belgravian drawing-rooms over a debauched duke or marquis who repents and marries than over the nuptials of 99 of the worthiest, most intelligent, and loveble young working men of society who are not in a position to make 'good' settlements.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"PRIMOGENITUS."

In the present year of grace, as every one may read in the public prints, there is a crusade against (and very properly to a certain extent) the “ midnight orgy ” in and about the Haymarket. Fielding was no bad observer of human nature when he wrote that this system “ was legalised in some countries, connived at in others, and practised in all.” I quote from the book of an eminent London surgeon. “ Virtue and vice, as we all know, are no subjects for enactment. . . . The existing* regulations are adequate for public protection and order, which are all the judicious can at present hope for; for any thing further in that direction we are certainly not prepared.”

In the year of grace, A. D. 1865, what is the result of a too keen *surveillance*? Why this; I am advisedly told more than one western hotel, of undeniable antecedents, receives in its hospitable arms, unwillingly, no doubt, many couples, whose close proximity to our wives and daughters is very far from desirable!

To a work, then, professedly dealing with

* Acton, pages 72 and 73. (1857).

wrong and *causes célèbres*, I have appended these few suggestive comments—endorsing, as I do, from no little personal knowledge of life, the verity of this remark from the pen of Mr. Acton. "There are thousands of fathers, and what is worse, mothers of families, in every rank and occupation of life, who have done much evil by the attempt to set up the worship of society, in association with that of Mammon. Wholesale dealers in so-called respectability, but screwing out scanty halfpenny-worths of brotherly love, they have passed a marriage code in the name of these joint divinities, which renders, day by day, more difficult the union of youth and love unsanctified by money and position. As this goes on, we see more and more of our maidens pining on the stem of single blessedness, more and more of our young men resigning themselves to systematic 'intrigue,' and of course for all this, none the richer or more eligible in the eyes of society, at last to a *mésalliance*."

In conclusion, I deprecate any prudish criticisms as to the discussion of this question; the "social evil" claims, from time to time, a column in every newspaper, from

the *Morning Post* upwards or downwards. Divorce Court cases are reported in journals to be found in every drawing-room in England—presenting, nevertheless, to brides elect, and young brides, very suggestive reflections—meretricious love-letters, &c. The modern novel is, in my idea, not *sans reproche*, though it certainly is *sans peur*. “Tom Jones” is tabooed, but “sensation” novelists and *La Traviata* are great facts.

Well, in closing this book I can only hope the era of tremendous criminals is passing away*—and that the Mammon worship of modern days, as exemplified in marriages of St. George’s, Hanover Square, may not conduce to (that primary sign of national decadence)—the *Vitio parentum rara juvenus!*

* Cassandra shakes her head and says “No.”

BOOK V.



METRICAL.



No. I.—Nemesis.

No. II.—“ Sir Plausible Kite.”

No. III.—Epilogue.

NEMESIS.*

IN many a heart's most dark abyss
 Enshrined reigns a NEMESIS :
 Awakened conscience grasps an hour,
 ('Tis Retribution's nuptial dow'r,)

To vindicate tyrannic pow'r.
 Ubiquitous, in every clime,
 She conjures up the ghost of crime
 To haunt her crouching slave.
 Seal up Life's sanctum—let there be
 No chamber with a Bluebeard key—
 A skeleton you still *shall* see,
Remains will yet remain for thee,
Remains you cannot brave.

Go, gnash your teeth in bitter rage ;
 Bewail Life's wasted pilgrimage :
 Sin's Maëlstrom you can ne'er assuage :
 Time fled is like a grave ;
 Its deeds are buried past command,
 Like children's castles reared on sand
 Swept o'er by flowing wave ;
 Lost—like a corse on foreign strand
 That chartless waters lave !

* These lines, printed, but not published, long since, are inserted as suggestive of Constance Emilie Kent's case. I read in some newspaper, on poor little Saville Kent's tombstone Mr. Kent has inscribed "Thy sin will find thee out."

But though "time fled" is past recall,
 Its spirit hovers over all ;
 For Conscience—the Creator's plan—
 Is oft a scorpion-scourge to man !
 Aye! bitter min'rals taint the rill
 Of all who quaff by lust of will,
 Who ever quaffing, thirsty still,
 Libations ever crave :
 Conscience *is* NEMESIS of Sin,
 Her Empire is the Heart within—
 A Sybil in her cave.
 Show me a Priest to exorcise
 The spell of mad'ning memories,
 Fiends those that ever rave.
 Avenging Cannæ's blood,—a ring
 Left Annibal a mortal sting ;
 Then DEATH a pardon gave.*
 Not always so—she plants a wound
 (Reactions terrible rebound !)
 That leaves us writhing on the ground,
 Unpitying will not kill :
 A ling'ring, long, and dread disease,
 What Leech its anguish may appease,
 Or cure it by his skill ?
 Go, martyr, draw your heaving breath,
 But only breathe—to beg for DEATH.

* Cannarum vindex et tantæ sanguinis ultor
 Annulus.

JUVENAL.

SIR PLAUSIBLE KITE.

SIR Plausible Kite was a Baronet,
 And a banker eke was he,
 As cunning a man as ever you met,
 Or on any fine day might see ;
 And he held many fish in his wily net,
 The fraudulent Pharisee !
 Conspicuous partner of a Bank,
 Cool Tartuffe of all the Co.,
 He won for himself an imposing rank
 In Swindledom Westward-Ho !
 And dinners he gave, and spreads so flash,
 For hospitals and sinners ;
 'Twas thus the Banker squandered the
 cash,
 In giving gorgeous dinners !
 And so there came an almighty smash,
 The Co. left off " no winners."
 They hauled Sir Kite to a criminal dock,
 And for all his bearing silky,
 The jurymen thought it best to lock
 Up the man they found so " Guilty."

They taught him the trade of mending
boots,

In lieu of money spending,
And so Sir Plausible gathered the fruits
Of borrowing and of lending.

MORAL.

To spend the cash you hold in trust,
Is *not* the way to earn a bust.

EPILOGUE.

MOST honoured chairman of rich banquets
spread,

MUST wealth first feast, that widows may
be fed?

'Tis England's plan, when Laz'rus lacketh aid,

At London taverns to have covers laid:

Then, sated Dives, after amply dining,

Is less impatient of a pauper whining;

Strokes his moustache, in sympathy of woe,

Confesses "man but wants few things
below,"

Throws down his guinea—just to pay the
score—

Credits the list with twenty shillings more!

Hail, King of Alms! Sleek Tartuffe of
mankind!

Say, was that bland philanthropy—a blind?

A stalking-horse, the rich man's ear to lure,

To fill thy pockets—not to feed the poor?

As falsely would a cynic sceptic call,

ST. LUKE no doctor, no apostle PAUL,

As say, "our banker," acted on a plan

The happy part of good Samaritan!
 What feasts he gave! What bright Faler-
 nian wine,
 Rosy as nectar, when celestials dine:
 Turtle and venison (rich man's "loaves and
 fishes"),
 A princely *menu* of most piquant dishes.
 If not a banquet for Olympian cheer,
 At least he was—a good Amphitryon here!
 So all "went happy," till the ravens came,
 And cawed in mock'ry o'er the banker's
 shame.
 Fit place, I trow—the felon's dock within,
 For broken Pagods of insolvent sin!
 Justice embraces in her penal niche
 Alike the poor and crime-convicted rich.

Tis all but winter: Stafford's county town
 Greets restless Turfites at her "George"
 or "Crown:"
 Plenteous as peas in July's teeming pods,
 Are shrill toned shouters of the "Polestar"
 odds.
 Remember Rugeley! Read, and friend,
 beware
 Of baffled gamblers who their *friends* en-
 snare!
 'Tis an old tale; remaining to be told

Yet and again, th' accursed thirst for gold !
 If Palmer *could* but filch those Polestar
 gains,

Awhile—he yet might cheat the FELON'S
 pains !

“ The pound of flesh ” that—*that* the
 forger's task ;

The whence it comes, what VAMPIRE cares
 to ask ?

He mixed the potion by the patient's bed
 (A deadly draught with subtle strychnine
 fed),

With hand untrembling held it to the lip,
 And callous watched the destined victim sip.
 Then pain and anguish—intervals of ease—

A surgeon's victims perish by degrees :

For men like Palmer strive to simulate
 Some dread disorder of unusual fate :

Coquetting now with death—now wooing
 life—

Now bringing poison to th' unequal strife ;
 By *ling'ring* stages doling out his doom,
 As nature takes her debtors to the tomb.

Cool as a critic in our playhouse stalls,
 Watches the farce until the curtain falls,
This man of death sat gloating on the deed ;
 SUCCESS IS BRILLIANT, WHEN ITS
 VIEWS SUCCEED !

Palmer looked on, with calculating eye,
 Pick'd Cooke's poor pocket—as he saw him
 die!

Is there of monstrous crime an after-birth?
 Did grim BRINVILLIERS walk upon the
 earth,

And take an English ogress for a tool,
 To teach *new* lessons to the PALMER
 school?

“Then what can tombs avail”—since here
 you find,

A CATH'RINE WILSON massacre mankind?
 One SMETHURST, too, is noted in our
 chart,

As having ta'en in Newgate toils his part.
 REPRIEVE. *Crown pardon!* Still it is a
 vice,

When undivorced by law, to marry twice!
 Well, *après?* Paid for bigamy the bill,
 He quits a prison, to propound—a will!
 Well, *choses comme ça* are all affairs of taste,
 And some men's HONOUR can be patched
 with paste.

Quoth Horace, “Let me share the miser's
 bliss,

Hugging my hoard—a fig for those who
 hiss!”

As 'mid such scenes the Muse pursues her
road,

The *Modern Athens* has her episode.

It ever was, and will be, much the same,
A woman's passion, and a woman's shame.

As Dido trusted, dames again will trust
That man will be unto his promise—just.
Not all are patient when they wake be-
trayed—

Though some, like Dido, will sit down dis-
mayed.

Anon, an outraged woman vengeful turns
Her reckless weapon on the thing she
spurns ;

And when she does, you had far better dare
The whelpless tigress, ravening in her lair !

* * * * *

It could not be : yet, oh, how sorely tried,
Hope's outcast she—thank God—no homi-
cide !

Ask who, in such a case, the truth may tell,
Perjured or forger, one or both, ROUPELL.
No pious tremblings mastered MAMMON'S
lust ;

You staked your die upon a father's dust !
You, old young spider, wove a canny web,
To pay thy debtors by the plundered dead.

o

(So planned the Gaul an instrument of death,

And proved its merits by his latest breath !)

With lofty brow, and supercilious scorn,

You laughed at HONOUR, and the better-born.

For thy brief day—the talk of club and town,

Elect of LAMBETH, with thy civic crown !

Now slink degraded by the felon's brand,

O'er Southsea Common, and o'er Portland strand.

Once more—once more—of *blood* the guilty stain !

Pursue, pursue—his path is o'er the main.

By some prescriptive clause Columbia's clime

Is deemed by felons a retreat for crime.

Let loose law's bloodhounds—scarcely pause for breath—

Take MATTHEWS with you ;—as your witness, DEATH !

Th' avenging vessel grim and grandly glides,

While Jonah's galley tarrics on the tides :

For him, no music of the prosp'rous gale

Strains the tall mast, or fills the flapping sail.

But land at last! the seas and skies are
 blue,
 And fresh'ning breezes bring the hills to
 view.

A speck—a sail! give here the telescope:
 They make the ship; to leeward cast the
 rope;

Men—not all pilots—whence? What make
 they here?

Mutters the dread presentiment of fear.

Ill-omened and mysterious guests are these,
 Rising like spirits from the surging seas!

In some wild maelstrom of those monster
 waves,

Oh, that “all hands” had found alike
 their graves:

That fire or thunder-bolt had swept the
 deck,

Or Southern war-ship left it for a wreck!
 For then, dark Müller, you had cheated
 doom—

Death on a scaffold, and a quick lime tomb!
 To punish MURDER, since the birth of time,
 Conscience is still a NEMESIS of crime.

* * * * *

Once more upon the waters, bounding fast,
 No more dependent on the fickle blast;

But steaming homewards with a pulse of
 life,
 Through adverse billows, with defiance rife!
 He felt his days must dwindle to the grave;
 But yet a chance—and “fatherland” might
 save
 For lavished gold, and high forensic fees,
 Have Caitiffs snatched from horrors grim
 as these!
 His glance resolved—a smile for other men,
 The captured ruffian was *not* sentenced—
 then!

POSTSCRIPTUM.

AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM.*

To the Editor of the “Daily Telegraph.”

SIR, —Please compare the case of Miss Constance Kent with that of Miss Scobell on two points—1. That great overruling influence is exercised over the dupes in Sisterhoods. 2. That the promoters of Sisterhoods look sharply after money. Miss Constance Kent denied all knowledge of the murder before she entered the Sisterhood. She resided there nineteen months, and then came of age, the possessor of £1,000. In two months after she confesses to being a murderess, and places in the alms-box on the evening previous to her leaving Brighton, between £700 and £800; Mr. Confessor Wagner and Lady Superior Gream being her accusers. Miss Scobell, daughter of the Rev. John Scobell, was kidnapped into a Sisterhood in 1857. Before she entered it, she had declared, so says Mr. Scobell, “her fixed

* (Hear both sides!) In the case of *Wagner v. Whalley*, it is fair that both should have a hearing.

resolve that nothing should tempt her to alienate her present or her future property." She died in the Sisterhood a few months after entering it, making a new will six hours before her death, leaving one half of her property to the Sisterhood, and appointing Mr. Confessor Neale executor, and Lady Superior Gream executrix. Mr. Scobell pithily remarks on his daughter's previous intention respecting her property, "We know by whom this was overruled," and then feelingly paints the death scene, from which all her relatives were absent, but at which were present Mr. Wagner's friends, Mr. Confessor Neale and Lady Superior Gream.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.
 May 28, 1865. A BANKER.

MR. WAGNER AND MR. WHALLEY.

To the Editor of the "Daily Telegraph."

SIR,—Will you permit me to contradict, in the only public way which is now open to me, the statement made by Mr. Whalley in the House of Commons last night, that a lady named "Scovell" had, under my influence, made a will leaving £8,000 to St. Mary's Hospital, and that after she had made this will she was purposely placed by me in a post of duty, i. e., nursing a sick person in a high state of fever, when her own death was a probable consequence.

No lady of that name, or any similar name, was ever an inmate of St. Mary's Hospital, or in any way connected with it, nor has any person who has yet died, ever left one single penny to St. Mary's Hospital by will. The whole statement is entirely false from beginning to end, without even a shadow of fact, of which it could be the perversion.

I feel sure that all right-minded persons will justly estimate the cowardly wickedness of a member of the House of Commons who takes advantage of his position to bring a charge of murder (for that in plain language is what Mr. Whalley's statement involves) against one who has no power to reply, or to demand adequate satisfaction for the injury which this atrocious calumny is calculated to produce.

With regard to what Mr. Whalley says on the subject

of Miss Kent, I beg to repeat, for the third or fourth time, that her giving herself up to justice was entirely her own act, unsuggested and uninfluenced by me.

I am, Sir, yours, &c..

A. D. WAGNER.

Vicarage, Brighton, May 24.

To the Editor of the "Daily Telegraph."

SIR,—A letter, with the signature of "Vigil," appeared in your columns of the 16th instant, charging the Rev. Mr. Wagner, of St. Paul's, Brighton, with having revealed what had been confided to him by Miss Kent in confession to "others of his half-hatched Roman persuasion," and offering, if Mr. Wagner should deny the charge, to name "one individual treading in the same dangerous paths he is walking in, and recently appointed to an important agricultural parish in the diocese of Winchester, who will not venture to deny that the sacred seal of the confessional was at least broken in his case." This letter has only just been brought under my notice, and as the charge contained in it is as wholly without foundation as the slander uttered against Mr. Wagner in the House of Commons on Tuesday night, it is but fair that your correspondent should at least give the name of the clergyman whose statement Mr. Wagner is challenged to deny. With the love of justice and fair play for which your journal is proverbial, I am sure you will at once give me the name of your correspondent, that, as Mr. Wagner's solicitor, I may accept his challenge, and call upon him either to prove or to withdraw his most injurious accusation.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

ARTHUR W. WOODS.

Brighton, May 25, 1865.

It would not surprise me very much if what "Vigil" terms a "half hatched Roman persuasion," was eventually to afford a profitable employment to what the newspapers call the gentlemen of the long robe.

**TRANSLATION OF THE LATIN
AND FRENCH.**

TRANSLATIONS.

Page 7.—“*Nemo repente fuit turpissimus.*”

“No one was most base all at once.”

“*Hispida membra,*” &c.

“Rough limbs and stubborn bristles along the arms—
augur a determined spirit.”

Page 9.—“*Oderunt peccare,*” &c.

“The wicked eschew crime through fear of punishment.”

Page 17. *Note.*—“*Flectire,*” &c.

“Better to rule in Hell than serve in Heaven.”

Page 19.—“*Felix nimirum,*” &c.

“A happy thing, forsooth, to grow your gods in
your garden.”

Page 20.—“*Et digito,*” &c.

“Pollio begs with a ringless (or ungloved) hand.”

“*Implentur,*” &c.

“Their cheer, old port and fat venison.”

Page 22.—“*Dulce est,*” &c.

“It is pleasant to draw from a large balance.”

“*Hune tu,*” &c.

“Englishman, steer clear of him.”

Page 24. —“*Surgit amari aliquid.*”

“Any bitter qualms?”

Page 26.—“*Una senum facies.*”

“Old men have much the same aspect.”

“*Laudator,*” &c.

“Praising good old times.”

Page 27.—“*Esto felix,*” &c.

“Be happy till old age.”

“*Mutato nomine,*” &c.

“Change the name, and there you have me.”

Page 28.—“*Nulla aconita,*” &c.

“No poison is drunk out of goblets made of cowhorn
(*i.e.*, Paupers are seldom poisoned).”

Page 31.—“*Fortuna non mutat genus.*”

“Money does not change the (inner) man.”

Page 41.—“*Nox erat in terris,*” &c.

“Night in the world—silence in the woods and seas—
repose everywhere—”

“*At non infelix animi.*”

“But not in her unhappy mind.” This beautiful simile
is in the 4th *Æneid* of Virgil.

Page 45.—“*Sic vos non vobis.*”

“Making money for other people.”

Page 47.—“*Che sara sara.*”

“What will be, will be.”

Page 48.—“*Nessun maggior,*” &c.

“No greater grief than the recollection of past happiness
when in misery.”

Page 49.—“*Credat Judæus,*” &c.

“Apella, the Jew, may believe it; faith, not I!”

“*Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.*”

JUVENAL.

“Poverty has no greater bitterness than that it provokes
ridicule.” Johnson thus translates this.

Johnson's imitation is:—

“Of all the griefs that harrags the distress
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest!”

Or, more literally :—

“ Nothing more hard hath poverty to bear,
Than wealthy worldlings' supercilious stare !”

Page 59.—Let us say, by the way, success is hideous enough. Its false resemblance to merit deceives mankind. For the multitude success and supremacy are almost identical. Success, that Manchnus of talent, has a dupe—history. Juvenal and Tacitus alone will not have it. In our days an almost “circumlocution office” philosophy keeps house with success, wears its livery, and hangs about its vestibule. Go ahead! This is what you have to do; prosperity supposes capacity. Win a prize in the lottery, and you are an able man. One who triumphs is venerated. “Be born” (the *Quarterby* translates) “with a silver spoon, and your fortune's made.” Luck's your game; the rest will follow. Gilt (or guilt) is gold. Let an attorney blossom as a Member of Parliament; a pseudo-Corneille manufacture *Tiridates*; a eunuch succeed in possessing a harem; a military adventurer accidentally win the “Waterloo” of his times; a surgeon take out a patent for paper soles (to shoes) for the army of Sambre and Meuse, and so acquire, by means of paper sold for leather, his £10,000 a year; let a Jew packman marry a usurer's daughter, and get her, as loving ladies who love their lords should be, with a representative of some seven or eight millions, of which he is father, she mother—men call that genius, just as they call beauty *la figure de Musquetor* and majesty the shoulders of Claude. They mistake for the poetry of heaven “the splays which a duck makes as it paddles about in the soft mud of a boggy ground.”

Page 65.—“*Illa venena,*” &c.

“She handled poisons from Cholchis, and whatever wickedness is elsewhere conceived.”

Page 76.—“*Furens quid fœmina possit.*”

“What a woman in a rage will do.”

Page 91.—“*Dicique beatus,*” &c.

“No one can be called happy till dead and buried.”

Page 97.—“Omne ignotum,” &c.

“The unknown is marvellous.”

“Not my sermon.”

Page 106.—“Quorsum hæc,” &c.

“Why all this rubbish,”

de lunatico inquirendo.

“about a lunacy inquiry.”

Page 109.—“Ingenuas didicisse,” &c.

“To be an accomplished scholar softens our manners and does not permit us to be ‘—— unlicked cubs.’”

Page 115.—“Brachia et vultum,” &c.

“Without losing my heart I praise her arms and countenance—do not suspect me!”

Page 116.—“Uxorem Posthume, ducis?”

“What marry, Posthumus?”

Page 140.—Monstrum, informe, ingens cui lumen ademptum.—*Virgil.*

“A monster, without form, huge and blind.”

“Donec eris felix, multos numerabis amicos.”—*Ovid.*

“Whilst you are prosperous you will number many friends.”

Page 153.—“Est mihi,” &c.

“I have at home a father and an unjust step-mother.”

Page 157.—“Cum sit tristi habitu,” &c.

“Of sad demeanour, stern countenance and garb.”

Page 166.—“Fiat justitia,” &c.

“Do what is right and defy consequences.”

Page 181.—“Festinat enim, &c.”

“The flower and very short period of our most miser-

able life, hastens to a swift decline; while we demand wreaths, perfumes, and ladies' smiles, old age supervenes unawares."

L'ENVOI.

A literary friend of mine tells me this promised translation is a "blunder"—it is certainly no "crime." Neither Fouché nor Talleyrand (they appear to divide the honours of this *mot* between them) would have called, nor will the noble lord call it so. The fact is, my friend (who is a ripe scholar) knows that everything—barring a bishop—suffers by a "translation;" since, however, the equalisation of the sees, the saying has lost much of its force. Thanks to the schoolmaster who is "abroad," and to the "Circumlocution Office," Ticket-of-Leavedom revels in what Gibbon called "the obscurities of a learned language." Still, this free translation may be of service to a few—can injure none. And now, Southeywise:—

"Go, little book, from this my solitude."

ERRATA.

- Page lli, line 13, for "are" read "is."
 " 28, for "aconita" read "aconita."
 " 29, for "independent" read "independently."
 " 30, for "fast" read "first."
 " 33, for "prisoner" read "poisoner."
 " 52, for "unlimited luck" read "unlimited tick."

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