

The Caxtons, Part 12

Edward Bulwer-Lytton

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PART XII.

CHAPTER I.

The Hegira is completed,--we have all taken roost in the old Tower. My father's books have arrived by the wagon, and have settled themselves quietly in their new abode,--filling up the apartment dedicated to their owner, including the bed chamber and two lobbies. The duck also has arrived, under wing of Mrs. Primmins, and has reconciled herself to the old stewpond, by the side of which my father has found a walk that compensates for the peach-wall, especially as he has made acquaintance with sundry respectable carps, who permit him to feed them after he has fed the duck,--a privilege of which (since, if any one else approaches, the carps are off in an instant) my father is naturally vain. All privileges are valuable in proportion to the exclusiveness of their enjoyment.

Now, from the moment the first carp had eaten the bread my father threw to it, Mr. Caxton had mentally resolved that a race so confiding should never be sacrificed to Ceres and Primmins. But all the fishes on my uncle's property were under the special care of that Proteus Bolt; and Bolt was not a man likely to suffer the carps to earn their bread without contributing their full share to the wants of the community. But, like master, like man! Bolt was an aristocrat fit to be hung a la lanterne. He out-Rolanded Roland in the respect he entertained for sounding names and old families; and by that bait my father caught him with such skill that you might see that if Austin Caxton had been an angler of fishes, he could have filled his basket full any day, shine or rain.

"You observe, Bolt," said my father, beginning artfully, "that those fishes, dull as you may think them; are creatures capable of a syllogism; and if they saw that, in proportion to their civility to me, they were depopulated by you, they would put two and two together, and renounce my acquaintance."

"Is that what you call being silly Jems, sir?" said Bolt. "Faith! there is many a good Christian not half so wise."

"Man," answered my father, thoughtfully, "is an animal less syllogistical or more silly-Jemical, than many creatures popularly esteemed his inferiors. Yes, let but one of those Cyprinidae, with his fine sense of logic, see that if his fellow-fishes eat bread, they are suddenly jerked out of their element and vanish forever, and though you broke a quartern loaf into crumbs, he would snap his tail at you with enlightened contempt. If," said my father, soliloquizing, "I had been as syllogistic as those scaly logicians, I should never have swallowed that hook which--Hum! there--least said soonest mended. But, Mr. Bolt, to return to the Cyprinidae."

"What's the hard name you call them 'ere carp, yer honor?" asked Bolt.

"Cyprinidae,--a family of the section Malacoptergii Abdominales," replied Mr. Caxton; "their teeth are generally confined to the Pharyngeans, and their branhiostegous rays are but few,--marks of distinction from fishes vulgar and voracious."

"Sir," said Bolt, glancing to the stewpond, "if I had known they had been a family of such importance, I am sure I should have treated them with more respect."

"They are a very old family, Bolt, and have been settled in England since the fourteenth century. A younger branch of the family has established itself in a pond in the gardens of Peterhoff (the celebrated palace of Peter the Great, Bolt,--an emperor highly respected by my brother, for he killed a great many people very gloriously in battle, besides those whom he sabred for his own private amusement); and there is an officer or servant of the Imperial household, whose task it is to summon those Russian Cyprinidae to dinner, by ringing a bell, shortly after which, you may see the emperor and empress, with all their waiting ladies and gentlemen, coming down in their carriages to see the Cyprinidae eat in state. So you perceive, Bolt, that it would be a republican, Jacobinical proceeding to stew members of a family so intimately associated with royalty."

"Dear me, sir," said Bolt, "I am very glad you told me. I ought to have known they were genteel fish, they are so mighty shy,--as all your real quality are."

My father smiled, and rubbed his hands gently,--he had carried his point; and henceforth the Cyprinidae of the section Malacoptergii Abdominales were as sacred in Bolt's eyes as cats and ichneumons were in those of a priest in Thebes.

My poor father, with what true and unostentatious philosophy thou didst accommodate thyself to the greatest change thy quiet, harmless life had known since it had passed out of the brief, burning cycle of the passions! Lost was the home endeared to thee by so many noiseless victories of the mind, so many mute histories of the heart; for only the scholar knoweth how deep a charm lies in monotony, in the old associations, the old ways and habitual clockwork of peaceful time. Yet the home may be replaced,--thy heart built its home round itself everywhere,--and the old Tower might supply the loss of the brick house, and the walk by the stewpond become as dear as the haunts by the sunny peach-wall. But what shall replace to thee the bright dream of thine innocent ambition,--that angel-wing which had glittered across thy manhood, in the hour between its noon and its setting What replace to thee the Magnum Opus--the Great Book!--fair and broad-spreading tree, lone amidst the sameness of the landscape, now plucked up by the roots? The oxygen was subtracted from the air of thy life. For be it known to you, O my compassionate readers, that with the death of the Anti-Publisher Society the blood-streams of the Great Book stood still, its pulse was arrested, its full heart beat no more. Three thousand copies of the first seven sheets in quarto, with sundry unfinished plates, anatomical, architectural, and graphic, depicting various developments of the human skull (that temple of Human Error), from the Hottentot to the Greek; sketches of ancient buildings, Cyclopean and Pelagic; Pyramids and Pur-tors, all signs of races whose handwriting was on their walls; landscapes to display the influence of Nature upon the customs, creeds, and philosophy of men,--here showing how the broad Chaldean wastes led to the contemplation of the stars; and illustrations of the

Zodiac, in elucidation of the mysteries of symbol-worship; fantastic vagaries of earth fresh from the Deluge, tending to impress on early superstition the awful sense of the rude powers of Nature; views of the rocky defiles of Laconia,--Sparta, neighbored by the "silent Amyclae," explaining, as it were, geographically the iron customs of the warrior colony (arch-Tories, amidst the shift and roar of Hellenic democracies), contrasted by the seas and coasts and creeks of Athens and Ionia, tempting to adventure, commerce, and change. Yea, my father, in his suggestions to the artist of those few imperfect plates, had thrown as much light on the infancy of earth and its tribes as by the "shining words" that flowed from his calm, starry knowledge! Plates and copies, all rested now in peace and dust, "housed with darkness and with death," on the sepulchral shelves of the lobby to which they were consigned,--rays intercepted, world incompleated. The Prometheus was bound, and the fire he had stolen from heaven lay imbedded in the flints of his rock. For so costly was the mould in which Uncle Jack and the Anti-Publisher Society had contrived to cast this exposition of Human Error that every bookseller shied at its very sight, as an owl blinks at daylight, or human error at truth. In vain Squills and I, before we left London, had carried a gigantic specimen of the Magnum Opus into the back parlors of firms the most opulent and adventurous. Publisher after publisher started, as if we had held a blunderbuss to his ear. All Paternoster Row uttered a "Lord deliver us!" Human Error found no man so egregiously its victim as to complete those two quartos, with the prospect of two others, at his own expense. Now, I had earnestly hoped that my father, for the sake of mankind, would be persuaded to risk some portion--and that, I own, not a small one--of his remaining capital on the conclusion of an undertaking so elaborately begun. But there my father was obdurate. No big words about mankind, and the advantage to unborn generations, could stir him an inch. "Stuff!" said Mr. Caxton, peevishly. "A man's duties to mankind and posterity begin with his own son; and having wasted half your patrimony, I will not take another huge slice out of the poor remainder to gratify my vanity, for that is the plain truth of it. Man must atone for sin by expiation. By the book I have sinned, and the book must expiate it. Pile the sheets up in the lobby, so that at least one man may be wiser and humbler by the sight of Human Error every time he walks by so stupendous a monument of it."

Verily, I know not how my father could bear to look at those dumb fragments of himself,--strata of the Caxtonian conformation lying layer upon layer, as if packed up and disposed for the inquisitive genius of some moral Murchison or Mantell. But for my part, I never glanced at their repose in the dark lobby without thinking, "Courage, Pisistratus! courage! There's something worth living for; work hard, grow rich, and the Great Book shall come out at last!"

Meanwhile, I wandered over the country and made acquaintance with the farmers and with Trevanion's steward,--an able man and a great agriculturist,--and I learned from them a better notion of the nature of my uncle's domains. Those domains covered an immense acreage, which, save a small farm, was of no value at present. But land of the same sort had been lately redeemed by a simple kind of draining, now well known in Cumberland; and, with capital, Roland's barren moors might become a noble property. But capital, where was that to come from? Nature gives us all, except the means to turn her into marketable account. As old Plautus saith so wittily, "Day, night, water, sun, and moon, are to be had gratis; for everything else--down with your dust!"

CHAPTER II.

Nothing has been heard of Uncle Jack. Before we left the brick house the Captain gave him an invitation to the Tower,--more, I suspect, out of compliment to my mother than from the unbidden impulse of his own inclinations. But Mr. Tibbets politely declined it. During his stay at the brick house he had received and written a vast number of letters,--some of those he received, indeed, were left at the village post-office, under the alphabetical addresses of A. B. or X. Y.; for no misfortune ever paralyzed the energies of Uncle Jack. In the winter of adversity he vanished, it is true; but even in vanishing, he vegetated still. He resembled those algae, termed the *Prolococcus nivales*, which give a rose-color to the Polar snows that conceal them, and flourish unsuspected amidst the general dissolution of Nature. Uncle Jack, then, was as lively and sanguine as ever; though he began to let fall vague hints of intentions to abandon the general cause of his fellow-creatures, and to set up business henceforth purely on his own account,--wherewith my father, to the great shock of my belief in his philanthropy, expressed himself much pleased. And I strongly suspect that when Uncle Jack wrapped himself up in his new double Saxony and went off at last, he carried with him something more than my father's good wishes in aid of his conversion to egotistical philosophy.

"That man will do yet," said my father, as the last glimpse was caught of Uncle Jack standing up on the stage-coach box, beside the driver, partly to wave his hand to us as we stood at the gate, and partly to array himself more commodiously in a box-coat with six capes, which the coachman had lent him.

"Do you think so, sir?" said I, doubtfully. "May I ask why?"

Mr. Caxton.--"On the cat principle,--that he tumbles so lightly. You may throw him down from St. Paul's, and the next time you see him he will be scrambling atop of the Monument."

Pisistratus.--"But a cat the most vicarious is limited to nine lives; and Uncle Jack must be now far gone in his eighth."

Ms. Caxton (not heeding that answer, for he has got his hand in his waistcoat).--"The earth, according to Apuleius, in his 'Treatise on the Philosophy of Plato,' was produced from right-angled triangles; but fire and air from the scalene triangle,--the angles of which, I need not say, are very different from those of a right-angled triangle. Now I think there are people in the world of whom one can only judge rightly according to those mathematical principles applied to their original construction: for if air or fire predominates in our natures, we are scalene triangles; if earth, right-angled. Now, as air is so notably manifested in Jack's conformation, he is, nolens volens, produced in conformity with his preponderating element. He is a scalene triangle, and must be judged, accordingly, upon irregular, lop-sided principles; whereas you and I, common-place mortals, are produced, like the earth, which is our preponderating element, with our triangles all right-angled, comfortable and complete,--for which blessing let us thank Providence, and be charitable to those who are necessarily windy and gaseous, from that unlucky scalene triangle upon which they have had the misfortune to be constructed, and which, you perceive, is quite at

variance with the mathematical constitution of the earth!"

Pisistratus.--"Sir, I am very happy to hear so simple, easy, and intelligible an explanation of Uncle Jack's peculiarities; and I only hope that, for the future, the sides of his scalene triangle may never be produced to our rectangular conformations."

Mr. Caxton (descending from his stilts with an air as mildly reproachful as if I had been cavilling at the virtues of Socrates).--"You don't do your uncle justice, Pisistratus,--he is a very clever man; and I am sure that, in spite of his scalene misfortune, he would be an honest one,--that is [added Mr. Caxton, correcting himself], not romantically or heroically honest, but holiest as men go,--if he could but keep his head long enough above water; but, you see, when the best man in the world is engaged in the process of sinking, he catches hold of whatever comes in his way, and drowns the very friend who is swimming to save him."

Pisistratus.--"Perfectly true, sir; but Uncle Jack makes it his business to be always sinking!"

Mr. Caxton (with naivete).--"And how could it be otherwise, when he has been carrying all his fellow-creatures in his breeches' pockets? Now he has got rid of that dead weight, I should not be surprised if he swam like a cork."

Pisistratus (who, since the "Capitalist," has become a strong Anti-Jackian). "But if, sir, you really think Uncle Jack's love for his fellow-creatures is genuine, that is surely not the worst part of him."

Mr. Caxton.--"O literal ratiocinator, and dull to the true logic of Attic irony! can't you comprehend that an affection may be genuine as felt by the man, yet its nature be spurious in relation to others? A man may generally believe he loves his fellow-creatures when he roasts them like Torquemada, or guillotines them like St. Just! Happily Jack's scalene triangle, being more produced from air than from fire, does not give to his philanthropy the inflammatory character which distinguishes the benevolence of inquisitors and revolutionists. The philanthropy, therefore, takes a more flatulent and innocent form, and expends its strength in mounting paper balloons, out of which Jack pitches himself, with all the fellow-creatures he can coax into sailing with him. No doubt Uncle Jack's philanthropy is sincere when he cuts the string and soars up out of sight; but the sincerity will not much mend their bruises when himself and fellow-creatures come tumbling down neck and heels. It must be a very wide heart that can take in all mankind,--and of a very strong fibre to bear so much stretching. Such hearts there are, Heaven be thanked! and all praise to them. Jack's is not of that quality. He is a scalene triangle. He is not a circle! And yet, if he would but let it rest, it is a good heart,--a very good heart [continued my father, warming into a tenderness quite infantine, all things considered]. Poor Jack! that was prettily said of him--"That if he were a dog, and he had no home but a dog kennel, he would turn out to give me the best of the straw!" Poor brother Jack!"

So the discussion was dropped; and in the mean while, Uncle Jack, like the short-faced gentleman in the "Spectator," "distinguished himself by a profound silence."

CHAPTER III.

Blanche has contrived to associate herself, if not with my more active diversions,--in running over the country and making friends with the farmers,--still in all my more leisurely and domestic pursuits. There is about her a silent charm that it is very hard to define; but it seems to arise from a kind of innate sympathy with the moods and humors of those she loves. If one is gay, there is a cheerful ring in her silver laugh that seems gladness itself; if one is sad, and creeps away into a corner to bury one's head in one's hand and muse, by and by, and just at the right moment, when one has mused one's fill, and the heart wants something to refresh and restore it, one feels two innocent arms round one's neck, looks up, and lo! Blanche's soft eyes, full of wistful, compassionate kindness, though she has the tact not to question; it is enough for her to sorrow with your sorrow,--she cares not to know more. A strange child,--fearless, and yet seemingly fond of things that inspire children with fear; fond of tales of fay, sprite, and ghost, which Mrs. Primmins draws fresh and new from her memory as a conjurer draws pancakes hot and hot from a hat. And yet so sure is Blanche of her own innocence that they never trouble her dreams in her lone little room, full of caliginous corners and nooks, with the winds moaning round the desolate ruins, and the casements rattling hoarse in the dungeon-like wall. She would have no dread to walk through the ghostly keep in the dark, or cross the church-yard what time,--

"By the moon's doubtful and malignant light,"--

the gravestones look so spectral, and the shade from the yew-trees lies so still on the sward. When the brows of Roland are gloomiest, and the compression of his lips makes sorrow look sternest, be sure that Blanche is couched at his feet, waiting the moment when, with some heavy sigh, the muscles relax, and she is sure of the smile if she climbs to his knee. It is pretty to chance on her gliding up broken turret-stairs, or standing hushed in the recess of shattered casements; and you wonder what thoughts of vague awe and solemn pleasure can be at work under that still, little brow.

She has a quick comprehension of all that is taught to her; she already tasks to the full my mother's educational arts. My father has had to rummage his library for books to feed (or extinguish) her desire for "further information," and has promised lessons in French and Italian--at some golden time in the shadowy "By and by"--which are received so gratefully that one might think Blanche mistook "Telema que" and "Novelle Morali" for baby-houses and dolls. Heaven send her through French and Italian with better success than attended Mr. Caxton's lessons in Greek to Pisistratus! She has an ear for music which my mother, who is no bad judge, declares to be exquisite. Luckily there is an old Italian, settled in a town ten miles off, who is said to be an excellent music-master, and who comes the round of the neighboring squirearchy twice a week. I have taught her to draw,--an accomplishment in which I am not without skill,--and she has already taken a sketch from nature, which, barring the perspective, is not so amiss; indeed, she has caught the notion of "idealizing" (which promises future originality) from her own natural instincts, and given to the old witch-elm, that hangs over the stream, just the bough that it wanted to dip into the water and soften off the hard lines. My only fear is that Blanche should become too dreamy and thoughtful.

Poor child, she has no one to play with! So I look out, and get her a dog, frisky and young, who abhors sedentary occupations,--a spaniel, small, and coal-black, with ears sweeping the ground. I baptize him "Juba," in honor of Addison's "Cato," and in consideration of his sable curls and Mauritanian complexion. Blanche does not seem so eerie and elf-like while gliding through the ruins when Juba barks by her side and scares the birds from the ivy.

One day I had been pacing to and fro the hall, which was deserted; and the sight of the armor and portraits--dumb evidences of the active and adventurous lives of the old inhabitants, which seemed to reprove my own inactive obscurity--had set me off on one of those Pegasean hobbies on which youth mounts to the skies,--delivering maidens on rocks, and killing Gorgons and monsters,--when Juba bounded in, and Blanche came after him, her straw hat in her hand.

Blanche. "I thought you were here, Sisty: may I stay?"

Pisistratus.--"Why, my dear child, the day is so fine that instead of losing it indoors, you ought to be running in the fields with Juba."

Juba.--"Bow-wow."

Blanche.--"Will you come too? If Sisty stays in, Blanche does not care for the butterflies!"

Pisistratus, seeing that the thread of his day-dreams is broken, consents with an air of resignation. Just as they gain the door, Blanche pauses, and looks as if there were something on her mind.

Pisistratus--"What now, Blanche? Why are you making knots in that ribbon, and writing invisible characters on the floor with the point of that busy little foot?"

Blanche (mysteriously).--"I have found a new room, Sisty. Do you think we may look into it?"

Pisistratus--"Certainly; unless any Bluebeard of your acquaintance told you not. Where is it?"

Blanche.--"Upstairs, to the left."

Pisistratus.--"That little old door, going down two stone steps, which is always kept locked?"

Blanche.--"Yes; it is not locked to-day. The door was ajar, and I peeped in; but I would not do more till I came and asked you if you thought it would not be wrong."

Pisistratus.--"Very good in you, my discreet little cousin. I have no doubt it is a ghost-trap; however, with Juba's protection, I think we might venture together."

Pisistratus, Blanche, and Juba ascend the stairs, and turn off down a dark passage to the left, away from the rooms in use. We reach the arch-pointed door of oak planks nailed roughly together, we push it open, and perceive that a small stair winds down from the room,--it is just over Roland's chamber.

The room has a damp smell, and has probably been left open to be aired; for the wind comes through the unbarred casement, and a billet burns on the Hearth. The place has that attractive, fascinating air which belongs to a lumber-room,--than which I know nothing that so captivates the interest and fancy of young people. What treasures, to them, often lie hid in those quaint odds and ends which the elder generations have discarded as rubbish! All children are by nature antiquarians and relic-hunters. Still, there is an order and precision with which the articles in that room are stowed away that belies the true notion of lumber,--none of the mildew and dust which give such mournful interest to things abandoned to decay.

In one corner are piled up cases and military-looking trunks of outlandish aspect, with R. D. C. in brass nails on their sides. From these we turn with involuntary respect and call off Juba, who has wedged himself behind in pursuit of some imaginary mouse. But in the other corner is what seems to me a child's cradle,--not an English one, evidently; it is of wood, seemingly Spanish rosewood, with a railwork at the back, of twisted columns; and I should scarcely have known it to be a cradle but for the fairy-like quilt and the tiny pillows, which proclaimed its uses.

On the wall above the cradle were arranged sundry little articles that had, perhaps, once made the joy of a child's heart,--broken toys with the paint rubbed off, a tin sword and trumpet, and a few tattered books, mostly in Spanish; by their shape and look, doubtless children's books. Near these stood, on the floor, a picture with its face to the wall. Juba had chased the mouse, that his fancy still insisted on creating, behind this picture, and as he abruptly drew back, the picture fell into the hands I stretched forth to receive it. I turned the face to the light, and was surprised to see merely an old family portrait; it was that of a gentleman in the flowered vest mid stiff ruff which referred the date of his existence to the reign of Elizabeth,--a man with a bold and noble countenance. On the corner was placed a faded coat of arms, beneath which was inscribed, "Herbert De Caxton, Eq: Aur: AEtat: 35."

On the back of the canvas I observed, as I now replaced the picture against the wall, a label in Roland's handwriting, though in a younger and more running hand than he now wrote. The words were these "The best and bravest of our line, He charged by Sidney's side on the field of Zutphen; he fought in Drake's ship against the armament of Spain. If ever I have a--" The rest of the label seemed to have been torn off.

I turned away, and felt a remorseful shame that I had so far gratified my curiosity,--if by so harsh a name the powerful interest that had absorbed me must be called. I looked round for Blanche; she had retreated from my side to the door, and, with her hands before her eyes, was weeping. As I stole towards her, my glance fell on a book that lay on a chair near the casement and beside those relics of an infancy once pure and serene. By the old-fashioned silver clasps I recognized Roland's Bible. I felt as if I had been almost guilty of profanation in my thoughtless intrusion. I drew away Blanche, and we descended the stairs noiselessly; and not till we were on our favorite spot, amidst a heap of ruins on the feudal justice-hill, did I seek to kiss away her tears and ask the cause.

"My poor brother!" sobbed Blanche, "they must have been his,--and we shall never, never see him again!--and poor papa's Bible, which he reads

when he is very, very sad! I did not weep enough when my brother died. I know better what death is now! Poor papa! poor papa! Don't die, too, Sisty!"

There was no running after butterflies that morning; and it was long before I could soothe Blanche. Indeed, she bore the traces of dejection in her soft looks for many, many days; and she often asked me, sighingly, "Don't you think it was very wrong in me to take you there?" Poor little Blanche, true daughter of Eve, she would not let me bear my due share of the blame; she would have it all, in Adam's primitive way of justice,--"The woman tempted me, and I did eat." And since then Blanche has seemed more fond than ever of Roland, and comparatively deserts me to nestle close to him, and closer, till he looks up and says, "My child, you are pale; go and run after the butterflies;" and she says now to him, not to me, "Come too!" drawing him out into the sunshine with a hand that will not loose its hold.

Of all Roland's line, this Herbert de Caxton was "the best and bravest!" yet he had never named that ancestor to me,--never put any forefather in comparison with the dubious and mythical Sir William. I now remembered once that, in going over the pedigree, I had been struck by the name of Herbert,--the only Herbert in the scroll,--and had asked, "What of him, uncle?" and Roland had muttered something inaudible, and turned away. And I remembered also that in Roland's room there was the mark on the wall where a picture of that size had once hung. The picture had been removed thence before we first came, but must have hung there for years to have left that mark on the wall,--perhaps suspended by Bolt during Roland's long Continental absence. "If ever I have a--" What were the missing words? Alas! did they not relate to the son,--missed forever, evidently not forgotten still?

CHAPTER IV.

My uncle sat on one side the fireplace, my mother on the other; and I, at a small table between them, prepared to note down the results of their conference; for they had met in high council, to assess their joint fortunes,--determine what should be brought into the common stock and set apart for the Civil List, and what should be laid aside as a

Sinking Fund. Now my mother, true woman as she was, had a womanly love of show in her own quiet way,--of making "a genteel figure" in the eyes of the neighborhood; of seeing that sixpence not only went as far as sixpence ought to go, but that, in the going, it should emit a mild but imposing splendor,--not, indeed, a gaudy flash, a startling Borealian coruscation, which is scarcely within the modest and placid idiosyncracies of sixpence,--but a gleam of gentle and benign light, just to show where a sixpence had been, and allow you time to say "Behold!" before

"The jaws of darkness did devour it up."

Thus, as I once before took occasion to apprise the reader, we had always held a very respectable position in the neighborhood round our square brick house; been as sociable as my father's habits would permit; given our little tea-parties, and our occasional dinners, and, without

attempting to vie with our richer associates, there had always been so exquisite a neatness, so notable a housekeeping, so thoughtful a disposition, in short, of all the properties indigenous to a well-spent sixpence, in my mother's management, that there was not an old maid within seven miles of us who did not pronounce our tea-parties to be perfect; and the great Mrs. Rollick, who gave forty guineas a year to a professed cook and housekeeper, used regularly, whenever we dined at Rollick Hall, to call across the table to my mother (who therewith blushed up to her ears) to apologize for the strawberry jelly. It is true that when, on returning home, my mother adverted to that flattering and delicate compliment, in a tone that revealed the self-conceit of the human heart, my father--whether to sober his Kitty's vanity into a proper and Christian mortification of spirit, or from that strange shrewdness which belonged to him--would remark that Mrs. Rollick was of a querulous nature; that the compliment was meant, not to please my mother, but to spite the professed cook and housekeeper, to whom the butler would be sure to repeat the invidious apology.

In settling at the Tower, and assuming the head of its establishment, my mother was naturally anxious that, poor battered invalid though the Tower was, it should still put its best leg foremost. Sundry cards, despite the thinness of the neighborhood, had been left at the door; various invitations, which my uncle had hitherto declined, had greeted his occupation of the ancestral ruin, and had become more numerous since the news of our arrival had gone abroad; so that my mother saw before her a very suitable field for her hospitable accomplishments,--a reasonable ground for her ambition that the Tower should hold up its head as became a Tower that held the head of the family.

But not to wrong thee, O dear mother! as thou sittest there, opposite the grim Captain, so fair and so neat,--with thine apron as white, and thy hair as trim and as sheen, and thy morning cap, with its ribbons of blue, as coquettishly arranged as if thou hadst a fear that the least negligence on thy part might lose thee the heart of thine Austin,--not to wrong thee by setting down to frivolous motives alone thy feminine visions of the social amenities of life, I know that thine heart, in its provident tenderness, was quite as much interested as ever thy vanities could be, in the hospitable thoughts on which thou wert intent. For, first and foremost, it was the wish of thy soul that thine Austin might, as little as possible, be reminded of the change in his fortunes,--might miss as little as possible those interruptions to his abstracted scholarly moods at which, it is true, he used to fret and to pshaw and to cry Papa! but which nevertheless always did him good, and freshened up the stream of his thoughts. And, next, it was the conviction of thine understanding that a little society and boon companionship, and the proud pleasure of showing his ruins and presiding at the hall of his forefathers, would take Roland out of those gloomy reveries into which he still fell at times. And, thirdly, for us young people, ought not Blanche to find companions in children of her own sex and age? Already in those large black eyes there was something melancholy and brooding, as there is in the eyes of all children who live only with their elders. And for Pisistratus, with his altered prospects, and the one great gnawing memory at his heart,--which he tried to conceal from himself, but which a mother (and a mother who had loved) saw at a glance,--what could be better than such union and interchange with the world around us, small though that world might be, as woman, sweet binder and blender of all social links, might artfully effect? So that thou didst not go, like the awful Florentine,--

"Sopra for vanita che par persona,"--

"over thin shadows that mocked the substance of real forms," but rather it was the real forms that appeared as shadows, or vanita.

What a digression! Can I never tell my story in a plain, straightforward way? Certainly I was born under Cancer, and all my movements are circumlocutory, sideways, and crab-like.

CHAPTER V.

"I think, Roland," said my mother, "that the establishment is settled,-- Bolt, who is equal to three men at least; Primmins, cook and housekeeper; Molly, a good, stirring girl, and willing (though I've had some difficulty in persuading her to submit not to be called Anna Maria). Their wages are but a small item, my dear Roland."

"Hem!" said Roland; "since we can't do with fewer servants at less wages, I suppose we must call it small."

"It is so," said my mother, with mild positiveness. "And indeed, what with the game and fish, and the garden and poultry-yard, and your own mutton, our housekeeping will be next to nothing,"

"Hem!" again said the thrifty Roland, with a slight inflection of the beetle brows. "It may be next to nothing, ma'am,--sister,--just as a butcher's shop may be next to Northumberland House; but there is a vast deal between nothing and that next neighbor you have given it."

This speech was so like one of my father's--so naive an imitation of that subtle reasoner's use of the rhetorical figure called Antanaclasis (or repetition of the same words in a different sense)--that I laughed and my mother smiled. But she smiled reverently, not thinking of the Antanaclasis, as, laying her hand on Roland's arm, she replied in the yet more formidable figure of speech called Epiphonema (or exclamation), "Yet, with all your economy, you would have had us--"

"Tut!" cried my uncle, parrying the Epiphonema with a masterly Aposiopesis (or breaking off); "tut! if you had done what I wished, I should have had more pleasure for my money!"

My poor mother's rhetorical armory supplied no weapon to meet that artful Aposiopesis; so she dropped the rhetoric altogether, and went on with that "unadorned eloquence" natural to her, as to other great financial reformers: "Well, Roland, but I am a good housewife, I assure you, and--Don't scold; but that you never do;--I mean, don't look as if you would like to scold. The fact is, that even after setting aside L100 a year for our little parties--"

"Little parties!--a hundred a year!" cried the Captain, aghast.

My mother pursued her way remorselessly,--"which we can well afford; and without counting your half-pay, which you must keep for pocket-money and your wardrobe and Blanche's,--I calculate that we can allow Pisistratus L150 a year, which, with the scholarship he is to get, will keep him at

Cambridge" (at that, seeing the scholarship was as yet amidst the Pleasures of Hope, I shook my head doubtfully), "and," continued my mother, not heeding that sign of dissent, "we shall still have something to lay by."

The Captain's face assumed a ludicrous expression of compassion and horror; he evidently thought my mother's misfortunes had turned her head.

His tormentor continued.

"For," said my mother, with a pretty calculating shake of her head, and a movement of the right forefinger towards the five fingers of the left hand, "L370,--the interest of Austin's fortune,--and L50 that we may reckon for the rent of our house, make L420 a year. Add your L330 a year from the farm, sheep-walk, and cottages that you let, and the total is L750. Now, with all we get for nothing for our housekeeping, as I said before, we can do very well with L500 a year, and indeed make a handsome figure. So, after allowing Sisty L150, we still have L100 to lay by for Blanche."

"Stop, stop, stop!" cried the Captain in great agitation; "who told you that I had L330 a year?"

"Why, Bolt,--don't be angry with him."

"Bolt is a blockhead. From L330 a year take L200, and the remainder is all my income, besides my half-pay."

My mother opened her eyes, and so did I.

"To that L130 add, if you please, L130 of your own. All that you have over, my dear sister, is yours or Austin's, or your boy's; but not a shilling can go to give luxuries to a miserly, battered old soldier. Do you understand me?"

"No, Roland," said my mother; "I don't understand you at all. Does not your property bring in L330 a year?"

"Yes, but it has a debt of L200 a year on it," said the Captain, gloomily and reluctantly.

"Oh, Roland!" cried my mother tenderly, and approaching so near that, had my father been in the room, I am sure she would have been bold enough to kiss the stern Captain, though I never saw him look sterner and less kissable. "Oh, Roland!" cried my mother, concluding that famous Epiphonema which my uncle's Aposiopesis had before nipped in the bud, "and yet you would have made us, who are twice as rich, rob you of this little all!"

"Ah!" said Roland, trying to smile, "but I should have had my own way then, and starved you shockingly. No talk then of 'little parties' and such like. But you must not now turn the tables against me, nor bring your L420 a year as a set-off to my L130."

"Why," said my mother generously, "you forget the money's worth that you contribute,--all that your grounds supply, and all that we save by it. I am sure that that's worth a yearly L300 at the least."

"Madam,--sister," said the Captain, "I'm sure you don't want to hurt my feelings. All I have to say is, that if you add to what I bring an equal sum,--to keep up the poor old ruin,--it is the utmost that I can allow, and the rest is not more than Pisistratus can spend."

So saying, the Captain rose, bowed, and before either of us could stop him, hobbled out of the room.

"Dear me, Sisty!" said my mother, wringing her hands; "I have certainly displeased him. How could I guess he had so large a debt on the property?"

"Did not he pay his son's debts? Is not that the reason that--"

"Ah!" interrupted my mother, almost crying, "and it was that which ruffled him; and I not to guess it! What shall I do?"

"Set to work at a new calculation, dear mother, and let him have his own way."

"But then," said my mother, "your uncle will mope himself to death, and your father will have no relaxation, while you see that he has lost his former object in his books. And Blanche--and you too. If we were only to contribute what dear Roland does, I do not see how, with L260 a year, we could ever bring our neighbors round us! I wonder what Austin would say! I have half a mind--No, I'll go and look over the week-books with Primmins."

My mother went her way sorrowfully, and I was left alone.

Then I looked on the stately old hall, grand in its forlorn decay. And the dreams I had begun to cherish at my heart swept over me, and hurried me along, far, far away into the golden land whither Hope beckons youth. To restore my father's fortunes; re-weave the links of that broken ambition which had knit his genius with the world; rebuild those fallen walls; cultivate those barren moors; revive the ancient name; glad the old soldier's age; and be to both the brothers what Roland had lost,--a son: these were my dreams; and when I woke from them, to! they had left behind an intense purpose, a resolute object. Dream, O youth! dream manfully and nobly, and thy dreams shall be prophets!

CHAPTER VI.

Letter From Pisistratus Caxton TO Albert Trevanion, Esq., M.P.

(The confession of a youth who in the Old World finds himself one too many.)

My Dear Mr. Trevanion,--I thank you cordially, and so we do all, for your reply to my letter informing you of the villanous traps through which we have passed,--not indeed with whole skins, but still whole in life and limb,--which, considering that the traps were three, and the teeth sharp, was more than we could reasonably expect. We have taken to the wastes, like wise foxes as we are, and I do not think a bait can be found that will again snare the

fox paternal. As for the fox filial it is different, and I am about to prove to you that he is burning to redeem the family disgrace. Ah! my dear Mr. Trevanion, if you are busy with "blue-books" when this letter reaches you, stop here, and put it aside for some rare moment of leisure. I am about to open my heart to you, and ask you, who know the world so well, to aid me in an escape from those flammantia maenia wherewith I find that world begirt and enclosed. For look you, sir, you and my father were right when you both agreed that the mere book-life was not meant for me. And yet what is not book-life, to a young man who would make his way through the ordinary and conventional paths to fortune? All the professions are so book-lined, book-hemmed, book-choked, that wherever these strong hands of mine stretch towards action, they find themselves met by octavo ramparts, flanked with quarto crenellations. For first, this college life, opening to scholarships, and ending, perchance, as you political economists would desire, in Malthusian fellowships,--premiums for celibacy,--consider what manner of thing it is!

Three years, book upon book,--a great Dead Sea before one; three years long, and all the apples that grow on the shore full of the ashes of pica and primer! Those three years ended, the fellowship, it may be, won,--still books, books, if the whole world does not close at the college gates. Do I, from scholar, effloresce into literary man, author by profession? Books, books! Do I go into the law? Books, books! Ars longa, vita brevis, which, paraphrased, means that it is slow work before one fags one's way to a brief! Do I turn doctor? Why, what but books can kill time until, at the age of forty, a lucky chance may permit me to kill something else? The Church (for which, indeed, I don't profess to be good enough),--that is book-life par excellence, whether, inglorious and poor, I wander through long lines of divines and Fathers; or, ambitious of bishoprics, I amend the corruptions, not of the human heart, but of a Greek text, and through defiles of scholiasts and commentators win my way to the See. In short, barring the noble profession of arms,--which you know, after all, is not precisely the road to fortune,--can you tell me any means by which one may escape these eternal books, this mental clockwork and corporeal lethargy? Where can this passion for life that runs riot through my veins find its vent? Where can these stalwart limbs and this broad chest grow of value and worth in this hot-bed of cerebral inflammation and dyspeptic intellect? I know what is in me; I know I have the qualities that should go with stalwart limbs and broad chest. I have some plain common-sense, some promptitude and keenness, some pleasure in hardy danger, some fortitude in bearing pain,--qualities for which I bless Heaven, for they are qualities good and useful in private life. But in the forum of men, in the market of fortune, are they not flocci, nauci, nihili?

In a word, dear sir and friend, in this crowded Old World there is not the same room that our bold forefathers found for men to walk about and jostle their neighbors. No; they must sit down like boys at the form, and work out their tasks, with rounded shoulders and aching fingers. There has been a pastoral age, and a hunting age, and a fighting age; now we have arrived at the age sedentary. Men who sit longest carry all before them,--puny, delicate fellows, with hands just strong enough to wield a pen, eyes so bleared by the midnight lamp that they see no joy in that buxom sun (which draws me forth into the fields, as life draws the living), and

digestive organs worn and macerated by the relentless flagellation of the brain. Certainly, if this is to be the Reign of Mind, it is idle to repine, and kick against the pricks; but is it true that all these qualities of action that are within me are to go for nothing? If I were rich and happy in mind and circumstance, well and good; I should shoot, hunt, farm, travel, enjoy life, and snap my fingers at ambition. If I were so poor and so humbly bred that I could turn gamekeeper or whipper in, as pauper gentlemen virtually did of old, well and good too; I should exhaust this troublesome vitality of mine by nightly battles with poachers, and leaps over double dikes and stone walls. If I were so depressed of spirit that I could live without remorse on my father's small means, and exclaim, with Claudian, "The earth gives me feasts that cost nothing," well and good too; it were a life to suit a vegetable, or a very minor poet. But as it is,—here I open another leaf of my heart to you! To say that, being poor, I want to make a fortune, is to say that I am an Englishman. To attach ourselves to a thing positive, belongs to our practical race. Even in our dreams, if we build castles in the air, they are not Castles of Indolence,—indeed they have very little of the castle about them, and look much more like Hoare's Bank, on the east side of Temple Bar! I desire, then, to make a fortune. But I differ from my countrymen, first, by desiring only what you rich men would call but a small fortune; secondly, in wishing that I may not spend my whole life in that fortune-making. Just see, now, how I am placed.

Under ordinary circumstances, I must begin by taking from my father a large slice of an income that will ill spare paring. According to my calculation, my parents and my uncle want all they have got, and the subtraction of the yearly sum on which Pisistratus is to live till he can live by his own labors, would be so much taken from the decent comforts of his kindred. If I return to Cambridge, with all economy, I must thus narrow still more the *res angusta domi*; and when Cambridge is over, and I am turned loose upon the world,—failing, as is likely enough, of the support of a fellowship,—how many years must I work, or rather, alas! not work, at the Bar (which, after all, seems my best calling) before I can in my turn provide for those who, till then, rob themselves for me; till I have arrived at middle life, and they are old and worn out; till the chink of the golden bowl sounds but hollow at the ebbing well? I would wish that, if I can make money, those I love best may enjoy it while enjoyment is yet left to them; that my father shall see "The History of Human Error" complete, bound in russia on his shelves; that my mother shall have the innocent pleasures that content her, before age steals the light from her happy smile; that before Roland's hair is snow-white (alas! the snows there thicken fast), he shall lean on my arm while we settle together where the ruin shall be repaired or where left to the owls, and where the dreary bleak waste around shall laugh with the gleam of corn. For you know the nature of this Cumberland soil,—you, who possess much of it, and have won so many fair acres from the wild; you know that my uncle's land, now (save a single farm) scarce worth a shilling an acre, needs but capital to become an estate more lucrative than ever his ancestors owned. You know that, for you have applied your capital to the same kind of land, and in doing so, what blessings—which you scarcely think of in your London library—you have effected, what mouths you feed, what hands you employ! I have calculated that my uncle's moors, which now scarce maintain two or three shepherds, could, manured by money, maintain two hundred

families by their labor. All this is worth trying for; therefore Pisistratus wants to make money. Not so much,--he does not require millions; a few spare thousand pounds would go a long way, and with a modest capital to begin with, Roland should become a true squire,--a real landowner, not the mere lord of a desert. Now then, dear sir, advise me how I may, with such qualities as I possess, arrive at that capital--ay, and before it is too late--so that money-making may not last till my grave.

Turning in despair from this civilized world of ours, I have cast my eyes to a world far older,--and yet more to a world in its giant childhood. India here, Australia there,--what say you, sir, you who will see dispassionately those things that float before my eyes through a golden haze, looming large in the distance? Such is my confidence in your judgment that you have but to say, "Fool, give up thine El Dorados and stay at home; stick to the books and the desk; annihilate that redundance of animal life that is in thee; grow a mental machine: thy physical gifts are of no avail to thee; take thy place among the slaves of the Lamp,"--and I will obey without a murmur. But if I am right; if I have in me attributes that here find no market; if my repinings are but the instincts of nature that, out of this decrepit civilization, desire vent for growth in the young stir of some more rude and vigorous social system,--then give me, I pray, that advice which may clothe my idea in some practical and tangible embodiments. Have I made myself understood?

We take no newspaper here, but occasionally one finds its way from the parsonage; and I have lately rejoiced at a paragraph that spoke of your speedy entrance into the Administration as a thing certain. I write to you before you are a minister, and you see what I seek is not in the way of official patronage. A niche in an office,--oh, to me that were worse than all! Yet I did labor hard with you, but,--that was different. I write to you thus frankly, knowing your warm, noble heart, and as if you were my father. Allow me to add my humble but earnest congratulations on Miss Trevanion's approaching marriage with one worthy, if not of her, at least of her station. I do so as becomes one whom you have allowed to retain the right to pray for the happiness of you and yours. My dear Mr. Trevanion, this is a long letter, and I dare not even read it over, lest, if I do, I should not send it. Take it with all its faults, and judge of it with that kindness with which you have judged ever,

Your grateful and devoted servant,

Pisistratus Caxton.

Letter From Albert Trevanion, Esq., M. P., To Pisistratus Caxton.

Library of the House of Commons, Tuesday Night.

My Dear Pisistratus,-- ----- is up; we are in for it for two mortal hours! I take flight to the library, and devote those hours to you. Don't be conceited, but that picture of yourself which you have placed before me has struck me with all the force of an original. The state of mind which you describe so vividly must be a very common one in our era of civilization, yet I have never before seen it made so prominent and life-like. You have been in

my thoughts all day. Yes, how many young men must there be like you, in this Old World, able, intelligent, active, and persevering enough, yet not adapted for success in any of our conventional professions,—"mute, inglorious Raleighs." Your letter, young artist, is an illustration of the philosophy of colonizing. I comprehend better, after reading it, the old Greek colonization,--the sending out, not only the paupers, the refuse of an over-populated state, but a large proportion of a better class, fellows full of pith and sap and exuberant vitality, like yourself, blending, in those wise cleruchioe, a certain portion of the aristocratic with the more democratic element; not turning a rabble loose upon a new soil, but planting in the foreign allotments all the rudiments of a harmonious state, analogous to that in the mother country; not only getting rid of hungry, craving mouths, but furnishing vent for a waste surplus of intelligence and courage, which at home is really not needed, and more often comes to ill than to good,--here only menaces our artificial embankments, but there, carried off in an aqueduct, might give life to a desert.

For my part, in my ideal of colonization I should like that each exportation of human beings had, as of old, its leaders and chiefs,--not so appointed from the mere quality of rank (often, indeed, taken from the humbler classes), but still men to whom a certain degree of education should give promptitude, quickness, adaptability; men in whom their followers can confide. The Greeks understood that. Nay, as the colony makes progress, as its principal town rises into the dignity of a capital,--a polis that needs a polity,--I sometimes think it might be wise to go still further, and not only transplant to it a high standard of civilization, but draw it more closely into connection with the parent state, and render the passage of spare intellect, education, and civility, to and fro, more facile, by drafting off thither the spare scions of royalty itself. I know that many of my more "liberal" friends would pooh-pooh this notion; but I am sure that the colony altogether, when arrived to a state that would bear the importation, would thrive all the better for it. And when the day shall come (as to all healthful colonies it must come sooner or later) in which the settlement has grown an independent state, we may thereby have laid the seeds of a constitution and a civilization similar to our own, with self-developed forms of monarchy and aristocracy, though of a simpler growth than old societies accept, and not left a strange, motley chaos of struggling democracy,--an uncouth, livid giant, at which the Frankenstein may well tremble, not because it is a giant, but because it is a giant half completed. (1) Depend on it, the New World will be friendly or hostile to the Old, not in proportion to the kinship of race, but in proportion to the similarity of manners and institutions,--a mighty truth to which we colonizers have been blind.

Passing from these more distant speculations to this positive present before us, you see already, from what I have said, that I sympathize with your aspirations; that I construe them as you would have me: looking to your nature and to your objects, I give you my advice in a word,--Emigrate!

My advice is, however, founded on one hypothesis; namely, that you are perfectly sincere,--you will be contented with a rough life, and with a moderate fortune at the end of your probation. Don't

dream of emigrating if you want to make a million, or the tenth of a million. Don't dream of emigrating unless you can enjoy its hardships,--to bear them is not enough!

Australia is the land for you, as you seem to surmise. Australia is the land for two classes of emigrants: first, the man who has nothing but his wits, and plenty of them; secondly, the man who has a small capital, and who is contented to spend ten years in trebling it. I assume that you belong to the latter class. Take out L3,000, and before you are thirty years old you may return with L10,000 or L12,000. If that satisfies you, think seriously of Australia. By coach, tomorrow, I will send you down all the best books and reports on the subject; and I will get you what detailed information I can from the Colonial Office. Having read these, and thought over them dispassionately, spend some months yet among the sheep-walks of Cumberland; learn all you can from all the shepherds you can find,--from Thyrsis to Menalcas. Do more,--fit yourself in every way for a life in the Bush, where the philosophy of the division of labor is not yet arrived at. Learn to turn your hand to everything. Be something of a smith, something of a carpenter, --do the best you can with the fewest tools; make yourself an excellent shot; break in all the wild horses and ponies you can borrow and beg. Even if you want to do none of these things when in your settlement, the having learned to do them will fit you for many other things not now foreseen. De-fine-gentlemanize yourself from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot, and become the greater aristocrat for so doing; for he is more than an aristocrat, he is a king, who suffices in all things for himself,--who is his own master, because he wants no valetaille. I think Seneca has expressed that thought before me; and I would quote the passage, but the book, I fear, is not in the library of the House of Commons. But now (cheers, by Jove! I suppose ---- is down. Ah! it is so; and C--- is up, and that cheer followed a sharp hit at me. How I wish I were your age, and going to Australia with you!--But now--to resume my suspended period--but now to the important point,--capital. You must take that, unless you go as a shepherd, and then good-by to the idea of L10,000 in ten years. So, you see, it appears at the first blush that you must still come to your father; but, you will say, with this difference, that you borrow the capital with every chance of repaying it instead of frittering away the income year after year till you are eight and thirty or forty at least. Still, Pisistratus, you don't, in this, gain your object at a leap; and my dear old friend ought not to lose his son and his money too. You say you write to me as to your own father. You know I hate professions; and if you did not mean what you say, you have offended me mortally. As a father, then, I take a father's rights, and speak plainly. A friend of mine, Mr. Bolding, a clergyman, has a son,--a wild fellow, who is likely to get into all sorts of scrapes in England, but with plenty of good in him notwithstanding, frank, bold, not wanting in talent, but rather in prudence, easily tempted and led away into extravagance. He would make a capital colonist (no such temptations in the Bush!) if tied to a youth like you. Now I propose, with your leave, that his father shall advance him L1,500, which shall not, however, be placed in his hands, but in yours, as head partner in the firm. You, on your side, shall advance the same sum of L1,500, which you shall borrow from me for three years without interest. At the end of that time interest shall commence; and the capital, with the interest on the said first three years, shall be repaid to me, or

my executors, on your return. After you have been a year or two in the Bush, and felt your way, and learned your business, you may then safely borrow L1,500 more from your father; and, in the mean while, you and your partner will have had together the full sum of L3,000 to commence with. You see in this proposal I make you no gift, and I run no risk even by your death. If you die insolvent, I will promise to come on your father, poor fellow; for small joy and small care will he have then in what may be left of his fortune. There--I have said all; and I will never forgive you if you reject an aid that will serve you so much and cost me so little.

I accept your congratulations on Fanny's engagement with Lord Castleton. When you return from Australia you will still be a young man, she (though about your own years) almost a middle-aged woman, with her head full of pomps and vanities. All girls have a short period of girlhood in common; but when they enter womanhood, the woman becomes the woman of her class. As for me, and the office assigned to me by report, you know what I said when we parted, and--But here J--- comes, and tells me that "I am expected to speak, and answer N---, who is just up, brimful of malice,"--the House crowded, and hungering for personalities. So I, the man of the Old World, gird up my loins, and leave you, with a sigh, to the fresh youth of the New

"Ne tibi sit duros acuisse in prcelia dentes."

Yours affectionately,

Albert Trevanion.

CHAPTER VII.

So, reader, thou art now at the secret of my heart.

Wonder not that I, a bookman's son, and at certain periods of my life a bookman myself, though of lowly grade in that venerable class,--wonder not that I should thus, in that transition stage between youth and manhood, have turned impatiently from books. Most students, at one time or other in their existence, have felt the imperious demand of that restless principle in man's nature which calls upon each son of Adam to contribute his share to the vast treasury of human deeds. And though great scholars are not necessarily, nor usually, men of action, yet the men of action whom History presents to our survey have rarely been without a certain degree of scholarly nurture. For the ideas which books quicken, books cannot always satisfy. And though the royal pupil of Aristotle slept with Homer under his pillow, it was not that he might dream of composing epics, but of conquering new Ilions in the East. Many a man, how little soever resembling Alexander, may still have the conqueror's aim in an object that action only can achieve, and the book under his pillow may be the strongest antidote to his repose. And how the stern Destinies that shall govern the man weave their first delicate tissues amidst the earliest associations of the child! Those idle tales with which the old credulous nurse had beguiled my infancy,--tales of wonder, knight-errantry, and adventure,--had left behind them seeds long

latent, seeds that might never have sprung up above the soil, but that my boyhood was so early put under the burning-glass, and in the quick forcing house, of the London world. There, even amidst books and study, lively observation and petulant ambition broke forth from the lush foliage of romance,--that fruitless leafiness of poetic youth! And there passion, which is a revolution in all the elements of individual man, had called anew state of being, turbulent and eager, out of the old habits and conventional forms it had buried,--ashes that speak where the fire has been. Far from me, as from any mind of some manliness, be the attempt to create interest by dwelling at length on the struggles against a rash and misplaced attachment, which it was my duty to overcome; but all such love, as I have before implied, is a terrible unsettlor,--

"Where once such fairies dance, no grass doth ever grow."

To re-enter boyhood, go with meek docility through its disciplined routine--how hard had I found that return, amidst the cloistered monotony of college! My love for my father, and my submission to his wish, had indeed given some animation to objects otherwise distasteful; but now that my return to the University must be attended with positive privation to those at home, the idea became utterly hateful and repugnant. Under pretence that I found myself, on trial, not yet sufficiently prepared to do credit to my father's name, I had easily obtained leave to lose the ensuing college term and pursue my studies at home. This gave me time to prepare my plans and bring round ----. How shall I ever bring round to my adventurous views those whom I propose to desert? Hard it is to get on in the world,--very hard; but the most painful step in the way is that which starts from the threshold of a beloved home.

How--ah, how indeed! "No, Blanche, you cannot join me to-day; I am going out for many hours. So it will be late before I can be home."

Home,--the word chokes me! Juba slinks back to his young mistress, disconsolate; Blanche gazes at me ruefully from our favorite hill-top, and the flowers she has been gathering fall unheeded from her basket. I hear my mother's voice singing low as she sits at work by her open casement. How,--ah, how indeed!

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