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THE

PRINCESS;

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THE BEGUINE.

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BY LADY MORGAN,

AUTHOR OF "O'DONNELL," &c.

"She was one of those kind of nuns, an' please your honour, of which your honour knows there are a good many in Flanders, which they let go loose."—"By thy description, Trim," said my Uncle Toby, "I dare say she was a young Beguine."

TRISTRAM SHANDY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA:

CAREY, LEA, & BLANCHARD.

1835.

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THE PRINCESS.

CHAPTER I.

THE ATELIER.

WHOEVER have visited Brussels *en grand seigneur*, lived exclusively with the diplomatic society, been billeted on the Belgian noblesse, or accepted only the invitations of the English residents congregated in the upper town, may leave the ancient capital of the Low Countries, after a few days' or weeks' sojourn, as ignorant of the treasures it contains in arts and antiquities, as if they had never left their mansions in the parish of St. James's, or their hotel in the Faubourg St. Honoré.

The old town, or *Basse Ville*, of Brussels, is a sort of moral, as well as mural, Pompeii, where habits, customs, and external forms of a long past era are preserved in all the integrity of their first fresh existence. There, may still be found the sturdy spirit and firm nerve that resisted the splendid tyranny of the imperial Charles, the bloody persecutions of the bigot Philips, the numbing despotism and ill-judged innovations of the Austrian government, and that has finally, in the present day, sent back the House of Orange to its native region, to which the interests of European nations should induce them to confine it. It was the manufacturers and the artisans of the *Basse Ville*, that lent their masses to the impelling movement of reform and revolution, emanating from the intellectual energies of the nation; and showed that the spirit of old '*doyens de la nation*,' (who stood by their national rights, with '*Lyster van Brabant*' in their hands; and effected by their steady adherence to principle, more than the chivalrous valour of their Horns and their D'Egmonts had been able to achieve,) still preserved its intense though long-latent vigour.

During the week passed by Sir Frederick and Lady Frances Mottram in Brussels, they had lived principally in the society of the always gracious, courteous, and agreeable Prince of Orange, or of his court and its circle. Their mornings had been passed in the delightful *salons* of the venerable Prince

D'Arenberg, admiring his fine collection of pictures, and listening to his amiable garrulity, of which the virtues and the sufferings of Marie Antoinette, the secret devotion of Mirabeau to her cause, and anecdotes of Voltaire's residence at Brussels, made the *fond*. They had accompanied the Prince of Orange to the races; and they had assisted at the evening circles of the Hôtels de Tresigny, de Ligne, or d'Ursel, or in other autocratic sets, where the old courtiers of the Austrian archducal times secretly compared the homeliness of the amiable Dutch Queen and her family, with the Spanish etiquettes and German stateliness of the beloved *gouvernante* of their fathers.

To days and evenings so spent, the present existence of Sir Frederick Mottram formed a strange contrast. His object for the moment was, if not to preserve a perfect *incognito*, at least to avoid his English friends, and their surfeiting associations; and when his carriage should arrive, (which he now concluded might come by Antwerp,) to proceed as the chances and his actual *laissez-aller* state of mind might direct.

There was a spell hanging over him, which he feared to analyze: it was producing a new developement of opinion. It was reviving all that had made youth delightful, and early manhood a dream: above all, it had removed him from the tyranny of fashion, in habits, in politics, in religion, and in the arts themselves. He felt within him a breadth of mind, an expansion of ideas, a boldness of inquiry, which he never before had time, independence or courage to indulge. The eyes of his *coterie* were removed from him; the watchwords of his party no longer resounded in his ears. He was scarcely less a Tory, and by no means more a Whig, than when he broke off from the sets and circles in which these epithets are consecrated; but he was already taking more European views; his mind was ascending from particulars to generals, and he was assigning to by-gone ages, those by-gone terms and usages which are no longer applicable to the present, an epoch without an antecedent! His mind resembled a compressive spring set free; and he already admitted the maxim of Bacon—"first to watch, and then to speed."

Deep in thoughts, which had for their subject a change of views, that made him almost doubt of his own moral identity, Sir Frederick Mottram was descending from the Tirlemont towards that little-frequented part of the town which leads to the nucleus of its foundation, the Isle de St. Géry. The drums and trumpets of the *corps de garde* on the Place Royale, were announcing the sunset of a sultry and clouded evening, when he seated himself on one of those Gothic arches which are so frequently thrown over the windings of the Senne. The extremely picturesque antiquity of the place induced him to inquire from a sturdy-looking old gentleman, who was plodding along by the help of a gold-headed cane, and in a dress that might have

figured in the reign of Maria Theresa, what was the name of the irregular square which he then occupied. The old gentleman drew up in amazement, as if he thought it scarcely possible that any one could be ignorant of so important a site.

"*Comment! monsieur,*" he said; "you do not know the Isle de St. Géry and the Borgval. *Sacrement!*"

"I am a stranger," said Sir Frederick, taking off his hat; for his informant, notwithstanding the abruptness of his manner, had lowered his to the ground.

"*C'est ça,*" said the old gentleman. "Well, monsieur, you are now on the site of the ancient citadel, where stood the chateau or first fortress of Brussels, occupied by the Emperor Otho the Second, in the tenth century. All that remains of that old bulwark is a ruin within that old brewery there, before you."

"An ancient site, indeed!" said Sir Frederick, perceiving he had fallen in with an original.

"The Isle de St. Géry," continued the former speaker, "belonged to seven *seigneurs fonciers*, each of whom had a chateau on the shores of this little river. They were called the seven patrician families, and they have always distinguished themselves by their devotion to their country. You now stand, monsieur, in the heart of the old city: it was not till the thirteenth century that we began to move a little up the hill, when our good Duke John de Brabant raised a fine palace on the verge of the Forest of Soignee, now our park. Other palaces have since been built by our foreign masters, German, Spanish, and Dutch; but here, on this spot, our own native sovereign, Duke John the Third, published the first constitutional laws known in Europe, which guaranteed personal liberty, and the secure exercise of the rights of property. You see, monsieur, we were always a little *en avant*, *nous autres Brabançons*, *n'est-ce pas?*"

"It appears so," said Sir Frederick, "through the whole history of your country."

"Can I give you any further information?" asked the bluff old gentleman.

"If I might ask the way to the Grand Béguinage."

"Ah, the good women! I have just been inquiring for one of the order now. *Voyez, monsieur.* Give yourself the trouble, if you please, of crossing that little bridge, and go straight on; but lose no time if you intend to get there by their vespers. Any one will point out the way to the Grand Béguinage."

Sir Frederick bowed his thanks, and gladly resumed his hat, which a blast of wind, sweeping down the little river, made necessary. With his head full of Othos, Duke Johns, and the frank courtesy of his Brabançon informant, he proceeded along narrow streets flanked by high façades, terminating *en escalier*. Lofty casements with little panes of Bohemian glass, massive doors fortified with square-headed nails, and the *rez de chaussée* protected by iron grates, added their features to the gloomy,

silent, solitary quarter. The antiquated inhabitants were either not returned from their Sunday festivities in the environs, the kermesses of Anderlatch, or the merry-makings of Boisfort or *Les Trois Fontaines*; or they were shut up in their family parties, where many generations assemble under the patriarchal roof, and from which strangers are always excluded.

As he proceeded, however, he had lost his clew, and scarcely knew how to go on, or how to return on his steps. Heavy drops of rain were beginning to fall, and sudden squalls of wind foretold a coming storm. The rain soon fell heavily; almost every door and casement was closed: and he had reached the neighbourhood of the lonely quarter of the *Béguinage* (a territory once without the walls of the town), when the increase of the shower obliged him to ask shelter from an aged woman, who sat within the threshold of an open door belonging to a large and gloomy edifice. From its appearance, the old ruin might have belonged to one of those old patrician families, of which the antiquarian of St. Géry had spoken with such reverence.

The portress, in her best Flemish French, welcomed him in, and offered him the stool on which she had been sitting, and reading her breviary. When he persisted, however, in declining the offer, and the rain continued to beat in with gusts of wind, she pressed him to enter *au parloir*. The desire to see the interior of the ancient edifice induced him to accept the invitation. The old woman hobbled on before him through a long narrow stone passage, which, turning to the right, opened into a dark, oak-wainscoted, low-roofed room. It could scarcely be said to be furnished. One or two antique carved, high-backed chairs, and an alcove (half screened by a sombre serge curtain) containing a couch, with a few antique picture-frames heaped up in a corner, a bust, and a torso, were its whole contents. One high window of many panes lighted the desolate apartment, and looked into a little grass-grown court. The old woman dusted a chair (which Sir Frederick accepted) and opened the door of an adjoining room, presenting to his observation an easel, on which was mounted an oil-painting of some dimension, with various implements of art. He rose and approached the *atelier*, for such it seemed.

"*Entrez donc, monsieur,*" said the old woman; "it may amuse you to look at that picture while the rain lasts. It is in a terrible state, this apartment! If I were mistress, it should be in another condition; the walls white-washed and the floors scoured, the furniture rubbed till it shone again, and things set to rights: but," she added, as she opened a glass-door that led into the court, "I have not been allowed to touch anything."

The opening of the door let in the perfume of the honey-suckles and jasmine which clustered round the walls of the court, and gave their dripping freshness to the close and heated

room. A ray of light thus admitted showed the interior in negligent confusion, and fell upon the picture on the easel. It was a bold outline, thrown in with the first colours, of a site full of interest and groups full of movement; the small but countless heads were full of strong expression, like those of Callot in his picture of Christ's entrance into Jerusalem. The time was night, and the picture represented the *façade* of that glorious Hotel de Ville, every part of which is in itself a picture. In the balcony stood several figures in the imposing costume of the *Garde Bourgeoise*. A conspicuous personage, in the centre of the group, was reading by torchlight from a paper,* with a look of intense anxiety, to an armed multitude beneath, which was shaded off by dense masses to the extremity of the Grand Place.

"That was a frightful night!" said the old woman. "There we are, monsieur; old and young, women and children—we all took a part in that night."

"And here is your own portrait, my good dame," said Sir Frederick: "what an admirable likeness!"

"*Je le crois bien*," she said proudly; "I sat for it. And here is Madame herself, in the dress of a *Béguine*, you see. Ah! monsieur, if you knew to what danger the good sisters exposed themselves during the Four Days!—Are they good patriots, the *Béguines*?†—Well, just as Madame had got thus far with her picture, and finished the portrait of the Prince of Schaffhausen, she was called away from Brussels to undertake some great work in Germany; and she has never visited Brussels but once since, when (the Virgin bless and protect her!) she settled a little fortune on me, with no other task but to live here, to air this apartment, and preserve everything just as she left it. 'Not a brush, Thérèse, *pas un coup de balai*,' she said, the last night she closed the door of this room, and turned the key and gave it into my possession."

In almost breathless accents Sir Frederick inquired, "And what is your mistress's name?"

"*Ah! cela s'appelle* Madame Marguerite," said the old woman; "a good creature, if there is one on earth, and a fine painter, if she had taken a better line, and had worked for the church as she has worked for her country. Look, sir"—and

* August 31, 1830.—On the return of the first deputation to the Prince of Orange, the deputies were so dissatisfied with the result, that they felt themselves called on to give an account of the transaction to the people. They accordingly distributed a proclamation through the town, narrating the circumstances:—"Elle fut lue en outre aux flambeaux, au balcon de l'Hôtel de Ville, au milieu d'une multitude avide et inquiète."—*Esquisses*, p. 74.

† "Le bel établissement du Grand Béguinage fut disposé pour recevoir et secourir les victimes des combats."—*Esquisses*, p. 74.

she turned out several unfinished pictures which lay against the wall, done only in two colours, and a little more than studies—"look, I beseech you: these are all taken from story-books about the Low Countries in the old times; but not a crucifixion! not a saint! not a miracle! not a martyrdom! as our *curé* said the other day, when he was looking for something for an altar-piece for the chapel of a good brewer in the Low Town."

Sir Frederick examined the various studies thus exposed to his inspection as long as he had light to see them by: there was obvious in all the same originality of conception, the same broad, bold, but unfinished touch. He assisted the old woman to replace them, and then asked, with affected carelessness—

"Have you lived long in the service of Madame Marguerite?"

"Nearly eight years altogether. It has been a rather dreary life; particularly when Madame went to Antwerp or to Ghent, to copy pictures, or take views of old buildings. This is a melancholy old place in the best of times. It belonged to the corporation of the *Poissoniers*; you see there the remains of their fine painted glass windows, called *chassis*. But Madame liked it all the better for that: she wanted, also, a spacious work-room—not easy to get in this old quarter; and then it is near the Grand Béguinage, where she has a little apartment."

"Oh! Madame is a Béguine?"

"*Hein!* a sort of a Béguine, if you will, a *dame chambrée*. She was once a sister, but when she took to painting pictures she recalled her vows. She has now again attached herself to the chapter, and when here submits, like a true charitable woman as she is, to all the duties of the order, and attends the hospitals: she visited all the *ambulances* during the Four Days."*

* The conduct of the women of Brussels during the Four Days was heroic:—"Pendant la bataille," says the author of the *Esquisses Historiques*, "un grand nombre de propriétaires de maisons, aidés de leurs familles, arrachaient le plomb de leurs toits pour en faire des balles, et travaillaient sans relâche à confectionner des cartouches quand ils pouvaient se procurer de la poudre. Les femmes, les dames même, se trouvaient avec courage et persévérance à ces occupations, si nouvelles pour elles. Dès le 28 Septembre, un grand nombre de ces dames se réunirent en société, sous la présidence du général-en-chef, Van Halen, dans le but de secourir les blessés et leurs familles. Des collectes furent faites par leur soins dans toutes les églises, elles se partagèrent la tâche douloureuse de visiter chaque jour les *ambulances*, accompagnées d'un aide-de-camp. Le vin trouvé dans les caves des palais fut mis à leur disposition."—*Supplément aux Esquisses Historiques de la Première Époque de la Révolution de la Belgique en 1830.*

Sir Frederick thrilled with the pleasurable interest he took in this relation. He feared that the rain would stop, or the evening fall too darkly, before he could devour all the details of this most melancholy, but, to him, most interesting apartment, where struggling penury and unavailing industry had worn out years of laborious diligence and unrequited talent. A little *guéridon* contained a plain delf *déjeuné*. A ponderous carved oak table loaded with drawings and books in various languages, a harp covered with green baize, and some music-scores, open on the desk of a little instrument which looked like an ancient spinette, were all objects of interest and curiosity.

"*Voyez, monsieur,*" said the old crone, pleased with the interest he exhibited; "here is the grey linen *blouse* in which she worked the night before she went off with the Prince."

"Went off with the Prince!" reiterated Sir Frederick, with all the blood in his body rushing into his face.

"*Ah! je ne dis pas cela,*" said the old woman, frightened; "at least, I do not say it with any evil meaning. Madame is protected by the Princess, who has done some great charities by her hands to the poor *Beguines* of Brussels and to others; and I have orders to give this picture to the Princess whenever she comes or sends for it: it is the unfinished picture of the late Prince."

She drew from behind the easel the portrait, which Sir Frederick brought out into the court, to view it by the last rays of sunset that lingered in the horizon.

It was the picture of an elderly man, who, to judge by the lineaments of his still handsome face, had passed through the world's hand, and shared largely in its pleasures. A voluptuous indolence, mingled with an aristocratical hauteur, was the leading expression. His dress was the white uniform of Austria; and his numerous orders were a proof of his rank and influence, if not of his prowess.

Sir Frederick replaced it with a deep sigh, and presenting the old woman a *napoleon*, observed, "that as the rain had now ceased, he would not farther intrude then; but he begged permission to revisit the *atelier*, and to see by daylight what had appeared, even by that dim twilight, so indicative of a master talent." Amazement at a donation so liberal, a recompense so far above the trouble she had taken, distended the eyes, and even silenced the tongue, of the garrulous old woman. Sir Frederick availed himself of her surprise, to escape the expression of her gratitude. He had scarcely however got a few paces, when, struck by a sudden thought, he turned back. The old woman was looking after him—

"I had heard," he said, "that Madame Marguerite had arrived in Brussels: do you know where she resides?"

"Oh! you know her then, *mon bon seigneur?*" said the old woman in trepidation.

"Just enough," he replied, "to entitle me to leave this card for her. You will not fail to give it?"

"I shall not forget any command of yours," she said; "but Madame Marguerite is not arrived. She never fails to visit her *atelier*; and yet I have heard nothing of her these three months. Her old friend Monsieur Jansens has just been here to inquire for her: I sent him to the *Béguinage la-bas*!"

"Oh! an old gentleman with a broad hat and gold-headed cane?"

"*Ah! mon Dieu, oui—un brave homme!* I think he wants to buy Madame's great picture."

"I should like to buy it myself," interrupted Sir Frederick hastily; "I like it much, and the price would be no object."

"*Bien, monsieur, bien,*" said the old woman, her countenance brightening into an expression of pleasure that her inadvertent courtesy excused itself by the sale of a picture which had remained so long on the artist's hands,—*"I will tell Madame."*

The heart of one who has 'cleansed his bosom of that perilous stuff,' which has weighed upon his spirits, and long impeded the flow of every better and more genial feeling, is like a dismantled fortress, open to all inroads, accessible to all invaders. The heart, or that disposition of the feelings to which the term is vulgarly given,—the heart of Sir Frederick Mottram was precisely in this state, which most fitted it to receive a new impression from objects, that, under other excitements and associations, would have passed over its surface without leaving a trace behind.

It had however one guard, whose slumbers were easily awakened,—the habit of distrust, the grand arch on which the education of the wealthy youth of England is principally founded. The false institutes of British society, which make wealth and rank the primary points of parental speculation, which sink personal worth, throw the great and unpurchasable gifts of nature into contempt, and consider genius, intellect, grace, and beauty as matters of suspicion and avoidance, had placed the son of the plebeian Mottram as much within the go-cart of aristocratic prejudice, as if his veins had been filled with 'all the blood of all the Howards.' He had been guarded by paternal maxims, and a mother's vigilance—by the precautionary saws of maiden cousins and widowed aunts (whom his father's niggardly liberality had raised from indigence to dependent sufficiency), against the allurements of youth, beauty, and talents, when unaccompanied by wealth, or unbacked by the world's consideration.

He had been taught to believe that the motherhood of Great Britain was in a conspiracy to entrap, and the unportioned daughterhood to seduce him, and the first lesson of his own consequence and self-importance was impressed on his young and too ductile mind, by the insinuating accents of female am-

bition, breathed in the tender tones of affectionate and anxious caution.

But nature was powerful above all! The artist's temperament, which he had derived from his Irish mother, had broken out, through the artificial associations of the over-educated, over-guarded *parvenu*; and the beauty of form, the grace of movement, and the universal genius of a poor orphan, received as a talking companion to his sister, to discourse with her in French and German, had, in one short month, nearly overturned the system of years; his after life had been the expiation of the imprudent impulse, as it had been the penalty of his heartless desertion of its object. Distrust of woman, the habit of considering her through her position in life, as a *means*, and never as an *object*, had clung to him, with that indissoluble adhesion which a mother's deep-sunk impressions are sure to create, and had survived other habits of mind of equal importance to his ambitious career. It had led to many an idle *liaison* with the flirting women of London sets, in which his senses took as little interest as his heart; and it had precluded him from ever performing one of those deep and lasting attachments, only to be awakened by the sympathy of tastes and opinions, constituting that suitability which confounds two existences in one. He had been jealous of a wife whom he had never loved; and he had believed himself in love with women, who had tried in vain to make him jealous.

The orthodox moralist, the pure and loyal church-and-state man, was a latitudinarian, where the passion, or vanity, which so often passes for passions, were concerned. He had written one of his best papers in the Quarterly Review, on the superior morals of England, while notoriously engaged in a *liaison* with the wife of his own friend, the Marquis of Montessor; and had been succeeded in her Ladyship's good graces by his friend Lord Aubrey, in an interval devoted to writing an hypercritical article on some book of travels, in which the probity of Ninon de l'Enclos had been praised, at the expense of the trust-worthiness of a churchman. Foreign demoralization was a frequent theme in his conversation, and in his literary productions, when he dabbled, like other party notabilities, in reviews and newspapers. But the domestic gallantry of England, the libertinism of some of her highest aristocratic *côteries*, (comparable only to the society which flourished under Louis XV. and hurried on a revolution as inevitable as it was morally necessary,) had never yet come under the ban of his opinion.

To amuse, therefore, his idleness, to dissipate his disgusts, and cheer his spirits, by the indulgence of a *goût passager* for a woman who had thrown herself in his way, whose talents entertained, or person pleased him, would have been an incident in his journey; but would scarcely have weighed on the conscience of one who, among his own set and party, had obtained

the name of the great moralist, because he paid his debts, and went, *sometimes*, to church on Sundays.

That '*l'oreille est le chemin du cœur*,' is a maxim in the code of gallantry, more especially applicable to that turn of life, when the wild energies of youth and passion are yielding to more sober and intellectual, but not less dangerous influences. The ear of Sir Frederick Mottram had been charmed by the music of sweet sounds, and his mind had been infinitely amused by the subjects on which those sounds had dilated, during his accidental rencontres with the fair Belgian artist. Her prepossession in his favour was romantic and flattering, as it was obvious. She had followed him from England (for he had no doubt that he had made his first impression at the bed of the parish workhouse,) and she had crossed his path too frequently to attribute the circumstance to accident.

Though no longer *une jeune femme*, she was, according to the delicate French definition, *une femme encore jeune*: she was fresh, agile, handsome, spiritual, and amusing; he thought her, therefore, precisely the person whom a prudent, tasteful, and passionate man of prudence and pleasure might select for a *campagne de voyage*; whom he might induce, by a liberal allowance, to travel as an artist at the same time to the same place with himself, and apparently with a view to the arts, and under the veil of great *bien-séance*. Madame Marguerite was a companion such as the world (if it ever knew aught of the matter) might not wholly disapprove, a connexion which the slang of English fashion would call 'a fair thing and very decent,' and which no compunctious visitings of conscience would reprove: for the lady had come to the years of discretion; and he, though a married man, would only do what half the married men of his acquaintance were daily doing, or had done at some epoch of their lives—with this exception, that the object of *his* selection was neither the wife of his friend, nor the friend of his wife.

Such had been the summary of the reverie which had occupied his mind during his solitary moonlight drive from Alost to Brussels, and which, under new and still more agreeable impressions, had since pre-occupied his thoughts; for he had no doubt Madame Marguerite would again throw herself in his way. The chance, however, which had led him to her melancholy home, in the ruined edifice in the old *quartier de St. Géry*, had caused some revulsion in his feelings, and the frost-work fabric of his selfish intentions, cold and shining as it had been, fell to pieces. The desolate work-room of struggling genius, with all its sublime but melancholy imagery, the eight years spent there in profitless labour, by one whose talents threw the mediocrity of all the female society he had ever mingled with into the shade, had cast over the character and position of this singular woman a halo of respect, and awakened a reverential admiration for her qualities, and a pity for her dreary

position, which altered the whole nature of the sentiment she had hitherto inspired.

Again, the fantastic creation thus raised was changed by an incident, a phrase! The portrait of the Prince of Schaffenhau- sen, and the *naïve* communication of the old portress, that the artist had gone off with the Prince, and was protected by the Princess, had roused the latent distrust awakened in his mind, while yet a boy at Harrow, by a caution against the wiles of his dame's artful niece; and placed the charming artist, the hard-working woman of genius, in the light of an adroit adven- tress, who had marked her quarry, and was eager in its pursuit.

Even the accounts of her patriotism and her piety, her exer- tions during the Four Days, and her belonging to the order of the *Béguines*, served but to fill up the outline of his own views of her character; as comprising great energies, ready to devote themselves to any cause which excited her imagination or flat- tered her ambition; and a love of intrigue, which the habits and licensed pursuits of that popular order might well serve and sanction.

The Princess's protection also recalled those odious intima- cies that had shocked him in Vienna and in London, between the wife and the mistress—intimacies founded in mutual neces- sities and equal profligacy; governed by the exigencies of their position, and maintained as the means by which they might aid, serve, and, in the end, betray each other.

The quondam mistress of the old profligate Prince of Schaffen- hausen, the *protégée* of the worst bad woman (if report spoke true) in the annals of modern high life, whose very name was to him a talisman of evil potency, was for the moment an object of sus- picion, and even of fear; and almost wound up his wavering res- olves to leave Brussels, as soon as his carriage arrived, with- out seeking to follow up an acquaintance of such dubious cha- racter. In the mean time he would confine himself to poking about the antiquities of the place, with his casual and accom- plished acquaintance Monsieur Van H., who had given him his address; keep aloof from the upper town, and its English set; get rid of Fegan, hire foreign servants, and then proceed to some pursuit of health, amusement and information, more accordant with his tastes, feelings and new-born determinations, political and domestic, and better suited to future years and new im- pressions.

Such was the wind-up of his self-examination, as he slowly, and by a not very direct road, ascended from the lower town. He had already reached the *Marché aux Herbes*, the barrier be- tween the French and Flemish quarters, when he was struck by voices and words that startled him out of his deep abstrac- tion; and he paused to listen and to see.

A crowd of votarists at the shrine of pleasure were returning

in various directions from the noisy *guinguettes* of the faubourgs. Some were singing their way back from the kermess at Etterbeek; others, expending their exuberant vitality in loud halloos, joyous shouts, and tipsy laughter, on their return from their recreations in the *estaminets* of La Porte Verte and Shærbeek.

But loud above all the Flemish guttural expressions of rude but happy sensation, and the *refrains* of patriotic songs in which the Orange flag was trampled under foot, two voices were heard singing in unison. The words of the song were English, but they were intonated with an Irish emphasis not to be mistaken.

“’Tis on the curragh of Kildare,
Lord Edward will be there,
And the pikes all in repair,
Says the Shanvan vaugh! Hoo!”

The vociferous singers cleared the way for themselves, by the irregular movements of their Herculean forms. They were tall, athletic; and they rolled on, arm in arm, supporting each other like two tired horses, toiling up the hill, shoulder to shoulder. Sir Frederick who drew back to let them pass, perceived that the riotous choristers and ‘ninety-eight’ men were Sir Ignatius Dogherty and his compatriot Lawrence Fegan, quite as drunk with Faro or Alembique, as they ever had been with true poteen or parliament whisky.

The revellers passed on, and Sir Frederick, a little surprised by the saturnalian association of the wealthy Irish baronet with his own servant, was still more amused than annoyed by the incident; for he had made up his mind to discharge the latter, and to cut the former. The frequent pauses which two potential sons of Erin made in their ascent, again brought Sir Frederick so closely in contact with them on the *Montagne de la Cour*, that it came into his recollection that he might as well notify his presence to Fegan, who had carried off the key of his sleeping room, and might, by protracting his vigils, prevent his master from that rest of which he already felt the want.

Fegan, with his usual quickness, drunk or sober (an instinct rather than a perception), stopped short, and endeavoured with his disengaged hand to remove his hat; but it fell to the ground. In endeavouring to recover it, he lost his equilibrium, and dragged the Baronet after him. Their fall produced a shout of laughter from the by-standers, some of whom had followed the drunken Irishmen up the hill. The prostrate parties, enraged at the insult, and with the huffishness of drunkards, and the love of row of Irishmen, strove to make fight as they recovered their feet.

Sir Frederick, who saw all the possible annoyance which might arise to himself from his servant’s getting into a scrape, now came forward to order Fegan home, and leave Sir Ignatius to his fate; but at the first sound of his voice, and advance of

his person, he was recognized by the latter personage, who, with his besetting passions all afloat, gave vent, in the honesty of drunkenness, to his long-stifled feelings.

Seizing Sir Frederick by the collar, and clinging to him as much for support as to prevent his evasion, he roared out—"The divel a fut you'll stir till you send me back my best shirt, though you were twenty times a greater dandy than you are."

The dexterity of Sir Frederick, joined with the indignation that led him to shake off the insolent drunkard, who, he imagined, had mistaken him for some other, were utterly unequal to relieve him from the grasp of one who had often floored a stouter man. He writhed and struggled in vain, and Sir Ignatius continued in tipsy emotion—"I'll have my shirt! You won't stir till you tell me where I'll get my best baby-linen-warehouse shirt!"

"*Ce sont des boiseurs Anglais,*" said one of the crowd, addressing the gaping circle of curious faces around him; while Fegan, sobered by apprehension and shame, stood aloof, wiping the mud from his face, which, in his fall, he had picked up from the still humid streets.

"*Soyez tranquilles,*" said the Belgian spokesman, "*vous allez voir un grand bocks. Allez donc, mon vieux brave!*" clapping Sir Ignatius on the shoulder.

"Get along out of that, you dirty spalpeen!" said Sir Ignatius, still holding the collar of Sir Frederick; "what is it to you? It's all I want is my shemie? Do you understand that—my shemie? I flather myself that's good Frinch, I want my shemie, monsieur."

"*Ah! c'est son camarade qui lui a volé sa chemise; faut dire un mot à la police,*" said the pertinacious interloper.

"The police!" exclaimed Sir Ignatius. Is it an Irish nobleman and a barinite you'd be sending to the police, you platter-faced omadaun?"

At that moment a carriage paused in its ascent up the hill, to avoid running over the still gathering crowd; a lady put out her head, and a voice from one of three gentlemen who were descending the hill at the same moment, inquired in English, "What is the matter? Can we be of any service?"

"Och! the mather is plain and aisy, gentlemen dear," hiccupped Sir Ignatius. "I am Sir Ignatius Dogherty, a nobleman and an ancient barinite, as Sir William Betham, Ulster king-at-arms, will tell yez, if he plaizes: and this English gentleman, as he calls himself, borrowed my shirt at Ostend; and never heard more of it nor him, from that blessed hour; to say nothing of my lady's white pocket-hankercher."

Sir Frederick Mottram had now succeeded in disengaging his coat, but with a violence that had almost flung him into the arms of the English gentlemen who had come to the rescue.

"Mottram! by Jove," cried one of the strangers; an excla-

mation followed by a shout of recognition and amazement from the whole English party, in which the lady in the carriage joined with a frank hilarity, such as fine ladies seldom indulge in. The gentlemen were Lords Montessor and Alfred, and Mr. St. Leger; the Lady was the Princess of Schaffhausen, who in spite of the darkness and a deep veil was instantly recognized.

"But what is it?" asked the Princess in her broken but sweet accent: "*faites-vous donc une petite contre-révolution à l'eau rose?*"

"No," said Lord Alfred; "it is, I suspect, *à la bière de Louvain.*"

"And English influence," said the Princess, "seems more or less at the bottom of this, as of other movements."

"I leave my friend, here," said Lord Montessor, "whom we have found in the thick of the row, to answer for himself. Sir Frederick Mottram, Madame La Princesse Schaffhausen." And he pushed Sir Frederick, whom he held by the arm as tightly as Sir Ignatius had held his coat, towards the door of the britzka.

Sir Frederick's first impulse at this strange, unlooked-for, and most unlucky rencontre with nearly all the persons he was most desirous to avoid, had been to make his escape: his next was to stand firm, and trust to the fact that Sir Ignatius Dogherty had, in his drunkenness, mistaken him for another person: he had as much forgotten that there had been a moment in which he was in want of a shirt, as he was ignorant, through the silence of Fegan on that particular, that he had availed himself of the flower of Sir Ignatius's wardrobe. This dense twilight introduction to the Princess, in the narrowest and most dusky part of the *Montagne de la Cour*, divested it of much of the awkwardness and confusion he could neither repress nor conceal, but which he felt in every nerve and fibre.

"Lady Frances is here, I suppose?" said the Princess, "though she never mentioned her journey when I saw her the night before I left London."

The cool effrontery of this reminiscence astounded Sir Frederick.

"No," said Lord Montessor; "we husbands are only the *avant-garde*. Lady Frances joins you here, I suppose, Mottram?"

Mottram answered 'unwittingly—he knew not what.'

"When did you arrive, messieurs?" asked the Princess; "and where are you going?"

"Here, St. Leger, come forward," said Lord Alfred: "he will tell you; he is the sense-keeper of our party."

"Monsieur St. Leger did always like what you call the *sincure*," said the Princess.

"My present part is anything but that," he said; "there is

no charge so difficult as the taking care of a man who is running after his heart without the hope of his recovery." (And he clapped Lord Alfred on the shoulder.) "But, be that as it may, we arrived yesterday at dinner, and have searched every hotel in the town for the *Princesse Fée*."

"And now you have found me, *à quoi bon?*"

"That is not a question to be answered here," said Lord Alfred, laying his hand on the door of the carriage: "Whence are you come?"

"From my *campagne*."

"And where are you in Brussels?"

"The Hôtel de Gronendael is my *état major*."

"That suffices. We shall not so easily lose sight of you again. Your disappearance in London caused a sensation, as the 'Age' said, unrivalled since——"

"—Since the death of Lady Frances's parroquet," interrupted the Princess.

There was an affected laugh and a short silence among the party.

"Are you going to the theatre, Princess?" asked Lord Montessor; "and will you let us into your box?"

"*Misericordia*—I go to a play on Sunday! What do you English take me for?"

"Will you allow me then," said Lord Alfred, "to join your head-quarters, and enter immediately on service?"

"*Nous verrons*," said the Princess, yawning. "*Bon soir, messieurs*." And then addressing her servants, she pronounced the imperative "*Allez*."

The carriage drove on. Meantime the *dramatis personæ* had shifted their position. A something uttered in the ear of Sir Ignatius by Fegan, had produced the same effect as the muttered magic of the celebrated Irish whisperer, who tamed horses by a word. Sir Ignatius shrunk off, supported by the arm of his companion; and the crowd, disappointed in their hope of witnessing an English boxing-match, dispersed and disappeared. The gentlemen proceeded down the *Montagne de la Cour*, on their way to the theatre; and either from malicious design or inadvertance, drew Sir Frederick along with them, who, pinioned on either side by Lord Montessor and his brother, meditated the escape he had as yet not been able to effect without exciting some strange suspicion.

"Whom had the Princess with her?" asked Lord Alfred.

"Her eternal *dame de compagnie*, I suppose," said Mr. St. Leger.

"Her German etiquette thinks a lady in waiting an indispensable appendage. I could tell you stories of that arrangement at Vienna *à mourir de rier*."

"You shall tell them over an Ostend oyster and iced cham-

paigne, after the theatre to-night," said Lord Montessor.
 "Mottram, you must sup with us at the Bellevue."

"Not to-night. I have written myself into the most ccu-
 founded head-ache, and must home to bed."

"Not a bit of it," said Lord Montessor, still detaining him
 by the arm; and he suddenly stopped at the corner of the
Place de la Monnaie, which now burst upon them in all its bus-
 tle and brilliancy.

"You must come with us to our ambassador's box. We
 have a million of things to say, and to ask. Have you seen the
 English papers? What do you think of the glorious stand
 made by the two Dukes, and Lords Winchelsea and Eldon, the
 other night?"

"I have seen no papers, and want to know nothing of Eng-
 lish politics. I have left London for the express purpose of
 throwing over the whole concern and breaking free for a time."

"Oh! so. I suppose you know that all sorts of reasons have
 been assigned for your escapade, gallant, political, economical,
 and salutary?"

"Provided you don't repeat them, it is quite indifferent to
 me what hirelings have written, or gossips of either sex invent-
 ed in malice, or repeated in design."

"Design! what design?" asked Lord Alfred: "I don't see
 how your movements can affect any one."

"Except his wife," said Lord Montessor, laughing. "She
 really was in despair at your sudden and unannounced depart-
 ure, until your letter to your man of business cleared up the
 mystery. But we cannot stand talking family business here.
 Do come and see *la petite Lincel—c'est à croquer, celle-là*."

"Impossible, I am not dressed."

"Psha! nobody dresses here. The *braves Belges* of the pre-
 sent day have not got as far as the *toilette habillée*, except for a
 court ball. By Jove! how gay and splendid this place is!
 quite a little Palais Royal. This is the proper *entourage* for a
 theatre. Our English theatres are buried in such horrid pur-
 lious."

At that moment, the French and English secretaries of lega-
 tion drew up in their cabs. They were known to all the par-
 ties, and the mutual recognitions under the peristyle permitted
 Sir Frederick to escape. His mood of mind had been wholly
 broken up by the unwished-for rencontre, connected as it was
 with associations it had cost him so much pain and trouble to
 get rid of.

He was in the act of crossing the illuminated *Place* with
 eager haste, when he came full against a gentleman, whom,
 while he was making his apology, he recognized to be his
 agreeable travelling companion from Ghent to Alost.

"You are surely not turning your back upon the '*Centenaire*'
 and '*La Fille de Dominique*,'" said M. Van H.

"I have been forcibly brought here," said Sir Frederick; "and have just shaken off some free-hearted companions, who wanted me, *bon gré, mal gré*, to bring my aching head into the heated atmosphere of the theatre. Besides," he added, already relieved by the absence of his tormentors, "I doubt that there is anything within, finer than this splendid scene without."

"Yes! whoever would give the stranger a favourable impression of the gaiety of Brussels, should drop him first here, at this hour, where we stand, in the centre of *La Place de la Monnaie*. On either side are the most modern and the most ancient public monuments—the theatre and the *Hôtel de la Monnaie*: the one, with its cold Greek architecture, its peristyle of Ionic columns, and illuminated arcades, was finished in 1819; the other, with its heavy masses now lying in their own deep shadows, was founded in 1291. Ages have passed over its venerable site; great scenes have been enacted where it stands; dynasties have been overthrown, and governments displaced; but no event, in the course of the five hundred years which have passed since its foundation, has been more extraordinary, or more influential on Belgian interests, than that which it witnessed on the night of the 25th of August 1830. Here began our revolution, on such a night as this—at this hour—in this month—and amidst such images of brilliancy and pleasure as now present themselves, with the music of Auber ringing in every ear, and the representation of a popular revolution heating every imagination!"

"Yes," said Sir Frederick, "you recall to my recollection that the outbreak of the disturbances at Brussels did commence at the theatre; and that the mimic representation of a rebellion of Lazzaroni was the first link in the important chain of events, which may yet kindle another general and European war, if not prevented by the wisdom and firmness of the greater powers. Had the *Muette de Portici*, then, not been performed, William of Nassau might still have reigned in Brussels, and Leopold been living an accomplished private gentleman at Claremont."

"That," said M. Van H., "is a very rapid, and, permit me to add, a very English conclusion. Accidents, sir, may beget accidents; but events which make the destinies of nations are never *improvisés*."

Sir Frederick felt that his already irritated temper was committing him on a point of courtesy, as well as of fact; and checking his own impetudosity, he said—

"The truth is, your Belgian revolution is not popular in England, or rather, not well known, and least of all with that large and influential party who are endeavouring to uphold a constitution, threatened not only by internal impatience of necessary evils, but by external influence and example; and when one hears of a dynasty overthrown under the excitement of a dramatic representation, and finds that event misrepresented as a great

movement of a great people, and offered as a proof of the march of social improvement, a theme of popular rejoicing, and a type for popular imitation——”

“When the theatre was first opened in 1819,” interrupted M. Van H., “the representation chosen as the most national and exciting, was the *Caravan de Caire*, the *chef-d’œuvre* of our own immortal Grétry (for whose heart, bequeathed to his native city of Liege, two nations went to law); the musical susceptibility of the Belgians, second only to that of Italians, was roused to a frenzy of delight; but no one thought of going to Cairo, or journeying in a caravan. If the example of Massaniello had more influence on the population of Brussels than it had on the *habités* of the Opera-house in the Haymarket, it was because it fell like the spark on a well-prepared mine—because the explosive elements were already accumulated by an unjust and anti-national government. The accidental influence was confined to the square in which we are now conversing, but the shock vibrated to the remotest corner of Belgium. But pray give yourself up for awhile to Belgian ideas and to Belgian influences. Let us take a *sorbet* under this veranda; you will find it more refreshing than the interior of the theatre; and in witnessing the manners of our citizens in this their favourite haunt, you will be better qualified to judge of the great event which took place on it.”

The next moment the stranger-friends were seated under an awning in the front of one of the brilliant coffee-houses which occupy the *Place de la Monnaie*. Ices and *ponche à la Romaine* were set before them, and the whole structure of mind and feeling which had been generated by the *mal-apropos* appearance of Sir Frederick’s English coterie gave way before an intense and awakened curiosity.

“It is not to be expected,” said Monsieur Van H., “that foreigners should be acquainted with the long details of grievance that prepared the way for our revolution; but from the universality of the effect, you must be prepared to infer the existence of an universal cause. Without, however, pausing upon historical considerations, the event, as far as this *locale* is concerned, you may well imagine, was one singularly picturesque. It has afforded a fine subject to the pencil of one of our most distinguished female artists, Madame Marguerite; for notwithstanding the imputed dulness and homespun materiality of our Belgian women, we have some fine painters and even agreeable writers among them.”

“Is that picture of Madame Marguerite’s in the market?” asked Sir Frederick.

“It was sold to a manufacturer of this city, before it was finished. In fact, it never has been finished. Madame Marguerite left Brussels a few weeks after the Four Days, and has never since been heard of here, till the other day, when a report

had been spread of her intention of contributing a picture to our exhibition."

"But," said Sir Frederick, "the public mind having been so fearfully excited by the Parisian revolution of July, there surely was great want of foresight in the Government allowing the performance of the *Muette*."

"So the event has proved," said Monsieur Van H.: "and indeed had the thing been contrived on purpose by a band of conspirators, it could not have been more *apropos*. Indeed there are not wanting persons to assert that the whole was a plot of the Government, to excite a scene, which might serve as a pretext for future severities. But the total absence of all repressive means, to confine the possible outrage within safe limits is the best defence of the authorities."

"True," said Sir Frederick; "such suppositions of ultra Machiavelian refinements on the part of governments, are seldom well founded, though frequently employed, in the speculations of journalists. They are common enough in English politics, and have been made, in instances, in which I have had the best reasons for knowing their slanderous falsity."

"In the present case," said Mr. Van H., "I totally discredit them, and believe that it had been in contemplation to prevent the exhibition. Considering the state of the public mind, more especially at that particular moment, the folly of administering such a stimulus to the inflamed populace, was worthy of a Government predestined to destruction."

"What," said Sir Frederick, "was the circumstance to which you more immediately allude?"

"The public discontents had been for some time gathering head, and the aspect of affairs was becoming daily more threatening. The Government was alarmed; but to conjure the coming storm, no better expedient suggested itself than an ostentatious rejoicing on occasion of the King's birthday, which fell on the twenty-fourth, precisely the day before that on which the revolution actually commenced. For this festivity the greatest preparations had been made by the Government. Fireworks were to be given at the *Porté de Namur*, with public illuminations in the Park and city; concerts, races, and exhibitions of every sort, calculated to intoxicate an unreflecting populace. An immense sum was expended on the Park alone to render it a centre of especial attraction. With an unpopular Government such a rejoicing by command would have been sufficiently galling; but it was rendered doubly disgusting, by the circumstance that the poverty of the exchequer had been made the plea of continuing an odious impost upon the grinding of corn, which fell especially heavy on the common people. The outcry was immense, and on every side was heard the epigram of '*to-day an illumination, to-morrow a revolution!*' The expense, however,

had been incurred, the preparations were made, but the authorities were discouraged; and amidst the most glorious weather they put off the celebration *sine die, à cause du mauvais tems!* In point of fact, the military and civil authorities, and the public itself, were, for more than eight days, aware that some great event was at hand; yet the drama of the *Muette* was allowed to be played!"

"The conjuncture was strange," said Sir Frederick: "and what followed?"

"The house was crowded at an early hour, and every allusion to liberty was received with an enthusiasm which was rapidly propagated to an assembled multitude collected in this square."

Warned by a sort of instinct, that the moment for action was come, the citizens flocked to the environs of the theatre in numbers unusually great. Other physiognomies and other dresses than are usually seen here, presented themselves. The *blouse* and the *casquette* were frequent; but there were no rags, none of the squalid poverty, which looks to public disturbances for the opportunity for plunder. Neither were there any ostentatiously armed. Surrounding the theatre, and spread in the *Café Suisse*, and the *Mille Colonnes*, they awaited events; but no one drank: '*Je ne bois plus, il est dix heures, venez donc, on nous attendra,*' was repeated on every side."

"And the authorities permitted all this, and did not take the alarm?"

"No force of any sort appeared to protect the peace. Towards the end of the play, the crowd began to move towards the *Fossé aux Loups*, where was the printing-office of 'the *National*,' a most anti-national and Dutch newspaper, an object of general execration and hatred.

"At ten o'clock two lamps were broken, which was the first signal for riot. In an instant, the street was unpaved, amidst cries of *à bas le forçat libéré*, the editor Libry. The shop of this man, in *Rue de Magdelaine*, was attacked, and a scene of devastation commenced, which lasted for more than thirty hours."

"And the authorities? the magistrates?"

"At eleven o'clock, the *Procureur du Roi* was quietly in bed; and when roused by his deputy, he went to the scene of action, accompanied only by four individuals, who soon deserted him: it was already too late. The military and civil authorities had assembled at the Governor's and to them the *Procureur* repaired, but found his apprehensions treated with contempt and mockery; and when word was brought that the magnificent hotel of Van Maanen, the unpopular Minister of Justice, was attacked, the informant was told, '*It is false, you are an alarmist, if not something worse.*'

"At two o'clock, after having supped, the magistrates sepa-

rated, and went home to bed. Van Maanen's hotel, which, strange to say, occupied the site of the palace of the atrocious Duke d'Alva, in the Petit Sablon, was attacked by a party utterly independent of the other rioters, and was promptly given to the flames. Nothing was stolen, not even to the amount of an *écu*; but nothing was spared.

"The troops, left without a superior authority to direct their movements, paraded the town in small bodies, without effecting any salutary purpose. About sixty chasseurs arrived towards three o'clock on the spot, where the people were tranquilly enjoying the spectacle of the fire at Van Maanen's. An individual ill-dressed, with a dirty feather in his hat, and armed with a sabre and pistols, who was in advance of the crowd, cried out to the officer in command, "*Bas les armes, ou vous êtes tous morts.*" The sombre and concentrated people turned their eyes from the flames, and beheld the troops advancing around the corner of Rue Bodenbreck. To the demand of *bas les armes*, the lieutenant replied by announcing his orders to disperse the crowd, and the necessity he should be under of firing, if they did not depart. But the individual, who acted on behalf of the people, and who was recognized as an old serjeant of the first division, pushing back the officer, said, 'You have nothing to do with this; go about your business.' *Mais quant à nous, Monsieur Damman, nous ne quitterons que quand cet hôtel* sera brûlé jusqu'aux fondemens.*"

"Well, sir," said Sir Frederick, much interested.

"The people kept their word. This little anecdote gives a fair estimate of the extent to which the authorities were unprepared to meet an event which they could not but have foreseen; and of the manner in which the people found leisure to become acquainted with their own strength. Some resistance was indeed made, and blood spilt in other quarters of the town; but it cannot be said that any well-directed effort was made to check the progress of anarchy, and prevent the utter destruction of the city, (had such been the good pleasure of the populace,) till the *garde bourgeoise* spontaneously formed, to protect their own property, and maintain order."

"This is a graphic sketch you have given," said Sir Frederick, "of the outbreak of your Revolution. It must have supplied your artists with many stirring subjects."

"Few, however, have as yet occupied themselves upon it, though the History of the Low Countries is a favourite source with our historical painters. There is a magnificent picture of Dutch heroism, *Le Burgomeestre de Leyde*, by Monsieur Wappers, at the King's palace. But the first painter probably of the day, the Paul Potter of the nineteenth century, Verboekhoven,

* So pronounced by the lower classes of Brussels.

confines himself strictly to safer subjects, and paints chiefly cattle pieces."

"I should be glad to visit the work-rooms of some of your modern school."

"And in my national vanity, I shall be happy to accompany you, if you will appoint your day and hour."

"I shall be delighted, as soon as I can make up my mind whether I shall remain in Brussels, or push on for some of the German Spas, to return for your great Anniversary."

At that moment, the carriages of the French and English Ambassadors drew up in front of the theatre; and the fear of being again caught by the English travellers, induced Sir Frederick to retire to his quiet *gîte* at the Tirlemont. M. Van H. accompanied him to its gates. It was not yet eleven; but the city of Brussels was already sinking into quietude and repose. In that one day, how many incidents, how many novel impressions, had occupied and amused the awakened mind of the English *désœuvré*!

Fegan, sobered but stupified, was waiting in the *porte-cochère*, to light his master to his room, and was beginning an apology, when he was dismissed at the bed-chamber door: but long after it had been closed his Irish moan and broken exclamations might have been heard on the corridor.

CHAPTER II.

THE JANSENS.

A BRILLIANT morning was ushered in by a packet of letters, brought from the post by Fegan, who was more than usually alert and attentive. They were letters of business, of politics, and of friendship. There was one, also, from Lady Frances, inclosed in that of Mr. Harris, his agent. It was reproachful, expostulatory, self-willed; and it mentioned her having definitely arranged to follow her husband, as soon as it suited the convenience of some friends, with whom it would be prudent, she said, and proper to travel.

There ran through the whole epistle such a mixture of art and heartlessness, such an obvious wish to keep to the letter of duty, in the absence of all sense of its spirit, such a substitution of decent forms for real anxiety, either for the recovery of his health, or for maintaining a place in his affections, that it awakened all his latent aversion to the writer. Still, seeing as he did through her ill-concealed purpose of throwing an air of

propriety over an inconsiderate indulgence of her own fancies, while she fixed upon him the odium of negligence and indifference, the letter itself did not displease him. One word of true feeling, one sentence of lurking tenderness, or of mortified affection, would have left him utterly defenceless. But there was nothing of this; and the perusal of the crafty phrases, dictated in possibility by some member of the Arlington-street coterie, and read to them all 'in council assembled,' was in its result as unfavourable to the writer, as it was most favourable to her husband's own desire to escape her rencontre.

The physical improvement impressed on Sir Frederick Mottram's health and temperament by change of air, climate, circumstance, and scene, the new developement given to native powers of thought by his new views and ideas, and above all, a delicious but doubtful consciousness that there were sources of sensibility within his heart, not absolutely dried up by the arid pursuits of his late circumscribed position, had given to his new life a relish to which he had long been a stranger. He determined, therefore, to pursue its pleasant casualties till their novelty should wear out, or their sources become exhausted in the enjoyment; and he made up his mind to write to Lady Frances, forbidding her to pursue her projected journey to Brussels, to announce his own return to Mottram Hall for the shooting season, and to request that she would fix her own residence, in the mean time, at the villa of her father, the Duke of —, at Richmond. For a moment, a doubt had crossed him that her proposition being a mere pretext, she might, to prevent his interference with her views, have already left England, and by the same packet which brought out her letter. On reflection, however, he thought it right to despatch his answer, and thus seal the hollow compact of mutual deception, the only tie that now existed between them.

It was not till he had fulfilled this intention, that he visited his English friends at the Bellevue, from whom he might expect information more precise concerning the movements of the travelling *brigata*; and on reaching the hotel, he found that they had already ridden out with a party to visit the race-course of Mont Plaisir: whence they were not expected till seven in the evening, the hour when they had ordered dinner.

As all hope of continuing his stealthy and incognito habits was for the present over, he had secured handsome apartments at the Hôtel de Flandre, wrote his name at the English and French embassies, presented his letter of credit to his banker, Monsieur Engler, received and accepted an invitation to dine at that gentleman's splendid and hospitable mansion, left cards on his accomplished acquaintance the Polish colonel, and for the courteous M. Van H.; and surrendered himself to the chances for the few successive days, even though the Princess of Schaffhausen should continue in Brussels, and his intro-

duction to his '*Donna odiosa*' bring with it the certainty of a meeting.

The latter, indeed, was a contingency to which less bitterness was now attached than he had hitherto experienced on the subject. The removal of his wife from the sphere of the Princess's unhallowed influence, had divested his feelings to her Highness of their sting. He disliked, it is true, her manners, and he despised her imputed immorality; but how many of his daily associates, in public and in private life, stood precisely in the same category!

The only occasion on which he had particularly noticed her voice in England was, when her insolent and aristocratic sarcasms on his own birth and character had reached his ear, in the box of the opera: it had then jarred on his organ like a sharp, wiry, untunable instrument. Was his hearing at that time, like all his other sensations, morbid?—or was the rich and sweet accent in which she had lisped her Parisian French from her britzka, on the preceding evening, another of her affectations? Sir Frederick was a voice-fancier; and that of the Princess, on the latter occasion, was so completely of the *timbre* that accorded with his auditory idealism, that it seemed to be familiar to his imagination, as if he had heard such music in his dreams; and the physical sensation was not without its moral effect.

The Princess, too, was now associated in his mind with her *protégée* the artist. It was true, he had forsworn Madame Marguerite, cast her from his mind; yet he found himself at the moment when the English fashionables were thronging to the promenade in the park, descending to the old town, and taking the direction to St. Géry. He stopped for a moment on his way, opposite the old house which had sheltered him on the preceding evening: it appeared to him in the bright daylight still more desolate and dilapidated than on the night before. Its one window, of many panes, was closed with a shutter; so was the Gothic casement in its stepped gable.

The narrow and nailed door was shut, but he could not resist pulling the bell. No one answered, though the summons was thrice repeated; and he proceeded to the ancient headquarters of the *Béguines* to inquire for La Sœur Greite.

The Grand *Béguinage* of Brussels presented a very different appearance from that of Ghent. Its cloistral and narrow streets, twelve in number, were dreary and lonely, as if swept by a plague. The blast of opinion had passed over the institute in Brussels, which no longer belonged to the age. Here and there, however, a flower-pot at an open casement, or a birdcage at a door, with a lean and withered sister sitting beneath a *trellised* shed, in front of her cell-like dwelling, indicated that a few lingering votarists of *Notre Dame de la Vigne* still found shelter in the consecrated purlieus of the great church of St.

Beghé: but there were none of the boudoir-like dwellings such as are occupied by the rich *semi-dévotés* at Ghent.

The habitation of this order at Brussels was a record of the changes of opinion and of the struggle of prejudices, religious and political, by which the capital of the Low Countries had for centuries been agitated. At a period when the influence of women began to assume the intensity of a religious worship, when the St. Beghés, the Ursulas, and the Gudules (who preceded the great stateswomen of the middle ages, the Marguerites and the Jeannes) made their appearance on the European stage, the Béguinage was founded. This event occurred in 1250, and in 1254 Hugh, the apostolic prelate of Brabant, endowed the order with high privileges; and, as its rules were the least rigorous of all monastic codes, the number of the sisterhood rapidly mounted to a thousand.

In 1583, when the reforming spirit of the sixteenth century gave a shock to the stronghold of human error, which loosened some of its minor absurdities while it left the graver prejudices unmoved, the movement penetrated even into the close and pleasant quarters of the Béguinage, and the ancient monastery and church were nearly demolished by a Calvinistical magistrate of Brussels. The sisterhood was dispersed, the shrines were overthrown, and the ruins of their once sumptuous cloisters were overgrown by the rank herbage of the neglected soil. But there is a pertinacity in error which truth rarely possesses, and in 1657 the church of St. Beghé again arose with additional splendour; the cells were re-opened and filled, and the sauntering sisters were again gliding along the streets of the city. The pious gallantry of the citizens was pleased to expend upon this restoration no less a sum than 331,318 florins.

Then came the grand European movement announced by the French revolution, and in 1796 the monastic orders were all suppressed throughout Belgium; but even then those true women, the Béguines, obtained, through that perseverance which is the omnipotence of their sex, a restoration to their ancient and venerated haunt; and a few of the order still linger on the spot to this day.

Sir Frederick Mottram stood for a moment in the midst of the moral and material decay, and was preparing to turn down one of the little alleys which radiate from the grass-grown space surrounding the church, for the purpose of inquiring from one of the sisters, who sat knitting in the sun, for the lodging of the *Sœur Greite*, when the unwonted sound of a carriage rattling over the pavement drew off his attention. The carriage rolled up to the portals of the church, a Béguine hobbled out, made an inclination of the head to the persons she was leaving, and remained standing on the steps of the church till the carriage moved out of sight. Before she had passed the skreen of

the door, Sir Frederick recognized his old friend, and followed her into the edifice.

"Well," she said, with her usual Flemish frankness, "I told the Princess it was you, though Madame Marguerite insisted that you have an air *plus guindé* than that of the person who passed the carriage with so quick and light a step, like one who was hurrying after somebody or something."

"She was quite right," he replied, smiling; "I was looking for you."

"*Tant mieux*," said the Béguine. "When a fine man of the world looks out in such a dreary place as this for a poor old sister of charity, it is a good sign. I thought you would come to see me, or at least to visit the Béguinage, as you promised; so returning from the Puterie, where *Madame la Princesse* was to see the Vandyke with Madame Marguerite, her Highness took me up and brought me here. She has given me this money to distribute among the poor of the quarter of the Béguinage, in spite of the remonstrance of Madame Marguerite, who pretends, that money so given only multiplies the poverty it affects to relieve. *C'est un esprit fort, que cet Madame Marguerite*. For my part I am but a simple Christian, a good Béguine, and I understand nothing of the matter; all I know is, that the pious women of old had always '*leurs pauvres*.'"

"I believe Madame Marguerite is right in principle, whatever she may be as to feeling. But I like the pity which gives, ere charity begins; and I beg of you to accept this trifle for the same purposes as the sum given you by the Princess."

"*Hein!*" said the Béguine, dropping the sovereign she had received into the Princess's purse, which she held between her finger and thumb."

"Tell me, *ma mère*," said Sir Frederick, smiling at the avidity with which she seized the money, "does Madame Marguerite accompany the Princess?"

"Yes, she is going to touch up some old pictures at the castle of Schaffhausen. She has a fine time of it, that Madame Marguerite, since the Prince sat for his picture to her; till then she had scarcely bread to eat; but since the Prince's death, she and the Princess are inseparable; she accompanied her to England, and some say she is a poor relation. Everybody may have poor relations, *n'est-ce pas, Monsieur?*"

Sir Frederick nodded assent, and sighed.

"They are both *semi-dévotés*," continued the old woman: "the Princess is attached to *les dames nobles du Petit Béguinage de Gand*; and Madame Marguerite is a sort of Béguine too: but *hélas!* we are no longer rigorous."

"And what is the nature of the *Petit Béguinage* of Ghent?"

"It was founded by a great and pious lady, Marguerite, the sister of the Countess Jane of Flanders. It is a little aristocracy, where the *noblesse* and *haute bourgeoisie* repose from the

fatigues of a stormy life, and the disappointments of the heart. I have no great faith in the piety of such persons."

"Nor have I," said Sir Frederick, emphatically; "and I dare say your two ladies find their account in——"

He paused in the feeling that he was committing an impropriety; and he was pleased to see himself relieved from the necessity of finishing his sentence, by the Béguine's devotion, who was now kneeling before the statue of St. Beghé, a woman who, at the end of a thousand years, was still exerting a certain influence on society, receiving its homage, and perhaps furnishing a veil to cover its follies and its vices.

Sir Frederick made the observation mentally, with the shuddering conviction of the power of a sex of which, like others of his class, he held a contemptuous opinion. He expressed aloud, however, only the eulogistical part of his reverie to the Béguine.

"*Ah! mon Dieu, oui,*" she replied; "our holy church owes everything to the pious Christian women of the better times! But all that is over: religion banished from earth is returned to heaven, whence it came! Look, Monsieur," and she pointed to a dirty crazy image of the Virgin, "look at that sign of the times. Look at that old tissue silk petticoat! You see by the fashion that it is as old as Maria Theresa's time. Would those artificial flowers be thus faded and covered with dust, if there was any piety upon earth? They say that Belgium is falling into the hands of the priests; but what does it signify, that our priests influence the elections, if they return only *esprits forts*, who do not so much as offer a taper at the shrine of a saint, and who leave the blessed Virgin without a rag to cover her. I distrust those priests exceedingly; they are but the instruments of the people, and not their leaders: *tant pis, ma foi*. The people are good for nothing in their religion! No, sir, the hope of the church was the *noblesse*; but even they have deserted both church and state to take care of themselves. Still, if you do see a devotee of your own sex on his knees before a shrine, or with his arms outstretched, you may take it for granted that it is Monsieur le Baron, or Monsieur le Marquis."

The lamentations of the Béguine over the neglected toilet of the Madonna, and the deplorable disuse of all those practices which in one nation constitute piety, and in another are accounted buffoonery, struck the English traveller as affording a remarkable feature in a country which had recently been deemed the most superstitious and bigoted of Catholic Christendom. The change implied was, however, by him deemed fatal to social order: for he was, or at least had been, of a party who, while they resisted the Catholic claims in Ireland even to the shedding of blood, and maintained the ascendancy of their own church in England as the only true and favoured religion of

Heaven, had forced the Pope upon reluctant Italy, had replaced on their forfeited thrones the bigoted and persecuting despots of the Peninsula, and were the steady allies of all who upheld old forms, cherished old errors, and fortified old abuses.

Sir Frederick Mottram had now flattered the pious vanity of the old woman by admiring several bad pictures, and stopping before the neglected lateral altars of the church, when the tolling of a bell announced the coming celebration of some holy office. Having obtained all the information which, almost unconsciously, he had come to seek, from the *Sœur Greite*, he took leave of his amusing old friend, with a secret conviction that she held no intimate communion with Madame Marguerite, and an expressed desire that he might again meet one from whom he had derived so much instruction.

"And where are you going then?" she asked with some anxiety: "for you have been so charitable, so good, and seem to have so true a vocation, that I should like now and then to speed a prayer after you in your wanderings."

"It would gratify me to be remembered in your oraisons," he replied, touched by the tremulous tenderness of her voice, which had taken the tone of departing friendship.

"You are going to some of the German spas, I suppose, for your health. I know them all. I travelled with *Madame l'Abbesse du chapitre de Namur*, as her companion and nurse, to all the waters, to Ems, to Schlangenbad, Wisbaden, Baden-Baden, and many others. They are all good; for they all bring the invalid back to Nature, to her hours, scenery, and diet. You will begin by Spa; and will perhaps be tempted to remain there by the beauties of the Forest of Ardennes. You have heard of the Forest of Ardennes?"

She stooped to pick up a wreath of *immortelles* which had fallen from some grim-looking saint. Rosalind, Orlando, Jaques, rushed upon the imagination of the most ardent votarist that the genius of Shakspeare ever warmed into idolatry.

"Yes!" he said, "I have heard of the Forest of Ardennes, through the medium of one on whose shrine I would hang this wreath" (and she permitted him to take it) "with a feeling as devotional, as that with which you are about to replace it on the head of your saint."

"*Gardez-le, monsieur, gardez-le!*" said the *Béguine*; "the offering has done its duty here. Keep it in remembrance of *la Sœur Greite* of Bruges; and when you offer it to the saint you speak of, think of the sinner whom chance and St. Beghé have thrown in your way; unworthy as she is, she may perhaps prove a chosen vessel, to recall you to the path from which temptation has early led you. Farewell, monsieur! it is the last time you will see *la Sœur Greite*."

"The last time, my good friend!" he repeated, considerably

affected by the solemnity of her manner, and touched too by the gloom and silence of the place.

"I predict," said the *Béguine*, emphatically, "that we meet no more; so God and the good lady St. Beghé bless and guide you!"

She offered him her hand from beneath the voluminous sleeve of her habit. It lay for a moment, soft and small, in his; and he pressed it silently and with cordiality, when the opening of the skreen door, and the entrance of the poor congregation afforded by the deserted quarter of the *Béguinage*, induced her to withdraw it hastily. Resuming her old pottering step and manner, she was the next moment involved with the remains of the sisterhood of St. Beghé, who, from a thousand, were now reduced to less than a score.

There was something in the scene and in the person he had quitted, that left a fanciful impression on Sir Frederick, whose merit and whose weakness it was, to be but too impressionable. He was abstracted and pre-occupied, and he wandered on unobservant of the intricacies of the antique purlieus of the old town. Many a Spanish fabric arrested his step, such as Bossuet * has delighted to trace with so much fidelity and finesse; and many a Brabançon hotel caught his eye, whose masters consider it a religious duty to reside on the patrimonial mansion, transmitted to them from those stirring burghers who maintained the independence of Brabant, before Spanish bigotry and Austrian despotism had reared their hateful crest above the head of the old Belgian Lion.

It was now near four o'clock, and Sir Frederick was looking for some index by which to retrace his steps to the upper town, when he read at the corner of a street verging towards the ascent—'*la Puterie.*' On one of the largest and most antiquated houses of this street was inscribed on a brass plate, '*Jansens père, Fabriquant de Dentelles.*' Vandyke, the Princess's visit, and the hope of outbidding her, induced him to seize this opportunity of calling on the virtuoso tradesman; and a massive brazen knocker announced the intention by reiterated vibrations, that stunned the old-fashioned quarter, where no variation in the beat declares the aristocratic rank of the petitioner for entrance.

The door was almost immediately opened by a frightened *servante de Campine*, † with an inquiry in Flemish of 'what was the matter?' The sight of the visitant calmed the terrors which his loud knock had awakened; and the broad, bright Brabançon face of the servant dilated into smiles, as she mustered up as much Flemish-French as went to inquire 'what was wanted for the service of monsieur?' Her curious cap, large gold ear-rings, coloured jacket, and full plaited petticoat, as she

* A living Belgian artist, of less European celebrity than merit.

† The 'Campine' is the country between Brussels and Antwerp.

stood within the sculptured oaken frame of the massive door, gave a living picture of one of the coarse, cleanly, joyous fraus of the Flemish school.

To the information that he came to see a picture which was to be disposed of, she only replied by opening her eyes, and a '*S'il vous plaît monsieur ?*' He repeated his wishes in simpler and more concise phrase, but she shook her head, and drew the door closer, replying—

"Je ne suis qu'un sujet, foyez-vous, monsieur."

Sir Frederick, thoroughly puzzled, thought of sending in the card of Madame Marguerite with his own, and asked if Monsieur Jansens was at home. At the name of her master, she brightened up and said, "*Ha ! c'est not' maître ! Il est à la maison.*"

Fortunately, a servant-man now came to the aid of her very limited vocabulary. His rubicund, good-humoured countenance was set off by a pair of gold ear-rings, and he was carving a ponderous piece of bread and butter with a large clasp knife, as he advanced.

"A moi, monsieur," he said, laughing, and pushing aside the maid, in the pride of superior acquirement. "*Not' demoiselle est indigène, voyez-vous.* Speak Flemish to her, and you will have answer enough."

Sir Frederick gave his card, explained the object of his visit, and was instantly admitted into an immense vestibule. The lofty oaken wainscot was hung with pictures; shrubs and pots of flowers were placed on marble *encoignures* upon frames worthy of Vanbruggen's chisel. A carved oaken settee, and an antique clock in a curious case, composed the furniture; while a broad and spacious staircase of polished oak to the left, conducted to the upper suite of apartments. The servant threw open the door of the *parloir*, and conducting in the stranger, said that he would inform his master.

"But, perhaps," said Sir Frederick, recollecting the early hours of the lower town, "he is at dinner?"

The good Brabançon stared. "Dinner!" he said; "*nous sommes à notre goûté, nous autres sujets.* Our ladies are gone to the *salut*, and my master is in the garden-house."

Then, almost forcing from Sir Frederick his hat and cane, he left the room. But, again suddenly returning, he opened a door which communicated with an adjoining apartment: it was the *salon*, or best room, the fane of domestic festivity and ostentation.

"There, monsieur," he said, "*voilà de la pâture !* People come to see our pictures from all parts. There is a Hemskirk—that small picture of boors drinking; it is a gem. The Prince of Orange would have given any money for it; but our master would not sell it, as he said, to Maria Theresa herself, if she had come back from the grave to bid for it."

He drew back the drapery of the window to throw a light upon the picture, and then retired. Sir Frederick was amused by this little trait of plebeian *virtù* and national spirit. These were the feelings which, being incidental to all classes in the Low Countries, encouraged their great schools, and enriched the masters; and they well explain the domesticity of their favourite subjects. It was the people painting for the people; it was the contention of citizens for the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the Jansens, of the Van Helmonts, of the Hobbimas, which gave to the northern schools an eminence built upon a surer foundation, than that which fashion or favour, the breath of princes or the vogue of courts, can bestow.

Sir Frederick was intoxicated with the works of art in which the sober wainscoted parlour and more sumptuous *salon* abounded. The walls of the latter were covered with the still richly gilt Spanish leather; the architraves of the enormous doors were redundant in the *roccoco* of the seventeenth century. The monumental stove, probably the work of some fashionable artist of the time of the Duke of Alva, displayed an architectural elevation; and every article of furniture was a chronicle of the Flemish taste and genius. The tapestry carpet was of Tournay.

The *armoires* of oak, sculptured in bold relief, with doors half open, displayed some rare and costly chalices, glasses, and covers, with quaint mottoes engraved in gold, long tapering drinking vessels, specimens of carved ivory from the East, and *boiseries* worthy of the chisel of Albert Durer. 'Indulging chairs' of immovable dimensions, with high carved backs and velvet seats, secured by broad brass nails, might pass for the models of the furniture in the beautiful conversation-piece of Rombout, or in an interior by Baptista Franks, both of which decorated the walls of the apartment. The whole was marked by a ponderous richness, that plainly indicated the forethought of a race who constructed for posterity, without calculating upon chance or change; while the total absence of modern taste was compensated by that neatness and propriety, that polished purity, which spoke the mistress of the mansion a vigilant and even fastidious housewife.

Sir Frederick was standing enraptured before the portrait of Catharine Culemburg, by Netcher, in a frame that was itself a work of art, when the servant entered by a glass-door from the garden, with a request that "the gentleman would walk to the summer-house, where the Vandyke was to be seen." He led the way under an arching trellis-work, through a garden as full of flowers as if the tulip mania was still at its height. Monsieur Jansens came forward to the door of one of those pavilions so prevalent in the old-fashioned gardens of the Low Countries: he had risen from his indulging chair, with the flush of his *siesta* colouring his healthful countenance. A furred velvet cap just permitted a few gray hairs to escape over his broad brows.

He was dressed in a *robe-de-chambre à grand ramage*, and wanted only a gold chain, to look the wealthy burgomaster of the olden times, the original of one of those nameless portraits now purchased at any price.

After his courteous assurance that he had 'the honour to salute the English virtuoso,' he insisted on seating him in the chair of honour, placed near a small table, on which a plate of biscuits, a glass tankard with its cover, and small goblets, were disposed. A cattle-piece, by Verboekhoven, was hung on one side of the room; and a curtained picture on the other. The rites of hospitality preceded those of the arts. A draught of Alembique, which looked like liquid topaz, was poured into a tall crystal glass, and recommended by Monsieur Jansens to Sir Frederick as a cordial. The biscuit was praised as '*la biscotte indigène*, which Corcellet and Chevet of Paris did not disdain to import.'

The good-breeding and the good appetite of the English guest equally induced him to avail himself of the old gentleman's after-dinner *goûté*; while he entered at once upon the motive of his visit, the desire to see and to purchase one of the best pictures of Vandyke at present in the market;—so at least it had been described by Madame Marguerite.

"Humph! You may believe her if she told you so," said the old man. "She knows what she is about, that Madame Marguerite! *C'est une maîtresse femme!* Not that she has much acquired knowledge. She has few rules, and no jargon. But her instincts are fine! She lays her finger at once on a good picture: she can't tell you why, and laughs if you ask her."

"She is also a good artist," said Sir Frederick.

"Not a fine artist, monsieur, but a fine genius. She has worked for bread more than for fame, and therefore wants finish; besides, she has indulged her taste more than consulted her interest. She has, too, a knack of painting a fool like a fool, and a rogue like a rogue—not to be mistaken; and every one is sure to detect an enemy or a friend in the groups which she calls *figures de fantaisie*, but which every one insists are living characters. Her pictures have all a moral object; and so they were considered as epigrams, and our *noblesse* have never patronized her. She has the merit, however, of knowing a good picture when she sees it; and is among the few who appreciate our immortal Vandyke, and place him at the head of the Flemish school."

"What! before Rubens?" asked Sir Frederick.

"Inasmuch as he is more Flemish, and less Dutch, monsieur."

"I have only very lately learned the line of demarcation," said Sir Frederick, much amused to see party spirit colouring even a passion for the arts.

"There is a line of demarcation," said Monsieur Jansens, vehemently, "between all that is Dutch and Flemish, which

neither Charles the Fifth in the sixteenth century, nor William of Nassau in the nineteenth, have been able to efface. We have nothing in common. Our schools of painting are as distinct as our national temperaments. Our Van Eykes and our Hemlinks, our Rubenses, our Van Balens, and, above all, our glorious Vandyke, come close upon the Cimabues, the Peruginos, the Titians, and the Veronesses; but they have nothing in common, either in their genius, character, or life, with the Rembrandts, the Ostades, or the Brouwers. There are heads by that king of painters, Vandyke, comparable only to the pictures which Titian left of the grand seigneurs of his time—the same elevation, the same elegance! But look at his own head! Compare it with the portraits of any of the Dutch painters, the genuine models of their own *bambocciate*. Remark, too, that the Dutch masters remained at home, living, like Rembrandt, in garrets and beer-shops, whereas ours travelled. Rubens, Vandyke, Miele visited foreign countries and courts, and they were gentlemen by the letters-patent of Nature, though they were the sons of men of the middling classes. Our Belgian nobles never produced much in the way of genius of any sort."

Sir Frederick ventured to cite a Dutch painter of celebrity, who had remained many years at Rome, in the time of the Dominichinos, and of Guido—Peter Wander."

"Well, sir," replied the old man, "that Wander passed his life there, as in Holland, stigmatized as the *Oltra-montano* and the *Bamboccio*; and after twenty years' residence in Italy, he returned to die in his native Haarlem, more *Bamboccio* than he left it. But with whom did the divine Guido study? Why, with a Flemish painter, sir; with Dionysius Calvert, called in Bologna *Il Fiamingo*. It was he that put Guido into the true path. He gave him his rules for drawing, and conferred force upon his *penello morbido*, as old Passeri calls it. When not engaged in my manufacture, I have studied a little Italian, sir, on purpose to read Passeri. We had also another Fiamingo, the Fiamingo *par excellence*, (Louis Pozzo,) the greatest landscape painter of his age; and also a third (named Brill), who established himself at Venice, and was in the highest repute all over Italy."

"And yet," said Sir Frederick, "we English prize the Dutch painters very highly; nor can I consent to abandon a school that has produced a Rembrandt, a Paul Potter, or a Gerard Dow! The latter we place fully on a par with your Teniers, as coming quite as close to nature."

"To the nature of a broomstick," replied the passionate partisan, in allusion to the well-known anecdote. "But our David Teniers gives as much elegance to his court subjects, as any royal painter of France or England. He throws imagination even over his Kermesses. There is a grace and an airiness in his groups, that show how much his genius ennobled subjects of the coarsest nature."

"It was the peculiar luck of Teniers to have been the idolized painter of the people, and at the same time the artist most in vogue with the higher classes; and if that frippery Louis XIV. (spoiled by the cold affectations of Coypel and Mignard) cried out, when they brought him a Kermess of Teniers, '*Qu'on m'ôte ces magots-là!*' many noble and crowned heads sought his friendship, and lived with him on terms of equality. They saw, in the joyous and naïve painter, the sublime mind which conceived '*Les Œuvres de Charité,*' and '*L'Enfant Prodigue,*' in the latter of which he has painted himself and his family. His works were those of a great man, his life that of an honest one; and his habits those of a gentleman. The director of the academy at Amsterdam, the gentleman of the chamber to Leopold, the friend of Queen Christine, and the companion of Don Juan of Austria, was not a man like your Rembrandts, and your Dows, and Brouwers! We'll drink to the memory of David Teniers, sir, if you please."

Sir Frederick, much amused, touched his lips to the glass, and named David Teniers. A thought crossed his mind, that at that moment the Montessor party were riding over the race-course at Mont Plaisir, while he was drinking to the memory of Teniers in nutbrown ale, and listening to the virtuoso details of an old Brussels lace-maker. There was at least novelty in the situation.

"But, monsieur," continued the old man, "you will think me a *bavard*; and when you see this Vandyke, you will regret every moment wasted upon any other subject."

He arose, proceeded to the picture, but paused a moment with the cord in his hand before he raised the curtain.

"I must first explain to you, monsieur, why I let so fine a picture slip through my hands; being, as I am, a descendant of Vandyke by the female side; his daughter having married his favourite pupil Jansens, my great grandfather. Of this I am more proud, than if the heralds of Vienna could prove me of a family as ancient as the Trezeymers.* But I let this picture pass on a principle. It belonged to the church of St. Martin, in the village of Salthem, near Brussels, whence it disappeared, no one knew how. It would be sacrilege to buy it under such circumstances; however, there are others not so fastidious on this point. But sit down, sir, and take this glass. Consider the picture at your leisure. There is a story attached to it, an old tradition in our family. I had it from my grandmother, Helen Jansens. Perhaps you would like to hear it?"

"Beyond everything," said Sir Frederick. "It will give the picture additional interest."

* Another claimant to a descent from Vandyke by Jansens exists in Brussels, in the fair person of Madame Charles Puqué, the wife of a young and ingenious portrait-painter of that name. The fine head of the descendant of the great master bears a considerable resemblance to his own.

“You see it represents a Holy Family receiving a visit from St. Martin.”

He raised the curtain as he spoke, and discovered a picture of such magnificence of conception, and brilliancy of colouring, as dazzled both the eye and the imagination of the critical spectator.

“There is a Madonna! What flesh and blood! what an eye! what a hand!”

“More of a Spanish than a Flemish beauty,” said Sir Frederick. “It resembles a Madonna of Murillo.”

“Bravo, monsieur, to be sure it does; you are aware that Murillo was a disciple of Vandyke, and copied him closely. But here, you see, is a genuine Flemish peasant, with his *blouse*, in St. Joseph; and as for St. Anne, she is a comely *frau*, and a true *Brabançonne*. Look too at this cavalier, monsieur; what do you think of him? Has not our St. Martin an *air de grand seigneur*, and a *costume cavaleresque*? What a noble animal he has just mounted! one is tempted to get out of his way, lest he should trample one under foot. What do you think, sir, of the gallant saint?”

“Why, that he resembles all Vandyke’s pictures of himself.”

“*C’est ça, monsieur*. It is Vandyke at one-and-twenty; and this picture, which so long received religious honours, is neither more nor less than a love adventure of the painter—*que Dieu lui pardonne!*—which happened when he was on his way to Italy, where his friend and master, Rubens, sent him, and not without good cause. Every one knows how Rubens, the chief of the Flemish school, the prince of painters, lived in his palace at Antwerp, where his garden and portico still remain.”

“I went,” said Sir Frederick, “from Brussels to Antwerp, in the year Twenty-nine, expressly to see them. It is more than I shall now do to see the ruins of the citadel.”

“Well, sir, it was in that palace he held his school, which was a school of morals and manners, as well as of art. It was a grand thing to see that splendid painter in the midst of his disciples, (generally as distinguished for their appearance as for their genius,) having the Archduchess Isabella, and other potentates, who delighted to converse with him at his easel.

“Among his distinguished pupils, none was so gay, so gail-lard as the young Vandyke. Vandyke’s mother was a celebrated beauty and artist: from her received both his genius and his good looks; and from her he had his earliest impressions of art, and first lessons. Rubens saw at once in him a genius, and perhaps suspected a rival. Many of the master’s designs were filled out by the scholar; and many of Vandyke’s pictures still pass for Rubens’s.

“It was a very sudden thought, and an odd one,” said Sir Frederick, “in Rubens, to send away a pupil to Italy, who did

so much honour to his school, and was so serviceable to his interests."

"The artists," replied the old man, "said it was professional jealousy; but the gossips of Antwerp reported that it was jealousy of another kind. Certain it is, that one of the finest pictures which young Vandyke ever painted, was that of Rubens's wife, Helen Forman. He made it a present to his master, who shortly after offered him the hand of his own daughter by a former marriage. The world was amazed when the young artist refused the alliance with the rich heiress. You saw her picture, probably, at Ghent, in the Scamp Gallery?"

"Yes; it is one of the most remarkable pictures in the collection."

"Well, sir, truth must out, as my grandmother Jansens said—Vandyke adored the step-mother. Whether Rubens suspected this or not, he strenuously advised him to visit Italy and study the Venetian school; but Vandyke still lingered to paint a Christ in the olive-garden. Every one knows that famous picture; the head of Christ is that of the painter. He left this picture behind him as a remembrance, and it long made a *pendant* to the Helen Forman, which Rubens himself had hung over the chimney-piece in his great room."

"That was a present of great value from so young a painter; what a price it would bring now!" said Sir Frederick.

"Yes, sir, and so thought Rubens, who, not to be outdone, (for who ever surpassed Rubens in generosity?) took from his magnificent stud an Arab given him by the king of Spain, and presented it, splendidly caparisoned, to Vandyke. There it is, sir; you see St. Martin himself can scarcely hold it in. I have somewhere a sketch of Vandyke's departure from the house of Rubens. He is mounted on this Arab; the arm of Rubens is thrown over the neck of the animal, while Vandyke stoops his head to catch his master's parting councils; but his eyes—those dark eyes, which give our saint so unsaintly a look—are cast up to the window, where Helen Forman stands half-concealed by a drapery. The sketch is by Madame Marguerite, and is made after our tradition."

"I should like to see it, Monsieur Jansens," said Sir Frederick, eagerly.

"Presently, sir, presently; we have not yet got to the end of our story of St. Martin. Vandyke cantered on to Brussels, looking like a cavalier of Wouvermans, just as you see he has made the saint curvetting it. You know the road from Antwerp, that nursery of great painters!—not a village along it that Teniers has not immortalized. But there was none so pretty in the seventeenth century as the village of Salthem, with its Gothic church and its beautiful peasant-girls. Well, the whole of its inhabitants waylaid Vandyke to do him honour, and to solicit

him to paint a picture for the altar of their church. Flowers were strewed before his horse's feet, and a chaplet of *immortelles*, just such a one as you hold in your hand there," (Sir Frederick coloured; he had forgotten his chaplet,) "was presented to him by the beauty of the village: she was the miller's daughter. Vandyke accepted the offer, but gallantly placed it on the dark head of the donor: it looked like a glory, and Vandyke saw before him the model of that handsome Madonna we are now looking at. He acceded to the request of the good people of Salthem, and the miller's daughter became the Fornarina of the Flemish Raphael.

"You have heard of De Vien, monsieur, the celebrated French painter? He has made a charming drawing of this little episode in the life of Vandyke. It represents the enamoured painter sketching the Visitation of St. Martin to the Holy Family. His young mistress is leaning carelessly over the back of his chair, and his head is turned back, as if he was consulting, or, perhaps, admiring her: I have it in my collection. But I fear I am fatiguing you."

"On the contrary, you only increase my desire to possess a picture so enriched by a sentimental interest. But as to the price —"

"We are not come to that yet, sir. We will, if you please, drink to the memory of our Brabançon Fornarina. When the news reached Rubens, that the pupil who, he thought, was in Italy, was still loitering over his picture in the neighbourhood of Brussels, he trembled for the honour of his school; and he sent his friend and guest, the Cavaliere Nani, an Italian gentleman then returning to his own country, to carry off Vandyke along with him. The picture was finished; so, too, perhaps, was the passion of that rogue the painter. At all events, the cavalier succeeded in his mission, and carried Vandyke to Venice. Working in the schools of Titian and Veronese in that city, our immortal painter rivalled them in some of their merits, and surpassed them in others. You know the rest of his life, so much of which was passed in your own country."

"Yes; it was a splendid romance. His visit to Charles the First, his marriage with a great lady—the Lady Mary Ruthven, and the honours conferred on him, in creating him a Knight of the Bath."

"As for that," said Monsieur Jansens, clasping his hands, and gazing earnestly on the head of Vandyke, "what can kings do for such a man as this? Who knows, out of England, that he was a Knight of the Bath? What does it mean? His dignities were in his genius; his honours were in his immortal pictures; and as to the great lady he married, he had better have married one of his own class, for he never throve afterwards,—one like his mother, a noble lady of Nature's own creation; (as

Madame Marguerite said this day when she was looking at the picture. But you English are so very aristocratic."

"I, at least," said Sir Frederick, "am rejoiced that your painter condescended to marry a daughter of Lord Ruthven; for that lady was a collateral ancestor of my wife, and gives me a sort of claim to be considered a connexion of the family.

"*Comment, donc, monsieur!*" said the old gentleman, his countenance brightening into cordiality,—"you, too, are a relation of Vandyke! I thought there was something about you, unlike what I had ever observed of your countrymen before."

"Still," replied Sir Frederick, "it is but justice to our country to say, that we honoured Vandyke while living, and that his remains, when dead, were interred in our great metropolitan church of St. Paul."

"I would much rather," said the old enthusiast, wiping a tear from his eye, "that they had reposed in the great church of St. Paul at Antwerp, under his own picture of 'Christ carrying his Cross.'"

To the *blasé* Englishman, there was something almost enviable in the freshness of feeling and fanaticism for the arts, which drew tears to the eyes of an old man, in honour of a great painter. He paused to let the flush of emotion pass; but, considerably interested in a picture to which the garrulity of age and *virtù* had given as additional charm, he soon afterwards asked—

"And how came this picture into the market?"

"Up to the French revolution, it had remained the treasure of the church of Salthem. It was then carried to the Louvre: but after the battle of Waterloo, when kings and pictures were sent back to their old habitations, St. Martin was restored along with the rest. One fine day, however, as if by a miracle, the picture again disappeared, and was never heard of more, till some months back, when it again came into the market, and was purchased by a person, who, desirous of making money by it, has left it here for sale."

"And now," said Sir Frederick, worked up to a pitch of enthusiasm almost as great as that of the lace-manufacturer, "and now to the point—the price."

M. Jansens drew forth a magnificent snuff-box, with a head of Vandernoot set on the lid, deliberately took a pinch, and offered it to the eager chapman.

"The price!" he said, "that picture is above all price; and, in fact, it has brought a great price, for times like these, when people are thinking more of politics than pictures. It sold, not two hours back, for ———."

"Sold?" interrupted Sir Frederick; "is it then sold?"

"Ha! ha! ha! Did I not tell you so? This is what my *barvardage* comes to. Why, to be sure; it was sold this morning."

“And who is the fortunate purchaser?” said the disappointed connoisseur, unaccustomed to be outbid in a matter of taste.

“The Princess of Schaffhausen. Madame Marguerite, her agent in the purchase, paid the money, in golden *napoléons*, not two hours back.”

Sir Frederick remained silent; and Monsieur Jansens dropped the curtain, much pleased to have found a fresh auditor for his traditional anecdotes. Favourably impressed by the taste of his willing hearer, he invited Sir Frederick to take coffee; observing,

“It is not usual, *Monsieur le Chevalier*, in the old quarters of Brussels, to admit strangers into the bosom of the domestic society. But a connexion of Vandyke makes all the difference. My wife and daughters are probably returned from the *salut*.”

With a low bow, he then led the way to the *salon*. Sir Frederick followed, at once amused and disappointed; yet resolved to see the adventure out, and to take coffee before dinner, as he had already sipped ale after breakfast.

At the moment when they entered from the garden, the door opposite, leading from the hall, was thrown open by the formal old servant, and a loudly laughing joyous group bounced in. The women of the party, old and young, were all in their black silk *faïlles*. A priest in his quaint ridiculous habit (revived since the Revolution), a young man in his military *blouse*, were equally picturesque in their appearance. There was one type of physiognomy running through the whole family, as in the family pictures of Frank Halls, proving an unmixed race. The presence of the stranger, as soon as it was perceived, at once silenced their mirth and steadied their movements. All were surprised, and the women abashed by the appearance of a foreigner; an event so unexpected in their calculations.

“My wife—my daughters,” said the manufacturer, taking Sir Frederick’s hand, and presenting him separately to all the party. “This gentleman, who has come to buy St. Martin, a little too late, has the honour to be a connexion of the family of the immortal Vandyke. He has the happiness to be married to a descendant of the Lady Mary Vandyke. He may well be proud of the circumstance.”

To the formal courtesy of the Mesdames Jansens, Sir Frederick was endeavouring to return as formal a bow, when, raising his head, his eyes met those of Madame Marguerite, whose dark splendid countenance shone forth with a sibyl contrast to the fair, round Flemish faces of the other females. Like them, she was habited in the *faïlle*; but she wore it with quite another effect. She bowed archly to Sir Frederick’s confused recognition, and then took her seat in the deep *embrasure* of an old-fashioned window. The other females sat all in a row on the edges of the high-backed chairs, regimented against the wall; the line beginning with Madame Jansens *grand’mère*,

and ending with a fair chubby-faced girl in a round-eared cap, her youngest grandchild. Their calm countenances and cold blue eyes bore testimony to minds on which the passions had made no trace, and care induced no cloud. An arm-chair was presented to the English guest. The three gentlemen occupied a settee of as many compartments.

This prim arrangement completed, a collation was rung for, and presented on trays by the man and maid. Tall crystal glasses, the fragile monuments of past times, preserved for generations by the most minute precaution, were half-filled with Burgundy, as bright as themselves. Coffee, tartines, fruit, sweetmeats, and a tankard of the precious *bière de Louvain*, afforded a variety of luxury, which seemed to concentrate universal attention. The voice of Jansens père alone was heard, as he pressed his English guest to taste a *petit pain à la Grèque*, or to drink of his choice wine.

Sir Frederick in vain endeavoured to move his ponderous chair towards the window where Madame Marguerite was niched. It was immovable; and the moral courage he exhibited, in walking across the room and carelessly leaning against the frame of the window with his back towards the rest of the company, struck them with surprise, as a breach at least in the code of Brabançon good-breeding.

"You have played me false, Madame Marguerite," he said in a low murmur: "the Vandyke is already sold to you, for the Princess of Schaffhausen."

"Why did you not apply sooner?" she replied: "you rich English are always behind-hand. You expect that circumstances will await your leisure; but these are times in which even the greatest men must wait on circumstances."

"It would be difficult," he said, petulantly, "to keep pace with one whose movements, like those of a steam-engine, are more rapid than comprehensible."

"It is that difficulty that makes all the difference between mind and mind. Time, with me, is property. The sands in my hour-glass are all of gold, and I cannot afford to lose a grain. It belongs to energetic indigence to get the start of lazy wealth."

"If you apply the phrase to me," he said, "you are mistaken. I have been busily occupied the whole morning."

"Strolling about the town," she interrupted, laughingly, "with that old gossip, *la Sœur Greite*. I suspect you gave her rendezvous at St. Beghé's to-day. We passed you, I believe, as the Princess conveyed the old *Béguine* to her headquarters."

"Yes, I was the *guindé* person whom you passed. But my rendezvous with the *Béguine* was an accident."

"Was your visit to the *Béguinage* an accident also? You are perhaps aware that there are some, who adopt the great

coif of St. Beghé for purposes not all tending towards Heaven."

"I have suspected as much," he said pointedly: "the spirit of intrigue finds its account in all disguises; and none furnishes so many as religion. But what brought the Princess of Schaffenhause and Madame Marguerite to the desolate quarter of the Béguinage?"

"Merely to set down the old sister at her afternoon devotions. We were on our way to pay for the Vandyke, which I had purchased this morning from my old friend Jansens. But if you have missed the picture, are you not amused by the originals?"

"Beyond measure; and I owe that pleasure, with many others, to you. I wish you would afford me an opportunity of expressing more fully my sense of the obligation. Your apparitions are those of an *ignis fatuus*; and the few occasions I have had of profiting by your advice, have arisen in chance only. But grateful as I am for the past, I would not willingly trust the future to the same uncertainty."

"At least avail yourself of the present, and attend to your hosts and to their conversation," she said, dropping her voice. "If, in your quality of statesman, you are desirous of obtaining information relative to the political state of these people, this is the circle where the truth will easiest be got at. Besides, it is against the law of Belgian good-breeding, which still clings to Spanish gravity and German etiquette in the quarter of the Puterie, to——"

He interrupted her with vehemence.

"One word, and I will obey you. Where are you going? with whom? When and where may I again hope to meet you? Will you allow me to sit to you for my picture, for a friend in England? And if, as the *Béguine* says, (for, truth to tell, I only sought her to obtain some information about you,) you are going to Schaffenhause with your Princess, will you endeavour to soften her prejudices against me, and obtain me an invitation to her castle on the Rhine?"

"To meet your wife?" asked Madame Marguerite.

Sir Frederick started. "Is she expected positively, then, at the Princess's castle?"

"I think I have heard that Lady Frances Mottram makes one of a large party of English invited there, or rather, who have invited themselves."

The blood rushed into Sir Frederick's face at this confirmation of the worst suspicions he had entertained of his wife's prevarication and manœuvring contrivance.

"I hope I have not said anything to annoy you," she continued. "Miladi Frances and the Princess are great friends: in London they were inseparables. But turn round; Monsieur Jansens is offering you wine."

"I propose you a toast, *Monsieur la Chevalier*," said the old man, as he presented a glass of Burgundy, and took another from the *plateau* for himself; "I am sure you will pledge me with all your heart:—May the alliance between reformed England and liberated Belgium be as permanent as it must prove honourable and serviceable to both nations!"

"I beg to be permitted to join in that toast," said the priest; "and I am sure Mr. Elias Jansens will have no objection to make one."

"We women of Brussels were not idle during the Four Days," said Madame Marguerite; "may we not take our *eau de groseille* to the same tune and time to which you, messieurs, quaff your *château margot*? Which of you gentlemen performed more service than Madame Jansens and her daughters, when they received the wounded in their own house, and attended the whole time at the hospitals?"

"Brava, Madame Marguerite!" exclaimed young Jansens; "you are right! Allow me the honour of serving you."

The fair, impassable countenances of the females flushed with the honest blush of self-satisfaction; and the toast was drunk with a reflective earnestness by all the party; while Sir Frederick, feeling for a moment the ardour of European liberalism, forgot that he was an English Tory, a term which belongs as little to the age as—an English Whig, or a French Doctrinaire.

The toast gave rise to a conversation purely political, to which Sir Frederick lent, as Madame Marguerite had advised, a willing ear. The subject was discussed with an earnest frankness by the men, and listened to with deference and attention by the women. Each of the latter drew her knitting from the little bag that hung on her arm; excepting only Madame Marguerite, who sat sketching on a card produced from a portfolio, which, on entering the room, she had deposited on the window-seat. The scene presented an admirable subject to such a pencil as hers; and the flexile figure of the elegant Englishman, as he lounged in his arm-chair, while every other person, even to the comely little girl who was winding a ball of thread at her grandmother's feet, sat bolt upright, was not the least remarkable in the entire group.

The conduct of the people of Brussels during the Four Days had gradually become the chief point of interest; and it was curious to observe how great a change it produced in the external expression of the debaters;—a change particularly observable in the manly physiognomy and resolute gesture of the younger Jansens, (who represented the educated youth of Belgium,) and in the energetic manners of the republican priest, the epitome of a class which had always existed and always been popular in the Low Countries."

During a momentary pause in the conversation of the Bel-

gians, and in reference to the remark of the last speaker, Sir Frederick Mottram observed :

"I never very clearly understood what determined the immediate march of the Dutch troops upon the city, at the outbreak of the Four Days."

"The moment chosen for the attack," said the young man, "was so far appropriate, that it presented the fewest apparent elements of opposition. The *Garde Bourgeoise*, established for the protection of property, had shown itself unequal to the new position it had assumed, as guardian of the independence of Brussels, and it had lost the confidence of the people. On the day previous to the attack, a rising of the populace had disarmed them, dispersed their officers, and taking possession of the Hôtel de Ville, (the seat of government,) he had left us absolutely without any acknowledged authorities: the fact soon found its way to Prince Frederick——"

"And he, of course, thought," said Sir Frederick, "that by advancing his troops he would take an unresisted possession of the town. The expectation was natural, and the action consequent."

"With any other people," replied the elder Jansens, "the expected surrender would probably have been the result. But the Belgian history is a suite of barrings-out, conducted by the populace of the great towns against their feudal oppressors, to which the example of Paris was a case strictly analogous."

"Yes," added the priest, "that event was well calculated to rouse the traditional feelings of the people; and the resistance it awakened was something more than a servile imitation: it was all the more effectual because it was not planned; because it was the work of individual volitions; and was guided only by each man's desire to place himself there, where his exertion was the most wanted, and would be most effectual."

"What part," said Sir Frederick, "did the upper classes take in the battle?"

"From the lists of killed and wounded, since published," said young Jansens, "it is positive that the brunt of the Four-Days' action was borne by the operatives of the town, assisted by bands of peasants and artisans, who flocked into Brussels from all parts; and of whom the Liegeois were the most remarkable."

"I saw them enter the town," said Madame Marguerite, "with Charles Rogier at their head. They swept by the balcony on which I was standing, with an effect glorious to witness."

"And this revolutionary leader," said Sir Frederick, "has long since, doubtless, paid the usual penalty of taking the initiative in such adventures, by becoming the first victim of the perilous drama?"

"He is at present," replied Madame Marguerite coolly, "the minister of the interior."

“But what became of the wealthy and middle classes?” reiterated Sir Frederick.

“Very few of that class,” said old Jansens, “had committed themselves irremissibly with William; and, as is usual under such circumstances, they mostly held back! Even those most compromised contented themselves with retreating to the frontiers, on the approach of the enemy; and it was not till the news arrived of the first day’s success, that many of the men, who have since taken the lead in the revolution, returned to share in its dangers.”

“Yes,” said the priest, “it was under the fire of the King’s troops, and when bombs were falling into the city, the Baron d’Hoogvoorst, the ex-commander of the *Garde Bourgeoise*, Rogier, a stranger to the town, and one or two more, seized the reins of authority, which had fallen to the ground, and *improvised* a government to conduct the defence; and it was not till the third day that a military commander-in-chief was appointed in the person of Van Halen.”

“Had there not been any secret agency previously at work?” again asked Sir Frederick; “no distributions of arms, or of money?”

“None whatever,” they all replied, eager to communicate the information, and flattered by Sir Frederick’s marked interest in the tale. “Everything was spontaneous, everything individual; nor does it very clearly appear whence the very ammunition came. Up to the second day, that important item was collected altogether from private and personal resources.”

“But what possible motive,” said Sir Frederick, “could have urged the populace, a class without sentiments or principles, to so desperate a defence?”

“When I was in England,” replied Madame Marguerite, “it was fashionable to attribute their zeal to a thirst of plunder. But the facts are distinctly against the calumnious imputation.”

“No, monsieur,” said the young man, his countenance kindling beyond the ordinary warmth of a Flemish temperament; “from the 25th to the 29th of September, the city was in the full possession of our artisans; yet, with the sole exception of one house burnt and pillaged, in the intoxication of victory, and under the excitement of an imputed act of treachery on the part of the owner, there was not a single act authenticated to justify the imputation. My father here threw open his house to refresh the combatants during the whole siege; this room among the rest. Not a single article was injured, not a spoon, or a fork carried away.”

“For what, then, did they fight?” said Sir Frederick, “for I am most earnest to know the truth on a point so little understood.”

“You English aristocrats, I fear,” continued Madame Mar-

guerite, "will never understand that point. The populace (those scapegoats of society, whom you charge with all its sins) are not such fools as you imagine. They do not syllogize and divide in their philosophy; but, pressed by necessity, and often by hunger, they possess a clearness and promptitude of judgment within their own sphere of thought, which your elaborate deliberations seldom reach."

"I know the class intimately," said young Jansens, "as an employer; and they are not like Figaro's soldiers, who suffer themselves to be butchered without knowing why. They might not be personally annoyed by the introduction of a foreign language into our law-courts, nor feel the exclusive promotion of Dutchmen to offices of trust; but the lowest Belgian has his national honour, and his hereditary national prejudices and opinions, as well as the best."

"And wo to the country," said Madame Marguerite, "where a national feeling does not exist even in the beggar in the street! But the populace were touched in man's tenderest point—in the stomach: the taxes were grinding; and employment had failed. Salvator Rosa has justly said, 'that no matter what scourge Providence may inflict upon nations, it is the poor who bear the brunt.'"

"Humph!" said old Jansens, as if not understanding, or not relishing, the sentiment. "Yet, after all, it is as well that the lower classes should feel an interest in their country, even though it be through their necessities; for if the affair had been left to the shopkeepers and gentry of Brussels, William of Nassau might still be *Roi des Pays-Bays*. Though they were good patriots, they were clearly not equal to the emergency: and though perhaps equally ready to *payer de leurs personnes* with the workmen, they were terribly afraid of their shops and strong-boxes. It was not, as in our great revolution of Eighty-nine, when Vonk and Vandernoot——"

"The impulse of the operatives," interrupted young Jansens, "to defend the city from a military occupation, which is the last of national misfortunes, was no taught dogma; it was not even inspired by the collision of minds in pot-houses and other points of assemblage. It was an electric spark propagated in the moment of emergency: it arose with the occasion; and it was equal to the occasion. The mission of defending the revolution belonged to the mass, and fortunately they felt, if they did not understand it. No one can say they erred; no one will be hardy enough to assert that a tame surrender of Brussels could have been followed by any other result than that which it would have so well merited—a complete and universal despotism."

"And pray observe, Sir Frederick," said Madame Marguerite, "that the blow once struck, the victory won, the people returned to their occupations; and left the constituting a govern-

ment to those more competent to the task than themselves. There was, surely, great national good sense in this moderation."

"Certainly," observed the Priest, "we owe a vast debt to the artisans of Brussels; but, after all, a revolution of some sort was approaching. Insulted as the Belgians had been in their nationality, outraged in their religion, and defrauded in their financial relations, by the Dutch, the majority of the people were determined on resistance, and the event was inevitable."

"So, indeed, it struck us Tories, who were then in office in England," said Sir Frederick. "We were no lovers of revolution; and if we embarked in the system of protocols, it was because we were fully sensible of the necessity of the case."

"Bravo!" said Madame Marguerite, in a low voice. And she added aloud, "Had you witnessed the scenes at which I was present during the Four Days (scenes of such heroism, humanity, and above all, of dogged perseverance under every disadvantage,) your convictions on that head would have strengthened an hundred-fold."

"Yes," said young Jansens, "could you have seen the brave fellows returning day after day to the scene of action, and, when fainting with thirst and heat, refusing intoxicating liquors and calling for water; could you have seen them breaking through the party-walls of a long row of houses to get at the enemy—"

"*Eh bien, eh bien, mon fils,*" interrupted the old man, petulantly; "*vous prêchez des convertis.* We are all, I hope, agreed that our revolution of 1830 was indispensable, just, and perfect; but we must not forget its great precursor, our Brabançon revolution of Eighty-nine. Monsieur le Chevalier, you see before you an old Brussels patriot of that epoch when the names of Vonk and Vandernoot were in every mouth; when the three colours of Brabant were painted on every fan and worn in every dress. These youngers think nobody ever made a revolution but themselves. I was then younger than Elias there by many years; and I remember, the day when it broke out, being sent by my father with a point-lace head to the Duchesse d'Ursel —"

Here certain symptoms of impatience were exhibited in the countenances of the family; the old lady coughed, Elias Jansens whispered the priest, and Madame Marguerite passed her finger over her lip, as she directed an arch glance at Sir Frederick.

"And so, as I was crossing the Grande Place, strange groups were pouring in from Willebroek and other faubourgs; and whom should I meet in front of the Broodhuys but young Jans Van Haslin, of Mechlin, the son of the rich lace-merchant. He had never been at Brussels, and was staring at the statue of the Virgin, and was reading aloud, like a scholar of Louvain,

the inscription—*'A peste, fame, et bello, libera nos, Maria pacis,'* when I came behind him, and —”

At this moment the *pendule* struck seven, and the company arose, as if by the same movement which directed the little figures of the German clock-work. The conversation-party, the type of the *estamieneto*, (introduced by Spanish fashion three centuries before,) broke up at the same moment at which it had done so, in the Jansens' family, for the last fifty years.

There was now an *assaut de politesse* on all sides; courtesies and bows were made to the very ground. Madame Marguerite saluted her friends severally; Madame Jansens, the priest, and the young ladies, sat down to *lolo*; Madame Elias retired to hear the children their prayers and put them to bed; Elias proceeded to the arcade of the *Café des Mille Colonnes*; and Jansens *père* exchanged his *robe-de-chambre* for his *redingote*, in the adjoining wainscoted parlour, with the intention *de faire son estaminet* at the *Comte d'Egmont*, in the Place Wallon.

Sir Frederick had not half returned the bows directed to him, when, perceiving the retreat of Madame Marguerite, he cut short all further ceremony, and followed her to the door; but she was already seated in the calash he had seen in the morning at the entrance of St. Beghé.

“You are like a fire-fly,” he said, laying his hand on the carriage door, “as bright and as evanescent.”

“The simile holds good in some respects,” she replied, “for my light such as it is, is all my own—unreflected, unborrowed: few of you great luminaries can say as much.”

“I remember,” he observed, coming still closer, “when I was in Milan, walking alone, on a gloomy evening, to *La Simonetta*. From the myriads of brilliant insects that lighted its melancholy solitudes, I chased and with difficulty caught one, which I secured in my bosom and brought home. When all other lights were extinguished, in the deep darkness of an Italian night, that light shone bright and pure, like a fairy star, cheering the imagination and delighting the eye. If again I could secure such an *'animale pellegrino gentile'*—if for me was still reserved —”

“And what became of your fire-fly?” interrupted Madame Marguerite, fixing her inquiring eyes on Sir Frederick's; “did it survive the night?”

“Yes; but it fell during the day from the flower on which I had placed it.”

“And you trampled it under foot!” she replied, in a tone of the deepest emphasis and expression.

“*Ah! c'est vous, Monsieur le Chevalier,*” said old Mr. Jansens, coming forth from his hall door, with his ivory-headed cane and broad-brimmed hat: “*Pardie*, I have half a mind to take you to the *Comte d'Egmont*. It is well worth seeing. It

reminds one more of the old *Corbeau* than any *estaminet* of the present day."

He took Sir Frederick's arm, and the carriage drove away. Sir Frederick wished the *Count d'Egmont*, and even the worthy Mynheer Jansens at the bottom of the Senne.

"I beg your pardon, my dear Monsieur Jansens," he said; "but I want to follow Madame Marguerite, to obtain an address, and——"

"You cannot follow her without your hat. You have come out before Antoine could give it to you: *êtes vous vifs, vous autres Anglais!* And then, your *guirlande d'immortelles*; perhaps you are going to place it on the tomb of one of our patriotic victims in the Place St. Michel. Shall I have it sent to your hotel? *Antoine, viens donc.*"

Sir Frederick accepted the offer, and gave the chaplet to the servant, who now brought him his hat and cane. He felt how narrowly he had escaped the absurdity of carrying such an object through the streets of the upper town. The triumvirate of the Bellevue rose up to scare him at the very idea. The old gentleman had again taken Sir Frederick's arm, and they walked together down the *Puterie*.

"I remember," he continued, "when I thought little of making four *estaminets per diem*. I now confine myself to one. Times are strangely changed; nobody smokes, or drinks Faro in the *Haute Ville* now."

"I think they are all the better," said Sir Frederick, peevishly, and bored beyond measure by his predicament: "it is a stupifying habit you Belgians have of drinking beer perpetually; for I believe your *estaminet* means that."

The old gentleman withdrew his arm, offended at the bluntness of the observation.

"But," said Sir Frederick, something shocked at his own petulance; "after all, every nation has its favourite beverage."

"Monsieur le Chevalier," said Mr. Jansens, with some coldness, "I believe you are right. We do drink more of our excellent malt liquors than is favourable to our vivacity. But we owe the habit, like many others, to our foreign masters. We were once almost as lively a race as the French themselves; for we are both of the common stock of Franks. We lived like them, then, on the wine of our own vineyards. But that did not suit the commercial interests of the Spaniards; and while they rooted up the vine in these provinces, to force a market for their own Sherry and Canary wines, they affected to extol our Brussels beer, by giving it the name of Faro: a name assigned to the precious beverage grown in the south of the Peninsula. We swallowed the compliment and the beer together; and ever since, it has had its place, with French Burgundy and Spanish Malaga, at our convivial meetings. It

is scarcely fair, monsieur, to judge the manners of a nation, without knowing something of its history."

Sir Frederick felt the necessity of attempting an apology, in which he was interrupted by the old gentleman—

"*Du tout, du tout, monsieur,*" said Mr. Jansens, taking off his hat; "we Brabançons are a little tetchy; we want the coolness of our brothers, the good Flemings. But that is your way to the upper town. I will not let you go further."

"The fact is," said Sir Frederick, standing with his hat in his hand, in imitation of Monsieur Jansens, "I have not yet dined; otherwise I would accompany you to *faire mon estaminet*, were it only to convince you that we English can drink ale, and smoke a cigar with the best Brabançon of you all. Another time, if you will allow me——"

"*Comment, monsieur,* a relation of the great Vandyke! and presented to us by our good friend Madame Marguerite! you will do us honour; we shall willingly admit you. But so true a lover of the arts, so liberal a purchaser, (for Madame Marguerite tells me you have some of the finest pictures, for which you have given the largest prices, in England,)——"

"Where could she have learned that?" thought Sir Frederick.

"You must get her to show you the work-rooms of some of our modern artists. *A l'honneur de vous revoir, Monsieur le Chevalier.*"

The Brabançon lace-merchant then proceeded to his *estaminet*; and the son of the manufacturer of Birmingham returned to his seven-o'clock dinner at the *Hôtel de Flandre*.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE FRACAS.

SIR FREDERICK MOTTRAM, after a late, and almost untasted dinner, was sipping his claret, and reading the '*Indépendant*,' in which his own arrival was announced, with a pompous display of his former ministerial rank and present personal distinctions, when Fegan, with his usual flourish of trumpets, flung open the door, and announced, with the emphasis of a herald-at-arms, the Marquis of Montessor, Lord Alfred Montessor, and the Honourable Mr. Montague St. Leger:

"Your Paddy Menalcas* is *impayable*," said Lord Montres-

* On an expected visit of a great man to one of the show-

sor. "Where did you pick him up, and for what purpose? One doesn't lionize such a tiger as that for nothing."

"I picked him up," replied Sir Frederick, half rising, while the gentlemen flung themselves on a couch, "in my own stables, where he was living *en retraite*, in consequence of a broken arm, got behind my cab some years back. He was neglected by my coachman, who had orders to take care of him, and did not; so I have taken him into active service myself. He is an excellent groom."

"Groom!" said Lord Alfred, laughing; "page of the presence, you mean. He is dressed like a young gentleman about to appear in the character of Belcour; and he figures about like a master of the ceremonies in a country ball-room."

"He answers my purposes for the present," said Sir Frederick, coldly; "but I am hiring foreign servants, and shall probably send him back to his former station."

"Oh!" said Lord Montessor, putting the head of his gemmed cane to his lips, and looking significantly at his companions, while Sir Frederick seemed intent on tearing up a bunch of grapes, and was evidently displeased with the intrusion of his guests; "report says that you are going to form a foreign establishment altogether, and to reside abroad for some time for the recovery of your health, and for the enjoyment of *virtù*."

"Report is a babbling gossip," said Sir Frederick, petulantly, "who devotes her strenuous idleness to echoing the nonsense she does not credit. Is your wife coming abroad, Montessor?"

"Am I my wife's keeper?" said Lord Montessor, yawning.

"No, not *you*," said Sir Frederick.

Lord Alfred bit his lips, and knitted his brow.

"But you probably know whether she is coming abroad or not. I had a letter from Lady Frances which mentions her own intention of coming as far as Brussels with a party of friends; I take it for granted they are Lady Montessor's coterie."

The gentlemen exchanged looks.

"Humph!" said Lord Montessor. "Yes, Georgina is not getting on. She proposes—that is, her doctors propose, that

places of Ireland (the Leasowes of the county of ——), the servants of the farm were dressed and named after the personages of a Virgilian eclogue. One of these shepherds, "for the nonce," had been laboriously drilled to answer the question of "Who are you?" by saying, "I am Menalcas." When the time for action came, and the pre-concerted question was put, in the presence of the distinguished visitor, the boy replied, with an air of perfect self-satisfaction, "I am Paddy Menalcas, plaze your honour!"

she should go to the Brunness. I am waiting for her here, for we are her only advanced guard ; and if you are going to push on, you had better leave us your route between Brussels and Baden. Lady Frances's accompanying her is the most likely thing in the world ; and if so, we will deliver our consignment in the like good condition to your address."

"I have written to Lady Frances to stop her journey," said Sir Frederick. "My own movements are uncertain ; and at all events, business and friends will require my return to Mottram Hall by October. I have half-promised the Duke a *battu*."

"Pray Heaven," said Lord Alfred with mock gravity, "your letter gets in time to Carlton-terrace ; for I should not wonder if the party were already on the road. I know the Princess of Schaffhausen expects them."

Sir Frederick stooped to pick up the napkin he had let fall ; and the suffusion left by the effort on his brows was still apparent when he arose.

"By the by, I have given the Princess rendezvous at the Opera," continued Lord Alfred, as he looked at his watch. "Nearly nine, by Jove !"

The gentlemen started up.

"We are come," said Mr. St. Leger, "to take you to the theatre, Mottram ; so order your coffee and let us be off : we have the French Ambassador's box."

"I hate the theatre," said Sir Frederick, rising and ringing for coffee ; "will any of you take *chasse* ?"

They had all gone through the *regime de rigueur* of the evening, and were impatient for the *spectacle*.

"Ay, but the '*Pré aux Clercs*,'" said Mr. St. Leger "with Cholet and the *Prevôt*, are novelties. You don't hate music ?"

"That depends," said Sir Frederick, who, after a little coquetry and a little reluctance, suffered himself to be persuaded.

The French Ambassador's box was already full, chiefly of travelling English, passing through Brussels to the Rhine ; for never since the pouring down of the northern hordes from their Scythian forests to its frontier shores, had the Rhine been so invaded by any roving irruption, as in the summer of 1833. The new-comers, according to the etiquette of foreign boxes, took the *pas*, and occupied the front row ; but after reconnoitring for a few moments the front of the house with their glasses, the Lords Montessor drew back, to talk English politics, scandal, and sporting intelligence with the newer arrivals from London.

Sir Frederick Mottram directed his opera-glass in search of the Princess of Schaffhausen's box ; but he saw nothing that resembled the fantastic dress and remarkable figure, (the all

that he knew,) of the Princess; nor was there anything that he could even mistake for Madame Marguerite. The return of Lord Alfred, after a short absence, announced the fact that the Princess had resigned the box lent her by Madame Engler, whose own beautiful face and elegant toilet were very distinguishable, in a circle where beauty was sometimes rather rare, and where dress was usually more conspicuous for its precision than its *éclat*.

In the *balcon*, however, and immediately under the Ambassador's box, there was a dress sufficiently remarkable to attract very general attention, not only from the loungers in the *loge diplomatique*, but from the parterre beneath. The wearer was so truly Dutch in her build, as to excite some unfavourable impressions in many of the Belgian spectators. A wreath of white roses, encircling her broad brow, formed a dazzling contrast with the deep red roses that suffused her cheek; and the pea-green plumes which waved before the eyes of Sir Frederick as he sat behind her, matched with her velvet robe much better than with the tresses of a *blonde hardie* (to say the least) of the head they adorned.

A bust more *décolleté* than the laws of Belgian decency permit, gave relief, by its whiteness, to a collar of emeralds, which, for their size, seemed fragments of that "first gem of the earth," whose hue they imitated. The whole exposure was so little in keeping with the decent *Canzous*, the snow-white *Vandykes*, and the capped and bonneted heads of the female frequenters of the *balcon* of the Brussels theatre (the most modest, proper, and reserved of all European audiences,) as to raise suspicions that this singular personage was of an order not supposed to exist in civilized society.

By the side of the lady, whom some of the elder Bruxellois declared to be a living impersonation of La Pino, the celebrated mistress of Vandernoot, sat and slept a portly model of the Sheriffalty of Dublin—to those, at least, who might happen to be acquainted with the type of city honours on a gala day. A full suit of black gave relief to a massive gold chain, with a double-eyed lorgnette, hanging from his neck. He wore powder in his hair, a brilliant brooch in his shirt, and a profusion of cravat that might have recalled to Belgian antiquaries the original article of that name, introduced into the toilet of the Low Countries, and borrowed from the Croats, by Philippe-le-Bon in the fifteenth century. Whether he was the owner, or the attendant merely, of the very *éveillée* person by whose side he slumbered (while Cholet and Prevôt were singing their favourite duet), was a matter of debate and wager with some of the gayest of the young Belgians.

At the close of the second act, the lady stood up to her fullest height and breadth; and turning back her wreathed head and bright rolling eyes to the ambassador's box, she tapped the

hand which was leaning over it with her fan. Sir Frederick started, and met the basilisk glances of Lady Dogherty, which literally transfixed him.

"I am inclined to raise an altar to chance, Sir Frederick," she said, "since it's to it entirely we owe the pleasure of meeting you. I hope you are quite well; and Lady Frances, I hope she was quite well when you heard from her."

The address, the inquiries, the accent, and the whole person of Lady Dogherty, drew the attention of the Montessor party, and of more than one English dandy and French *attaché*. Sir Frederick, whose exquisite apprehension of ridicule was never so wounded in its life-nerve, had neither the barbarity to *cut dead*, nor the tact to give into the amusing absurdity; and he received most awkwardly the reproaches and compliments of his friend of the Dublin court-ball in the time of the Duke of Richmond.

At that moment, a loud yawn from Sir Ignatius (who had awakened as soon as the two charming vocalists had ceased to sing, and who was rubbing himself round with as unconscious an indulgence of his national movement as Monsier *Sans Gêne* in the French farce could have done,) excited a general laugh in the pit, accompanied by a murmur of disapprobation, at a gentleman (in a box too that represented majesty) conversing with a female whose appearance would be scarcely tolerated in the *foyer* of Franconi. The well-known admonitory nudge of Lady Dogherty's elbow soon, however, recalled her husband; who, looking up into the face of Fegan's master, began an apology which filled up the measure of amazement to the young men in the box, and particularly to the Montessor party.

"It was my raal and intire intintion," he said, "to wait upon you, Sir Frederick Mottram, this very day, and apologize for the little accident last night, in regard to our frolic, in which Mr. Fegan was nowise to blame: for th' ale here, sir, is the most treacherous liquor that ever a man let pass the threshold of his lips; and a crature as sober as a jidge gets disguised, before he knows whether it's table beer or bottled porther he's drinking. And in respect of my shirt, sir, it was all a mistake; and I'm proud to own it before your frinds here, who might have got odd notions into their heads. For it seems, Sir Frederick, by what I hear tell, that you hadn't wore it a second day, before Mr. Fegan very politely had it washed, and put up in lavender, till he come to Brussels and give it to my wife's lady's maid, who is there in the blue bonnet in the lattices above, with Mr. Fegan."

Every one laughed; while Sir Frederick, endeavouring to laugh too, was relieved from all further apologies by some one tapping him on the shoulder. He turned round and pushed back his chair to hail the welcome intruder; when Doctor Rudolf de Burgo, with his pert flashy air, and fine tigrish-dress'd

figure, stared him in the face. *C'était Gribouille, qui se jetait dans l'eau pour se secouer de la pluie.* The intrusion upon the sacred precincts of a private box (especially an ambassador's) was a shock followed up by the most provoking familiarity, indicating many more foregone conclusions of intimacy than the punctilious and reserved *London man* was willing to admit.

"How do, Sir Fredrick?—but I need not ask you: you are looking a devilish deal better than when we parted *à l'impromptu*, owing to the Princess of Schaffhausen's sudden departure; she is so rapid in all her movements, and somehow we got involved—but here we are. I have been to see the citadel at Antwerp: magnificent! only returned an hour ago; just time to dress and dine."

Lord Montessor's star, shining on his tight-bottomed broad-breasted blue coat, caught the Doctor's quick eye, and he said—

"Do introduce me to your friend; I happen to be particularly intimate with a lady in whom he is very deeply interested."

The rising of the curtain, and the universal '*Chut!*' from all parts of the house, directed to the noisy box of the absent ambassador, produced the necessity for silence. Sir Ignatius and Lady Dogherty, who had been standing with their broad backs to the audience, and their broad faces to the party in the box, were now obliged to sit down; while, to the utter annoyance of Sir Frederick, Doctor de Burgo drew the only unoccupied chair to the front of the box, between the Marquis and Lord Alfred, and putting up his glass, recognized a number of Dublin, Cheltenham, and Brighton friends distributed through the house—all '*Pilgrims of the Rhine*,' the emptying of the day's diligences from Ostend and Calais.

The Doctor felt assured that, as far as the '*mere Irishy*' went, his being seated next to a knight of the garter, in an ambassador's box, would bring him more professional distinction, than if he united the skill of Abernethy with the courtliness of Sir Henry; and he was partly beginning a puff on the subject for the '*Pilot*' and the '*Mail*,' (with both of which journals he corresponded,) and partly making up his mind to address the Marquis on a subject to which it was in the worst taste to allude, when the noble brothers arose and left the box, followed by the whole remaining English party: Sir Frederick had already escaped.

The Doctor, mortified to find himself alone and abandoned by the velvet friends whose personal acquaintance he so much coveted, arose, as if to follow, when the strong arm of Sir Ignatius caught the shining button of his coat. Wearied beyond all power of further endurance, and rising for the purpose of joining Fegan and the lady's-maid in the upper box, the Baronet had then first perceived the vicinity of his travelling physician; and, irritated by heat, confinement, and listening, as he said, 'to a parcel of balderdash of which he did not understand a

single iota,' he revived all his lately cherished impressions of the airs and negligence of the Irish Apollo, who had moreover been two days absent during his employer's worst fit of bile, and fear of cholera. He now, therefore exclaimed, without reference to time and place—

“Why, thin, doctor, I am intirely amazed at your conduct, laving my lady and self in this outlandish place, without as much as ‘God be with you,’ or ‘Good bye kindly,’ or a powther to take, or a ditto repated, (shaking the bottle :) and Lady Dogherty all pimples, as if in the mazles, and as red as blazes; and myself with the weight of a smoothing-iron on the heart, and as blue as a blanket about the eyes; and wouldn't wonder it's a touch of the collera I've got, which you tould me was raging through the place. And, allow me to ax you, Doctor de Burgo, is it for looking after thim ould ruins at Antwerp that I am paying you two hundred a-year, and your board and lodging, and a sate in my own carriage, and other benefits for which I make no charge——”

‘*Chut! Chut!*’ with other expressions of displeasure, were now echoed on every side, as the voice of Sir Ignatius rose with the rising of his choler, and disturbed the actors as well as the audience. Lady Dogherty, in an agony of feeling, which probably gave an additional muscular force to her arm, endeavoured to pull Sir Ignatius down into his seat. But Sir Ignatius, in the irritation of his excited feelings, was more than usually *récalcitrant* against her ladyship's authority; and, without any previous acquaintance with the theory of dynamics, he hung the heavier on the Doctor's button in proportion as he perceived the *nisus* on the uxorial side of the *fulcrum* to preponderate. The Doctor, on his part, was taken at a mechanical disadvantage; for, his person being tall and the front of the box low, the leverage was decided against him. What man could do, however, he did; and, like another Atlas, he sustained the double world of Sir Ignatius's attractions and those of his lady, till, in an unlucky moment of increasing stress, the button of his coat, the pivot on which so many opposing forces turned, gave way. Lady Dogherty lost her centre of gravity; Sir Ignatius was dragged into the track of her eccentric movement, and, catching convulsively at the Doctor's arm, shot him from the box with overwhelming force upon a *Commis voyageur*, who, thus impelled, rolled his German rotundity of person over the prostrate couple.

To have remonstrated in no very measured terms with the living projectile, would have been the immediate consequence of the *Commis* recovering his legs; but the agile De Burgo, a practised professor of callisthenic exercises, on feeling that the impulse he had so unexpectedly acquired was hurrying him irrecoverably into the yawning gulph beneath, seized the front of the balcony in his passage, and was thus enabled to drop

quietly into the pit, without further injury. The pit door stood at hand invitingly open; and the Doctor, with an harlequin bound, which would have done credit to Eller, disappeared through the opening, and was seen no more.

At this moment a gendarme, drawn by the increasing clamour of the angry and astonished audience, made his appearance in the *balcon*. He approached Sir Ignatius, (who, once more having regained his feet, was beginning to show fight,) and with the utmost gentleness and civility requested the Baronet to accompany him out. Sir Ignatius mistook the *molliter manus imposuit* of the executive for an illegal arrest, and resisted the invitation with all his force, exclaiming,

“Vous un fool, Monsir Policeman, vous un fool, if you think I haven't more law in my head, than to let myself be arrested and sent to a furren jail, for nothing at all, at all!”

“*Soyez tranquille,*” said the gendarme, drawing him gently on; “*soyez tranquille.*”

“Sorrow step I'll stir, sir, good or bad, till you show me your warrant,” said Sir Ignatius.

“*Oui, oui, Monsieur le Grand Connétable,*” cried Lady Dogherty; “*où est votre lettre de cachet?*”

“Isn't it mighty hard,” continued Sir Ignatius, appealing to the bystanders, “that an Irish nobleman, and magistrate of Shanballymac, can't spake to his own thravelling physician, without being taken up like a pickpocket, in the face of a furren audience?”

Lady Dogherty, half affecting a faint, though not sorry to make a sensation, now bestowed her entire French vocabulary on the young *Commis*, whom she endeavoured to interest in the cause of outraged hospitality and violated gallantry; but the phlegmatic German, who had visited the theatre for the express purpose of comparing the orchestra and vocal strength of the Brussels company with those of the free and noble city of Frankfort, had been incensed and annoyed, past all bearing, by the frequent interruptions his critical acumen had received, through the various nonconformities of Sir Ignatius and his better half; and to her pathetic appeals he made no other answer than a frequent iteration of

“*Comment, matam! Que fouler fous! fotre cafalier est un tapacheur! Il m'a gâté mon opéra, lui.*”

Meantime the gendarme continued his gentle but persevering efforts—“*Je vous invite toujours de sortir, monsieur,*” he said; and step by step he drew him towards the door of the *balcon*: but on gaining the lobby, he was himself suddenly seized by the collar, and hurled round with such force, that he reeled against the opposite wall; while Fegan, (by whose *geste et fait* this assault was perpetrated,) rushing forward, took Sir Ignatius under the arm, and brandishing a short stick, roared out,

“Shall I kill him dead, Sir Ignatius?—shall I, sir?—say the

word, the dirty furren polisman ! Does he know you're the sitting magistrate of Shanballymac ? Does he know who you are, at all, at all ? Here, my leedy. Honour me with your leedyship's arum. Your leedyship's carridge is up and waiting at the blackguard door below."

Lady Dogherty, trembling, accepted the proffered arm ; Sir Ignatius followed raging ; and Fegan, flourishing his stick, was clearing a way for them through the crowd, when they were met by the officer of the guard, who demanded which was the offender that had assaulted the gendarme.

Two Belgian gentlemen pointed to Fegan, observing at the same time that it was a great outrage.

"Outrage !" said one of a group of vulgar Englishmen, who were beginning to take a part in the fray. "The outrage is on your part, messieurs. If a gentleman is to be insulted by a gendarme for talking to a friend in an adjoining box, the sooner we English get away from the protection of this republican government the better."

"I should like to know," said another, "what the Orange king could have done worse than this, or what the English papers will say of it."

"So much for mob governments," said a third ; "the magistrates are afraid to put the laws in force against the people."

To all these sarcasms, which were not followed up by any overt act in behalf of the prisoner, the Belgian officer made no reply ; a moderation which may be explained by his not having understood a word that was said : for the dialogue had been carried on partly in English, and partly in no-French. With considerable politeness he endeavoured to persuade Sir Ignatius to follow his lady into their carriage, and to leave Fegan in his charge ; assuring him that every justice should be done by the prisoner.

Fegan, meantime, was marched off amidst a file of soldiers. The awful aspect of an armed force had electrified his imagination to a degree that no symbol of civil power could have effected. Pale and subdued, he made no further resistance ; for that courage which would have stood firm against an array of thousands of his fierce countrymen, on the heights of Cappoquin, or in the ravines of the Galties, was in perfect abeyance before the bayonets of a disciplined soldiery.

It required the sedative powers of half an hundred of Ostend oysters, of two carafes of Alembique, qualified by a tumbler of Cogniac and water, to tranquillize the irritation of Sir Ignatius, and to soothe the nervous emotion of Lady Dogherty. They had found the supper ready according to order, at the Bellevue ; such a supper as, in the good old times of Ireland, was as indispensable after a party to the play as an epilogue to a new comedy, or a 'raking pot of tay' after a county ball.

L'homme en mangeant remonte ses ressorts ; and the supper

discussed, Sir Ignatius and his lady began to see the affair which had at first terrified them in another and better point of view. The person carried off and imprisoned by the armed force, was the confidential own gentleman of one of the first men in England, a Privy Counsellor, an M. P., who would doubtless 'make a Star-chamber business of it,' bring it before the Parliament, perhaps; and, in all cases, the names of Mottram and Dogherty would appear together in the public papers. The necessity of calling on Sir Frederick the first thing in the morning, to procure his protection and assistance, was therefore the practical result of this speculation.

Lady Dogherty, though she felt all the advantage of such a coincidence, had yet 'a silent sorrow' preying on her heart which stood apart from all other grievances—the recent desertion of Doctor de Burgo; and she gave but a divided attention to the apostrophies of her husband in honour of the prowess and gallantry of Fegan, the object which seemed at present uppermost in his mind.

"Och! he's a chip of the ould block," said Sir Ignatius in a sudden burst of emotion, called forth by a second glass of brandy and water, and the recapitulation of Fegan's noble defence. "He's a chip of the ould block! And now, Kitty dear, did ever you see an handsomer fellow, or a taller, than Larry Fegan? and a pair of shoulders that would flank a martillo tower. I remember the day when the wild goose flyers* of Kerry, would have given any money for such a lad for th'ould king of Prussia. And when it is known who and what he is, this little ruction may be the making of him; and would'nt wonder ——"

Sir Ignatius here looked earnestly and steadily at Lady Dogherty, as if he had a confidence to make which would require all her indulgent sympathies; but he looked in vain. Lady Dogherty's bright eyes were suffused with tears. Exhaustion, fright, oysters, ale, the vulgar indiscretions of her ill-assorted mate, the conduct of Rodolf de Burgo, were all weighing heavily on her heart or—her digestion; and having thrown herself back in her chair, with her handkerchief to her face, she was indulging in a 'luxury of wo,' to which the monotonous mutterings of her husband gave no interruption. Confiding however in her silent attention, Sir Ignatius filled his glass and continued.

"And now, Lady Dogherty dear, that this poor lad has risked his life for us in a furrep land, and lies in jail this blessed moment for our sakes, and the honour of ould Ireland, and has proved himself a brave boy and an honour to the father that —— which I may say, Kitty, dear, is coming to the point,—

*The name by which the crimps of the king of Prussia were known in Ireland, where they used to recruit for giants for his service.

and—which—while—that is ma'am !—for youth is youth ; and the greatest man in Ireland has had his frolic out, and in that respect I am not worse than my betthers ; as you who knows Ireland, and what we Mallow boys were in thim ould times, and Rory Karney, of Fort Karney, your uncle, who was called Hell-fire Karney, can tell. Sure had'nt he his pickidillies, your own kith and kin ?—and isn't the lad that was well known to be a bit of a by-blow, young Roderick Karney, a general in the Austrian service, and a Count ? which shows that I was no ways particular in regard of poor Larry, called Fegan after his mother's maiden name, alias Betty Burke.

“ And so, Lady Dogherty, on my bended knees, ma'am, (and he 'suited the action to the word') “ I here as if you were my patron saint, declare and confess to my great sin and shame, and *mia maxima culpa*, that Larry is my first-born of two fine lumps of twins by the said Betty Burke, alias Fegan. If you will just pardon this trifling bit of a piccadilly, committed years before I had the high honour of making you Lady Dogherty, and marrying into the Fort Karney family, I declare to Jasus, and 'pon my word of honour as a gentleman, and a barinite, that I'll be true and loyal to your wedded love and bed and board, from this time out, now and evermore, amen.”

Lady Dogherty, in an amazement that dried her maudlin tears on her crimson cheek, let fall her handkerchief, and gazing on her prostrate penitent, exclaimed—

“ What is it you are after telling me, Sir Ignatius ? Lawrence Fegan your son ! your illegitimate child !”

“ Sorrow word of a lie in it !” said Sir Ignatius, folding his brawny hands over his lady's knees : “ I had my misgivings from the first time I saw him before the *jidge de pay* at Ostend. Big, bare, and naked, as he stood there, I felt my bowels yearn towards him.”

“ And did he know of the relationship ?” said Lady Dogherty, in a tone of deep mortification : “ does Sir Frederick know that your natural son is his valet-de-chambre ?”

“ Sorrow know he knows ! for the poor lad has kept the secret, ever since he saw me by chance walking in that wild-baste garden in London, and says he followed us often, but wouldn't bring shame on me, nor himself neither : for it's he has the raal spurrit of a gintleman, not all as one as the Doctor, and would sooner beg the world than axe me for a tinpinny, after I throwing him on the *Shaughraun*, and never giving him bit nor sup, or trade to live by, sinner that I am ! And if it wasn't that it was a little hearty we got together last night, at a nate little tay-house, or shebeen, a taste out of the town, ma'am, (where we met by accident, and made our kermish and our *staminay* together, as they say in German) the divel an iota I'd have known of it yet, only by guess ; and never saw the cratur since he was the height of a Munster potato.”

"But," said Lady Dogherty, perplexed in the extreme by a sense of all the inconveniencies and embarrassments which might arise from this discovery, "how do you know that he is really your son?"

"Know it! why, isn't he as like me as if I had spit him out of my mouth? Isn't he six feet high in his stocking feet! and hasn't he the look of a lord, if lords weren't such little *lepra-hauns* as they are now,—to say nothing of Priest Murphy's certificate of his birth, which he has on his person; for he was the mother's darling, in regard of his luck in coming an hour before th' other poor donny garlogh, whom she tuck up to the Foundling in Dublin."

"There are two of them, then!" cried Lady Dogherty, raising her hands and eyes in dismay.

"There *were* two of them, sure enough, Kitty dear," said Sir Ignatius, taking her hands tenderly, and kissing them with propitiating gallantry, and an ill-concealed smile of triumph.

"I hope I don't intrude," said a voice from the half-opened door. "By Jupiter!—a *scena!* I trust I am included in the general amnesty; for as I am the offended, the injured, the insulted person, I of course am the person to cry *peccavi*."

"It doesn't signify what you cry, Doctor De Burgo," said Sir Ignatius, rising from his knees and wiping the dust from his best black pantaloons, equally ashamed of the humble position in which he had been discovered at his wife's feet, and enraged at the easy assurance of his travelling physician; "it does not signify whether you cry *copavi* or not; for you and I must part, Doctor de Burgo, and the sooner the better."

"With all my heart, Sir Ignatius," said the Doctor, ringing for a relay of oysters and a bottle of wine; "but let us part friends. The munificent offer I have received here, the prevalence of *cholera*, of which the foreign physicians know nothing, the certainty of being made state physician to my old acquaintance Leopold the First (to whose *soirées* I went at Marlborough-house,) and, above all, the charming valetudinarian, the Marchioness of Montessor being expected every moment in Brussels—(you saw her husband and brother in the box with me; he with the star on my left was the Marquis;)—add to this my interest with Sir Frederick Mottram, and the probable return to office of our party; and you, at least, Lady Dogherty, who know the world, will allow that to accompany you to the Brunens of Germany, would, in a worldly consideration, be a great sacrifice. I do not say that certain feelings, Lady Dogherty, will not wrench from the heart ties, '*which breaking, break it,*' but Sir Ignatius's conduct——"

The Doctor paused, and fixed his eyes on Lady Dogherty. Sir Ignatius was already mixing for himself another tumbler, and listened patiently to this rigmarole, of which 'the raging cholera' was to him a cabalistical phrase. Lady Dogherty,

who could upon occasions quarter the dramatic gentility of Lady Teazle with the royalty of Queen Dollalolla, drew up to her fullest height, and gently pushing away the tumbler of brandy and water from before her husband, said with emphasis,—

“Doctor de Burgo, while under the influence of feelings as violent as they are agitating, allow Sir Ignatius and myself to withdraw, and to defer all further discussion on the unfortunate events of this eventful evening till to-morrow. Oh! sir! may your night’s reflections bring with your morning’s convictions a proper sense of your very improper error, and a sincere sorrow for the neglect of all those finer feelings, which, as the poet says, ‘fills the happiest breast.’”

“Amen!” said Sir Ignatius, gently stealing back the tumbler, which his wife again pushed away; while she added, in an emphatic tone,—

“All I entreat of you is, Doctor, that you will take no step till you hear from Sir Ignatius and myself, at breakfast to-morrow morning; till then farewell!

and in for ever
“And if for ever,

Then for ever fare thee well.”

“I cannot part with you in anger, dear Lady Dogherly,” said the Doctor, in a tone as dramatic and sentimental as her own; “and if Sir Ignatius can forgive himself ——”

“Is it me?” interrupted Sir Ignatius, softened to childish tenderness by his recent confession, by the ‘tumblers’ he had already taken, and his desire for the one he had not yet tasted; “Is it me? Divel a bit but I forgive every one; and have enough to be forgiven myself, as Lady Dogherly knows, and will tell you, Doctor ——”

“Enough of that for to-night!” said Lady Dogherly, taking his arm in a manner that obliged him to rise.

“Aisy now, aisy, Kitty dear,” he cried, as she forced him from his chair: “to cut the matter short, the Doctor and I’ll just take a tumbler to our making up; not forgetting poor Lawrence Fegan, now lodged in the watch-house for all our sakes.”

De Burgo, taking a hint from Lady Dogherly’s eyes, replied—“Not to-night, Sir Ignatius, if you please; it is enough that we part friends. Good night, dear Lady Dogherly! We shall meet, I suppose, at breakfast: allow me to open the door!”

There was a little struggle on the part of Sir Ignatius to remain; and still, as his lady dragged him forth, he cast a “longing, lingering look behind,” at the tumbler of untasted brandy and water, until she at last forcibly effected his exit, and the Doctor closed the door.

Lady Dogherly trembled for the discretion and paternal vanity of Sir Ignatius, and resolved to make his silence on the

discovery of a relationship at once so immoral and so disgraceful the purchase of his forgiveness for wrongs, and an infidelity which, like a 'coming event,' had 'cast its shadow before,' over the bright surface of their conjugal life.

A dish of oysters, a bottle of Burgundy, (entered, as soon as served,) on the increasing bill of the Irish baronet, soon banished from the Doctor's mind his muddled patient and his maudlin patroness. More than ever annoyed by their vulgarity and absurdity, and ambitious to rise in a world for whose suffrages he had so many qualifications, he was resolved on cutting the connexion altogether as soon as anything adequate to the salary he enjoyed, and the advantages he reaped from it, should present itself. He thought the arrest of Fegan was a fair ground of appeal to the anti-continental prejudices of the tory ex-minister, and of the Lord's Montessor, and a sufficient excuse for paying them an early visit on the following morning. With a true Irish imagination that was easily mounted to extravagant speculation, he drank and dreamed, and dreamed and drank, till he saw himself in prospect all that he had boasted of already being to Sir Ignatius,—the boon companion of Englishmen of rank and fashion, the Struensee of the Belgian court, if not of some higher power.

He looked round him for a female autocrat, some Catherine of Russia, some Christine or Matilda, or even for a Maria Theresa. But there were no queens *regnantes* at hand to raise him; though women were the levers by which he hoped to attain to greatness. He thought however of Donna Maria di Gloria, and fell asleep over his last glass of Burgundy with her image uppermost in his mind. Visions of advancement still floated round his head. He slept; but (the elements of his previous thoughts combining in all the fervour and vivacity of his waking expectations), train after train of gratified vanity and ambition succeeded in gay and dazzling sequence, till all vanished in the person of Donna Maria di Gloria; who taking the form of Lady Dogherty in a wreath of roses and green velvet gown, gave him her awful 'good-night' in No. 144, Hôtel de Bellevue.

From any other form than that, his firm nerves would not have shrunk; but even in sleep her bulky Ladyship had now become his *bête noire*. Roused therefore from his nightmare by the apparition, he started on his legs, emptied the carafe of water upon the table, and taking one of the nearly extinguished wax-lights, retreated to his bed-room, singing, as he passed the chamber of Sir Ignatius and Lady Dogherty,

" A rose-tree in full bearing,
With sweet flowers fair to see,
One rose beyond comparing
For beauty attracted me."

While Sir Ignatius lay snoring, the well-known words and voice fell upon Lady Dogherty's ear. She was seated before her writing desk, pouring forth her feelings on a sheet of bright yellow musk-scented paper, which, in the form of a letter, she was addressing to her dear friend,

“LAURA LADY DICKENSON, ROSE COTTAGE, CHELTENHAM.

“Hôtel de Bellevue, midnight.

‘Tired Nature’s sweet restorer, balmy Sleep,
He like the world [the Doctor] his ready visit pays
Where fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes;
Swift on his downy pinions flies from wo,
And lights on lids unsullied by a tear.’

YOUNG’S *Night Thoughts*.

“And oh! at this ‘witching hour of the night’ may *he*, my dearest Laura, shed his choicest poppies on the eyes of my sweet friend, while mine overflow with tears, and ache with unrequited kindness. While all are asleep in the Bellevue, (certainly the most fashionable hotel in Europe,) and ‘leave the world to darkness and to me,’ your Kate keeps dreary vigils.

“But, to continue my journal: after I had sealed and sent my last packet from the Tirlemont, by Mr. O’Reilly (a friend of the Doctor’s), I removed to this truly splendid establishment, where I had the pleasure of again meeting my dear friend the Right honourable Lady Anastasia Macanulty, lately married to one of the most perfect Adonises I ever beheld (as far as person goes, though with perhaps too strong an accent for my fastidious ears). She is still in her honeymoon, though not exactly in her *première jaunisse*. Sir Ignatius, who knows every one, thinks Mr. W. Macanulty is one of the King’s County Macanulties; and that he has claims upon the patronage of an illustrious and gallant gay Lothario, who, in the words of the poet—

‘—— Wide as his command
Scatter’d his Maker’s image through the land!’

“Be that as it may, he has been lately appointed a commissioner for inquiring into the state of Ireland, past, present, and to come; and is now travelling, *via* Brussels, to the flowery shores of the Rhine, whence he proceeds to Vienna for the winter (Lady Anastasia’s cousin being expected to be ambassador there.) They dine with us every day at the *table d’hôte*, which is the fashion here for persons of the highest rank. The Doctor and Mr. W. Macanulty are inseparables. They have been at Antwerp together to see the ruins: but of that here-

after. It is with unfeigned delight I have been of use to dear Lady Anastasia, as they came off before their carriage was finished, and mine is always at her service. In return, she has introduced me to many of the fine people here—all passing through: so that I shall have my circle ready formed at Baden-Baden; and should I induce Sir Ignatius to visit Vienna, the advantages of this connexion would be incalculable.

“Why, my beloved friend, are you not here to partake of them? We have also the Dowds and the Doolans of county Wexford, and the Smiths of Grouse Lodge, Tipperary, the Reilleys, the Randals, the Roystons, and others of our Cheltenham and Brighton set of last season; also the three East Indian families who are going for their livers to the Brunns. The Marquis of Montessor and his brother Lord Alfred, who are waiting for the Marchioness and a large party of English fashionables, are in the Bellevue. Of course we shall be introduced to them all by our new, and certainly much obliged friend, Sir Frederick Mottram.

“Not that we have much to boast of from his gratitude. I wrote you word what imminent services we rendered him at Ostend; offering him our purse and table, and lent him our linen (some of which was only returned to us here); and would have taken him into our carriage and travelled with him to Germany: but from the time we parted with him on the ramparts of Ostend, we have never set eyes on him till this evening, at the play. He sent his card, indeed, to our hotel yesterday, and perhaps really meant to be civil as soon as he had settled himself, as he has every right to be. But he certainly is one of the haughtiest and most reserved men I ever met with; which is the more ridiculous, because he turns out to be a low-born person, the son of a Birmingham manufacturer, and come of people that, in Ireland, would not be admitted into high society at all. I should like to see Sir Ignatius’s ancestors, or his cousin the general Sir Shane, who proved his thirty-two quarters at Vienna, associating with a tradesman’s son. I say nothing of the Kearneys of Fort Kearney, or my mother’s family, the Fogartys of Castle Fogarty. And yet these are the men who look down on the Irish gentry, with the best blood of the country in their veins! What will greatly amaze you, is that his mother was an actress, and never could be received at court by the late Queen.

“But the pen of your friend runs away with her. Can you blame me, Laura sweetest, for thus ‘drinking oblivion to my woes?’ You will ask me, what woes? Blessed with rank, title, fortune, a person still in its prime, though touched with the green and yellow hues of melancholy; which, as our friend the Doctor (*our friend—oh, Laura!*) used to say, is but ‘the scabbard eating away the sword.’ How often has he said to you in our moonlight walks, under the shady trees of Mont-

pellier buildings, at Cheltenham, 'Dearest Lady D., if you could prevail on your susceptible friend to cease to feel, she would then cease to suffer!' But, 'paired, not matched,' with one whose ancient family and liberal fortune, scarcely compensate for the want of all that 'something more exquisite still,' (as our national bard has it,)—that reciprocity of sentiments and sensations which makes the charm of connubial felicity,—I had hoped to have found in Doctor Rodolf de Burgo a Platonic friend, an instructive Mentor, a constant companion, a literary colleague, and a vigilant as well as skilful physician. But I tremble to confess to you,—to myself,—that I have been disappointed.

"Devoted as he was in Brighton, his conduct here has been cold, careless, and neglectful. He has been running after great people, to the perfect forgetfulness of his true friends. He was first led away by a German Princess from Ostend to Brussels; and it was not till after a visit of an hour long, that we discovered it was her German maid we were talking to, the Princess herself having gone alone to visit her estates between Brussels and Namur. Since then, he has been taken up by young W. Macanulty; and though he knows Sir Ignatius's horror of the cholera, and that my delicate and only remaining lung requires constant attention, he ran away two days to Antwerp without saying a word, and appeared first on his return in the French Ambassador's box, with his new and assuredly *very great friends*, the Marquis of Montessor and Sir Frederick Mottram, with several other persons of fashion of his acquaintance.

"This so provoked Sir Ignatius, that he took him to task very roundly, and more loudly, perhaps, than the stupid habits of these vulgar Belgians permit (for they *are* the vilest dawdles you ever beheld; the women cased up to their chins in habit-shirts, and washing muslins, with little bonnets and hats, and the men not dressing at all for the theatre.) The result was terrible! A fracas ensued. Sir Frederick's own gentleman and private secretary, a sort of *attachy*, who came to our assistance, was seized by a *lettre de cachet* (such as you have read of in French novels), and thrown into a dungeon! Sir Ignatius and myself were only saved by our rank and titles, and the effects produced by our carriage with the arms of the Dogherty's and the bloody hand, and that of the Kearneys in the middle on a scutcheon of Pretence, which waited at the door, as Sir William Betham has proved. Pray read this to your radical friend, Mr. Wittingham, who is such a stickler for the Belgian revolution, if he is still at Cheltenham when you arrive there.

"The Doctor, the cause of all this, got out of the way, and never made his appearance till after supper. Words have not power to express the indignation I felt; though never did I see him look more bewitching; his face a little flushed, and his

customary black suit set off with a cherry-colour and gold tabinet waistcoat, as Hamlet says, which I got over from O'Donnell's, in Dublin, as a *cadet* for him, the day before we left Brighton. Sir Ignatius's too, too easy temper was yielding to De Burgo's pleading eloquence, when I carried him off from the voice of the charmer, whom, I must say, we left overwhelmed with deep emotion at the thought of parting from us.

"I write this, dearest Laura, ere 'sleep knits up the ravelled sleeve of care,' to beg you will write him such a letter as will make him feel how blind he is to his own interests, and how unworthy of your (may I say?) maternal interest in him—ah, Laura!

"And now, sweetest, good night! Lady Anastasia sends this early in the morning by the ambassador's bag, which leaves no time for adding more than that I am, to my heart's last beat,

"My dearest Laura's ever devoted,
though perhaps too susceptible,

"KATE."

CHAPTER IV.

DEPOT D'ARCHIVES, AND THE LIBRARY OF THE DUKES DE BOURGOGNE.

THE results of the *fracas* at the theatre brought with them, if not disappointment, at least another issue than had entered into the calculations of the several parties concerned. The designs of Sir Ignatius and Lady Dogherty, the speculations of Dr. De Burgo, the apprehensions of Fegan, and the prophecies of the English lookers-on at the box entrance, all alike fell before the wise views of the Belgian authorities, who treated the smallest disturbances of public tranquillity with a delicacy rendered necessary by the circumstances of the revolution. Instead of making the most of the outrage, and exhibiting an un-called-for display of what public functionaries in the older governments are so fond of calling 'vigour,' and the 'vindication of law,' they suffered the affair to die quietly away. In all that concerned the English and French visitors at the Belgian capital, there was a special desire to act with particular prudence; so that, while they leaned lightly on the subjects of states with which the national interests were so closely bound, they might avoid irritating the rather susceptible jealousy of

the populace, who, in the novelty of their recently acquired independence, are perhaps something too suspicious of foreign influence.

On the ensuing morning, accordingly, Fegan was liberated, on a promise, backed by his word of honour, of keeping the peace while he remained at Brussels; and on making an apology, founded on the irresistible influence of Faro, to the aggrieved gendarme. The officer on guard waited on Sir Ignatius and Lady Dogherty at their hotel, accompanied by a friend, to act as interpreter; and after explaining to them the tenacity of a Brussels audience, where a favourite opera or singer was concerned, presented them a ticket for an amateur concert.

Sir Ignatius was stunned by a courtesy so unexpected.

"A ticket for a concert, Lady Dogherty," he said, "when it's a challenge I expected, which would have seen the upshot of such a frock-caw as ours in the Thatre Royal of Dublin; where, if you only brush by a chap's *surtout*, it's 'Here's my card, sir; I'll trouble you for yours!'"

"You see, Sir Ignatius," said Lady Dogherty, drawing up, "the value of the title, you were at first so reluctant to assume, and from which you have derived such incalculable benefits."

"Why, thin, sorrow much!" muttered Sir Ignatius; "only being obliged to pay three-and-sixpence for but-ends of wax candles, when mowlds would have served our turn just as well, and better."

"In freign countries," continued Lady Dogherty, "the claims of high rank are always acknowledged with due deference and respect!"

"Why, thin, 'pon my daisy," said Sir Ignatius, "I'd back Ireland 'gainst the world, in regard of its respect for quality, and titles too."

While the Doghertys thus consoled themselves for the indignities of the previous night by the alchymy of their *amour propre*, the party most concerned by Fegan's last indiscretion was Sir Frederick Mottram. The non-appearance of his servant had obliged him to close rather hastily with a French *valet-de-chambre*, who, with a German courier, were, before mid-day, installed in his antechamber at the Hôtel de Flandre. He was himself deep in letter-writing *à porte fermée*, when his Frenchman presented him with the following note:—

"TO SIR FREDERICK MOTTRAM, BART.

"SIR FREDERICK MOTTRAM,—Sir, I take lave to permise that you and I must part after what has happened last night at the playhouse, in which I was noways to blame, but would have been the manest-spurited of spalpeens, if I had stood by, and seen them insultin a leedy, let alone an ancient Irish nobleman by seed, breed, and discent, like Sir Ignatius and my lady.

7*

To say nothing, Sir Frederick, of its coming out who and what I am, being a gentleman bred and born by the father's side; the same being now hereby satisfied by Sir Ignatius himself; which would make it neither convenient nor decent that I should remain any longer in your honour's service,

"Who am, Sir Frederick,

"Your most obed. servant.

"LAWRENCE FEGAN DOGHERTY."

"P. S. Anyhow, Sir Frederick, I should have discharged you, in respect of your taking in an underhand manner the furrin volet, who I will give your honour's keys to, and other wearables, being two dozen of new, Ostend, Holland shirts, till th' others comes over with the travelling carriage; which, with th' inventaries of white cambrick French pocket-handkerchiefs, the pistols, tellyscope, and other apparel, your new dressing *necessarie* and *O de Colown*, (two cases included,) and various articles, some in silver, and some in gold, bought yesterday in the *Minuet de la Cure*,* I will deliver up, and wait your honour's commands for that same.

"I am, sir, yours faithfully,

"L. F. D——."

This letter was as great a puzzle to Sir Frederick, as the billet-doux of 'Cousin Con' to Tony Lumpkin; 'it was all buzz.' That Fegan had again got into a drunken broil at the theatre, and was lodged in durance vile, he had learned from the servants of the hotel; and he had already made up his mind to leave him to his merited, and, perhaps, salutary punishment; and afterwards to send him back to England, with a handsome compensation for his recent services, and for his former sufferings. But, in all other respects, the letter was an hieroglyphic: the production of a mind still stupified by a recent fit of beastly inebriety. The shortest way of unriddling it, was to call in the writer; which he forthwith did.

Sir Frederick was struck by his air and appearance, on entrance. His manner was easy to insolence; and his high white shirt-collar, black silk stock, and head fresh from the hands of the most fashionable *coiffeur* of the Rue de la Madeleine, gave him such a resemblance to Dr. De Burgo, that for a moment his master was the dupe of the illusion. A bow, still respectful, and an erect position at the door (with the lock of which he fiddled in evident emotion,) replaced the flash dandy in his old character of *valet de chambre* of Ostend; though it left no trace of the grotesque wretchedness of the porter's *locum tenens* at Carlton-terrace.

"What does this mean, pray?" said Sir Frederick, with his cold high manner, as he held up the epistle.

* Probably *Montagne de la Cour*.

"Plaze your honour, Sir Frederick, it's what it manes, that it is intirely out of my power to have the pleasure of keeping with you any longer, Sir Frederick; and so, sir, I thought it was most genteelest to cut at once."

"If it only means that," said Sir Frederick, while he wrote an order upon his banker, "it is well: I intended to part with you this day. Your incorrigible neglect, frequent absences, dissipated habits, summed up by the very unpleasant scrape you got into last night, which might have involved me in its disagreeable consequences, had brought me to this conclusion."

"Why, thin, I'd have been raily sorry for that, Sir Frederick. But sure, sir, I put it to your honour's self—long life to you!—that set a case, that your own honoured father was unsulted, and my leedy, his wife, by a dirty griddle-cake-faced furren polisman, forenent a whole playhouse, wouldn't you like to be after taking the dust out of his coat, Sir Frederick? And sure it isn't because a man has oncet fallen into throuble, and has been obligated to put on a livery, that he isn't to have the spurrit of a man; and he, above all, sir, an Irishman, and a gintleman by kith and kin and relationship; and the son of a barrynite, like yourself—and no offence, I hope, your honour. For, plaze your honour, I am warranted, and permitted, and sarfified to tell you, sir, by Sir Ignatius's own self, that I am his own son naturally born, and eldest heir, if I had the law on my side, and only offspring to inherit his fine fortune: and that is the truth, and the whole truth; only hopes your honour will say nothing to nobody about it yet, and 'bove all, to my lady and the Dochter, till we get back to Mount Dogherty Shanballymac, and gets rid of the Dochter intirely, who gives himself the divel's own airs, saving your prisence, Sir Frederick; and it's heartily sick my father, Sir Ignatius, is of him."

"Oh!" said Sir Frederick, struggling almost vainly with the laugh that was rising to his lip; "you are, then, the natural son of Sir Ignatius Dogherty?"

"Troth I am, Sir Frederick," he replied, releasing the handle of the door, which he had nearly twisted off; and drawing up to his full height, as he arranged his black cravat, he added with a flush of pride—"His raal lawful and natural son; and I hope he will never have cause to be ashamed of me, for I am as much above doing a dirty thing, sir, as the greetest man in the land; and if iver, owing to your honour's goodness and purtection, and greet interest with the King and others, and my father Sir Ignatius's long purse, I should have the honour of serving his Majesty agin, (and I would prefer the Couldstrames afore the world,) I would show them furreners, as my half-brother Jeemes Burke, by another father, did at Watherloo, that I could fight my way to glory, and get my medal, as well as any man in the Duke of Wellington's army."

While the kindling imagination and military ardour of Law-

rence Fegan was thus 'plucking up drowning honour by the locks,' Sir Frederick, with his head almost touching the paper on which he was affecting to write, muttered an occasional, "Well,—so—." At length he addressed the orator more directly, and added, "I wish you well; but in the mean time accept this: it is an order on my banker for a hundred pounds; part of it is due to you, I suppose; and the rest pray accept as a trifling compensation for the accident you met with, in my service, some years back."

"You owe me nothing at all, at all; Sir Frederick," said Fegan, bowing in his best way, and flourishing his hat. "I need no agreement with you, sir, about station or wages, only just the high honour of being about you, to the great amazement of the servants' hall and steward's room, and no thanks to them: and was too proud to have the honour to be so useful to you on your travels, which I'll never forget: and if I accept this money at all, Sir Frederick,"—and he bowed again, as he took the draft and folded it up,—"it isn't as wages; I'd be very sorry, troth; only just as a keepsake from your honour, in regard of th' ould times;"—(Fegan put the back of his gloved hand to his eyes, and, after a moment's silence, added,) "and not forgetting the greet fun at Bruges, and the fine merry old nun, long life to her! And will keep this note, if it were double as much, to buy a murning ring for your honour; and wishes you, and my lady, and young Mr. Emilius, every happiness in life, and a happy death, I pray Jasus—Amen!"

Sir Frederick had risen with an air of impatience; he waved his hand, with a half-courteous "I wish you well;" and Fegan, with his deepest Irish sigh, and most improved Flemish bow, backed out.

He was already in the ante-room, when, suddenly turning on his steps, he again stepped forward and said, "I forgot to mention to your honour, that before I went to the play last night, there came some cards, a letter, and an elegant little donny garland of daffy-down-dillies: you'll find them all in the tebble-drawer, Sir Frederick, there, forenent you, sir. Allow me, your honour."

The cards were those of the French and English Ambassadors, of Sir Frederick's Polish friend, Col. P——, together with those of one or two English acquaintances who had seen his arrival in the papers. The garland was labelled '*De la part de Jansens père.*' and the note was from Monsieur E——, his obliging banker. It ran thus:—

"It has been signified to Monsieur E——, by Madame Marguerite, that the antiquarian tastes of Sir Frederick Mottram would be much gratified by a visit to the 'Library of the Dukes of Burgundy,' and to the '*Dépôt des Archives Beligiques.*' Monsieur E—— has been enabled to appoint a meeting for this day, between the hours of twelve and four, with the learned gentle-

men at the head of these rich departments. Mons. E —— hopes to be able to give Sir Frederick rendezvous ; but, at all events, encloses two notes of introduction.”

The one of these notes was addressed to ‘ *Mons. Marchal, Conservateur de la Bibliothèque Royale des Ducs de Bourgogne ;*’ the other, to ‘ *Mon. Gachard, Archiviste du Royaume.*’

These memorials of other times, and the recurrence to a name which seemed always to hang like a charm with all that was connected with the poetry of life, swept away from Sir Frederick Mottram’s recollection every record of the absurdities with which he had been engaged a moment before. Without, therefore, waiting for Mons. E ——, and guided by his courier to the *Dépôt des Archives*, he hastened to escape the risk of a reproof from Madame Marguerite (should he meet her) of being always *en arrière* with time and circumstances.

The *Dépôt* of the Archives of Belgium lies in a very Spanish quarter of Brussels. It occupies that part of the Palace of Justice which commands *La Place du Grand Sablon* ; a locality which, though it unites many inconveniences both of space and distribution, is, from its antiquity, a not inappropriate site for perhaps the most precious moral remains of ancient Europe.

To obtain access to such documents was, in the olden times, an exclusive privilege of royalty, or a favour granted by special protection. In Brabant, the Grand Council alone could grant leave to inspect the charters and state papers of the province ; and it often only named one of its own members, or the *procureur-général*, to make search through the *garde-charte* for the particular date or fact required.

When the provinces which now constitute the kingdom of the Belgians were separate and independent, and were governed by their counts and dukes, or by their republican corporations, each had its own distinct archives, or, as they were called, *trésoreries de leurs chartes* ; which, for security, were often concealed behind the altars of their churches, or guarded in the strongholds of their fortified castles. In these several *dépôts* were preserved, from the earliest ages of the social existence of the people, records of public acts concerning the privileges, domains, and possessions of the reigning houses ; title-deeds and charters, foreign treaties, and ordinances for the internal government of the country ; with other documents of a more municipal and even domestic character : rich items for the history of mankind, preserved for the use of a future and a better day.

As far back as the thirteenth century, Brabant, Flanders, Limbourg, Artois, Hainault, Namur, Luxembourg, &c. &c. had their several archives. The marriage of Marguerite Countess of Flanders with the Duke of Burgundy, in introducing a new dynasty and a new order of things, made no change in this disposition. The brave, the enlightened, the spirited

Philip le Bon, who united so many of these provinces under his dominion, left their precious deposits where he found them. From this time, however, the state archives were deposited in the castles of Rupelmonde, or of Lille: often too, they were sent to the treasury of the Dukes of Burgundy, at Dijon. Under Maximilian and Philippe le Beau, they were still kept in the two first named fortresses. It was in the reign of Charles the Fifth that state papers first began to be preserved in Brussels; but the old collections still were left in their ancient depositories.

In the troubles of the sixteenth century so fatal to Belgium, and so favourable to every species of plunder, many of the ancient records were carried off by particular individuals for their own purposes;* and during the whole Spanish regime, nothing was done for their conservation. Maria Theresa, who, in her dull maternal despotism, neither respected, nor probably remembered, the former independence of the provinces, had, however, the sense to discover, in the memorials of their former greatness, "*des monumens fort utiles pour la conservation de mes droits, hauteurs, et domaines*;"† and she gave orders for the recovery and arrangement of all the public documents, under the care of the *président de la chambre des comptes* at Brussels, and for the employment of two archivists for that purpose.

The taking of Brussels by the French, after the battle of Fontenoy, put a stop to this operation. Notwithstanding the terms of capitulation granted by Marshal Saxe, which stipulated for the preservation of the archives, and library of her Imperial Majesty, they were plundered and thrown into disorder by the conquerors; the legitimate Lewis acting precisely the part which has since been so bitterly execrated as exclusively revolutionary. Eight cases of this plunder were despatched to Lille, then become a French town. In the wars of Lewis the Fourteenth, however, and on many other occasions, public documents to a much greater amount had fallen into the hands of the French; and it was not till the treaty of Versailles in 1769, that any attention was paid to the frequent reclamations of Austria on the subject. In consequence of this treaty, however, one hundred and twenty-six cases of papers were brought back from the dépôt in Lille alone.

* It was thus the famous treaty of Marche-en-Famène, concluded between Don John of Austria and the States General, in 1577, found its way into the possession of a Dutch family, who lately presented it to the King of the Pays-Bas: and thus too all the papers relative to the trial of the Counts d'Egmont and de Horne got into the libraries of private individuals.—See *Notice sur le Dépôt*, &c. &c.

† So expressed in her letter to her Governor-General *ad interim* of the Pays-Bas on the subject.

During the long period which elapsed, until the year 1794, various efforts were made by patriotic individuals to draw the attention of the Austrian government to this subject; and various attempts were made, in the slow, unsatisfactory way peculiar to that government, to secure and arrange the public archives. But in the summer of 1794, a very large part of the collection was hastily packed up and transported to Holland, and subsequently to Vienna, in contemplation of the progressive successes of the republican armies. By the treaty of Campo Formio, it was agreed that the Belgian documents should be surrendered to the French, as the new masters of the country; a stipulation but imperfectly fulfilled. The more valuable portion of the documents remained behind at Vienna, till the taking of that city in 1809, when they, together with the archives of the whole German empire, were removed to Paris.—After the treaty of Paris in 1814, the Belgic archives were again brought back; with the exception of about three hundred articles, reserved for the Austrian court; by what right, it would be difficult to determine.

During the twenty years of French occupation, little or nothing was done for the preservation of such public documents as had been left untouched on the destruction of the Austrian power; but upon the erection of the new kingdom of the Pays-Bas, the *dépôt général*, which had gradually been formed at Brussels, was greatly enriched, as well by the restitutions already mentioned, as by the acquisition of the archives of Brabant, Namur, &c. &c.

Notwithstanding these frequent revolutions, and others of less extent, the collection as it now stands is one of the most extensive, and at the same time the most interesting, in Europe.—The stirring and important events which have passed in the Low Countries, the valuable nature of their institutions, and the influence these have exercised on other states, give a value quite peculiar to this national collection: for if any new lights are to be obtained concerning the middle ages, and the times which immediately followed them, it is probably in these archives that they are concealed.

As Sir Frederick Mottram passed through the long stone passages of the *Dépôt des Archives*, ascended its narrow stairs, and entered the first of the series of apartments walled with the documents of eight centuries, he fancied the very atmosphere impregnated with the dust of antiquity. He was received in the antiquarian study of Monsieur Gachard by its learned occupant, with all the elaborate forms of Brabançon courtesy, which contrasted with the easy, cold address, and simple ceremonial of the English gentleman, who never bends his head beyond the confines of his stock.

The functionary of the most liberal government in Europe received the ex-Tory minister with no other impression on his

mind, but that of the pleasure arising from doing the honours of past times to one whose visit was deemed a national compliment, rarely paid by the travelling English of any party, who usually consider Brussels only as the great coffee-house of Europe.

After a short conversation concerning the origin and history of the establishment, of which the preceding paragraphs contain a short summary, Sir Frederick followed the learned archivist through a labyrinth of chambers, with increasing interest.

"This," said Monsieur Gachard, "is the dépôt of the archives of the *chambre des comptes de Flandre*, an institution founded by Philip the Bold in 1383; and here, we approach the frontiers of modern diplomacy, the archives of the *conseil d'état*, dating from the reign of Charles the Fifth. 'Tis from this collection that the Austrian government carried off the correspondence of that emperor with the Duchess Marguerite his aunt, and with Mary his sister, who governed the Low Countries from 1522 to 1555; and the correspondence of Marguerite with Ferdinand King of the Romans. It is from this dépôt, too, that we have supplied the correspondence of Marguerite of Parma with Gérard de Groisbeck, to the pages of the *Analectes Belghiques*. But, precious above all its treasures, it contains the materials for the history of that *Marguerite des Marguerites*, the Duchess Marguerite of Austria, the aunt, guardian, and governess of Charles the Fifth,—the most able and brilliant of our female sovereigns. Another clever Marguerite has been working here this morning, with a view to the illustration of the lives of the able stateswomen to whom Belgium is so deeply indebted."

"An author, or an artist?" asked Sir Frederick with affected indifference.

"An artist," replied his informant. "She is employed, I believe, by the Princess of Schaffenhäusen to make researches for subjects to be illustrated by her able pencil."

"The Princess of Schaffenhäusen," Sir Frederick remarked, "is a great aristocrat, a disciple of the school of absolutism, and full of all sorts of German prejudices."

"The very reason why she should search here, where the origins of so many European titles and dignities may be found. The Schaffenhäusens boast of a descent from the Frankish Emperors of the West."

"Does Madame Marguerite return here to-day? I should like to see some of her illustrations," said Sir Frederick carelessly.

"She is at this moment somewhere in this world of papers. I left her carrying a huge portfolio of letters, in one of these chambers, when I was called away to have the honour of receiving you. It is curious to see so pretty a woman so deeply

interested in antiquarian pursuits, and so frequently eliciting from her dry researches some new and brilliant inference. Not that she is learned in these matters; but she sees everything through her imagination, which brightens the gloom of antiquarian lore itself."

"It is thus women should always see!" said Sir Frederick warmly. "It makes all the difference between poetry and pedantry; the ideality of female genius, and the dull dogged industry of female pretension; between *la femme fantastique*, and *la femme savante*; a Madame Marguerite and a Madame Dacier."

"Precisely so," said the Archivist, endeavouring to keep pace with the now rapid strides of his English visitor; who, with his glass to his eye, as if in search of some object not yet found, was hurrying on from chamber to chamber, regardless of the curious labels which marked their ponderous contents—'*Archives de la joint des terres contestées*,' '*Archives du comité pour les affaires jésuitiques*,' '*des Ducs de Brabant*,' '*des Comptes de Namur*,' '*des corps des métiers*,' '*des corporations religieuses supprimées*;'—each the text for a volume of reflections, the finger-post alike for philosophy and for romance. They soon, therefore, again reached the chamber of the Archivist, the 'tribune of the gallery,' containing whatever was most precious in the collection.

This room, which they had left empty, was now occupied by a female student, intently poring over a portfolio of musty papers, whose smell of time was dispersed by a bunch of Orange flowers, placed beside her.

"It is Madame Marguerite," whispered the Archivist, as they approached the fair student. "Well, Madam, you have found, I hope, what you were looking for?"

"Yes, and more too," she said, directing her eyes to Sir Frederick. "Good morning, Monsieur Mottram; I am glad you have been tempted to visit this interesting place: I was sure it would amuse you."

"Amuse me!" said Sir Frederick, with a smile that was almost a sneer. "You think that, like other great children escaped from the English go-cart, I only come forth from my nursery of prejudices, to be amused!"

"I don't say that," said Madame Marguerite, resuming her work, as if she had no time for mere discourse; "but since you belong to the class of spoiled children (spoiled alike by nature, fortune, and circumstances,) the cup of Truth, presented to you by some officious hand, should perhaps have its cold but golden brim just touched with honey."

"It is the syren's hackneyed mode of delusion," said Sir Frederick, with marked emphasis; "but I knew not that the dignity of Truth stooped to such arts."

"Oh! yes, Truth is—common sense; and common sense

treats children as she finds them, whether they fall in her way fresh from the hands of nature, or moulded by those of society: she consults their force or their infirmities, and with reference to either, she will restrain by a rope, or lead by a wreath; and use hemp or roses, as the object of her solicitude may best require."

"Of whose solicitude?" interrupted Sir Frederick, fixing her bright eyes, now raised, on his.

"Of—of—of whom were we talking?" asked Madame Marguerite, with the colour rushing over her face.

"Of common sense," said the Archivist, the only one of the party whose thoughts had not diverged from the starting-post.

"Common sense," said Sir Frederick, "is a common-place term, serving all sorts of purposes. It is sometimes applied to stupid discretion, that risks nothing and gains nothing; and sometimes it is taken as a *nom de guerre* by genius, to conceal its own intensity of meaning from the apprehensive feebleness of its distrustful auditory."

"Yes, it is impossible to appreciate terms, without some measure of the mind of the speaker," said Madame Marguerite. "Give society a word, and it will be adopted without inquiry, employed without applicability, and flung away without thought, whenever fashion substitutes a newer phrase:—to give language a meaning, it must pass through a mind that has something to reflect. By the by, Monsieur Gachard, your historians and antiquarians have treated words rather carelessly (at least names, epithets) when you suffered the charming Marguerite '*la gente Demoiselle*,' to retain the very false appellation of Marguerite of Austria; for she is as much Marguerite of Belgium, as I am myself."

"Yes," said Monsieur Gachard; "our great names, with our rich territories, have been too frequently made the plunder of strangers. It is thus that Monsieur Chateaubriand has taken from us our Godfrey of Bouillon."

"Oh! that is only one theft among many," continued Madame Marguerite. "Few are aware how often, and how ably, the great movements of European society have been advanced by the nerve and sinews of Belgian leaders. The Pharamonds, the Clovises, the Pepins, for instance: one Flemish adventurer founded a kingdom on the ruins of that of Solomon; and another re-established the Latin empire in the East, in the thirteenth century."

"Yes," said Sir Frederick, "your *Bras-de-Fers* and *Tête-de-Fers* were fine fellows; but such prowess as theirs is no longer to be met with."

"If such qualities were still available, they would be still forthcoming," she replied, tying up her papers: "every age works with its own materials, and produces what it wants. This is the age of great events, and not of great men. There is

no master-mind seen in Europe now—because there is no scope for its activity. The people have displaced individuals; and Napoleon would have fallen without the snows of Russia. You English conservatives overlook this. You think and act as if the same engines and the same methods, which belonged to the most ignorant of ages, were applicable to the most enlightened. Look around you! It is in such mouldering masses as this, that you seek for precedents, as ill adapted to the contingencies of the day, as the Godfreys and the Baldwins would be to figure in your congresses of Vienna and Laybach."

"You non-conservatives, however," replied Sir Frederick, "are too absolute, too abstract in your conclusions. In theory, we are not, perhaps, so very far apart as you imagine: it is on the question of practicability that we most widely differ. Our views of human nature——"

"Are formed upon the narrow experience of your exclusive circles," she interrupted, "and they are for ever misleading you. But this is a great confession from you."

"And a proof that you think the honey on the brim of the cup of truth has induced me to swallow the draught, *sans m'en douter*."

"To sip, not to swallow," she replied, laughing: "but the honest are open to conviction when the faction 'that doth hedge in' a minister, or leader of a party, can be broken through; the great difficulty is to get at them. Few dare to step forward to lead the forlorn hope, and to risk life and peace in storming the outworks without the possibility of arriving at the citadel of the deeply-trenched prejudice."

"The hope, which is led by such eyes as now direct the charge, can never be forlorn," said Sir Frederick, in a low voice, and in English.

"Monsieur Gachard!" she called out, rising, and taking her papers. Monsieur Gachard was at that moment engaged with a gentleman who had just entered the apartment; but he hurried back to Madame Marguerite, who whispered some request, to which he replied with a bow, "I shall have the honour." Madame Marguerite was now at the door; and, turning round, she said, "*Monsieur le Ministre*, I count on you for to-morrow evening. It is my *soirée d'adieu* to my Brussels friends and brother artists. You must, for a few hours, give up to a party what is meant for mankind." And she quoted the line in English, to one to whom the literature of England was familiar.

"I shall not fail," he replied, offering his arm to the artist.

"No," she said, drawing back, and laughing; "I have gone through life without an arm to lean on; and I will not now risk my independence, by taking the arm of a minister of state, even though he be *le plus aimable de tous les ministres possibles*." She bowed and retired.

"Who was that very intellectual-looking person, to whom

you addressed the title of *Monsieur le Ministre*," said Sir Frederick, as he followed Madame Marguerite down stairs.

"The Minister of the Interior, Monsieur Rogier. You are surprised at a poor artist inviting a minister to her tea-party, but such is the state of things at Brussels. Besides, that the arts and literature are under the special protection of his department, he has all those sympathies for talent which belong to a man whose own personal qualifications have placed him in his present eminent situation."

They were now at the entrance of the Dépôt, and Madame Marguerite had sprung into the carriage that was waiting for her, when Sir Frederick put his foot upon the step, as if to detain her, and prevented the servant from closing the door; "You spoke," he said, "to that gentleman of a *soirée d'adieu*. Do you, then, positively leave Brussels the day after to-morrow?"

"It is the Princess's present intention; but, certainly, to-morrow evening will be the last appearance of Madame Marguerite on the stage of Belgium in the character of a professional artist."

Sir Frederick looked amazed.

"And if," she continued, "you have a mind to witness the exhibition, I shall be happy to see you at it. But I keep Belgian hours—*point de réveillon*."

"You may count upon me, though the arts are not under my protection. But where are you going now?"

"To the *Bibliothèque des Ducs de Bourgogne*," she said, "to finish some illuminations which I have been copying for the Princess."

"I am going there too; perhaps you would set me down?"

"With pleasure. But I have a visit to pay on the road; not altogether unconnected with the arts, however. Will you trust yourself with me for the morning?"

"For life!" he replied eagerly, and he sprang into the carriage; when, perceiving the front seat occupied, he paused under the supposition that it was the Princess of Schaffhausen; for it was her carriage and liveries. Finding, however, that the stranger was only a humble sister of the *Bèguinage*, he took his place, mortified to be thus for ever disappointed in the hope of finding the piquante and original artist alone. He believed he had so much to say, so much to inquire, so much to discuss, so much to reproach; and with a marked sharpness of expression, he said in English, as the carriage rolled on, "You remind me, Madame Marguerite, of those religious orders, whose members are never permitted to go alone."

"It is a wise precaution," she answered evasively, and in the same language, "founded on a knowledge of the uneradicable folly of humanity, when left to itself. Solitude, enforced, is madness; and, when freely chosen, it indicates natural defect or a diseased mind: no one, well organized, will love or seek it. No

one is the better for wandering alone through life: and, trust me, no one is the happier. The wretched are often left alone, the fortunate never." She sighed deeply; and then, after a short pause, added, "You never could have known, Sir Frederick, what it was to be left utterly to your own resources, abandoned, deserted, your very existence unguessed at, uncared for; for you have always had something to give!—the Gordian knot of society."

"A severe summary of its nature and motives. But I have often wished to be all you mention; I have often, like Madame de Sevigné, been hungry for silence and solitude."

"And, like her, you would have broken through both to seek and to gossip with your gardener, rather than endure them for a week. No, no, it is not good to be alone! Omniscience admitted the fact at the creation, and declared co-operation the fundamental law in His great scheme of moral government."

"No human being can more thoroughly feel the wisdom of the doctrine than myself," said Sir Frederick, with earnestness. "I hold a communication with something that suits us, to be the sum of human bliss."

"And were there none among your late colleagues who answered to this description?" asked Madame Marguerite, with a tone of perfect simplicity.

"My late colleagues!" he repeated in a bitter tone, as he threw himself back in the carriage, with the feeling of one who was startled from a delicious reverie by a dash of cold water thrown over his heated brow.

"Lord Eldon, for instance," she continued coolly; "or Sare Wetherell, or——"

"Madame Marguerite," he interrupted with vehemence, "I have more than once observed, that you have the art of making yourself disagreeable beyond any person I ever met with. You have a power, all your own, of stilling the pulse you have raised; of freezing the most genial flow of happy sensations, and of throwing the wretch, who would escape the purgatory into which destiny has hurled him, back to its deepest holds."

"*Pour trancher le mot,*" she said in French, "*je suis ce qu'on appelle une fâcheuse,—en Anglais, a bore.*"

"It would be very difficult to say what you are," he replied, with an irrepressible smile, at variance with his closely-knitted brow; "but it is possible to conceive what you might be, with a little restraint on your froward humour, a little warmth in your icy heart, and some of the ardour of your bright imagination thrown over your composed, regulated, and prudent feelings."

"*Ciel, que de vertus vous me faites haïr!*" she exclaimed, laughing; "but you must take me as I am."

"Take you, indeed!" he muttered; "you——"

"——Use me as you find me, and fling me off, when the ar-

rival of your English set throws a ridicule on your acquaintance with one without a single artificial distinction to recommend her to your notice, and who above all wants that stamp of fashion, without which no merit is current in your London!"

"And you really think me capable of that?"

"Think you!" she said, emphatically, and with deep emotion; "know you. Time may subdue, but cannot change. Habits of mind, like those of physical life, grow unconquerable by indulgence. Remember the death-bed in the parish workhouse!"

"Ha!" he exclaimed, with the suspiration of one suddenly struck with a knife; the blood rushed from his face, and then returned with increased glow and impetuosity. "Then you *were* the person, as I have long suspected, who brought me to that sad scene. But when you know all,—the motives, the circumstances—"

"I do know all. But it is altogether a painful remembrance; and it is my creed not to encounter a pain, when no good is to result from the sacrifice. That scene, and all connected with it, is now over, and for ever! *autant en emporte le vent*," and she kissed the tips of her beautiful fingers, as she spoke, and blew over them with an air of infantine grace and *naïveté*.

"And now for the world of arts, the divine, fresh, and ever-inspiring arts. I am going to present you to the conservator of one of their most delightful temples. Trust me, my dear Sir Frederick," she added, in a tone which gave a touch of cordial and kindly humanity to the expression, "the arts are fine things to cling to; they are true friends, and, like true friends, they remain with us to the last. Music!—painting!—they are the language of Nature herself; they are worth a world of sickly sentiment, and far beyond that *girouette* and pretending thing called reason!"

"You are in the right," he said, earnestly, "to cry down reason; for none, I believe, like you, have so completely the power of deranging it. But pray forgive an earnestness, a more than curiosity in all that concerns you. You express your love of the arts; and yet you are relinquishing them, professionally."

"Yes, in Belgium."

"You are right. There is no scope here for genius like yours. A country, whose resources are so disproportionate to its wants, cannot recompense those talents which, though they contribute to the charm of life, must give place to the more pressing necessities of a young state just rising out of revolution."

"To what country, then, would you advise me to direct my steps?"

"To England, where everything finds its market; a country

where genius never works in vain, or, at least, unrecompensed."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Madame Marguerite, as the carriage stopped at the door of a small house, in a remote and melancholy suburb: "here dwells one who tells a very different story."

They alighted, and Madame Marguerite led the way up a narrow staircase, and was followed by Sir Frederick Mottram to a small landing-place on the second story. She put up her finger, in token of silence, and then opened the door of a back room, unheard by its sole occupant. A female in black habiliments was seated near the only casement, which commanded no gayer view than the red-tiled roofs of Brussels. She was deeply occupied in reading from a folio bible, which rested on her knees. A large coffin, covered with hieroglyphics, stood open and upright before her: it contained the most perfect mummy, perhaps, in existence. The walls and floor of the little room were covered with fragments, drawings, and objects of Egyptian antiquity: on the table were several relics, deemed holy, in holy land, which once would have been purchased by the diadem of royal saints and imperial pilgrims, but which now derived their chief value in the eyes of their *triste* possessor, as memorials of that all-enterprising mind, whose researches extended into the abyss of time, and rescued from oblivion evidences of many of the great and successive events which marked its passage to eternity.

The female was Mrs. Belzoni: she received the visitors with the grace which always goes with strong feeling, but was evidently both affected and surprised by the visit.

"Madame Belzoni," said Madame Marguerite, "I have taken the liberty of bringing a countryman of yours, to do honour to the memory of your husband in your person: he is a lover of the arts, an antiquarian, and one of that large class of English virtuosi, to whom foreign talents stand so greatly indebted for liberal encouragement."

Sir Frederick coloured deeply, and stuttered an awkward compliment to the genius of Belzoni, and an hope of being useful to his widow on his return to England.

Madame Belzoni, in reply, observed, "that she wanted nothing but the means of leaving Europe, and laying herself down in the tomb 'under the shade of the *avasma*' at Gato."* She wept passionately, and, instead of expatiating on her own distresses, talked only of Belzoni's virtues, his services, and sacrifices. She did not utter one word against that administration which so largely benefited by the glory of his researches, with-

* Belzoni died at Gato, in the kingdom of Benin, on his route to Houssa and Timbuctoo, 1823; he is buried under a tree, with a few palisades round his unhonoured tomb.

out advancing one guinea in aid of his splendid, his stupendous exertions.

The books, drawings, and objects of Egyptian *virtù* occupied the attention of the visitors, till the tolling of a bell reminded Madame Marguerite how little time was left for the visit to the library of the Dukes of Burgundy.

Sir Frederick and Madame Marguerite were again seated in the carriage, and nearly half-way to the object of their drive, before a silence, mutually maintained, was broken.

"Madame Marguerite," at length Sir Frederick said, with some bitterness, "you have a mode of acting epigrams, as other people dramatize charades."

"There is nothing like these *tableaux vivans*," she replied, "for bringing home conviction. You Tories are fond of boasting of the great discoveries which illustrated your long reign; yet Belzoni died of a broken heart, and his widow languishes in poverty in a foreign country."

"This, it is to be hoped, is a rare exception to our general conduct toward those who have served us: we shall see what the Whigs will do for genius, now that they hold the public purse."

The carriage now passed into the fine old monumental court of the *Palais de l'ancienne cour*, and drew up before a narrow arched gate. Sir Frederick and Madame Marguerite descended, and left the good little *Sœur Béguine* to pore over the life of St. Gudule, written in good old Flemish. Sir Frederick offered his arm.

"Not so fast," said Madame Marguerite, drawing him away to another part of the court. "You see, there, one of the royal carriages. It is the young Queen, who frequently comes here. Besides, look about you. There is not a site in Europe more illustrated by historical events than this court and palace. Oh! the scenes that have passed, the persons who have trod, the hearts that have throbbled here! The Hornes, the D'Egmonts, the gallant William of Nassau, the splendid *Gueux des Bois*, with their devotedness to national independence, '*jusqu'à la besace*;' and then that great melodramatic event performed here, the abdication of Charles the Fifth! There is no history so replete with dramatic incidents as that of the Low Countries. The habitual struggles of the people for an independence, so opposed by the circumstances of their position, has rendered it a stirring romance. This ancient palace will supply you with a whole day's amusement in itself. You must come with your Belgian Plutarch, or some other short cut to history, such as suits Englishmen of fashion and classical scholars."

"Your arrow falls pointless," said Sir Frederick, drily. "I have been dipping into Flemish chronicles, in good old French, ever since I landed at Ostend."

At that moment the royal carriages drew up. A fair young person, accompanied by two other ladies, entered the first. It was the Queen, attended by Mesdames de Stassart and de Merode. Monsieur Marchal, the conservator of the library, was still bowing off the royal visitor, when, perceiving Madame Marguerite, he came forward, with equal courtesy, though with less formality, to receive her. After she had presented Sir Frederick Mottram, and as they ascended the narrow stone stairs together, she said,

“You have a visit from a descendant of the Dukes of Burgundy; an interesting incident! Republicanism itself cannot resist the charm of such an association, connected as it is with all that is imaginative in history.”

“The Queen,” said Monsieur Marchal, “has been here the greater part of the morning. This is her Majesty’s fourth visit. The knowledge she has acquired, and the pleasure she takes, in studies so rarely pursued by the young and gay of her sex, are happy presages.”

“It would never do,” said Madame Marguerite, “to have the Queen of the Belgians like some of the queens distributed over the old courts of Europe; who, with their narrow acquirements of tent-stitch and twaddle, expect the world is to go on, as in the good old times, when cabinets were agitated by the minuet de Lorraine, and *l’affaire des parasols fut une affaire d’état*.”

“I’d as soon they meddled with tent-stitch as politics,” said Sir Frederick.

“Suppose they should happen to do both,” she replied, “and, like Madame de Maintenon, bring their work-bags to the privy councils; and direct the affairs of Europe, while they trace patterns for foot-stools! The influence of woman was, is, and ever will be exercised, directly or indirectly, in good or in evil! It is a part of the scheme of nature. Give her then the lights she is capable of receiving; educate her (whatever her station) for taking her part in society. Her ignorance has often made her interference fatal: her knowledge, never.”

“The result, at least, can never be the same,” said Monsieur Marchal. “We owe the principal treasures of this library to a woman. Marguerite of Burgundy, or of Belgium, (vulgarly called of Austria,) was to the Low Countries, what Francis the First was to France.”

“And a little more,” said Madame Marguerite; “for the policy of her government was as wise, as her protection of letters was humanizing, and that is more than can be said of the ‘*fors l’honneur*’ king.”

They now stood in the centre of one of the most curious, as well as ancient, libraries in Europe. Its air of antiquity, the gemmed lights of its stained windows, the portraits of the Dukes of Burgundy encased in its dark walls, the magnificent

and antique binding of its precious volumes, render it as picturesque to behold as curious to examine.

"Shake the dust of the age you live in from your feet," said Madamé Marguerite, addressing Sir Frederick; "'be innocent of the future,' and resign yourself wholly to the past. I give you up to Monsieur Marchal, from whom old Time has no secrets, and whose *tête encyclopédique* may be consulted with confidence upon all subjects connected with the progress of mind through the dimness of past ages."

She sat herself down before an illuminated volume, and continued to work at a copy which she had already begun; while the gentlemen took down volumes and looked through manuscripts.

"How far does your library date?" asked Sir Frederick, astonished at the antiquity of an illuminated missal he was looking through.

"It is the sister of the *Bibliothèque du Roi* at Paris," replied the Conservator, "of which Charles le Sage may be considered as almost the founder. At that epoch, arts and literature flourished in Brussels, Ghent, Antwerp, and, above all, at Bruges, where the finest parchment was manufactured. But the immediate founder of this collection was the Duc de Bourgogne, Philip the Good; who, on succeeding to the duchy of Brabant, formed in Brussels an establishment for copying manuscripts, which he placed under the direction of David Aubert; a man of great merit, who surrounded himself with a train of historians, romancers, translators, designers, and calligraphers; and caused more than three hundred volumes of the greatest value to be completed, for the instruction and amusement of his patrons. But, perhaps, you will be more amused with seeing the results, than with hearing the history?"

"No, no," interrupted Sir Frederick; "pray go on. If you knew my passion for these subjects, and my ignorance on the present occasion, you would not hesitate."

"Charles le Téméraire," said Monsieur Marchal, "on succeeding to his father, continued to encourage the learned. The translation of the *Cyropædia*, lately given to this library by the Queen of the Belgians, was transcribed for his use. It had been taken in the battle of Nancy, in 1477, in which the Duke himself was killed. Mary, his daughter, married Maximilian of Austria. A prince so miserable, ignorant, and wasteful, was ill adapted for maintaining the splendour of his predecessors; he abandoned the volumes collected by them to the money-lenders; and many of the most valuable works in this library thus found their way into the other European collections."

"That was a worthy child of the house of Hapsburg, that Maximilian," burst forth Madame Marguerite; "inimical to letters in all aspects."

"Philip le Beau, his son," continued Monsieur Marchal,

“by Mary of Burgundy, had all the good qualities of the Burgundian princes, without their faults. His reign was a golden age; and his sister, *our* Marguerite (called) ‘of Austria,’ was celebrated for her literary labours, of which some volumes are still preserved in this collection. History places her among the most illustrious princes and able diplomatists of the sixteenth century. She it was that educated Charles the Fifth.”

“Yes,” said Madame Marguerite; “but his mother, Jeanne Folle, was before her.”

“Maria, Queen of Hungary, sister of Charles the Fifth, born, like him, at Ghent, had all the great qualities of a perfect stateswoman. She brought from Hungary the missal of Matthias Corvinus, translated and illuminated in Italy, and finished in the Low Countries; which is by far the finest manuscript now existing in Europe. Here it is. The Dukes of Brabant swore upon it to observe the *Joyeuse Entrée*, the old political constitution of the province. See how this illumination has suffered from the process.”*

“How proud you Belgians ought to be of your women of the olden times,” said Madame Marguerite, still occupied with her drawing.

“And I have no doubt we shall have reason to be so of some of the women of the present,” said Monsieur Marchal, bowing and continuing. “In the turbulent reign of Philip the Second, the President Viglius assembled the volumes of this library in the palace of the sovereign, to protect them from outrage and spoliation; since which time, till the reign of Maria Theresa, its condition continued stationary. Marshal Saxe carried off some of its best contents to Paris; but they were restored on the marriage of Marie-Antoinette. In Ninety-four, everything precious was again transported to the French capital, and Napoleon caused a vast number of the volumes to be bound in red morocco and marked with the imperial cipher. In 1815 they were once more restored to this palace, though it is thought that William had some idea of depositing them at the Hague. Since the revolution, the collection has again been thrown open to the public.”†

“Well,” said Sir Frederick, in acknowledging the courtesy which had inspired this detail, “you see that these princes,

* There is one picture, on which this process has been so often performed, that it is nearly obliterated;—a fit emblem of the fate of such promissory oaths.

† This short account of a collection so eminently curious, was taken down from the words of the learned and courteous librarian himself, to whom the Author takes this opportunity of acknowledging the many obligations conferred by his kindness and attention. The story is shortly but clearly told in an inscription which he has set up in the library, and which runs as follows:

whom your revolutionary doctrines decry, are, after all, the best patrons and encouragers of learning."

"When mind, like power, was confined to the few," said Madame Marguerite, "the few were its natural protectors."

"With all due gratitude to the Dukes of Burgundy," said the Conservator, "we stand also indebted to the present constitutional government. Notwithstanding the large demands which are made on the public purse by the unsettled state of our foreign relations, the Minister of the Interior has authorized me to continue the sumptuous bindings commenced by Napoleon, to replace the portraits of all our sovereigns since the commencement of the Burgundian dynasty, and to ornament the windows with stained glass in imitation of the old art; and, every day, I receive permission to purchase fresh manuscripts: so that the sixteen thousand volumes of which the present collection consists, will be rapidly increased in every department of human knowledge."

"Here is a book and binding," said Madame Marguerite, "beyond all price in the estimation of such antiquarians as Sir Frederick and myself."

She had taken up a very antique volume of manuscript, of an oblong form, bound in black damask.

"It is the album or common-place book of one of our great stateswomen, the Duchess Marguerite," said Monsieur Marchal: "her government of the Low Countries, and her famous treaty of Cambray, in which she outwitted the wily cardinal D'Amboise, and a woman as astute, though not as enlightened as herself, entitle her to that epithet." He added, as he presented the book, "You see her well-known and mystic device—'*Fortune, infortune, fort une.*'"

"Sir Frederiek started: the eyes of Madame Marguerite were fixed on him with a strange expression; but she resumed her drawing.

"Here," continued the Conservator, "are her arms on the cover, and here is her autograph."

"*Balades!*" said Sir Frederick, reading the title, "a strange work for a diplomatist!"

"Oh, she was a true woman!" said Madame Marguerite—

"Cette ancienne bibliothèque royale,
formée des librairies que les Ducs de Bourgogne avoient créés
pour le délassement et l'instruction des princes de leur sang,

Augmentée par les Souverains Autrichiens,
Renfermant des Manuscrits précieux de douze siècles,
Transportée en partie à Paris 1726, restituée en 1770,
Fut ouverte au public en 1772 par Marie Thérèse
et le Prince Charles,

De nouveau enlevée en 1794—rendue en 1815;
Elle est destinée par un arrêté du 24 Avril 1831,
à devenir la base d'un Musée historique.

“author, politician, sovereign, but *femme avant tout*; as every word in this most charming volume shows. Here is stanza *tracé d'inspiration*, in her own hand-writing to prove it: it is in the old Flemish-French of her court, which has a charm for me beyond the *purism* of a French academician.

‘Quelque soit, je vous oublieray,
Pleust à Dieu que fût de ceste heure,
Mais de tant plus, qu’a ce labeure,
Tant plus en memoire vous ay.’

Through the obscurity of this old French you see the idea of Moncrieff’s delightful refrain,

‘En songeant qu’il faut qu’on l’oublie,
On s’en souvient.’”

“What a charming line!” said Sir Frederick, devouring the manuscript. “It appears through all these stanzas that the Princess Marguerite was unhappy.”

“To be sure she was,” said Madame Marguerite. “She had got the start of her age, a crime never forgiven. She had the heart of a woman, the mind of a man, and was tied down to the barbarous formalities of a court she despised. Here is the *résumé* of her life, called *Chanson faite par Madame*.

‘C’est pour jamais que regret me demeure,
Qui sans cesser, nuit et jour, à tout eure
Tant me tourmant que bien voudroie mourir.’”

“*En attendant*, however,” said Monsieur Marchal; “she amused herself pretty gaily, as this old and very damaged volume proves. You see, it once had a splendid cover; it was bound in crimson damask. The paper is black with golden letters, its title *Plusiers basse dance*. It was the quadrille book of the Court of Brussels in the fifteenth century, and belonged to our Duchess Marguerite herself. Here is an explanation of the dances *à la mode*, in seventeen pages that follow the music; and here are the names, ‘*La Marguerite*,’ ‘*L’esperance de Bourbon*,’ ‘*M’amours*,’ ‘*ma mie*,’ ‘*va-t-en, mon amoureux desir*,’ ‘*Filles à marier*,’ ‘*La dance de Ravestain*,’ ‘*La douce Amour*,’ and ‘*le joyeux de Bruxelles*,’ a name of true Belgian origin.”

“Yes,” said Madame Marguerite; “it is remarkable that the Belgians, like the old Castilians, were a vivacious people, till the *espionage* established in domestic life by the Spanish rule quenched their spirit in a cautious, if not gloomy reserve; but they will soon recover under free institutions, and we shall have them dancing the *joyeux des Bruxelles*, as in the time of their own Madame Marguerite.”

“No doubt,” said the Conservator; “and I am glad that you, Madame, are collecting materials for the life of that most accomplished Belgian lady.”

“Oh! only for its pictorial illustrations.”

“Who, then, is to compose the text?” asked Sir Frederick.

“The Princess of Schaffenhauseu,” replied Madame Marguerite.

“Is she capable of that?” said Sir Frederick; “with her creed of absolutism, so different from your own, as to make your connexion a paradox.”

“We have a stronger tie than that of opinion. She wants me, I want her—*Je vous conviens, vous me convenez*. As for the work, she will bring to it all her *amour propre*; and that is a great inspiration. Her husband, by the Trazeymers, is descended from the Dukes of Burgundy: I have just picked up ‘*La véritable Histoire de Gilleon de Trazeymer*,’ a very old work, with which she is delighted.”

“But here,” said Monsieur Marchal, returning from the other end of the library—“here is the pearl of cur collection; as bearing upon a fashionable branch of modern literature. It is the joint production of two pretty women; commenced in the sixteenth century by one, and finished by the other in the seventeenth—Marie de Behercke, and Wilhelmina Del Vaël.”

“The first *bas bleus* on record, I suppose?” said Sir Frederick.

“In what relation these two ladies stood to each other, or how the volume passed from the one to the other, is unknown,” continued Madame Marguerite; “but a very pleasant hypothesis was raised the other evening by Monsieur Campan,* that they were grandmother and grand-daughter; and he speculated upon the ludicrous effect the love vows addressed to the elder lady must have had on the younger, who could only have known her as old, wrinkled, and venerable.”

“Yet,” said Sir Frederick, “the thought did not prevent her registering her own loves for the benefit of her grand-children. The *hommages*, I see, are in all languages, and would answer as well for the albums for 1833 as for 1624 (the date of some of its verses). Pray, what does this Flemish mean?”

‘Naer lyden
Kompt verblyden.’

“Why, that the author was as great a coxcomb as any other of the species,” said Madame Marguerite: ‘*verbatim*, it is, “*after pain comes pleasure*,” the reverse was more probably the truth, though that does not much matter now.”

* Monsieur Campan has since made this manuscript the subject of a pleasant article in *L'Artiste*, a Brussels periodical of distinguished merit, to which some of the most eminent men are contributors.

"Here," said Monsieur Marchal, laying his hand on a pile of very old manuscripts, in coarse antiquated binding, "here is another æra of mind, illustrated with the names and autographs of Erasmus, Heinsius, and Puteanus; but *je vous ferais graces des pedans en vs*, one little anecdote excepted, Dorothée de Croy, Duchesse de Croy, sent these complimentary verses to Puteanus.

'Blâmera qui voudra le style de ta voix,
Et tes divins écrits d'où naissent l'ambrosie,
Elle n'a pas de goût pour l'ignare et l'envie :
Ains agace leurs dents et cause tant d'aboïs ;
Aboïs qui n'ont pouvoir que d'honorer ta fâme,
Et accroistre ton los en accroissant leur blâme.

'*A Bruxelles, 6^e Février 1614.*'

"And how do you think Puteanus replied?"

"Like a pedant, of course," said Madame Marguerite.

"Exactly; by criticising the false concord in the second line, which he calls a '*synthèse peu tolérable.*'"

"The learned men of that day, unlike those of the present times," said Sir Frederick, with a slight bow of the head, "knew but little of the courtesies of life."

"*Apropos* to which," said Madame Marguerite, "we must not intrude farther on the inexhaustible politeness of Monsieur Marchal: the hour for closing the Bibliothèque is come."

"It is so natural," said Sir Frederick, "to forget time, when searching into its records, under such auspices."

"I am always too happy to do the honours by visitors of all nations; but more particularly by such true lovers of antiquity and arts as Monsieur, and Madame Marguerite."

"It is a privilege," said Sir Frederick, as he conducted her to the carriage, "to be presented by you."

"Yes, here: but I could do nothing for you at Almack's."

"It is, perhaps, the only place where I should not require your protection."

"*A l'Hôpital de la Vieillesse Malheureuse*," said Madame Marguerite to her servant. "I will not ask you, Sir Frederick, to accompany me there."

"If you did, I should accept the invitation, as I have done that for to-morrow evening, without calculating the consequences. But you have not given me the *itinéraire* of your Pavillon."

"Here it is," she said, presenting him a card, "and remember the hour."

"You will find it more difficult," he replied, "to teach me to forget, than to remember:

'En songeant qu'il faut qu'on l'oublie
On s'en souvient.'"

Madame Marguerite drove off for the hospital, and Sir Frederick to dress for a dinner at Monsieur Engler's, preoccupied, amused, and—in love: golden circumstances in the life of the idle, the *ennuyé*, and the susceptible.

CHAPTER V.

THE FETE IN THE FOREST.

No capital in Europe possesses more beautiful environs than that of Belgium. Deficient in every feature of sublimity, in all that strikes boldly on the mind, and awes the imagination; with no Alps that rise, no sea that rolls, no volcanic elements to threaten or destroy, there is every where much to cheer the spirit of man, and nothing to make him feel how light, in the great scheme of creation, are his individual interests and existence.

That hardy and strenuous enterprise, which found the Low Countries the region of the crane and the stork, the refuge of the wolf and the boar, has left it the land where man may best feel himself the lord of the ascendant. Rich in a soil that teems with luxurious abundance, with forests that shade and temper the influence of the elements, the provinces of Belgium unite in their scenery the highest features of moral and picturesque beauty. Its feudal castles, and holds of force and violence, serve now but as features for the painter, to tip a crag, or to frown over a glen. Its magnificent abbeys and lonely monasteries, once the causes of popular prostration, are now subsidiary to the wants of man, the receptacles and the shelter of his industry; and every where the bell-capped mansion and comfortable cottage give token of a pervading equality, and fill up the fearful vacuum which in other less blessed regions separates the castle and the hut. Even the faubourgs and suburban dependencies of Brussels are scenes to paint, as well as to enjoy. The valley and village of Etterbeek, its gardens, and ponds, and rustic *guinguettes*; the hamlet of Ixelles, with its splendid prospects; the superb park of La Cambre; Boisfort, which rivals in beauty the villages of Switzerland, with the deep and dark line of the Forest of Soignes, are subjects of the highest inspiration to pictorial genius—of the profoundest reflection to the moral philosopher.

Amidst these various sites, replete with picturesque beauty, there is one of pre-eminent loveliness, where the eloquent silence of Nature in her grand repose is interrupted by the eve-

ning song of myriads of nightingales. It is called the 'Gronendael,' or green valley. There still moulder the ruined cloisters of the once stupendous monastery, to which the Infanta Isabel, one of the ablest and most powerful sovereigns of the Low Countries, retreated from the cares of state and the tedium of a court. There, too, the Emperor Charles the Fifth bade his last farewell to greatness; and, surrounded by Philip the Second, Eleanor, the wife of Francis the First, Marie, Queen of Hungary, Maximilian of Austria and his wife, and Mulez Hassan, a King of Numidia, took an early repast, previous to resigning the imperial crown for the cowl of a monk.

In a site so favoured by nature, so consecrated by time, so tinged with ideality, and yet so within the lines of civilization, the late Prince of Schaffhausen possessed an ancient hunting-tower. This descendant of one of the great feudal families of Europe, the Belgian Prince, the Spanish Grandee, the Count of the Empire, had all the faults, prejudices, and tendencies incidental to his caste. Selfish, haughty, despotic, sensual, he was witty and tasteful; a voluptuary in the capitals of Europe, passionate for the arts, and liberal in their encouragement; in his castle on the Rhine he would gladly have been a petty *suzerain*, as his father was before him, whose uncontrolled power had actually permitted him to pronounce sentence of death on one of his serfs, and to execute it in the court of his castle. The once astute statesman, the disciple of absolutism, was utterly disappointed and disgusted with the arrangements which had followed the battle of Waterloo. His hope for Belgium had centred in the restoration of the Austrian power; and he was wont to say that he did not choose to be elbowed by the petty Princes of Nassau, who had no political existence when his own family were sovereign powers.

He was one of the many grand seigneurs of Brussels who left it for Vienna, in the same disgust against the government of King William as those of his class and temper have lately exhibited against King Leopold. In disposing, therefore, of his splendid hotel in the old Spanish quarters of Brussels, (the neighbourhood of the Alvas and the Fustenburgs,) he had sent his precious pictures, and other objects of art, to his ancient *campagne* belonging to his family in the Gronendael, until he could make up his mind in which of his many mansions he should deposit them.

Chance, and the pursuit of the arts, had brought to visit this remote gallery in the forest the person whom he had afterwards made his wife; and it was at her suggestion that he had been induced to re-edify and enlarge the building, but the outbreak of the Belgian revolution drove him again from his temporary residence in its neighbourhood, and interrupted the progress of his improvement and his plans.

Shortly afterwards he married,—partly from passion, and

partly in the hope of disinheriting his next heir. His death, however, occurred almost immediately after his marriage; and his liberal bequests to his widow left the successor to his title nothing beyond what the law awarded him. Over his German property he had no power, save the splendid ruins of a castle on the Rhine; but his Belgian estate, in the neighbourhood of the Forest of Soignes, he had left to the now celebrated Princess of Schaffenhauseu.

His widowed Princess had probably shared the prejudices of her aristocratic husband, as she had not visited Brussels since her marriage. It was only within the last few months, that orders had arrived from England to her agent to continue the edifice in the Forest of Soignes, and to double the number of workmen employed on it.

Since the Princess's arrival in Belgium, she had made the Pavilion of the Gronendael her head-quarters; declining all visits, and busied in superintending her buildings, and inquiring into the state of her affairs. The caprice of ennui (that malady of the fortunate, that penalty of the rich) might have probably determined her to seek amusement in this expensive toy; thus adding one more superfluous residence to those she already possessed without occupying: but it was generally supposed that the influence which Madame Marguerite had obtained over her, had been the more immediate cause of recommencing the fairy palace, in which possibly the whimsical Ar mida would never eventually dwell.

It was in this pavilion that the retiring artist had obtained permission to make her adieus to her brethren, on quitting professional life under the liberal protection of her sumptuous patroness.

The sun had nearly set, and the tops of the trees of La Cambre, and the pinnacles of the abbey, were alone brightened by its declining rays, as Sir Frederick stopped his carriage at that beautiful and elevated point of view called *L'arbre vert*. He had done so at the advice of his courier, to look down on the rich and magnificent scene that spread beneath; and then proceeded by Boisfort, through the Forest of Soignes, to an opening among the trees, which led by a foot-path to the pavilion of the Gronendael. Having left his carriage at a *guinguette*, (where a vine-covered porch displayed a living group, such as, in the language of art, would be described as a happy accident,) he set out on foot with his guide, by a tangled brake diverging into many 'an alley green,' till the deep, dark defiles of interlacing trees scarcely left more than a straggling ray of light to point the way. A gurgling stream roamed amidst the high rank herbage, nourished by one of those springs which so frequently gush up amidst forest scenery like magical creations. Sir Frederick, as he forced his way along the tangled and briary path, soon withdrew his attention from the natural beauties of

the scene; and in some impatience he asked his courier, "Is there no carriage-road to the pavilion?"

"There is a road now clearing, Monsieur le Chevalier," replied the courier, "a mile below the village of Boisfort; and another old and rutted road leads from the hamlet of Gronendaël to La Hulp: but this is the shortest and the most beautiful; and it opens at once on the *rendezvous de chasse*, where Monseigneur le Prince began his *maison de plaisance*. Excepting the pavilion at Terveuren, there will be nothing comparable to it, if Madame la Princesse ever completes it: but, *hundert tausend sacrament!* 'who will answer for a great lady!' It was Madame Marguerite's postilion who desired me to bring *votre seigneurie* by this track: I hope I haven't lost my way."

"I hope so, too, with all my soul!" said Sir Frederick.

The next moment the hope was realized, by the appearance of twinkling lights, which sparkled like fire-flies through the branches of the trees, and by the faint sounds of music. Farther on, a dark arcade, cleared under the entwined branches of a mass of elms, opened at once upon the pavilion, which stood in the midst of one of those cleared spaces that, in forest-scenery, are designated as a *rendezvous de chasse*. Its gothic porch was of pure white stone, and presented a perfect specimen of the most ornamented and elaborated style of that picturesque order. Its long, narrow, and elegant casements, filled with painted glass, threw their many-coloured tints on the green sward without; and three pointed arches, opening to the free air, gave a perfect view of the interior of an illuminated gallery behind. The light shafts and feathered tracery of this beautiful fragment were alone clearly discernible. The forest-trees, and the dark outline of a massive turret, formed the background. Beds of flowers, clustering shrubs, and *corbeilles* of rare exotics, enriched and perfumed the verdant lawn in front.

Here, seeing all, himself unseen, Sir Frederick Mottram stopped, and seated himself on a rustic bench, under the wide-spreading branches of a giant oak, one of the leading features of the sylvan scene. Groups were passing in and out of the portico, and the inner apartment was occupied by a crowd of persons of both sexes. The hostess of the evening was occupied in arranging music on a piano-forte, which stood exactly in a line with the central open archway. Among the persons surrounding the instrument, Sir Frederick distinguished Colonel —, and other Polish gentlemen, the Italian exile whom he had met in the *treckschuyt*, Cholet, the delightful tenor of the *Pré aux Clercs*, Messrs. Fétis, Belliard, and other professors and amateurs of distinction, some of whom he had met at the house of Monsieur Engler on the preceding evening. Among the groups scattered through the room, he also recognized the striking head of the Minister of the Interior, Messieurs

Gachard, Marchal, Van H—, Mr. Grattan,* and M. Mock, (to whose several writings Belgium stands equally indebted for investing it with new interest,) with Dr. Freidlander, (one of the most liberal and elegant German writers of the day,) and other foreign notabilities, who had been pointed out to him in the streets and public reading rooms of Brussels. But, among this varied group, he saw no form to which he could assign his own vague and fantastic idea of the Princess of Schaffenhäusen; and he rejoiced at the fact. There was nothing in the scene which by the remotest association could recall the restraint imposed by his own exclusive circle and its cold despotic forms, to scare his eyes and grieve his heart! Everything around him was strange, new, unconnected with ancient habits and morbid feelings, as the site he occupied.

The tuning of musical instruments was now completed. Madame Marguerite had taken her place at the piano-forte, with a sweep of chromatic modulations which showed the science of a mistress of the art. He thought, as he listened, of her pictures, of her conversation; he looked at her person, irradiated as her splendid countenance then was, by sensations which music alone awakens in those organized for its enjoyments. Coquetry, too, could not have chosen a more appropriate dress than her usual, full, voluminous robe of rich black stuff, and her wonted *faute*, thrown back from her head, and serving as a fine relief to her flashing eyes and sibyl face.

The music performed was a Polish hymn to liberty. The solo parts were sung by Madame Marguerite, in a deep, soul-touching contra-alto voice; the chorus, by the Polish and other foreign gentlemen. It was one of those calm and genial nights, when music acquires its fullest power over beings susceptible of its mysterious spells. Not a breath of air disturbed even the clear flame of a lamp which hung over a fountain, whose rills trickled round the roots of a huge, blighted elm, once the rival of the oak, under which Sir Frederick lounged.

The impressionable temperament of the late cold and arid statesman, (the slave of mental habits at variance with nature's intentions in his favour,) yielded to the enchantment of the fresh and scented atmosphere, and the witching of sweet sounds. He thought the melody of the Polish hymn was almost an argument in favour of the Polish cause; and even the liberation of classic Italy, and of honest Germany, stole on his affections as plausible and possible, through the passionate voices of men so gifted and so worthy to enjoy all that bounteous nature had created for their use.

The music ceased; the Belgians applauded. *They* had

* The Heiress of Bruges, by Mr. Grattan, in historical research and local colouring, is comparable to many of Walter Scott's best pictures of national peculiarities.

completed their great work, and their sympathies were offered with an unoffending expression of pity and admiration for their less fortunate brothers. Refreshments were then served, and Madame Marguerite, circulating through her guests, advanced from the gallery to the portico, and from the portico to the open air. In the courteous *surveillance* of a society accustomed to receive those personal attentions which English bon ton has banished from its circles, she advanced to the last stragglers, with a pleasant word and a welcoming smile for each, till she reached the seat where Sir Frederick reposed. Her recognition was instantaneous and cordial.

“Ah!” she said, “you have selected your *bel respiro* well. I pray you mark the spot; it is that on which Charles the Fifth took his last leave of his family, and of the allies of his power, the day he abdicated. What a group! What a scene! I have sketched it as the subject of a future picture.”

“The scene,” said Sir Frederick, “is exquisitely beautiful; but the historical interest you now attach to it is infinitely more interesting. What a lesson on the vanity of human passions!”

“And what a lesson on the vanity of that unlimited power beyond what man should trust with man!” she replied.—Look at that German, that Italian, those Poles, all victims of the despotism still subsisting, still flourishing, which it was the ambition of Charles to establish; for that he laboured and fought, and for what?—to die of religious melancholy and ennuï in a cloister! The music, which still rings in my ears, is a fearful comment on the story.”

The music you allude to breathes of sentiment, of passion, of enthusiasm; but I do not see by what reasonable association it connects itself with the despotism (if so you will call it) of Charles the Fifth.”

“It breathes of human suffering, of national degradation, of force, of injustice; and it but repeats the tale of centuries of wrong, enacted in every kingdom of continental Europe to this present day. And for whose benefit did the candidate for universal monarchy and unmixed despotism raise the superstructure of evil? Think of the successors of Charles. The foundress of the stock was Joan the mad: Charles the Fifth died mad; Philip the Second lived in ferocious delirium; and his bigoted and stultified successors exhibited, in scarcely less striking characters, their intellectual monstrosity. *Au reste*, you were at the congress of Vienna, and can tell whether the successors to the power and the inheritors of the blood of the universal monarchist are either better or happier than their predecessor.”

Sir Frederick remained for a moment silent.

“You do not agree with me yet,” said Madame Marguerite.

“Perhaps not,” he said; “but I at least feel with you, and

that is a preliminary step to agreement. That music of yours is a great rhetorician: and you have a mode of attacking the mind through the senses, which leave it without the power or the wish of resistance."

"A great cause," she replied coldly, "should owe nothing to such sybarite accessories."

"And is not all here sybarite?" he said, endeavouring to detain her, by catching the floating end of her *faulle*, as she was in the act of passing him—"The air we breathe, the scene we occupy, the voice which penetrates to the innermost recesses of our existence, and turns life into a trance!"

"And observe," she said with animation, taking his offered arm; pray observe that Nature is the fountain of all this; and that when you exclude her fresh vital breath, reverse her seasons, and, above all, neglect her great distinctions, for those of artificial society, you forfeit all the charms which now so much excite your rather excitable imagination. But I must make you known to some of our Belgian notabilities, our revolutionary ministers, past, present, and (I dare say) to come.—I have nothing for you in the way of a Metternich, a Talleyrand, or a Montague St. Leger; nothing to set against the diplomatists I have seen filling the *salons* of the Princess of Schaffhausen in London and Vienna. Ours are the agents of the day, the necessities of the occasion, the springs of a new movement; and their characteristics are as peculiar as their position."

"Pray," he said, holding her back, as she approached a group at the portico, "let me for awhile, at least, be a spectator, an auditor—an—"

"Oh! I won't *commit* you; nothing plebeian shall get between the wind and your gentility. Look at that energetic, gesticulating man, with a countenance all expression, and an eye all fire; I may present you to him: he is of the equestrian order—of *your* order," (she added with pointed expression.) "In England, he would be what the Princess calls "*Sure somebody*." Is not that like her?"

"Too, too like her!" he replied, the whole scene in the Opera-box rushing on his memory.

"But Charles de Broucker *s'en moque*," she continued; "he has far other claims for distinction."

"Is your Princess here?" asked Sir Frederick.

"Oh!" she said ironically; "princesses are *patronesses* of the arts: They *purchase* talent; but they do not enter with it into social equality. '*Ces gens là*,' as Madame Du Deffand called Voltaire and D'Alembert—'*ces gens là*' make a part of the parade of aristocratic station, but do not enter into its intimacy: but you see here men worth all the *altesses Bruxelloises* that ever flourished since the time of the D'Egmonts and the Hornes. Look to your left; you see that person talking to Constantine

Rodenbach, whom you met at Bruges. It is Monsieur De Meulenaere."

"One of your ministers, I believe," observed Sir Frederick, putting up his glass.

"Il est, le fut, ou le doit être,"

replied Madame Marguerite, laughing; "for talent and energies like his must always be available in such great revolutionary times as the present. His best distinction is simply that of a pure patriot; he is, however, an historical fact."*

"By the energy of their movements, they must be deciding the fate of the nation, at least."

"They did so once," said Madame Marguerite, seating herself on a mound of cushions, which, after the old Spanish Brabantian fashion, were scattered on the lawn. Sir Frederick drew a tabouret beside her, much amused at the moving and characteristic scene before him. "But pray observe that group to your right."

"I have been observing it some time," said Sir Frederick.

"'Tis an odd coincidence," she continued, "but there stands nearly the whole of the last provisional government of the Belgian Revolution. There is Charles Rogier, the Minister of the Interior, who, in the most awful moment of popular fermentation, flung himself into the very gap of anarchy, and established that character of dauntless devotedness to a great cause, which may be deemed the chivalry of politics. Next to him stands the brave, the gallant, the patriotic commander of the National Guard, the Baron Vander Linden D'Hoogvoorst; and there is the honest, single-minded, Count Felix de Merode: he is in conversation with Colonel Joly, who, from aiding to emancipate and govern a nation, is now contented to fall back upon the arts, and is the Director of the *Musée*. That venerable personage who is about to join them, is the ex-regent, Baron Surlet de Chokier. He comes but rarely amongst us, now that he has abdicated his public functions; but he deserves well of his country, and is in full possession of its respect. That elderly man near him is the Baron de Sécus, the Nestor of the Chamber of Deputies; and next to him is Count Robiano."†

"Oh! you admit, then, that the Belgian *noblesse* did come forward? for here are barons and counts in plenty."

* "Lorsque M M. De Meulenaere et Vilain XIV. furent écartés des états généraux, lors des élections en 1829, on ouvrit spontanément, dans les Flandres, une souscription, pour leur offrir une médaille en or, à leur effigie."—*Episodes de la Révolution, &c. &c.*

† At this time Mons. Giendebien was in the country; and Monsieur Van de Weyer was in London, the Minister Plenipotentiary from his government to the English Court.

“So few, on the contrary,” she interrupted, “as to make the exceptions only more remarkable.”

“But where is your equestrian? his countenance interested me.”

“Ay! where indeed! He ‘is the movement’ personified; he has passed through every phasis of the Belgian Revolution, prominent in all, and giving to each something of his own characteristic energy; rapid as a meteor—as bright, and as unfixed; and, though shooting from sphere to sphere with incalculable celerity, always leaving the track of his light behind him: a patriot from sentiment, a *frondeur* from principle, and a lover of liberty and the arts from temperament.”

“He has played, then, no ordinary part in your revolution.”

“Oh! he started from the post, and a little before it. Called to the representation in 1827, he distinguished himself by a motion in favour of the liberty of the press, which was then compromised by an exceptional law,—an act of vigour which placed him in public opinion at the head of the Belgian opposition. Conjointly with the Counts de Celles and de Langhe, he proposed, during the heat of the commotions of September 1830, the administrative separations of Belgium and Holland. He was, on various occasions, the chosen negotiator with the Prince of Orange, and successively Military Governor of the Province of Liege, Minister of Finance, (a place which he threw up on the proposed election of Leopold,) Minister of the Interior on Leopold’s nomination, and afterwards, on the invasion of the territory, aide-de-camp to the King, when he succeeded in bringing together and re-arming ten thousand men of the dispersed and demoralized army after the affair of Louvain. At a moment of general confusion, when nobody would accept the portfolio of minister of war, it was almost forced on Monsieur de Brouckere. Still, however, he found himself placed in a false position, by the conflict of his duties and sentiments towards the King with his feelings and principles as a member of the opposition in the Chamber of Deputies; and he ultimately vacated his seat, and accepted the office of director of the mint, which, being disconnected with politics, he could hold without a compromise.”

“You have given me,” said Sir Frederick, “a reason the more for visiting the Hôtel de la Monnaie to-morrow, which I had already intended to do.”

“Yes, and you will find the Master of the Mint as sharp-cut, as salient, and as fresh, as any of his own coins. There are various opinions of Charles de Brouckere; but I cannot help placing him in the first rank of national talent. He is accused, however, of wanting that sagacious submission to the pressure of events, that wise indulgence for the inconsistencies of men, which are indispensable for the conduct of all great enterprises. Honest, straight-forward, seeing at once what ought to be, and

taking a bird's-eye view of the circumstances of a position, a pebble thrown in his path may check his progress: he starts, draws up, neither stumbles nor retreats, but flies off at a tangent, indignant at the paltry obstruction. To the querulousness arising from the first check, he yields with the frowardness of a spoiled child; and with '*all or nothing*' for his motto, he makes the impossibility of attaining the first his excuse for falling back upon the last. It was this quality which induced King Leopold, with his usual tact, to say, '*Charles de Brouckere est un homme dont on ne peut rien faire, mais sans lequel on ne peut rien faire.*' Would you like to be presented to him now?"

"Not now," said Sir Frederick, hanging back; "you see he is engaged, and with a person who looks like a *preux* of ancient chivalry, a '*jeune et beau Dunois.*'"

"You have hit him off well," said Madame Marguerite.

"Felix Chazal is the Bayard of our revolution, '*sans peur et sans reproache.*' Every trait of his short career is striking and elevated. The hero of the commotions at Mons, he at twenty-one years of age exhibited a presence of mind, a courage, and a diplomatic dexterity, that would have done honour to a veteran general. At Antwerp, in conjunction with his friend Rogier, he succeeded, by the firmness and decision of his manner, in extorting an armistice for the city. During several months of official disorganization and confusion, he, as intendant-general of the army, had immense sums at his disposition; yet he quitted his office in a poverty as honourable, as it is (under such circumstances) rare. He is now colonel commandant of the province of Liege."

"And who is that intellectual young person, whose sedate air forms so striking a contrast with the physiognomies of the two fiery sons of republicanism?"

"'Tis Monsieur Nothomb, the historian of the revolution, in which he has borne himself a distinguished part. He is another instance of the political talent latent in the middle ranks of society, which awaits but the call of occasion to show itself for the benefit of mankind. A doctor of laws at the age of twenty-one, he shortly afterwards quitted his native country of Luxembourg (where he practised as an advocate,) to commence journalist at Brussels. At the outbreak of the revolution, he became secretary of the constitutional committee, and was very influential in fixing the bases adopted for the Belgian constitution: In the congress, also, he defended the monarchical system with two chambers; and, being convinced that nothing but ruin could result from a war, he became an active partisan of what has been so inconsiderately censured as the system of protocols."

"Yes," interrupted Sir Frederick, "'twas the only chance. That was great foresight in so young a man."

"In March 1831 he became secretary of foreign affairs, and strongly advocated the election of Leopold. He was conse-

quently chosen, together with Monsieur Devaux, a commissary to the conference in London, where they conjointly arranged with Lord Palmerston the celebrated eighteen articles of peace."

"I must, then, have seen him when in London," said Sir Frederick: "I thought his face was familiar to me. Pray go on."

"In every step of our revolution he has contributed largely towards determining its character; and, being compelled by the necessities of the times to adopt the *juste milieu*,* as the only system compatible with the permanence of national independence, he, of course, has constantly been employed, and has shown himself an active member of the government, and a firm and useful supporter of its measures in the Chamber. Replete with acquired information, and endowed with a singular perspicacity of judgment, he has acquired great influence with his party both in the cabinet and the chamber; and in his work, which you have doubtless read, he has as ably as elegantly defended the revolution before the tribunal of continental Europe."

"His book," said Sir Frederick, "affords the clearest insight into the origin and tendency of your revolution that I have yet acquired. It is marked throughout by a moderation and good sense, that gave me the impression of a more mature and practised mind than so youthful a person should indicate."

"The Belgians," she continued, "though some think him too much a *doctrinaire*, are justly proud of his talents; and, as a member of private society, he is not the less gay, *spirituel*, and unpretending, than he is laborious and able in office: unlike some of your English rising young men, as you call them, who '*cachent la médiocrité sous la masque de la gravité*.'"

"He, I suppose," said Sir Frederick, "is one of your working men?"

"Our ministers," she replied, "are all working men: Belgium is too poor to afford the luxury of aristocratic show servants. There, for instance, that tall, studious-looking person, is Monsieur Lebeau, minister of Justice, who passes for the leader of our cabinet, and the very spirit of the *juste milieu*. Like his friend Nothomb, doctor of laws, advocate, journalist, and author, he was the first individual singled out for office by the provisional government, which appointed him advocate-general in the supreme court of justice at Liege. He was one of the committee of safety formed in that city to protect property and avert anarchy, on the breaking out of the revolution; and he was also of the deputation sent by the inhabitants of Liege to treat with the Prince of Orange for the administrative separation of the two countries. Subsequently, he was chosen on

* Whatever may be thought of France and England, the *juste milieu* was forced upon Belgium by inevitable circumstances.

the committee for drawing up the constitution : and he has continued ever since an influential member of the cabinet. As a statesman, cool, cautious, and astute, he has laboured to consolidate the system which the geographical and political circumstances of the country have forced on its adoption. He has with infinite tact and adroitness laboured to conciliate the timid and suspicious allies who have agreed to acknowledge, without loving, the revolutionary government ; and, in doing this, he has not retrograded into that semi-legitimacy which has depopularized the government of Louis-Philippe. That, indeed, the Belgian people would not have endured. As an orator, Monsieur Lebeau is the main stay of the administration. He is always heard in the Chambers with attention and respect ; as uniting with a persuasive and energetic oratory, a penetrating intellect, a singular tact, and a compassed solid sense. In temperament and disposition he is the opposite of his friend Rogier. The latter, bold, frank, simple, all impulse and sentiment, was well suited to the moment of action, which drew him from the ranks of an arduous professional life ; the former, reflective, cautious, almost Machiavelian, is better suited to treat with the corrupted cabinets of old Europe, and to parry their fence by a *finoterie* not inferior to their own. Rogier is the poetry, Lebeau the prose of the revolution."

"The poetry of the revolution ?" said Sir Frederick, shaking his head.

"What !" said Madame Marguerite, "do you think that revolutions are made by the cold-blooded ? Are great changes impressed on society by mathematical calculation ? The enthusiasm which placed Charles Rogier in the most perilous predicaments, was the quality most wanting in the moment of conflict. Parties may disagree upon shades of opinion ; the ministers of to-day may be inapplicable to the exigencies of to-morrow, in times of such rapid transition ; but Belgium should never forget the men, who threw themselves headlong into her cause at a moment when everything that was cold and calculating deserted it.* Much of the purity and success of

* On the 20th of September the *Garde Bourgeoise* was disarmed, and all the authorities dispersed ; the 23rd was the first day of the battle of Brussels ; and it was in the midst of this scene of carnage and of anarchy that a provisional government was formed. Of this, the following proclamation affords the evidence :

"PROCLAMATION.

"Depuis deux jours Bruxelles est dépourvue de toute espèce d'autorité constituée : l'énergie et la loyauté populaire en ont tenu lieu. Mais tous les bons citoyens comprennent qu'un tel état de choses ne peut durer sans compromettre la ville et le triomphe d'une cause dont le succès d'hier a été assuré.

our revolution is owing to its having fallen into the hands of such men as these; to the happy circumstance that none of the fragments of the old diplomacy of Europe meddled with it. The men who made it were in earnest: they had reminiscences, no second thoughts. One Mirabeau, one Metternich, would have spoiled the whole affair. It was not a democratic movement merely, but a revolution of knowledge, directed by an enlightened class; with whom science was not subordinate to craft, nor virtue stifled by precedent."

Sir Frederick, though amused and even interested, still listened with an air of incredulous attention, as one who sought to shelter his prejudices under his scepticism.

"You asked me," he said, "to meet a society of artists; but since the time of your illustrious namesake Marguerite of the Low Countries, no lady was ever so intrenched with ministers."

"Oh! yes," she said, pointedly; "the Portsmouths and the Suffolks in your country, in past times: and, methinks, I have seen in London women of no greater capacity than my own carrying on a sort of diplomacy of the boudoir, ministeresses of the back-stairs, with nothing to distinguish their heads but the coronets that bound them. I have seen, women, and so have you, who had yet their *LASCIA PASSARE*, to councils of state and faction, by qualifying for their position, just as the Suffolks and the Portsmouths had done before them. But what surprises you, Sir Frederick, is, that men in power should surround a woman, who has no one worldly distinction to recommend her."

"I see, I feel that I have offended you, Madame Marguerite," he interrupted; "but I will be frank. There is not one among your guests more alive, perhaps I should say, more infatuated by your talents, than myself; yet, I *am* a little surprised that a professional artist should form the centre of a circle composed of such authorities as one only expects to meet in the salons of rank or the chambers of royalty."

"But you forget, Sir Frederick, that these are men who have risen from the class to which I belong. They are what your cabinets would call *roturiers*. In England, the whole political machine stops when you cannot get a lord to govern the springs,

"Des citoyens guidés par le seul amour du pays ont accepté provisoirement un pouvoir, qu'ils sont prêts à remettre en des mains plus dignes, aussitôt que les élémens d'une autorité nouvelle seront réunis. Ces citoyens sont MM. LE BARON VANDERLINDEN D'HOOGVOORST, de Bruxelles; CH. ROGIER, avocat, de Liège; et JOLLY, ancien officier du génie.

"Ils ont pour secrétaires MM. DE COPPEN et VANDERLINDEN, de Bruxelles.

"Bruxelles, 24 Septembre, 1830."

or a duke to direct the moving power. It is impossible to make you, or your caste, feel this; *mais brisons là.*"

She rose as she spoke, and advanced towards the portico.

"*En dame qui tient bien son salon*, (as Napoleon termed it,) I must now circulate among my guests."

Sir Frederick offered her his arm; but she declined it.

"You want to shake me off," he said, laughing; "but zeal is not enough for proselytism; perseverance is equally necessary: and I have yet," he added, pausing in search of some inquiry to detain her, "so many things to ask, that I cannot so easily dismiss the Pythoness from her tripod! Your ministers are fortunate fellows, with women to eulogize, and no opposition to embarrass them."

"Eulogize! I only speak of them as necessary agents; and, up to the moment you see them, I will not answer for men, and, above all, for men in power. Fortunately for themselves, they have an opposition, a *spirituel* and a spirited opposition; though not a party business, such as your English oppositions often are. There is, it is true, a catholic opposition and a liberal opposition here, each making its own attack on the ministers, and often blaming them for the most opposite faults; but this is not a conspiracy against their places. Every man here goes on his own tack, and does not hesitate to praise and to support where he can."

"The sure sign," said Sir Frederick, "of their newness to affairs."

"Yes: that newness is their salvation. But listen: there, is a spell that unites all parties in Belgium!"

"What divine music!" he exclaimed. "The waltz, in its measure, exerts some strange mystic charm on the organization of us Northerners."

A fine band was playing the melting measure of a beautiful waltz, of that marked and elaborate character which this species of music has received at the hands of the great modern masters.

"How delicious!" said Sir Frederick. "Pray, don't leave me, Madame Marguerite; the air, the perfume of the flowers, the moving music of your own voice—this is life, enjoyment ineffable!"

"And how cheaply purchased:" said Madame Marguerite; "something cheaper than the faded flowers of Covent-garden, Collinet's band, and peas at a guinea a quart."

"Don't talk of it," said Sir Frederick, with an expression of infinite disgust.

"All here is the spontaneous offering," she said, "of un-purchaseable talent. That waltz is the composition of your accomplished Polish friend; another gifted Pole is at the piano-forte; and the rest of the band are all young Belgians, members of the amateur music of Brussels."

“And who is that, not very young, but very animated and graceful person, who talks to one of the fair waltzers?”

“An illustrious Polish magnate, Count P——, the head of one of the noblest families of Poland, by descent, by patriotism, and by valour; of a family, too, illustrated by the glorious devotion of a woman. The heroic deeds of the Countess P., his kinswoman, will shed a glow upon the history of her country, which not all the power of Russia can cloud or conceal from posterity!”

Sir Frederick was irresistibly affected by the unexpected appearance of the noble Pole, under circumstances so much at variance with his own preconceived ideas of expatriated nobility.

“And there,” said Madame Marguerite, pointing to a light and elegant figure, as it whirled by them: “that dark, intelligent, but now reeling head, belongs to our opposition. ’Tis Henry de Brouchere, the brother of Charles; more measured than he, but not, perhaps, less patriotic or gifted. You must hear him speak. He is followed in the dance by the arch-liberal deputy Ernst. He is now passing two of our best and most brilliant *frondeurs*, Julien and Fallon. They are in conversation under the archway: let the Abbé de Foere and the Catholic party look to it.”

“But you will not waltz yourself?” said Sir Frederick, passing his arm round Madame Marguerite’s waist.

She shrunk from the encircling fold, with a shudder disproportioned to an act in which a whole society was engaged with enthusiasm: for in Belgium, as in Germany, the waltz knows no distinction of age, rank or sex; and all yield to its intoxicating involvements, its delicious undulations:

“Pair by pair, and group by group, unite;
The fairest forms in thousand-folded light
Still twinkle to and fro.”*

Sir Frederick drew back, hurt, offended.

“At least,” he said picking up his hat, “let me not prevent you from doing the honours of your assembly, or distinguishing some of your guests by your selection.”

She touched the cordon of an order which hung gracefully over her bosom. “You see,” she said, “I must not dance.”

“You must belong to a very rigid order,” he replied coldly. “I remember some years back, dancing with a very pretty young *chanoinesse* at Vienna, in the full costume of the *Dames Nobles* of Frankfort.”

“But I am not a pretty young *chanoinesse* of the *Dames Nobles*; I have passed through too dreary a noviciate for the order I profess, to indulge in any such intoxicating gaieties. But

* Wieland Oberton.

look around you! There is the beautiful Madame —— of Bruges; there is the truly elegant Madame Q——, with a toilet as Parisian as if fresh from the hands of Victorine; and there is an aristocratic belle, the handsomest woman in Belgium, the Countess ——.”

“I do not mean to waltz,” said Sir Frederick, peevishly.

“Then you must move out of the way; for here they come: neither grass nor gravel will form any impediment.”

As she spoke, the animating influence of the waltz of Guillaume Tell gave a new *élan* to the rotatory movements of the party; and the happy Belgians, escaping beyond the fretted roof and pointed arches of the gothic portico, were now dancing over the very site where the tyrants of their forefathers, with their dusky Numidian guests, once sat in gloomy state, amidst prostrate slaves and kneeling courtiers.

Passing into the gallery behind the portico, Madame Marguerite gave to her guest a new impression of the talent by which she was surrounded, by pointing his attention to several glowing pictures of the modern school, which the liberality and kindness of her brother artists had contributed as ornaments of the night's fête. A cattle-piece of Verboeckhoven, exhibited all the truth and fidelity of Paul Potter, united with an ideality, of which Potter had not a conception, and of which such subjects seem hardly capable. There, too, was the great Scripture subject of Wappers, destined to figure in the coming *anniversaire*, and to recall the ancient reputation of the Flemish school,—the school of Rubens and of Quilenus. There, too, were several cabinet pictures of landscapes, of perfect beauty and execution, the works of the modern school.

While gazing on these exquisite specimens, Sir Frederick's attention was called off, that he might be presented to their authors; and their intelligent and unaffected conversation heightened even the impression made by their works. In reply to his questions on the state of the market, in that sense by which the staple commodities of genius, as of vulgarer minds, must eventually be tried, he learned that the arts in Belgium could hope but for little support from the government; and that the wealthy burghers of Brussels, and the manufacturers of Ghent, Liege, and the other industrial communities, were the best patrons, (that is, purchasers,) of the works of compatriot genius.

The group of artists which now surrounded Madame Marguerite and her English guest was from time to time increased by other persons, attracted by the presence of the hostess. Among the most distinguished of these was the astronomer royal (as he would be termed in England,) Monsieur Quetelet, whose learned writings and European reputation had not prepared Sir Frederick for the mild simplicity of manner, the frank and benevolent cheeriness, which his conversation and ad-

dress so favourably evinced. When will the world learn that modesty is the true mantle of genius; and cease to run after solemn plausibility and arrogating pretension; those infallible attributes of shallowness and inferiority?

Monsieur des Broussarts, the *chef d'instruction publique*, was presented to Sir Frederick, as one capable of giving him the best information upon a subject which must now occupy a prominent place in the inquiries of the sensible traveller, as it will in the views of such statesman as must for the future be selected for the government of reforming Europe,—the education of the people.

The Baron de Stassart, the Belgian La Fontaine, whose *naïve* poetry resolved itself into very vigorous prose during the fierce contests of the revolution, and whose merits are rather obscured than illustrated by his post of president of the senate, at once engaged and fixed the attention of the British ex-minister, by the various information he so readily imparted, and by the polite and pleasing address of the man of the world and practised diplomatist. The Counts Vilain XIV., De Mérode, and d'Arshot, the deputies C. Rodenbach, De Vaux, and Julien, were each severally presented; and a general conversation ensued, in which the reigning topics were discussed in a manner that gave to the foreigner the most favourable impressions of a nation that could produce such specimens of its culture and talents. The announcement of carriages broke up the circle, just as Madame Marguerite returned, after an interval of absence, to do her honours by her English guest.

"You must know the Baron de Stassart," she said, "for many reasons: first, for his own sake, because he has passed through scenes the most singular and momentous, with honour to himself and advantage to his country; and next, because he may be of use to you when you pass through Namur. He is governor of the province; and then, when you return for the great national fête——"

"But," he interrupted with impatient vehemence, "where am I to go?—when to return? for by this time you must be convinced that my movements are no longer under my own direction."

"Under whose, then?" she asked gaily.

"Yours," was the abrupt reply.

"Mine!" She shrugged, and hummed in a low voice,

"Ma foy, aultre part i'ay promis;
C'est quit à quit, et bons amis."

"You are taken in the fact, Madame Marguerite," said a young Belgian amateur. "Every one present is dying to hear you sing the madrigal which you have discovered in the album of the *Damoiselles de Behercke* and *Wilhelma del Vaël*."

“And set to such an appropriate melody,” added Monsieur Fétis, in the indulgence of true talent.

“Well, who will give me their arm to the piano?” she asked, looking round.

Every arm was offered: Sir Frederick’s was taken; and his eyes (as she sang in her sweet, deep, contralto voice) were alternately riveted on her face and on the paper placed before her on the music-desk; where, in the good old French, written and spoken in the court of the Duchess Marguerite, were copied the following lines from the album of the sixteenth century:—

CHANSON.

Vostre humeur m’a point faché,
 Pour vous cognoistre distraicte;
 Ma foy, i’estois bien empesché
 De faire un’ honeste retraicte:
 Ma foy, aultre part i’ay promis—
 C’est quit à quit, et bons amis.

Je ne vous aimois seulement
 Que pour vous cognoistre muable;
 Je suis subicet au changement,
 Car chacun aime son semblable;
 Ainsi n’y a-t-il de crime commis—
 C’est quit à quit, et bons amis.

Lorsque i’estois votre cœur,
 Seul aussi vous éties mon ame;
 Je changois de serviteur
 Lorsque vous changies de dame;
 Le changement nous est permis—
 C’est quit à quit, et bons amis.

Adieu, nous nous verrons un jour,
 Pour raconter de nos fortunes;
 Oublions donc nos amours,
 Quoy quelles soient bien importunes:
 Qui plus y pert, plus y a mis—
 C’est quit à quit, et bons amis.

There was something in the words of this song that went home to the heart and bosom of Sir Frederick Mottram with an effect the most inexplicable. It not only entranced him by the arch and emphatic manner in which it was sung, but it seemed to have a particular and personal application, that plunged him back into past events, and confused and involved him in a reverie that left him alone at the piano-forte, with his eyes and

thoughts riveted on the written words of a song composed near three centuries back.

Meantime Madame Marguerite, overwhelmed by the brilliant plaudits which had followed her exquisite song, had taken the arm of the illustrious Count Plater, and escaped from the hot and crowded gallery into the open air.

It was sometime before Sir Frederick found her alone, and standing near the portico. Either she did not, or affected not to observe his approach; for she moved on to a marble vase filled with bouquets of fresh flowers, from which she was selecting a bunch of *pensées*, as he reached and addressed her.

"You perceive Madame Marguerite," he said abruptly, "that you make your '*honeste retracte*' in vain."

She presented him the flowers she had culled, with a smiling and expressive air.

"I do not want your *pensées*," he said, rejecting the offering peevishly; "I am suffocated by my own. Look at the effect of that moonlight breaking into fragments on the dark masses of the forest, and lighting up a sort of natural arcade of tempting freshness: will you trust yourself with one so dull and miserable, for a moonlight ramble of half an hour?"

"An arcade!" said Madame Marguerite, "it is what we call a *wolf tract*! I will not venture!" And she turned away; but he intercepted her path.

"You must hear me for a moment," he said vehemently; and then, if you will '*quit à quit*,' but not '*bons amis*!'—nay, you had best stay and hear me; or, go where you will, I shall follow you, like your shadow, if indeed shadow you have."

"Oh! you take me for Madame Peter Schlemil!" she replied gravely. "Well, once for all, speak, and I will answer."

She permitted him to draw her arm under his as they walked to and fro amid the illuminated trees.

"First then; when does your Princess leave Brussels? what is her route, and what do you know of my wife's projected visit to her friend's castle on the Rhine! Of course, you know everything—influence even their puppet movements; you are of their confederacy."

"You do me too much honour," she said. "Madame Marguerite the artist, who lives, or rather, who has hitherto lived by her labour, might be permitted to serve, but never admitted to the equality of confidence with such high and puissant dames. I know, however, that the Princess had a letter from Lady Frances Mottram, to announce her intended arrival, wind and weather permitting, in a few days. But, doubtless you also have heard from her to the same purport?"

"No, indeed, I have not. But, pray lay aside for once your tone of mystification, your jesuitism, and answer me frankly.—Do you accompany this idle, frivolous, and dissipated party,

who make their tour to that eternal Rhine an excuse for the neglect of every duty at home! Am I to understand that this is your last evening at Brussels?"

"It was to have been. But the Princess of Schaffhausen means now to await the arrival of her English friends; and has taken a hint from my *soirée* to give them a fête here before they proceed. It is to be a sort of court dinner, *à la grande Duchesse*; and we are to scour the country for a D'Arenbourg, a D'Ursel, a Tresigny, or any fragment of the *Alteses Bruxelloises*, we can collect. In short we are to toast the *Orange Boven* in draughts of Metternich's Johannisberg, and show our contempt of citizen kings, republican ministers, and *roturier* society, *à toute outrance!* I should not wonder if we formed the nucleus of a counter-revolution."

"Psha! nonsense! Your Princess is mad, or something worse! But what are you, who hang upon her protection, and administer to her—her follies, her caprices, to say the least of them?"

"Alas! I am what we all are—the creature of circumstances, an atom in the vortex of events; and, whatever you may think, or the world suppose, the Princess of Schaffhausen has been everything to me. I owe to her the bread I eat, the air I breathe. It was her effort, her exertion, that rescued me from want, from crime, perhaps,—and, oh! too certainly, from despair."

"Good God! how you talk!" said Sir Frederick, more touched by the passionate melancholy of her voice, than by the words she uttered: "with your talents, your intellect, it must always have depended on yourself to command success."

"You would not say so, if you knew my story," she said, sighing deeply. "It is one of the sad and incredible romances of real life, which fiction would shrink from relating. It is a story of strange incidents, from the moment of my birth in the Hospital of St. John of Bruges, to the moment in which here, in the Forest of Soignes, within view of that glittering fabric, of those brilliant and joyous groups, I now lean on your arm. Seduced into confidence by words so winning, by a voice that is itself seduction, I am led to forfeit some of the unblenching spirit that has hitherto borne me above the weakness of complaint, and to confess to you that I have been crushed to the earth, to a state more humble than that of the worm that crawls on it; for I once occupied that bed in the parish workhouse, where you shed tears over the ——"

"I cannot let you go on—not for a moment, at least," said Sir Frederick, in great emotion.

She too was weeping. He led her forward, grasping with a convulsive movement the hand which hung over his arm. They had proceeded a few moments in silence; the lights in the pa-

vilion shone dimly through the intervening trees; they were at the opening of a glen, with 'thickets overgrown, grotesque and wild,' and he was still hurrying her on with, perhaps, unconscious and unintentional rapidity. His breath was short, his step uncertain, and his thoughts a chaos of remembrances, conjectures and doubts, the flash of new convictions, and the influence of passions, to which mind and imagination now lent their dangerous spells: yet he was silent.

"No, said Madame Marguerite, sternly, and suddenly drawing up; "I will go no farther. Let us stop here. Here we have still the forest and its vast silence around us; the pure light of that sparkling firmament above us: here we are still in the presence of the upholders of an ennobling cause, of the defenders of an emancipated people. If you are sufficiently interested for me, to listen to a few details, which may in future place us in the only position in which we can stand towards each other, seat yourself here. Shall I go on?"

"Not," he said, throwing himself on a bank beside the shattered trunk of an oak on which she was now seated, "not until—come what come may—I unequivocally declare my admiration, my gratitude, my passionate devotion! Vague, mysterious, almost awful as are the emotions of this moment, one sentiment is predominant; partaking of all that friendship has most permanent, and love most ardent. Whatever may be the result of such an avowal to one so cold, so regulated, so proud, and so ambitious; for all this, I am aware you are—I know not: but, in a word, Madame Marguerite, I—I love you!"

"You said so once before," she replied, "in such a spot, on such a night as this!"

"But not to you—not to you," he exclaimed, trembling with an emotion so strange, so wild, as to shake his whole frame. "I guess—I know to whom you allude; but to adore you, is to offer a tribute to her merits! There is a resemblance between you; a strange and almost maddening resemblance, which has long struck me; which convinces me that the unfortunate, whose eyes you closed, was some way related to you. But there is still a difference between what you are, and what she was, as wide as between the all I felt then, and the all I feel now; between the effervescence of boyish caprice, and the deep-seated, high-directed, irrevocable devotedness of manhood; of that age, when man is in the prime of passion, as of reason; and when woman, retaining the charm of youth, gives to its allurements the more binding spell of mind. Oh! you have seen and known too much, not to have discovered that all which is worth possessing in this melancholy farce, in which we are forced to play a blind and mysterious part—the all that is really good, is such a union as it is possible for us to form. I beseech you, hear me out! You are no longer a

girl; and I am, in mind, even older than in years. We have both been miserable; we have been so, according to your bitter allusion, from an early estrangement from your goddess, Nature. Let us return, then, to her dictates, to her laws, while yet her best gifts are ours. I am weary of the world: the world is weary of me. I have found you here, in a region of enchantment. All that is beautiful in nature, all that is intoxicating in art, surrounds you; but the paradise is only borrowed. Yours to-night, but whose to-morrow? A woman's, who has won it by arts you have scorned to practise; a woman who, were she worthy to be your friend, your protectress, would not now be mistress here. Let me, then, press upon your apprehension the uncertainty of your tenure of the favour of this bad or foolish woman; the possibility of falling back, and at a time of life when the energies of youth, the moral force of that prime of womanhood you are now enjoying, may—can no longer exist, upon unavailing and unrequited industry. I have shed tears in the dreary darksome room of the sublime paintress of the incidents of the Four Days; and I know what you have endured, what you must again endure, should your capricious Princess drop you, as she took you up. Let me press on you, then, the prospect of that worst of all human miseries—the isolation, the desolation of unprovided old age, ‘*La Vieillesse Malheureuse*,’ the hospital, the workhouse! You shudder; but remember, what beauty, what sensibility, what talents——”

“—We have seen brought there!” interrupted Madame Marguerite, in a deep, low voice, and covering her face with her hands.

• “Well!—yes—we have. But instead of making that a subject of eternal reproach to me, use it as a warning, an example, a possibility for yourself. Listen to that divine music; look at that sybarite scene: they are but the borrowed sources of a transient delight. But there are regions as delicious, music as divine, luxuries as refined, and minds as honest, as those you have here collected round you; and for your own sex, you are already beyond and above them. In London, you may still have your wits, your authors, your artists, your statesmen, about you. Then let me implore you to reflect that there is a noble fortune, a devoted heart, at your disposal; and that upon whatever terms you may please to accept it, I offer you a life of——”

“—Infamy!” she interrupted, coolly.

“What jargon!” he replied, in a tone of deep provocation.

“You would call it so, if offered to your wife,” she said.

“Good God! there is no communing with you. If these are your opinions, if these are your prejudices, why have you thrown yourself in my way? why have you sought to pique me into passion, to warm me into the highest order of admiration?”

why have you taken pains to display a mind that has commanded my respect, a mysterious conduct that has worked on my imagination, talents that have enraptured my senses, and graces that have lent themselves to every transition? You cannot suppose that I am such a dolt as to believe that you have done this, all this, in a spirit of fanatical liberalism, to work a political conversion, and bring over one proselyte to a cause in which you can have no interest beyond that of abstract opinion!"

"Why not?" said Madame Marguerite, spiritedly. "What have not women done for religious proselytism! what are they not doing every day! What oceans have they not been tossed on! what distant regions have they not traversed! what deserts have they not perished in!"

"Religion!" he said; "that is another thing."

"Be it so: but have earthly interests no claims on our sympathies? Is that great faith which concerns entire humanity, the greatest happiness of society itself, to have no female advocate? Is the moral, social, and political elevation of the species mere opinion, ever to be discussed, and never acted on? Oh! trust me, sir; if I have had the designs you attribute to me, they would have been a noble mission! But the plain fact is, that impulse, not system, has dictated all that I have said, that bears on the country of my accidental birth and free selection. Belgium has been misrepresented to England! The old cabinets of Europe have spared no pains to betray her cause, or to vilify her upholders! You are among those who influence opinion! You belong to a party, sovereign by its wealth over that branch of the British press which sells its honour, its independence, the interests of humanity, at a price! You are listened to from the benches of the British senate; and though no man is changed, save by time, and the workings of his own perceptions, still the way may be cleared for him, for the free and fair exercise of his faculties. You have accused me of throwing myself in your way! I have but availed myself of the coincidence of our pursuits, and of our travelling contingencies. Had you ever painted a picture, or composed a tale, you would understand how admirably accident produces effects, and combines events, which might appear the results of deep and well-directed study. As one attached to the order of the *Béguines*, and wearing the habit when I perform its offices, I have frequently crossed your path under circumstances too amusing to escape my wayward fancy; and I have availed myself of them to the full bent of my joyous humour, at your expense. I rated you in the hospital at Bruges; I piqued your self-love in the *treckschuyt* at Ghent; I met you in the tower of Charles the Fifth; gave you my blessing on the Kantur, and mystified you in the church of St. Beghé!"

"So," exclaimed Sir Frederick, folding his arms and throw-

ing himself back, "you are, then, as I often suspected, La Sœur Greite! But pray go on."

"Our mutual love of the arts has more than once brought us also together, when it was in my power, at least, to amuse you; and the Princess's loitering mode of travelling, her various stations—for *she* is a *semi-dévoté*, and has her casino in the Béguinage of Ghent, her apartment *à la Du Deffand* in her St. Joseph, in Namur, and a *pied à terre* wherever taste or caprice may direct; her interests, too—for she is busy improving her property in the neighbourhood of Brussels."

"So, then, all was accident, caprice, the whim of the moment, or the habit of mystification?"

"I do not say that," observed Madame Marguerite, dropping her voice and eyes; "I do not say that there was not an *arrière pensée*, a passion which, to a woman's heart, is——"

"Gracious Heaven!" said Sir Frederick, seizing her hands; "why not begin there? and having come to that, why should we not understand each other at once?"

After a moment's pause, she said, coldly, withdrawing her hands, "I will tell you why."

"Well," he said, with peevish impatience; "now, then, for more logic, more finesse, more eloquence, and another jesuitical *escapade*."

"Are you disposed to hear me? or shall we return to the company?"

"Oh, certainly, disposed—most disposed. Patience perforce, I am willing to hear what you may have to—mystify me further with."

"It is no mystification," said Madame Marguerite, in a voice of some emotion; "it shall be a brief detail."

Sir Frederick again seated himself.

"The great movement of Europe, amidst its direful epic, has presented many episodes of domestic romance which fiction would scarcely have dared to imagine. A young Irishman, with gentle blood in his veins, and all the excitements of the troublous times of Ireland beating at his heart, joined the standard of rebellion in Ninety-eight. Escaping from an ignominious death, he entered into the French service; and, with the usual fate of a stranger and a refugee, spilt his blood thanklessly, and fell unrequited, almost unknown. The distinguishing feature of his short, gallant, and luckless life, was his imprudent union with an illustrious Polish lady, who, an exile like himself, had followed her veteran father, the friend of Kosciusko, through the campaign of Ninety-nine. In a moment of alarm and danger, she had been rescued from a band of Cossacks by the Irishman, and she recompensed his chivalrous protection with (all she had to give) her heart and hand. His death, which happened when she was on the point of becoming a mother, left her bereft of everything; and, in obedience to his injunc-

tions, she proceeded to seek a wealthy lady in England, his sister, one whose life, like his own, had been one of vicissitude. She had reached Bruges on her way to England, where her resources became exhausted, and her strength failed her. Reduced to the last point of destitution, she was visited by the sisters of the Béguinage, and by them conveyed to the Hospital of St. John; and there, giving birth to a daughter, she—died.

“The orphan child inherited from its hapless parent nothing but a tablet with a few memoranda, a golden reliquary, and a seal with a crest and an Irish motto. She was baptized by the name of the saint on whose day she was presented at the font, and was taken home by the Sisters to their Béguinage. Becoming the plaything of the Sisterhood, she displayed such talents as interested their feelings, and promised many future advantages from such a person becoming a member of an order then fast falling into insignificance. Quick and passionate in all pursuits, her residence at Bruges and Ghent was favourable to the acquirement of arts which were congenial to her temperament.

“She had attained to her fifteenth year in all the force of health and precocity of character which a life so active and practical as hers was calculated to produce, when the Abbess of the convent of English ladies at Bruges applied to the *Béguines* for a young person who could act as a *dame de compagnie* to a Catholic lady of rank, and superintend the education of her daughter. The name of the lady was that which was written in the tablets of the orphan’s mother; and the Sisters saw a strange coincidence in the fact, and gave their young *protégée* permission to accept the office.

“There was something extraordinary in the reception of the young Béguine on her arrival in England. When the certificates of her birth and baptism, her seal, reliquary, and memorandum were spread before her new protectress, they excited an attention and interest far disproportionate to the seeming occasion. Numerous questions were asked of her, but asked in vain. All she had learned of herself from the good Sisters who had brought her up, was the name of her parents, and the date of their marriage, which was registered in her tablets; and the first interview ended in an extorted promise of secrecy concerning the circumstances of her birth and breeding, save only as regarded the name of her noble mother, which was given to herself. The grave, plain habit in which she had arrived was exchanged for that beautiful and splendid Polish costume in which she is represented in that fine picture painted of her at his own request by Hopner, which once decorated the walls of the crimson room at Mottram Hall.”

“This unavailing cruelty,” exclaimed Sir Frederick, “what has it to do with present circumstances? You knew, then, this Polish-Flemish girl in your Béguinage; you were contempo-

raries, and no doubt in some way related,—a half-sister, perhaps——”

“You promised to hear me out,” interrupted Madame Marguerite. “The part afterwards played by the little Polish girl, found amidst the snows of Russia, and exhibited in the fashionable circles of London by tonish sensibility, was rehearsed in Mottram Hall. Its beautiful mistress was a true Irishwoman, prone to all manner of excitement, greedy of sensation, and full of aristocratic *prestiges*. She showed off the grand-daughter of the friend of Kosciusko, turned her misfortunes to a romance, and deceived her coarse, astute, and bigoted Protestant husband,—who hated all that was Catholic in religion or liberal in politics,—to believe whatever she pleased.

“The girl had become her passion; and when her son arrived for his first vacation from Oxford, his ‘boyish caprice’ for her was laughed at, and encouraged, by the imprudent mother, till it assumed a serious form. An offer of marriage was made at a distant day, ratified by a written contract, signed, sealed, and sworn to, on such a night, at such an hour, and in such a place as this. There was but one witness—an unexpected, an unseen witness,—the mother of the young *parvenu*, who then disclosed to him the secret of her niece’s birth and previous vocation. In vain she opposed to her son’s passion her own objections, and the circumstances of the case; and, as a last resource, she confessed the whole to her obdurate husband. The young man was sent from home, an *attaché* to Vienna. The object of his ‘boyish caprice,’ maddened by insolent contumely and coarse reproach, was turned adrift, to labour, beg, or perish, as she might. The simple habits of her former life had become disgusting: she had learned to love, to live, as if life were but a splendid trance; and when she was thus rudely awakened from her transient dream of bliss, another no less powerful excitement—indignation, seized on her being, in all the force in which it seizes on high-minded and feeling spirits, when thus oppressed, deceived, and wronged. Helpless, hopeless, with none to vouch for or to recommend her, her talent and acquirements availed her nothing. Still she strove to work her way to an honest subsistence. But in that most humiliating, that only line open to female industry, which unites all that is confidential in trust with all that is servile in position,—her very appearance was against her. Her extreme youth, her personal attractions, were insuperable impediments in her way. Besides, there was a brand upon her: she was born in a foreign land, heaving with revolutionary convulsion; she inherited her mother’s temperament, and her father’s kindling imagination; and even when her accomplishments opened to her the *salons* of the wealthy, the poetry of her song and the subject of her pencil furnished time-serving envy with the occasions to mark her for proscription.

“But your feelings writhe under these details : to the result, then. Disappointment, failure, poverty, sickness, a wretched asylum, and, to finish life as she began it—an hospital bed.”

“There, there !” interrupted her agitated auditor ; “let that suffice : let your desire and power to torture rest satisfied with the pangs they have inflicted : let your tale of vengeance end there !”

“But it did not so end :—she escaped in delirium from the workhouse ; was received, sheltered, and when at length restored to comparative health, enabled to return to Bruges, by one whom sorrow had made compassionate—a poor Sister of Charity passing through London from Ireland on her way to Bruges. There the wanderer resumed the habit and profession of her indulgent order, but more as a protection than a vocation ; and there were no qualifying, or rather disqualifying, institutions to impede her way ; she became an artist of some note, —economized sufficient means to study in Italy, and, on her return, attracted the attention of a distinguished amateur—the Prince of Schaffhausen. His orders were munificent, calculated to inspire and to recompense genius. But he stopped not there—he had other views ; and employed all the arguments you have now advanced, to rob genius of its independence and virtue of its dignity. Like you, he failed : the result was more favourable than such sacrifices usually obtain : and the Princess, his widow, is now the only friend and protectress of her who addresses you.”

A loud, sharp exclamation burst from the lips of Sir Frederick Mottram.

She permitted the burst of passion to subside, till its last sob broke down into convulsive sighs.—Some minutes of silent emotion succeeded.

“Shall I go on ?” she asked.

He replied by a faint pressure of her hand, as it passed over his brow to remove the branches of a shrub which impeded the free circulation of air.

“The rest,” she continued, “is soon told. While residing in the Princess’s family in London, I had frequent opportunities of seeing *you*, of witnessing your habits. I heard you in the House of Commons, saw you at the opera, heard of you as the frequent theme of conversation and of comment in the Princess’s circles. I watched you on the very evening when you sat opposite to her and Lady Frances, and when the abruptness of your action and frequent direction of your glass to their box betrayed the torture of some uncontrollable deep emotion. I had an appointment on that night in the hospital ward of a workhouse with a poor dying sister artist, whose story was almost a repetition of my own ; and it struck me, that you might, with a beneficial effect on your inflamed and distempered feelings, take a lesson from her deathbed-side worth all that

precept ever produced. You were unhappy amidst everything that life and society can afford to multiply enjoyment and ensure content. You were unhealthy in the prime of manhood, from a passive yielding to the circumstances and accidents of a false position, from an indolent addiction to the artificial habits of that society into which misdirected ambition and the undue influence of others placed you. You wanted rousing, you required a blow; I struck it boldly, for I wanted—my revenge!”

She paused. Her auditor,—if indeed he was her auditor; if a discovery so stunning, if the dead restored to life, if the recapitulation of events and sufferings which gave to every word the sharpness of the dagger’s point, had not blunted even remorse itself,—her auditor remained silent. He lay stretched and motionless on the mossy bank where he had lately lounged in passionate emotion. His head was buried in his hands; and his breast heaved with a difficult and heavy respiration. Whatever were his efforts to recover his poise of mind, and fling off the oppression which weighed down his very physical being, their success was doubtful and slow. A vague and inextricable confusion, a tingling sensation through the whole frame, (such as, it is said, accompanies the return to life of the half-drowned,) the rush of memory with its pains, of remorse with its pangs—the past,—the present, with its delicious and empassioned convictions—succeeded to each other, like the phantoms of a perturbed vision; and it was long ere the blood flowed freely through his veins, or the external world reassumed its empire over his senses.

When once more aroused to the consciousness of his position, when he again breathed without effort the delicious freshness of the breeze impregnated with the perfume of many a night-blowing flower; the tinkling murmur of the rills which fed the illuminated fountain, the forest, the many-twinkling firmament that canopied his head, were objects that soothed and renovated him.

He was alone. The sorceress who had worked so singular a revulsion of his whole being was gone. Strange to say, he felt relieved by this conviction. He arose, and plunged deeper and deeper into the intricacies of the wooded knolls, till their dark, sequestered wildness, and a rush of waters across a narrow glen, obliged him to return on his steps. He paused, in fear of encountering the gay groups of the Pavilion of the Gro-nendael; but the toll of some distant clock, borne on the silence of the night, released him from the apprehension.—It struck two!—It is not alone when ‘it treads on flowers,’ that the foot of Time falls noiseless and unperceived. Strong emotions, whatever be the cause which rouses the passions and agitates the mind, are too pre-occupying to admit of the slow counting of the hours.

With slow and reluctant steps, Sir Frederick returned to-

wards the *rendezvous de chasse*. But there was now no reflection of bright lights, no sound of pleasant music, to mock his gloom, or to startle the timidity of his shaken frame. Silence and darkness the most absolute prevailed. He entered the Gothic portico: it was empty, as the ruined porch of some deserted monastery. He examined the folding doors of the saloon behind it: they were fastened within. He drew back for a short distance, and threw an examining glance over the whole pile of building. The conjunction of the grey towers of the ancient *maison de chasse* with its beautiful Gothic addition, was more apparent by the glimmering of the starry firmament, than when a glare of lights in the foreground had thrown the remoter parts of the dusky pile into the depths of shadow. Not even the twinkling light of a candle, beaming through a loop-hole, testified that the building was inhabited. The whole scene, as he gazed on it, in its contrast to what it had been a few hours before, appeared like some magical illusion. The brilliancy, the loveliness, the music, the buzz of mirth, of wit, and of intellect, had subsided and disappeared with the enchantress whose spells might be thought to have evoked them.

Through the intervening branches of the forest, one spark of light shone distant, like a fairy star. Sir Frederick followed its flickering and uncertain ray. Another shot forth, and another: and he at length perceived that he was in an avenue cut through the wood, which led from the Pavilion to the village, and which had been partially lighted for the convenience of the departing guests. Pursuing the avenue for some considerable distance, he reached the *guinguette* where he had left his carriage, and found his courier asleep on a bench under the vine-covered shed. He appeared to have smoked himself into forgetfulness, as well as the postilion, who, stretched almost under the horses' feet, gave audible indications of the facility of repose to the rude and the weary. The yellow flash of dawn was already tinging the forest's tops; a few of the villagers were already issuing forth to their early harvest labours; and it was broad day-light when Sir Frederick's calèche drove under the *porte-cochère* of the Hôtel de Flandres, where his new *valet de chambre*, as he attended him to his bed-room, presented him a letter. He was too exhausted, too absorbed, to have opened or read it, had not the black seal attracted his attention. There was a magic in the device, that roused every faculty back to life. He dismissed his servant, and gave himself up to the perusal.

“TO THE RIGHT HON. SIR F. MOTTRAM, BART. HOTEL DE FLANDRES.

“Midnight.

“FAREWELL!—The explanation which has taken place, will suggest to you the necessity of a firm and final farewell.

Should this imply the sacrifice of a passing predilection, I claim and command that sacrifice—a slight compensation for the infliction of years of suffering and vicissitude. Any effort on your part to evade this conclusion, will compel me to throw myself on the protection of your wife, through the Princess of Schaffhausen. I can never meet you again, unless presented to you by Lady Frances Mottram.

“You will offer me (as to a poor relation) some certain means of existence for the future. The past renders it impossible that I should accept of such tardy liberality; the present leaves it unnecessary for me to do so. I am as wealthy as yourself; for my means are equal to, and even beyond, my wishes. They are within myself, a faculty which the world can neither give nor take away.

“Pursue, then, your route. Bring your restored health, your renovated mind, to bear on subjects of vital importance to your country,—its foreign policy. Every step, from the capitol of free young Belgium, to the capitals of prostrate Germany, will offer facts for investigation, a text for comment. Pursue that route with one to whom time, common interests, and solemn vows have irrevocably bound you. Look to your wife, and live with her;—literally—not nominally. You made great sacrifices to obtain her; make one more to recover and reform her. Like you, she is the victim of forgone conclusions. Grant to her errors the indulgence you so much require for your own: and forget, for the sake of what you owe to her—to yourself—the object of a fantastic passion, the passing dream of the two great epochs of human life,—always, as bearing on your destinies, a phantom, and now—nothing.

“MARGUERITE.”

This letter, frequently perused, was answered before the agitation it produced permitted Sir Frederick to seek for the much-wanted oblivion of repose; and the answer was despatched by the porter of the hotel, before any one of his own servants was in attendance.

“A MADAME MARGUERITE, AUX SOINS DE MADAME LA PRINCESSE DE SCHAFFENHAUSEN, HOTEL DE GRONENDAEL.

“You shall be obeyed, to the letter, by the greatest sacrifice your vengeance could impose, or your indifference dictate. Beyond this, I do not think you have a right to command. I shall make no effort to meet you again. Your apparitions have ever been fatal to my peace, and perilous to my honour. I owe to you my first false step in life; to you I owe its last and deepest sufferings; and—but complaint is weakness, re- crimination vain. Farewell—for ever!

“F. M.”

CHAPTER VI.

GREAT LADIES.

THE multitude of strangers who had visited Brussels, attracted by the ceremony of the royal baptism, or infected with the epidemic of the Rhine, had now disappeared from the capital of the Low Countries; and a comparative silence and solitude reigned in *La Haute Ville*, strongly contrasted with its recent bustle. The King and Queen of the Belgians had retreated for necessary repose to their villa of Lacken, to await the period of their departure for the provinces of Namur and Liege. The Chambers were occupied with mere details of business, to which the vigilance of the opposition brought those '*discussiones intempestives*,' that always follow an attempt of the government to disburse the public money, even when letters and the arts make their demands on the exchequer. The ministers of finance and of the interior were kept on the alert; but amidst the endless though necessary details of a complicated budget, nothing of deeper interest was before the House, than such questions as the claim of the Abbé de Pradt for his pension, and the letter of the French ambassador to solicit its liquidation.* Neither natives nor foreigners, therefore, found amusement to detain them in the upper city: the former retreated to their country seats; the latter to the assigned fashionable points of legitimate and established travelling: and the mansions of the Rue du Cal were closed, and the portals of the Bellevue and the Flandres were silent and deserted.

The good old quarters of *La Basse Ville* meantime exhibited much the same aspect as they have done through a sweep of centuries. La Grande Place, with its beautiful monuments of the middle ages, and that noblest of all, the HOTEL DE VILLE, the capital of Belgium freedom, presented, as for the last five hundred years it has done, the rural commerce of Brabant and Flanders, in bustling activity. Wagons of luscious fruits, panniers of bright-coloured vegetables, pots and baskets of shrubs and

* The Abbé de Pradt, at the general restoration of 1815, had surrendered his archbishopric of Malines at the desire of King William (who probably did not like such a multi-scribbling politician for a subject), and in consideration of this had received a pension of 12,000 francs. During the revolution this pension had been suspended; and the French government having applied for its payment, the affair was treated as an undue interference, by Monsieur Dumortier, and other deputies; and reflections were cast on the ministers, as not sufficiently alive to the national honour and independence.

flowers, were arranged in front of the Broodhuys,* occupying a spot once wet with the blood of martyred patriots. Groups, as fantastically dressed as any which Teniers painted, or Callot engraved, circulated in noisy confusion; giving a life and a colouring to the beautiful and ancient part, which contrasted strangely with the quietude of the Place Royale and the deserted Park (so widely different, though so closely approximating). Still lower down in the town, near the Porte de Lacken, the neighbourhood of the canal presented its usual commercial groups, the Wapping of Brussels; and every where the manufactories of lace, of thread, of woollen cloths, of silk hosiery, of hats, of calicoes and muslins, and of the thousand other articles of use or luxury which support the multitudinous population of the city, were teeming with life and movement, as in the height of the fashionable season; such branches of industry know no vacation, and continue their wonted hum of activity in the absence, as in the presence, of their fancied protectors.

In a busy street of *La Basse Ville* stands the Gronendael, one of the most ancient hotels of Brussels, since the destruction of the famous Corbeau. To this hotel, the flight of the birds of passage made no difference. Its rafted and wainscoted chambers had their usual complement of guests: Belgian Barons of the old Austrian stamp, who had not made up their minds to cut William or to oppose Leopold; Orange manufacturers, with whom the *régime* which sets their looms in motion is the *régime par excellence*; or country gentlemen of all or any factions, whom business, and not pleasure, had brought to the capital.

On the morning which succeeded the fête given by Madame Marguerite, the journals of the day announced the arrival of the Princess of Schaffhausen at this hotel. Both these events were thus recorded, under the head of '*Nouvelles de la Journée.*'

"Last evening, Madame Marguerite, so favourably known as one '*née pour tous les arts,*' gave a fête champêtre, on the occasion of her retiring from a profession she has exercised with so much respectability and talent, and, it is hoped, with substantial success. Most of our celebrated artists, *littérateurs*, and scientific professors were invited, together with *MM. les Ministres*, and many of the authorities: some French and English

* The Broodhuys, or breadhouse, a beautiful specimen of the fantastic Flemish architecture, is one of those corporation buildings, which have their political antitypes in the halls of the London Companies. It was rebuilt in 1518, and restored and embellished a century later by the Infanta Isabella, who placed in the front of it a statue of the Virgin, with the inscription "*A pes'e, fame, et bello, libra, nos Maria Pacis.*" The Counts d'Egmont and de Horn received the last consolations of religion in this edifice, on their way to the scaffold.

celebrities also joined the brilliant party, which was singularly favoured by the fineness of the evening."

"Last night, or rather this morning, her Highness the Princess of Schaffhausen arrived at the Hotel de Gronendael, where her suite and carriages have for some time awaited her. The wealthy and widowed Princess has been visiting her estates in Brabant, and her chapter of *Dames Nobles* at Namur. It is said, that she is completing the '*Tour de Chasse*,' begun by the late Prince in the Forest of Gronendael, for the purpose of disposing of the whole beautiful property there, and of fixing her residence in Germany."

These paragraphs attracted the attention of the Princess on the day after her arrival, as she sat in the best *salon* of the Gronendael, looking over the various journals, which were piled on an old spider table before her. Her quick eye was glancing from column to column, from page to page, and from journal to journal; and her acute smile was sometimes clouded by a lower of passing disapprobation, or brightened to its most vivid expression, as the political or social news happened to meet her approval, or to awake her displeasure: hers was a countenance in which men might read 'strange things,' the reflection of a mind through which strange things had passed.

Within the embrasure of the old-fashioned window, sat at work a *Béguine*, in her black habit and snow-white coif; while a *chasseur* (that showy and brilliant appendage to foreign rank) was busied in arranging vases of flowers on the old carved *encoignures* of the antique apartment. In the corridor, without the apartment, more than one lackey, in splendid livery, awaited (for in the old Brabant hotel there were no antichambers for lounging valets and intriguing abigail) to name or to reconduct the visitors whom the news of the Princess's arrival might bring to offer *leurs hommages* to the wealthy widow of the deceased Belgian Prince.

Since the marriage of Prince Schaffhausen, which had taken place in Germany nearly three years before, strange events had passed in Brussels. Its society had changed with its reigning dynasty; and of the very few persons left who had known his Highness (his ancient contemporaries and boon companions during the short reign of the Emperor Leopold,) but few remained. Of these, more than one was shut up in the '*measureless discontent*' of his antiquated palace or dreary *manoir*; and the rest had fallen into an utter obscurity or indigence, for which time, high play, and their own intrinsic insignificance, when not supported by artificial accessories, were more accountable than the Belgian revolution.

Among these, was the old Baron Van Gobbelscoy, who had been *frondeur en permanence* of Brussels since the affair of Vandernoot. He had grumbled through the reigns of Leopold and Francis, the French occupation, the Orange regime, and (to sum

up in one the bitterness and spleen of all) the Four Days of eighteen hundred and thirty. The Baron's millennium was of the past, not of the future. In his boyhood, he had seen Voltaire and La Belle Emilie; and now actually occupied a *premier* in the hotel of the Marquise de Chatelet. He had corresponded with the Prince de Ligne; had been the friend of the minister Staremberg, and the intimate of the Prince of Schafenhhausen's father. He preserved, as a sacred relic, the chamberlain's key, presented to him by Prince Charles of Lorraine, governor of the Low Countries for the Empress Maria Theresa; and he piqued himself on an album enriched with the autographs of Kaunitz, and his imperial mistress, and filled with endless anecdotes of the Court of Brussels in 1772, his great epoch, when he had gone with a trifling mission to Vienna. He wore on his breast many extinct orders, in their day (like the *Saint Esprit*) '*des colliers de toutes bêtes*;' and he preserved in his head, the prejudices, errors, and aristocratic illusions of nearly eighty years.

The Baron Van Gobbelscoy presented himself to the Princess with the air of an old courtier, and with the cordiality of the friend of her late husband's father and family. He brought with him his court album, (he never went without it,) which he introduced immediately after himself; and the Princess was soon deep in its pages, over which she gloated with an obvious delight, that flattered its doting owner to his bent, and extorted from him the exclamation of, "*Ah! Madame la Princesse, on voit bien que vous êtes de la vieille souche.*" She was listening with unaffected attention to his emphatic perusal of a letter from Marie Thérèse to the chancellor of the Low Countries, forbidding the appearance of the Princesse de Stolberg at court, on her daughter, the celebrated Countess d'Albany's marriage with the Pretender, in the eternal 1772,—when another guest was announced, equally a stranger to the Princess, and equally brought within her vortex by the newspaper account of her arrival.

The lackey had already announced to the *chasseur*, and the *chasseur* had repeated twice to the Princess, the high-sounding title of the Count Melchior Von Katzenellenbogen, (in plain English, Cat's-elbow,) before she lifted up her eyes from the old chronicle of the Brussels court, and half rose to receive her unknown visitor. Colonel Count Katzenellenbogen—*ancien guidon* in the service of the quondam Electors of Saxony; lieutenant of cavalry in that of the King of Prussia; aide-de-camp to Field-Marshal Lefebvre, in the imperial army of France; colonel *en activité* of the body-guard of the Grand Duke of Darmstadt; and general in perspective to the Duke of Modena, through the interest he meant to awaken in the Emperor of Austria on the first available occasion,—had served all powers and all opinions; and was the modern *refacciamiento* of the con-

dottieri of the fifteenth century. Semi-barbarous and semi-civilized, he united to the person of a Croat, the air and address of a Parisian *merveilleux*. Drilled in dress, as in principles, in the school of military despotism, he might have passed for the *beau idéal* of a *chef de brigade* of Potsdam, or the Cossack dandy of Petersburg. The combinations which went to make up his character and being, were dominated by a well-developed organ of self-love, or of vanity, which had induced him, on the principle of St. Paul, to try all things.

A German metaphysician, a French sceptic, a mystical evangelical in Berlin; a latitudinarian in Paris; and an anythingarian in London; a Werter in sentiment, a Richelieu in gallantry everywhere; the Count, as hero, author, wit, cavalier, and mediatised Prince of the *ci-devant* absolute sovereignty of the Cat's-elbow, was, in his own estimation, an object to fix the world's attention; whether he figured in the *salons* of Stuttgart, Paris, or London; or withdrew from their distractions, to his own castle and domains, in—he was not very certain where. The Katzenellenbogen territory had been so often translated from one German sovereignty to another, that his loyalty might well be puzzled, when suddenly questioned, where to bestow his allegiance.

A truant disposition had brought him from his *Stamm Schloss* to Wisbaden, where he had drunk the waters, and played at the Kursaal. The epoch of the baptism at Brussels found him attending its festivities, he scarcely knew why (for Brussels was not within the sphere of all his ambitions, literary, military, or matrimonial); and an accidental rencontre with Lord Alfred Montessor (an acquaintance and ally of the *salon* at Paris) had detained him at the Bellevue after the conclusion of the festival; until the advent of the rich and noble widow opened to him new views, which came not within the prospect of belief, on his first arrival in the democratic capital of Belgium.

The Count entered the apartment of the Princess of Schaffhausen with all the ease of a European man of fashion, and all the confidence of a man whose self-possession was never degraded by his modesty. One white-gloved hand was occupied with a gemmed cane, the other with a splendidly bound volume in duodecimo. There was in his gait and gesture a mobility, which almost tempted the beholder to believe that 'his whiskers thought.' His well-turned *moustaches* bristled like the brindled cat's; and his *svette* and serpentine figure had all the elasticity of youth; though 'the damning witnesses' of time, which crowded round the corners of his small and feline eyes, bore testimony against his juvenile assumptions.

He opened his address of self-introduction in German, but fell immediately into French, an easy chair, and an elegant attitude. He briefly detailed his excuses for presenting him-

self to the Princess, in a strain of elegant, but not too obvious flattery, which dwelt more on her personal and intellectual distinctions, than on her rank and station. "His *petite gloriole d'auteur* had," he said, "induced him to lay his last literary work at her feet" (and he playfully suited the action to the word). "It was entitled '*Mémoire pour servir à l'histoire de l'illustre famille de Katzenellenbogen.*'"

A more perfect *pendant* to the not very young, but still very elegant and artistly made-up German dandy, than that presented by the still very handsome, but no longer very girlish German Princess, never figured in the *tête-à-tête* portraits of an old-fashioned magazine.

In manner, air, and a grace, not 'beyond the reach of art,' but formed with its obvious aid, the Princess of Schaffenhausen might have recalled, to the person who had visited Rome in 1820, the style and manner of that splendid imperial *petite maîtresse*, who, to the visitants of the 'eternal city,' was as attractive a modern monument, as the Colosseum was an antique one. The Princess of Schaffenhausen, who in London had assumed the brusque and *tranchant* tone of the English and German stateswomen with whom she lived, was now, *maniérée* to the extreme of coquetry. Her first look, word, nod,—the play of her small silken-slipped foot on a crimson velvet cushion, the frequent flinging back of a voluminous sleeve, to display a fine and splendidly clasped arm, and the daring experiment of drawing up her hair to the summit of her head with a golden bodkin,—convinced the Count that the rich widow was *son affaire*. Looking at her askance, with his sly, unquiet eyes, he suddenly let them fall, and mentally observed, *C'est bon!* The rich vineyards of Schaffenhausen and the ruined towers of Katzenellenbogen were already definitively united in his speculation.

"When I read in the journals of your arrival, *belle Princesse*," said the Count, taking a flower from the vase beside him, and placing it in his bosom, "my first impulse was to throw myself at your feet; and my first reflection, to wonder what could have brought the High Transparency of Vienna to the court of the *Roi Bourgeois*."

"Not to the court; for I have not written myself there. Business brought me here, a few *chétifs* thousands of florins; *rien que cela*."

"You have estates, then, in Brussels?"

"A—a—*piéd à terre*," she replied carelessly, and fluttering over the leaves of the book which she still held in her hand: a *piéd à terre* in the forest of Soigne."

"Your late illustrious father-in-law," said the Baron, "and my colleague in my mission to Vienna in 1772, was reckoned the wealthiest of our Belgian *noblesse*, the D'Aremergs except-

ed. But your late husband, Madame la Princesse, is said to have lost immense sums at Vienna."

"And won them also," replied the Princess.

"High play," said the Count, "is high excitement; the infirmity of great minds, of men like Charles Fox and Marshal Blucher."

"But I hope not of Count Katzenellenbogen," said the Princess, smiling.

"Give me a motive," said the Count, "either for pursuing an object, or of abstaining from it, and I am capable of anything."

"You must have found one here," said the Princess, pointing to the Count's 'Memoir,' which she took up from the table. "The memoir of a noble house, drawn up by its noble representative, opens a sufficient field for the two greatest excitements—fame and glory."

"If the royal historian of the House of Brandenburg did not find it so, then well may not I. But Frederick of Prussia was a passionless man."

"I have a fac-simile of his autograph somewhere in my album; it was given me by my witty friend the Prince de Ligne," said the Baron, trying to get in a word.

While he proceeded to search for the precious document, loitering over every page in fond delay, the more rapid interlocutors passed through a world of subjects on sentiment and sensibility. The splendid distinctions of superior genius and high birth, the inestimable value of many talents and many quarterings, letters laudatory from the learned of Europe, and letters of nobility recorded in the Herald's Office of Vienna, were run over in a jargon, to which the ultraism and *bas-bleu*-ism of the coteries of Weimar, Paris, and London equally contributed. The Princess and the Count knew all the royal authors of the day. They had both wept over the pathetic poetry of the royal bard of Bavaria; they had both wandered through the primeval shades of the Black Forest, and the romantic defiles of the Taunus, with no companions but Burger, Goethe, Wieland, and Schiller, she with her parasol and reticule—he with his *regenscherm* and note-book, and both followed by their sumpter mules, after the fashion of the middle ages, of '*force pierreries, et point de chemise propre.*' The Count had read of nothing but the Princess's brilliant success in London; the Princess was eminently conversant with the Count's praises in the '*Morgenblatt.*'

"Oh! they are too partial," said the Count: "they are dazzled by my rank, when they call me 'the brightest gem in the Gothic crown of German literature;' and they are fascinated by my humble talents when they place me at the head of the mediatized Princes, and call me the Frundsberg or German Bayard of the day. I am more proud of their calling me 'one of

those rare meteors which'—allow me to show you the passage."

He took up his Memoir, and read from it an *éloge* of himself, which could not have been more extravagant if he had written it or paid for it himself.

"'Tis a great distinction," said the Princess, "to be reviewed by such a man as Goethe; and it is immortality to be praised by him."

"*Pas mal*," said the Count, curling his ebony *favoris*, "if one wanted that sort of thing, or cared for it. To the *roturier* it is bread; but *we* do not want literary immortality! That sort of *fante* has been forced on me; though I have sought military glory e'en in the cannon's mouth. Goethe, more than any one, knew the value of birth, rank, and fortune. The inmate of Palaces and guest of kings, he disdained to join the literary *cannaille* of Europe; and that was his great merit. Think what mischief that man might have done, had he taken the liberal side of the question, as it is stupidly called! As far, however, as my merits are concerned, I was his guest (for I made his house my own,) and the pride of the host might, perhaps, have—a—a—coloured a little the strictures of the reviewer."

"*Mon Dieu, mon Dieu*," said the Princess, "*vous êtes par trop modeste*."

"The fact is," continued the Count, interrupting for the twentieth time the attempts of the poor old Baron to put in a word, "I have known most of the professional writers of Europe, English, French, and German; and I never saw one of them who did not *donner dans la seigneurie*, as the charming Marquise de Sévigné has it. Starting from Voltaire, and his hero the King of Prussia, and his Catos Diva of Russia,—"

"*Ah, pour ce qui est de Voltaire*," interrupted at length the Baron, raising his quivering voice to its highest possible pitch, and laying a hand, distinguished by its dirty fingers and diamond rings, upon the Count's shoulder, "*on peut se rapporter à moi*. Every one knows that the immortal Émilie came to Brussels, like the Princess here, on business concerning her property; and that her friend being engaged to superintend the publication of—"

"It is ridiculous," continued the Count, rising so abruptly as almost to overset the remnant of Belgian nobility, and pacing the room to the advantage of his fine figure; "it is ridiculous, the manner in which your friends of the high English coteries court the scandal-mongers of the press, and bring forward the trading authors."

"Yes," said the Princess, "who are but spies on society, and who, being admitted into great families, 'talk of beauties whom they never saw, and boast of favours which they ne'er received'—*cela passe outre*. They flatter even the booksellers, and have sugar-plums for the printer's devils. What do you

think of Lady Agnes M'Gregor stuffing the red hands of her *libraire* into a pair of white gloves, sticking a *chapeau habillé* under his arm, and then thrusting him into a *soirée* at Montessor House?"

"*Mais elle est si bête!*" said the Count.

"*Pas si bête,*" she replied. "It sold her the copyright of her *Judaïse par excellence*, which had been refused by half the publishers of London."

"Milord Albrecht Mon-tresor," announced the German *chasseur*. Lord Alfred entered, the mirror of English fashion in dress and address; both being as simple and concise as Nugee and English taste could make them. He walked straight up to the Princess, who held out her hand *à l'Anglaise*.

"It is too bad," he said, "that I am always to be indebted to chance for finding you out. I have only this moment read of your arrival in Brussels. Where have you been? and why—?"

He now for the first time perceived the Count, reddened, and said coldly, "*Comment! c'est vous, Comte?*"

"*Oui, c'est moi, mon cher,*" he replied, advancing, and throwing himself on the *tabouret* that the Princess had pushed from before her feet.

"You are always *en avant,*" said Lord Alfred, with a sneer.

"So they say," returned the Count, conceitedly.

"*Mais dites donc, Milord,*" said the Princess languidly. "Our confederation of the Rhine, what have you to tell me of it?"

"It is at this moment assembled in congress at the Bellevue."

The Princess started up, the colour mounting to her brows; and the abruptness of her movement deranging the bodkin which fastened up her hair, she gathered up the scattered tresses with affected carelessness, and asked, "Who are the members?"

"To begin," said Lord Alfred, "with the three great powers: there are the Ladies Montessor, Mottram, and St. Leger; then, there are their ministers plenipotentiary, Lords Aubrey and Allington, and the little *diplomate bijou*, Claude Campbell."

The Princess now stood before a curious old dusky mirror, arranging her head-dress. The representatives of British and German dandyism each played with his flexile cane, and eyed each other's rival beauties with looks malign askance. The Belgian Baron, overwhelmed by the modern steam-engine rapidity with which subjects were discussed, and stunned by phrases, names, and events fifty years in advance of his vocabulary, sat incorporated with his *bergère*, a movable of the same antique date as himself; his eyes dazzled, his ears tingling, and his trembling hands employed in tying up his precious album, in a silken damask cover, embroidered by the Duchess Dowager D'Ursel, in 1772.

"And what," asked the Princess, after a pause, "are the

protocols of their High Mightinesses? What are their plans of operation?"

"They await for your Highness, as *présidente de la diète*.— They only arrived last night, or rather at one this morning; and they are now seated at the council, that is, their breakfast-table. They have despatched me as ambassador extraordinary to announce their presence, and to express their ardent desire of the honour of seeing you. They would have come to you, as in duty bound; but that poor Lady Georgiana is really dreadfully shattered, and far from well. Then, *la petite St. Leger* is the tea-making angel of the *déjeûné*; and poor dear Lady Frances in a sort of Ephesian-matron predicament, and not to be consoled for the loss of her faithless lord."

"What does that mean?" continued the Princess, still making her toilet at the old mirror.

"It means," said Lord Alfred, "that the great commoner, the most moral man in England, left Brussels by the *Porte de Namur*, as his wife entered it by the *Porte de Lacken*; and that he is accompanied by a handsome *artiste*, who figures away in the '*Indépendant*' of this morning, as the *Amphitryon* of a *fête champêtre* given last night in the forest of *Soigne*. The report this morning is, that they went off together by moonlight, from the *Gronendael*, in Sir Frederick's calash, which was left the last at the place where the carriages put up. But he was at the *Hôtel de Flandres* at daylight, wrote some notes,—one to *Montessor*, to forward to Lady Frances, well packed up and marked 'glass,' to *Spa*; and then left Brussels alone for *Namur*: but whom he may have picked up at your Highness's pavilion in the forest, on his road, this deponent sayeth not."

"There is but one objection to your innuendo," said the Princess, throwing herself into an arm chair; "and that is, that your 'handsome *artiste*,' *Madame Marguerite*, is at this moment closely occupied about my business and under my roof!"

"*C'est égal*," said the Count; "his story is a good story.— I knew *Mottram* in London. He is one of those *collets montés* in morals, who are so numerous in England. His society is as *guindé* as his person. *D'ailleurs, joli garçon et véritable Amphitryon*: but, Lady Frances!" (and he kissed the tips of his fingers as he spoke) "*Mon Dieu, quelle femme! et si bien conservée!*"

Lord Alfred was now hanging over the back of the Princess's chair, and muttering something, in that practised voice of mystery, so distinct to the person to whom it is addressed—so inaudible to all else. The Count hummed a German air, and fiddled with the strap of his embroidered pantaloon.

"I shall order my carriage directly," said the Princess, aloud; "I will follow you to the *Bellevue*."

"My carriage is in waiting," said Lord Alfred.

"And mine," said the Count, advancing, "is in the court."

"No, no," said the Princess, laughing; "I was once so situated as to have no carriage of my own, and then nobody offered me one; and, now, *je m'en venge*. Besides, I have promised myself the pleasure to set down Monsieur le Baron, who has taken the trouble to walk here."

Monsieur le Baron rose, bowed to the ground, scraped the old Courtrai carpet with his cocked hat, and began a speech that was not finished when the two modern cavaliers were already seated in their respective carriages, on their way to the Bellevue. The Baron spoke on uninterruptedly, got through an account of Voltaire's arrival in Brussels, and brought down his anecdotes to the year 1772; when the britzka was announced by the *chasseur*.

The old cavalier buttoned up his album in the breast of his coat, flourished his cocked hat with one hand, and giving the other to the Princess, conducted her to her carriage. He seated himself bolt upright, and remained bareheaded till he arrived at his dismantled hotel, immortalized by having been the residence of Voltaire and *La Belle Emilie*.

The Princess, then, drove to the Bellevue. More than once during the course, she raised the black crape that shaded her face from the ardours of the mid-day sun, to catch a breath of air; but suddenly let it fall, as some of the recognized authorities of the revolutionary day passed her; probably, in disgust at the democratic changes, which left a woman of her rank with no other society than English detrimentials, German fortune-hunters, and by-gone Belgian *vieilles*.

Whatever were the causes that veiled her countenance and knitted her brows, they were all probably removed as she descended from her carriage in the *porte cochère* of the Bellevue, where Lord Alfred and the Count were stationed to receive her. She took the offered arm of the former; while the latter followed, observing that "he would make his bow at the levee of the ladies before he went out to ride."

They were preceded by Hypolite, Lady Montessor's page, to the most splendid apartment of the most European of all hotels. The Marchioness had not yet left her room. Mrs. St. Leger was buried in the depths of an arm-chair, and in the pages of the last number of the Court Magazine, gloating over the portrait of her own *chiffonné* face, and a memoir of her own frivolous life: the one from 'a splendid miniature by Mrs. Mee;' the other conjointly from the Red-book and from her milliner's puff of her birth-day dress, the united jargon of Lodge and Madame Carson.

Lady Frances, more languid than ever, half lying, half seated on a *chaise longue*, was rapidly filling whole reams of rosy paper; while Claude Campbell, fresh, fair, and fragile,

“as the flower in his bosom,” was immersed in the pages of Mingaud’s work on ‘Billiards.’ Lord Aubrey had not yet left his dressing-room; and Lords Allington, Montessor, and Mr. St. Leger had gone to look at some horses belonging to the Prince of Orange, which were expected to be offered for sale.

The party had just resolved not to leave their names at the palace, and to reserve their visits to Sir Robert Adair, the Prince Auguste D’Aremberg, &c. &c. till their return to Brussels, in their way back to England. The Princess’s entrance made a sensation. Cheeks were touched by cheeks, hands were kissed, and faint exclamations and languid inquiries, with other *minauderies* of feigned affection, occupied the interval, till Lady Montessor entered, supported by her woman, and followed by two footmen with a *couchette*. It was some time before the Count could find an opportunity of making his bow; and though he was known to all the party, it was received with a coldness that marked no very ardent desire to renew the acquaintance. The Count twisted his *favoris*, twirled his *moustaches*, and bit his nether lip; then, taking up the Court Magazine, fixed his eyes on the portrait of ‘the Hon. Frances Eleanor de Vere, Wentworth, St. Leger,’ and muttered in an audible apostrophe, “How lovely! and how like!”

The observation brought Mrs. St. Leger to his side, and the gallant and plausible Count soon found that he had *bien placé son mot*; for the fair diplomatist was at home in a flirtation with all nations, from the Don to the Tiber; and the Count, always, in his own opinion, irresistible, did not let his powers of fascination lie idle. Meantime, Claude Campbell, who hated the Princess because he feared her, flung aside his book, and left the room; and Lord Alfred, taking up the discarded volume, soon appeared lost in its perusal; though a strong expression of annoyance deepened the traits of habitual ill-humour which at all times marked his countenance.

The three great ladies were now ‘in colloquy sublime and high divan.’ Lady Montessor, stretched on her couch, was supported by pillows soft and glowing as summer clouds, her feet covered with a cashmere shawl. The Princess was seated beside her in an easy chair, and Lady Frances, at her feet, on a *tabouret*. Their discussion was warm, though carried on in a low tone. Lady Frances’s manner was vehement, and her countenance was more than usually marked by expression.

“You will never tell me, Princess,” she said, “Sir Frederick’s leaving Brussels the day of my arrival is decisive; and his conduct for the last six months will justify my appealing to the protection of my friends, and demanding a separation.”

“Nonsense, child,” said Lady Montessor.

“His insupportable temper,” continued Lady Frances; “his negligence; his selling my own villa—I call it mine, since he gave it me at the birth of Emilius; his hating every one I love;

his refusing to associate with my own particular set last season; his refusing to meet you, Princess, at his own table; his killing my poor Coco; and, above all, his ordering me not to join him—What do you say to *that*, Georgy?"

"Why, dearest, I say that the whole thing is in bad taste, and very like the quarrels of two love-sick children. Why should a man and his wife quarrel about anything, as long as they have the means to follow their own separate way?"

"Exactly," said the Princess. "Live and let live."

"I now speak in a mere worldly sense," continued the Marchioness; "in a religious point of view, as poor dear Medicot says, I think the last folly married people can commit, is to part, even where there is a little cause for jealousy: but I don't place under that head an habitual predilection for the society of some particular individual, which time has rendered respectable."

"A thing perfectly well understood in Germany and Italy," said the Princess.

"And in London, too," interrupted Lady Montessor. "I could instance fifty such things at this moment among our own friends, where the husband, the wife, and the friend form—a—that is, a——"

"—A *triangolo equilatero*," said the Princess, quietly.

"But," said Lady Frances, vehemently, "that would be impossible with us! Day and night, fire and water, are not more opposed than Sir Frederick and ——"

"Your paroquet!" added the Princess, coolly. (Lady Montessor laughed.) "And therefore your husband got rid of it; and he may again rid himself, by a process equally violent and short, of any *other* object that may be obnoxious to his feelings."

"If I thought that," said Lady Frances, passionately, the blood rushing over her fair face, "I should at once know how to *prendre mon parti*. I am capable of making any sacrifice, sooner than be tyrannized by a man so every way my inferior."

"How very much in love with him you must be!" said the Princess.

"I in love with *him*!—never! and he knows it. I was sacrificed to his wealth and his boroughs. There was nothing in common between us. I thought him vulgar when I married; at least, he was not like the men I was accustomed to; and I never could get over the idea, that if his father had not succeeded in his contracts with government, instead of my marrying his son, my housekeeper would have been buying his gridirons."

She burst into a fit of laughter, in which she was joined by Lady Montessor, who, in the intervals between lozenges and lozenges, languidly added, "Yes—there is—something in that."

Lord Aubrey says that different men are made in different moulds: something about porcelain and the pottery; I forget now."

"Just that," said Lady Frances, smiling; "Lord Aubrey is so clever when he *does* speak. A little hard, though, to get on with at first: did not you find it so, Georgy?"

"He is not demonstrative," said the languid Marchioness; "but that suits me; I should die of a *beau parleur*."

"And then his eyes are never silent," added Lady Frances musingly.

Lady Montessor raised hers to her friend, with so strange an expression, that Lady Frances coloured through her rouge; and averting her head, she added,

"Don't you think so, Princess?"

"Lord Aubrey's head is so handsome altogether," replied the Princess, "that one would be tempted to think there was something in it,—if one did not know to the contrary!"

"You are very severe!" observed Lady Montessor carelessly.

"Very!" reiterated Lady Frances. "But nothing under the head of a Metternich satisfies the Princess."

"I think I could make something of Sir Frederick Mottram's," said the Princess dryly.

"It is more than I could ever do," said Lady Frances.

"So I should suppose," said Madame Schaffenhäusen; "but that being beyond your reach, suppose you try to gain his heart: 'tis the odd trick a woman is sure to win, if she knows how to play her cards."

"When I play for hearts," said Lady Frances, "I promise you it shall be for higher stakes than—in short, nothing risk, nothing have."

"And when you have risked all," said the Princess, "what do you expect to gain?"

"What?" said Lady Frances, with a passionate expression, and throwing up her eyes.

There was a momentary pause in the conversation; and the Princess sat, with her keen glance fixed on the face of Lady Frances Mottram, as if she was reading every lineament, and extorting a conclusion from every line.

"At all events," resumed Lady Frances, "I happen just now to have the cards in my own hands. Sir Frederick the moral, or, at least, the reformed; for since he sighed in vain at the feet of our Marchesa—you know we were once rivals, Princess"—(Lady Montessor smiled faintly)—"he has had no *belle passion*, and has been doing the proper——Well, *mes amours*, I know it for a fact, that Sir Frederick has a *chère amie* travelling with him, with whom he went off on the very night of my arrival; and if I *should* follow him to Spa (which he knows I won't), I should be very much *de trop*."

"Pshaw! nonsense!" said Lady Montessor; "that is Claude Campbell's and Alfred's fun about the *artiste* Madame Marguerite; Lord Montessor says 'tis all nonsense."

The Princess smiled significantly, and shook her head.

"There!" said Lady Frances, "you see! The Princess believes it; she knows something."

"If you won't betray me,—if you won't show me up."

A thousand '*honour brights*' were pledged and pawned.

"Well, then, there *is* an *artiste*, a Madame Marguerite, in the question. She is at this moment an object of as much annoyance to Sir Frederick, almost as—as his wife."

"There Georgy!—there now!—Go on, Princess."

"She is a poor relation of his, who has claims on him. She has been supported by me, for years; belongs to a religious order; and has naturally a desire to avail herself of her accidental rencontre with so wealthy and distinguished a relation."

"Just the thing to bore him!" said Lady Frances, much pleased. "He is always afraid of his vulgar relations coming in my way. His cousin Molly and Dolly, from Button-town common near Birmingham, as Claude says—he! he! he!"

"Oh! but he has cousins from Ireland much more annoying," said the Princess; "and this Madame Marguerite is one."

"Yes," said Lady Frances; "his mother was an Irishwoman—an actress—a sort of Mrs. Jordan. She only died, you know, five years ago: quite beautiful! but a vulgar fine lady, and such a brogue! besides being a papist, my dears, *à la dérobée*."

"Well, *ma belle*, this poor cousin is the daughter of Lady Mottram's brother, who narrowly escaped being hanged in your Irish rebellion, *le pauvre homme!*—at least, so she says."

"Charming! only think of one of Emilius's grand-uncles being hanged, and another being the hereditary grand—But go on, dear."

"Observe," said the Princess, "I only repeat what my *protégée* tells me. Your mother-in-law, Lady Mottram, had another relation, a half-brother, who kept an inn in Ireland."

"My uncle the innkeeper!" said Lady Frances, half amused, and more than half mortified: "that is the *comble*."

"On whose head have fallen the honours of an ancient baronetage, by the death of a very distant relation. He is at this moment here in Brussels, with such an *entourage!*"

"And does Mottram know this?" asked Lady Frances, folding her arms on the Princess's knees; her mirth subsiding into an obvious mortification.

"No; the whole *embroglio* lies in the keeping of Madame Marguerite, who waits her own moment to unveil the plot, or not, as Sir Frederick may conduct himself. Meantime, she has applied by letter to the Baronet, the quondam *aubergiste*, for assistance, whose lady has peremptorily refused her, and affects

to consider her an impostor. I saw an insolent letter from her to the poor creature, this day."

"And what are these creatures called," asked Lady Frances, turning pale, "that I may keep out of their way?"

"*Ah! ça, voyons,*" said the Princess, with a humorous attempt at an Irish pronunciation; "*cela s'appelle Saire Dogerty, et Miladi Dogerty, sa digne épouse!*"

The Marchioness tittered.

"It is no joke," said Lady Frances; "it may be very annoying, coming to the ears of such men as surround us."

"*Oui,*" said the Princess; "*une ridicule ineffaçable.*"

"For Heaven's sake," said Lady Frances anxiously, "don't let your *protégée* take any step till we are gone."

"And when will that be?" asked the Princess.

"Oh! to-morrow, to-morrow!" said the Marchioness, with all the restless impatience of a sick and spoiled child: "this place appears to me covered with a black crape; all gone that I knew or cared for."

"Exactly," said Lady Frances. "St. Leger says that there is not one of our old set left, *pas ce que s'appelle un.* The men, too, are bored to death, being kept so long waiting for us. Only look there at Alfred Montessor: he has mounted his sulky look! I suppose he has been losing at billiards to that odious Count."

"*Piano pianissimo,*" said the Princess, putting her fingers to her lip: and stepping forward, she whispered, "Cut him, if you will, in London; but don't offend him here. He will put you in the '*Morgen-blatt,*' *ou, pardie, pire que cela.* Besides, he may be of use to you. He may give you a fête at his ancient castle. It lies somewhere between Darmstadt and Baden. And then he has recently been appointed Jagd Junker, in the magnificent wilds of Odenwald, or Oden's forest; and can command a boar-hunt or buschgang, and take the unoccupied men off your hands."

The ladies smiled and caressed the Princess. The resources she had opened, the new words she employed, not only gave a new colour to their tour, but raised the Count *cent. per cent.* in their opinion; who as well as Lord Alfred, though both affecting pre-occupation, threw from time to time a furtive and observant glance on the confederated powers of the *couchette*.

The entrance of the cavaliers of the party, Lords Aubrey and Montessor, Lord Allington, Mr. St. Leger, and Claude Campbell, broke up the conference. They respectively offered their devoirs to their future hostess of the Rhine, according as their various views, or their common *prestige* in favour of her rank and influence, directed. Those among the men who had not yet seen the Count bowed coldly to his haughty recognition: but the ladies, beckoning them to their side, whispered the advantages to be derived from the Count's acquaintance in Germany; talking in great excitement of busch-gangs, jagd-junkers, and the forest of Oden.

The gentlemen, let down by their dreary journey from Calais to Lille and from Lille to Brussels, kindled at the awakened

fires of the languid ladies of their thoughts : a general council was called ; a round table was spread with maps, prints, tours up the Rhine and down the Rhine, and ‘autumns in the Taunus.’ ‘Summers in Western Germany,’ ‘trips,’ ‘journals,’ ‘voyages,’ with all their thousand-times repeated raptures about Thurmbergs, Lurleybergs, Marksbergs, were consulted, from Gottschalk’s Mountain Castles of Germany, down to the last book-seller’s guide-book. Some wished to steam up the Rhine, and return through the magnificent scenes of the Taunus ; others chose to go by land and return by water ; some were for stopping here, and others there ; some were desirous of seeing the ruined towers of ‘the Cat’ and ‘the Mouse,’ of going by the famous ‘*route Napoléon* ;’ others had designs on the Berg-strasse.

Lord Allington, who sat coolly looking on, with his cane at his lips, and his eyes half closed, declared, “that he travelled principally for change of diet ; being heartily tired of white bait and poacher’s black game. His stomach,” he said, “wanted a new idea—hungered for *Kramts vogel*, and thirsted for *Kalt schale*. *Au reste*, the party, and not the journey, was his attraction : but he would propose, that whoever repeats the slang of the Rhine guide-books, should pay a forfeit for every offence.”

“As, for instance ?” said Lord Alfred.

“Why, phrases cut and dry, such as, ‘the castled crags of the Drachenfels,’ or ‘the exulting and abounding river.’”

“Or telling the story of Nonnenswerth more than twice,” observed Lord Alfred.

“Or even alluding to the brothers, and their castles of Libenstein and Steonfels,” added Lord Allington.

“Or quoting Lord Byron,” said Lord Alfred.

“Or Baron Von Gerning’s *pretty* poems on the Taunus,” said Lord Allington.

The Princess and the Count exchanged looks bordering on contempt.

“As far as I am concerned,” said the Marquis, “so that I am in time for ‘Robert le Diable’ at Frankfort, I am satisfied ; since my dear opera at Darmstadt is no more, where, *you* may remember, Aubrey, we heard Wild and the pretty little Marconi in 1819.”

“Yes,” said Lord Aubrey, listlessly, “and when I was consigned to the Dowager Margravines and Altesses, to practise the Polonaise, while you were shut up with the Grand Duke, scraping your violin for some opera of his own composing ! I have a perfect recollection of the whole bore.”

“I propose,” said the Princess, who, as well as the Count, had celebrated the beauties of German scenery in every variety of extravagant eulogy, “that you leave the entire affair to the Count and myself, who have traversed every wolf-tract of the forests and mountains, from Cologne to Hanover.”

“Oh ! by all means,” exclaimed Lady Frances ; “do, Princess, it will be so very nice.”

“By all means,” re-echoed the entire party, delighted to be spared the trouble of thinking for themselves.

“Well, then, I propose your starting from Cologne for Bonn,

as fast as our lazy post-horses can carry you ; and then, emerging from the mountains and following the brink of the Rhine to Bingen, you shall plunge into the purple hills of the Rhingau, and reaching Ingelheim——”

“Of which the following tradition,” interrupted the Count, “is but little known. In one of the ‘castle craigs’ of Ingelheim, frown the ruins of an ancient palace of Charlemagne. Here the Imperial Bertha and the Emperor’s——”

“Oh ! Count, spare us the loves of the eternal Bertha and Eginhard,” cried Lord Allington.

“It was not on the *Index Expurgatorius*,” said the Count, pettishly.

“Here is the whole legend,” said Mrs. St. Leger, opening a guide-book printed in the year 1777. “Lady Agnes M^{rs} Gregor is turning it into verse, for her *Legends of the Rhine*.”

“Then,” continued the Princess, “you will stop to sleep, if you please, at Mayence.”

“Where you will pause and bend the knee,” said the Count, “at the shrine of Gutenberg, the first printer ; and kiss the walls of Faust’s House.”

“I think I see myself !” said Lord Albert.

“*Comment !*” said the Count, turning round fiercely.

“If I kiss anything,” said Lord Allington, “at Mayence, it shall be the tomb of the old Abbot Frauenlob, or ‘Praise-the-ladies ;’ his name is so funny.”

“Go on,” said the Marchioness, impatiently. “Shan’t we be off, Princess, the next morning ?”

“Yes, the next morning,” said the Princess, marking the stages with her golden pencil. “There is nothing to be seen at Mayence, but casernes and cabarets, barracks and beer-houses ; with Prussian soldiers stuffed with wool and horse-hair, and Austrians with faces as white as their uniforms. So cross the Rhine at once to Cassel, and enter the dominions of the Duke of Nassau.”

“Dominions !” repeated Lord Allington, with a sneer.

“Whose beautiful capital——,” continued the Count.

“A tidy English watering-place, with white houses and green shutters,” said Lord Allington.

“His peace establishment——,” said the Count.

“Is, I dare say, a thousand strong,” muttered Lord Allington.

“Hasn’t Nassau something of a little constitution of her own ?” asked Lord Aubrey. “I think somebody said so in the House, the other night.”

“Oh, yes,” said the Princess, sneering ; “a little house of commons in the village of Beiberick, close to the Duke’s country-house ; and prettily he has been paid for it. One of its members chose to oppose the budget. The Duke naturally turned him out, and all who voted with him. The *frondeur* refused to pay the tax, all the same ; was thrown into prison, and died. The son, following in the father’s steps, had his property in Wisbaden seized, when two pictures, amongst other things, were put up to sale : the first, the portrait of the

frondeur, sold for four hundred francs; and the second, the Grand Duke's own, was knocked down for three kreutzers."

"Well, if they will give constitutions to nations who are not fit for them, they must take the consequence," said the Marquis.

"True, Milord," said the Count. "Germany is essentially aristocratic. The people are well fed and contented; and provided the press be kept quiet, and a few turbulent spirits curbed, all will go the better for it."

"That is just the reverse with us," said Lord Allington: "our people are better taught than fed; and that's the reason I have *mangé ma fortune*, before the radicals rise to eat it for me."

"Not," said the Count, "that our people are ignorant. The King of Prussia, for example, has taken the national education into his own hands; and, improving on Napoleon's catechism, has determined, not only what the nation shall believe, but what they shall know. By his benignant despotism, in educating the youth of his land to be useful and submissive subjects, and preventing them from educating themselves in the school of French jacobinism, he has done one of the greatest things that has been effected since the foundation of the Jesuits."

"I prefer the Emperor of Austria's plan," said the Princess: "plenty to eat, and no press; pleasures for the obedient in Vienna, and fortresses for the refractory in Hungary. Your king—for I believe, Count, you are a subject of Prussia—has put thoughts into his subjects' heads, and arms into their hands. Not but that the Prussian system would do very well for England and France; and I am happy to see that the *juste milieu* ministry in France are trying to import it, and that your English Tory writers, my Lord, and reviewers, are preaching German metaphysics and German criticism, and German institutions, to their countrymen. One way or other, the press must be put down. You must dog the heels of miscreant publishers, and incarcerate revolutionary authors in dungeons as deep as those of Spielberg, or as high as those of Marksberg, if you do not mean to merge your hereditary honours in a universal democracy."

"You are quite right, Princess," said Lord Alfred.

"I saw two statesmen in Marksberg, the other day," said the Count, while the vehement Princess paused for breath: "they are shut up, the one for forty, the other for two-and-twenty years, for some inflammatory publication."

"You will see the romantic fortress," resumed the Princess, penning the route with her pencil, "where these erring mortals behold from their grated windows the glories of the Rhine beneath. The late affair at Frankfort will people the towers, and fill *aubliettes* long untenanted."

"It is all the fault of the Whigs," said Lord Montessor, yawning.

"From the very first attempt to abolish the patriarchal *Leibeigenschaft*, I augured the worst results," said the Count.

"Why, Count," said Lord Allington, "you and the Princess seem to anticipate the restoration of the secret tribunal!—What do you call it in German?"

"The *frei gericht*," exclaimed the two mediatized potentates together.

"My own castle," said the Count, "was a *frei stuhl*, or seat of the tribunal. Margrave Rodolph II., from whom I descend in a direct line, was the last *stahl graf*, or supreme judge; and all the principal vassals of the family were *frei schöppers* for many generations."

"How very nice!" said Mrs. St. Leger. "I do so love the German language!"

"But the whole magnificent system," continued the Count, "was upset by the short-sighted policy of Charles the Fifth."

"Or rather," said the Princess, "by the innovating spirit of that reforming age to which Charles was obliged to yield."

"The very word 'reform' makes me sick," said Lord Alfred.

"What really was that secret tribunal?" asked Mr. St. Leger; "one reads so much about it in German romances."

Lady Frances Mottram and Claude Campbell were meantime engaged in a window apart, muttering over a bouquet of flowers and some toys he had brought in: Lord Aubrey was leaning over Lady Montessor's couch, catching, as he might, the feeble murmurs of her lisping accents.

"The *frei gericht*," said the Count and the Princess, speaking in a breath, but the Princess maintained the *parole*—"The *frei gericht* was a mysterious tribunal which spread throughout Germany, selected from princes, nobles, and citizens; for all who could, were anxious to be the agents, rather than the victims, of its terrific but necessary denunciations. The *wissenden*, or initiated, knew each other by secret signs."

"A sort of despotic carbonari, I suppose," said Lord Allington, a sly look of mingled humour and surprised curiosity passing over his countenance.

"The accused knew neither his accuser nor his judge," said the Count.

"That was pleasant," said Lord Allington.

"The oath," said the Princess, "was to spare none—(and what beautiful poetry!) none that the sun shineth on, or the rain wetteth, or that floats between heaven and earth. Is not that fine? How very sublime!"

"Very!" said Mrs. St. Leger: "what Lady Agnes would give for it, for her traditions of the Rhine, which will now have such an interest, when everybody is going there!"

"And such novelty!" said Lord Allington.

"Lady Agnes is a twaddle!" said Lord Alfred.

"I think her charming!" said Mrs. St. Leger. "But go on, Count, about your tribunal."

"The proceedings were summary," said the Count. "The culprit was summoned: if he refused to appear, he was surely found dead, with the executioner's knife sticking in his breast."

"And if he did appear?" said Lord Allington.

"Why he was brought to one of our castles, let fall through a trap into the *oubliettes*, and there was an end to him," said the Princess, carelessly. "But pray read Goëthe's divine 'Goetz Von Berlichingen.'"

"Oh! I remember, said Lord Allington; "his extravagant heroine was a victim of the secret tribunal."

"Should such an institution be again required," continued the Princess, in these most innovating times, I believe, Count, that many of our castles are still *in statu quo*."

"One of mine," said the Count, "has its range of dungeons perfect, with dark vaulted chambers, stone doors, instruments of torture fixed in the walls, and *oubliettes*."

"How very nice!" again exclaimed Mrs. St. Leger: "I wonder all the romance writers in the world don't come to Germany, to visit these castles on the Rhine."

"It would make a famous ballet," said Lord Montessor.

"The secret tribunal?" asked Lord Allington.

"No, but Goethe's *drame*. Think of Taglioni in Adelaide of Weislingen!"

"Dancing to her own execution," observed Lord Allington.

"Well," said Lord Alfred peevishly, and jealous that the Count had engrossed so much of the general attention, "enough of the secret tribunal: I am sick of Germany and all belonging to it."

"Mine is not exactly on the Rhine," said the Count. "It lies in the midst of mountains, on the summit of a crag, peering through vast forests of the *pinus silvestris*, interspersed with oak and beech. The impetuous brawling of a torrent, while it adds to the magnificent horrors of the scene, guides the eye to a delicious valley, which terminates in purple vineyards on the shores of the noblest river in the world. There, the village of Rodolfs-baden-dorf discovers its slated roofs, amidst young plantations, plants of my hand, and children of my care, and the bubbling Brunnens of my newly discovered spa, superior to those of Baden, Ems, Schlangenbad, and 'pouring fresh health and renovated life through all my lovely glens,' as the Baron Von Gerning sings."

A general exclamation of delight and wonder, elicited by this description, was interrupted by the Princess's proposition that they should all pause at the Count's castle in their way; and that Lady Montessor should try his spa. If it was successful, they need go no farther; and on their return they might stay at Schaffenhäusen, which, lying amidst terraces of vineyards on the edge of the ravines of Rhudesheim, where the tradition of a virgin and a dragon——"

"Here it is," said Mrs. Leger, referring to her old book.

"——Will be more sheltered for your reception than the ruder heights of the Count's chateau."

There was now an unanimous vote of approval and of thanks to the Count for his invitation. The Count was confused. "He looked forward with pleasure to seeing them on their return; but he had just then an urgent engagement to meet some

friends of the Faubourg St. Germain at Baden. Besides, Rodolfsdorf was just then overrun with architects, artists, landscape-gardeners, hydrographers, &c. He was creating, remodelling, working mines, building baths, &c. &c. Karl Schinkel, and Theodore Ottmer, were working for him at that moment."

"Oh dear!" sighed Lady Montessor, wearied by the buzz of voices, "let us get quietly and quickly on to Baden-Baden, and keep Schaffenhausen and Cats-what's-its-name and all the other bores, for our return."

There was a general titter, and the high contracting parties deputed Mr. St. Leger to draw up a plan on this basis, he was already installed in this office, and pen in hand, when the door opened, and the page announced "Lady Anastasia Macanulty." Every one looked surprised when they perceived their Scotch cousin, the worn-out rag of quality, who had forced the pass of half the doors in London, introduced by a name they were yet unacquainted with, though they had laughed over her marriage in the papers. No relationship, moreover, or connexion with the Montessors justified Lady Anastasia's being accompanied by the tail that followed her; for close behind were marshalled Sir Ignatius and Lady Dogherty, and Dr. de Burgo.

The utter want of common sensibility, and a habit of pushing her way into all societies, rendered Lady Anastasia invulnerable to the freezing reception of the Marchioness, who scarcely turned her eyes on her, but renewed her conversation with the finest of all fine men. Unappalled, however, she stooped her long crane neck over the Marchioness's sofa and said aloud, in her broadest Scotch accent,

"Eh, weel, here I have caught you all together; I'm only passing through, and could not refrain from inquiring after your Ledyship's health, and my cousin Montessor's." Then putting her mouth close to the Marchioness's ear, she added, "I will explain to you another time, my dear Lady Montessor, why I have been obliged to introduce Sir Ignatius and Lady Dogherty, who, *par parenthèse*, are intimate friends of Sir Frederick Mottram, with whom I believe they have travelled thus far, and are worthy and wealthy people."

"Oh," said Lady Montessor, "there is lady Frances."

Lady Frances was looking out of the window at the promenaders in the Park, with Lord Aubrey, who had yielded his place to Lady Margaret. She was now gently touched on the elbow by Lady Anastasia, who, rising to take Lady Dogherty by the hand, said,

"Dear Lady Frances, allow me to present you to Lady Dogherty and Sir Ignatius; they can give you the very last and best accounts of Sir Frederick. They were to have had the pleasure of being introduced by him to your Ledyship; I only ripresent him."

By this time the eyes of the most select coterie out of St. James's parish, or Belgrave-square, were all turned on the newly-arrived group, with looks of such varied and humorous expression of insolence, ridicule, and curiosity, that the assem-

bly of English exclusives had the air of a last scene in some farcical drama. Lord Aubrey, unable to stand the contact, had taken his hat and left the room. The St. Legers threw their heads over their shoulders *bouches béantes*, the one with his pen, the other with her book, suspended over the backs of their chairs. Lord Allington was chuckling with a sense of the ludicrous. The Count fixed his golden double-eyed glass; and the Princess stealing behind Lady Frances, whispered, "*Chère amie, c'est notre oncle.*"

Lady Frances changed colour, and drew back with a movement that amounted almost to a shudder, casting her eyes rapidly round to observe if anybody laughed at her. Lady Dogherty, pressing forward, and leaving Sir Ignatius squatted on a divan, where Lord Allington had invited him, began a speech, of which Lady Frances's tingling ears scarce heard a word.

"I hope I have the honour of seeing your Leedyship perfectly well, and quite recovered from your recent delicacy. Sir Frederick was really unaisy about your Leedyship. He only departed last night,—a greet counter-tom: but at the reet you travel, you will soon overteek him. I hope you left your freends all well, the Devonshires, the Duncannons, and the Chesterfields. I see by the peeper, Lord Chesterfield has left town. Charming book his; quite a brevery of ton, Dr. de Burgo says: such rules for good breeding!"

There was a general titter, in which Lady Frances was the only one who did not join.

While Lady Dogherty was thus endeavouring to make her way, by her knowledge of high life, and high life literature, with one great lady, (who received with silent sullenness and a disheartening bow of her haughty head the outpourings of her vulgar civilities,) Dr. de Burgo had actually taken the chair beside the noble invalid, vacated by her *cavaliere servente*. He had previously opened a window, replaced the cashmere and *couvre-pied*, which had fallen to the ground, and in a low soothing voice, and a look of considerate interest, he said—

"A professional man may be forgiven for obtruding such little services as contribute to the relief of suffering humanity, whatever may be its rank or distinction. This room is much too crowded and noisy for your Ladyship; I am sure you benefit from the opening of that window. Warm extremities, and a free circulation of air, are a great secret; and I presume to offer it to your Ladyship as a travelling opinion."

"Thank you," said Lady Montessor, half distrustfully and half graciously.

She was benefited by the fresh air, and if there was something in the dress of the Doctor that startled, his eyes and words were pleasing, and his practice successful. He continued in the same subdued and gentle tone to ask a question, or to anticipate a reply. He had analagous cases at hand from the Red-book of rank, and anecdotes amusively illustrative of his subject from less distinguished patients; and Lady Montessor, weary of striving to keep the drowsy mind of Lord Aubrey

awake, was pleased by being herself amused, without an effort.

In the mean time the Princess drew out Lady Dogherty, for the particular amusement, but to the infinite horror and consternation, of Lady Frances. Lady Anastasia joined the St. Legers, and Claude Campbell; and commenced an account of her marriage, and a list of the seducing qualifications, personal, intellectual, and hereditary, of W. W. Macanulty, Esq. of Castle Macanulty, county of Tipperary; to which they listened with a tittering attention, interrupted by insidious questions.

Lord Allington and the Count had got Sir Ignatius to themselves; who gave them his reasons for leaving Ireland, his journey from Tower-Stairs to Brussels, his protection of Sir Frederick Mottram, his lending him his shirt and Lady D.'s pocket-handkerchief, with every incident and circumstance of vulgarity and ridicule, that the Baronet's demonstrative feelings and Irish garrulity led him to detail.

Lord Allington was in the third heaven. This was the first event in his tiresome journey which had amused or interested him. The fancy, which he had mistaken for a predilection, in the circles of London fashion, and which had the diplomatic *petite maîtresse* for its object, had subsided in the first day's journey. Shut up in the same carriage, she had gone through all the *manège* of her coquetry; and her *journalier* looks had changed from something like prettiness into absolute ugliness. Besides, she was evidently more interested by the frolics and mischief tricks of the *petit page d'amour*, than by the bonmots of the witty peer, whose self-love she did not spare, and whose cooling down mortified her into retaliation.

Superior in wit and intellect to all his party, Lord Allington had worn out every possible resource of amusement derivable from the insipid follies of his travelling companions, and was yawning himself to death, when the reappearance of the Princess of Schaffhausen on the scene had roused him from apathy into a disagreeable and morbid sensation of aversion. A Tory, if anything, in politics, he listened to her exaggerated principles with displeasure, as tending to put him out of conceit with his own creed, without supplying any other. "That woman," he said to Lord Aubrey, when she was preaching her absolutism, "is enough to force one upon downright radicalism. I sometimes think she is paid by the Italian carbonari or German revolutionists to turn us into ridicule:" and he was now led back to the same conjecture, by impressions still more unfavourable. Sir Ignatius's appearance was therefore a grateful relief. Lord Allington remembered him, drunk on the *Montagne de la Cour*, and asleep on the balcon of the theatre; and he now deemed him a treasure of inappreciable value. He suspected that there was some intrigue between the Baronet and Sir Frederick, which it might possibly afford amusement to unravel, during the rest of the journey. The lowering looks and flushed cheeks of Lady Frances proved to him that she was annoyed; and the sly-looking Princess, he plainly saw, went for something in the *imbroglio*. Even the Count, too, the de-

scendant of Rodolf the Second, was evidently not wholly unknown to the devotee of 'Shan van vaugh:' for his Highness's eyes followed with a shifting gaze the now suddenly averted looks of Sir Ignatius; and he writhed under the basilisk glance, until, overcome by annoyance, his face grew purple, his hands fiddled with his green-lined grey hat; and his flaunting silk handkerchief, (illustrated by the Milesian face of the 'great Liberator,') fell to the ground, without his having the courage to pick it up, or even to raise his glances to the brilliant circle which surrounded him.

"That, I presume, is a specimen of the Irish arts?" continued Lord Allington, looking at the prostrate head of the representative of Ireland.

"It is, my Lord," said Sir Ignatius, crushing his hat.

"The oriflame of Irish independence!"

"Intirely so, my Lord."

"To what, Sir Ignatius, do *you* ascribe the extraordinary influence of the representative of the Irish people over his countrymen?"

"Is it over the boys, my Lord?" said Sir Ignatius, endeavouring to collect his scattered thoughts.

"Is that the technical phrase for your hereditary bondsmen?"

"It is, my Lord."

"I should like to know how he manages them," said Lord Allington.

"Why, first, my Lord, he butthers them up; and then he slithers them down: divel a thing else!" said Sir Ignatius, with a humorous gravity.

"Butters them up! and slithers them down—a short process for governing public opinion. You are a repailer, of course, Sir Ignatius?"

"Oh, troth I am, every inch of me, my Lord."

"And on what principle, may I, in my ignorance, presume to inquire?"

"Upon every principle in life, my Lord."

"As, for instance, Sir Ignatius?" asked the Marquis.

"Why, my Lord," said Sir Ignatius (looking round for the means of escape, and by no means in a mood for political discussion,) "first and foremost, it would bring back all the great Irish quality to the country, thim that sould the pass at the union, bad squeeze to them! and make them spind their money at home, and not in furrin parts."

"By which it is clear that *you* did not vote for that false measure, the Union!" said Lord Allington with ludicrous emphasis.

"Oh! I'd be very sorry, my Lord."

"You were not in parliament then, perhaps?"

"I was nat," replied Sir Ignatius, with an irrepressible twist of his mouth.

"I wonder," said Lord Allington, "that you patriotic Irishmen did not come in a body, and present yourselves at the bar of the House."

"Oh! then it's often I did," said Sir Ignatius, conscientiously availing himself of the pun, his eye still fixed on the Count.

"And for what particular bill did you call?"

"I left that intirely to the head-waiter," said Sir Ignatius, completely *bothered* (in his own phrase) by the tittering of the fashionables, and the reprobating looks of Lady Dogherty, who was talking fashions *with* the Princess and *at* Lady Frances.

Lord Allington, in his turn, somewhat thrown out by the reply, gave one of his semi-inquiring, semi-humorous looks; at the same time chuckling with infinite relish—"Oh! you consider," he said, "the Commons House as a very common house indeed."

"Sorrow a commoner, your Lordship, in regard of the Union."

Sir Ignatius now made an effort to disengage himself by starting up, with an exclamation of,

"It's shocking hot. I'll take my a-jew, my Lord, with your lave. This place don't agree with me at all, at all—(I mane Brussels,) whatever the Doctor, there, may plaze to say."

"Allow me," said Lord Allington, rising ceremoniously, "to reconduct you, and to express the hope of a *revoir à tantôt*."

"With all the veins, my Lord, I'll be happy to meet you toe to toe, or any way you plaze, over a bottle of Johnny's berg."

Lord Allington still kept bowing back Sir Ignatius; who, on retreating *à reculons*, by one unlucky false step stumbled over a footstool, and in his fall, catching at the cloth which covered the round table, drew down the splendid bagatelles spread over it, books, portfolios, bronze inkstands, incense-burning lamps, vases of flowers, and a whole toyshop of *bijouterie*, and ivory and cut paper inutilities, which combined with a pot of Indian jasmine, scattered all the elements of nature, earth, fire, water, 'in hideous ruin' round his devoted head. The *bouleversement* was general, the laughter universal.

"I am afraid you are half-drowned," said Lord Allington, picking up the vase, whose water had fallen directly on the white chitterling of Sir Ignatius's 'best new baby-linen warehouse shirt.'

"Or burned," said Mrs. St. Leger, whose childish mischief, once awakened, knew no bounds, and who was slyly applying the half-extinguished lamp to the well-powdered, well-pomatumed head of the prostrate Baronet.

"Or buried alive," said Claude Campbell, permitting the earth of the flower-pot to fall over his head and breast, as he affected to take it out of his way.

Lady Dogherty, whose cheeks glowed 'deeper and deeper still' with stifled anger and mortification, exclaimed, amidst a profusion of 'Oh! mys' and 'graciouses,' and 'I am so shocked,'—"My dear Sir Ignatius, how can you be so awkward!"

Casting a reproachful look at the Doctor, she advanced to raise her husband from the ground. Sir Ignatius, however, anticipated the movement; and in his efforts to rise, flopped his hands in a flood of ink, which (inadvertently applied to his heated brow) produced by the newest lithographic process of transfer, a humorous impression, that carried the laughter of the children of a larger growth crowding about him to an inextinguishable excess.

The discomfiture of Sir Ignatius was at its height, and he was turning abruptly away to reach the door, when the Princess arrested his steps by observing, "You forget your hat, Sir Ignatius;" and at the same time presented it with an air of compassed gravity and respect.

"It is the Princess of Schaffenhhausen, my dear, who does you the honour," said Lady Dogherty.

"I ax her Royal Highness's pardon," said Sir Ignatius, cheered by the distinction. "We were highly disappointed at not overtaking your Royal Highness on the road, which was all owing to the Doctor's mistake."

"And may I put in my claims to recognition?" said the Count, bending his cane and bowing gracefully. "I think I had the honour of being your guest, Sir Ignatius; of being under your hospitable roof, and entered on your books."

The Baronet was now at his wit's end; he saw the explosion that was impending, and his Irish pride and Irish humour both impelled him to show fight.

"If you are in my books," replied Sir Ignatius, his Irish blood mounting to his brow, "it was all in the way of trade: but that's no *raison* in life why you should put Killy Kelly, the barmaid, into yours, as Lady D. here tells me you did. And it was all Tallaght-hill talk after all, divel a more, poor little cratur! and she as innocent as a lamb: but never would have got a place for want of a charackter, if Lady Dogherty hadn't turned her into her own lady's-maid, and is at this blessed moment here in Brussels to tell the same; and moreover, if she has the pleasure of seeing your Highness, will tell you more of her mind—ay, in troth!"

A burst of laughter followed this tirade, and Lady Dogherty took advantage of its cover, by a sudden jirk, to pull her husband out of the room. Sir Ignatius, too happy to make his escape, lent his gigantic bulk to the *douce violence* of his mortified lady; and found himself, the next moment, with intense delight, on the fourth flight of stairs, No. 144.

The laughter which had favoured the escape of the mystified couple was not abated by their departure.

"Lady Frances," said Lord Montessor, wiping his eyes, "do come here, and tell us who your friend in the green pelisse is. I assure you, she was taken for a fie-fie lady at the theatre, the other night. I never saw such a friendship as yours, since the toasted-cheese business in the Antijacobin."

"I know nothing of her," said Lady Frances angrily, and blushing. "She is Lady Anastasia's friend, and I refer you to her."

"Dear!" said Lady Anastasia, "she travelled with Sir Frederick Mottram."

"But the Count," said Lord Alfred sharply, "seems the *ami de famille*. His acquaintance with the *bon, gros cavalier* seems of ancient date; and the book and the barmaid,—Come, Count, come into court."

"To be sure he is," said the Count, laughing off a scowl of

anger. "He was my host for a week, when I visited the Irish lakes, with the Fürstembourgs, and Lord and Lady Sackville."

"Then the charmer really is an Irish Baronet!" asked Mrs. St. Leger.

"No, but an Irish innkeeper," said the Count: "I occupied his best apartment."

Dr. de Burgo, during this long scene of mystification of his friends had kept his place at the farther end of the room, behind Lady Montessor's couchette, apparently as much amused as one whom it did not concern; and vigilantly prompt to 'meet the wish,' and 'explain the asking eye,' as *eau de luce* was required or a sunbeam obtruded. But when his personal interests became involved, as being presented to the noble circle as a friend of the ridiculed Doghertys, he came forward, and drawing up his fine figure, and settling his black stock with an air that even Count Katzenellenbogen might have envied, he said—

"I remember hearing of your visit to Ireland, Count; for who did not? The event was European; and literature has since benefited by it. But mistakes may creep into the conceptions of the most observant. Are you quite sure that this Irish gentleman was your *aubergiste*?"

"Quite, Sir," said the Count, coldly.

"It is very extraordinary, for I really believe that, however grotesque and original he may be, Sir Ignatius Dogherty is still, beyond all doubt, the representative of one of the most ancient families in Ireland, and very wealthy."

"Perhaps!" said the Count, measuring the speaker haughtily with his eyes; "but he is nevertheless (or at least was, when I visited the Irish lakes) the master of the Stag's Horns on the Cork road to Killarney."

"Then I have been strangely imposed on," said the Doctor: "I met them at Brighton, was introduced to Lady Dogherty, professionally, by my friend the Dowager Lady Dixon; and finding her case one of the most singular that ever occupied medical attention, a case that puzzled Halford, Cooper, and Brodie, I determined to see it out, and accompany the family to Baden-Baden, of whose springs I have the highest opinion."

"And what may be her complaint?" said Lord Allington. "Plethora?—that worst and vulgarest of diseases, too much health?"

"No, sir," said the Doctor, "she has but one lung."

"By Jove!" said Lord Allington, "but that is a wapper; for she puffs and blows like a porpoise."

The Doctor permitted the laugh excited by this observation to subside; and then entered on the case, with a display of technical eloquence, which had its due effect on the fashionable coterie; every member having some darling hoard of hypochondriasis, that was flattered by the medical generalities of the plausible lecturer. Even the Count came round, when he passed an eulogium on the Brunnens of Germany; and he invited him to visit his own spa at Rodolfsbad, which he expected would absorb the whole profits of the Duke of Nassau's

establishments, and make him the first bath-keeper among the potentates of the Rhine.

While the Doctor was thus engaging the attention of the company in general, Lady Anastasia was making her way with Lady Frances in particular; who severely, and in no measured terms, accused her of unwarranted intrusion, in bringing such people down upon so select a society. Lady Anastasia, half a fool and half a manœuvrer, was now going on the Doctor's tack, and was throwing in a word about Sir Frederick's intimacy, when she was cut short by Lady Frances turning on her heel. She remained, however, standing for awhile where she had been *planted*, simpering, smiling, and tearing a flower to pieces; and then took leave of Lady Montessor, and sidled out of the room.

Accustomed to similar rebuffs, she was consoled (as she often had been) for the insolence of her great friends, by the use she had made of them in paying off her vulgar ones. She had a long arrear to settle with the Doghertys, for money lent, carriages shared, dinners given; and Mr. W. W. Macanulty was at that moment paying an account of long standing with a Brussels banker, with part of a remittance which Sir Ignatius had just received from Kerry, and with which they were to set off for Baden-Baden on the following day.

The party now thinned off. The Doctor took his leave, leaving the odour of his plausibility behind him. The rest of the gentlemen and Mr. St. Leget went to make their toilet for a dinner-party at the neighbouring chateau of Count Hompesch. There still remained Lord Allington, the Count, and the three great ladies: Lord Allington reposing himself over a book, the Count thrumming a guitar; and the Princess and Lady Frances in a solemn conference at the Marchioness's *couchette*. The Princess stood with her despotic air of dictation; Lady Frances leaned with her face on her arms; and Lady Montessor listened in languid silence, quite exhausted by her morning's fatigues.

"I have nothing more to add," said the Princess. "Don't mistake common sense for cant. I cannot join your party on any other terms."

The terms were, that Sir Frederick Mottram, for the sake of that decency which even the most profligate of the foreign aristocracy preserve, should be followed to Spa, and incorporated with the society. The promise was given; being extorted by some cabalistical word which the Princess murmured in Lady Frances's ear. She then took her leave, arrangements having been vaguely made that she should meet the party at Frankfort, on its return from Baden, and accompany them to her castle on the Rhine, on a certain day.

The Count, as the Princess withdrew, gave her his arm. "How I regret," he said, pressing her hand, "not knowing Hompesch, since you dine with him to-day. I ought to know him, for he is of one of the greatest families in Germany. His father was one of our last feudatories of the Rhine, who held his

courts of justice within the walls of his castle. When may I hope for the honour of seeing you again?"

"I was just going to ask the same question," said Lord Alfred, coming up to the other side of the carriage, in which the Princess was then seating herself.

"Oh! a—a," said the Princess, coquettishly: "suppose in the Count's Castle on the Rhine?"

"Nonsense!" said Lord Alfred, with temper.

"Well, then," she said, "it may be in one of my *châteaux—en Espagne!*" And the carriage drove off.

The two great ladies still remained in council some minutes after the departure of the Princess; and perceiving Lord Allington, Lady Montessor faintly exclaimed, "What! are you still there, Allington? Ain't you been very much amused this morning?"

"Very!" he said, still reading.

"We have settled everything for our journey," said Lady Frances, turning back as she was leaving the room, "and start early to-morrow morning."

"What is to be our first halt?" asked Lord Allington.

"Spa," said Lady Frances, sighing.

"So I thought," said his Lordship.

"Why, for Heaven's sake?" asked Lady Frances, eagerly.

"Because I heard the Princess say so."

"What do you think of her?"

"What I always thought of her," said Lord Allington, reading aloud from his book, "*Elle domine partout où elle se trouve, et fait toujours la sorte d'impression qu'elle veut faire.*"

"Humph!" said Lady Frances, still lingering on the threshold of the door; "perhaps—but not always: however, we shall see."

CHAPTER VII.

Letters on a Journey.

FROM SIR FREDERICK MOTTRAM, TO HORACE HARVEY, ESQ. GLEN
DRUID, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

"Hôtel d'Harschamp, Namur.

"DEAR HORACE,—This date will send you back to your Tristram Shandy, while I am pretty much in the situation of uncle Toby, when, one morning, lying on his back in bed, the thought came into his head, that if he could purchase such a thing as a large map of the town and citadel of Namur, with its environs, &c. &c.

"I am not exactly on the broad of my back, but on a couch, to which I have been only transferred this day from a bed of worse than sickness. I *have* purchased my map of Namur, which lies before me, with some charming old chronicles and local histories, accompanied by sundry less intellectual comforts (fruits and other delicious things, furnished by the kindness of the governor of the province, and the gracious and graceful attentions of his accomplished lady). I am attended, too, by the *Sœur Béguine*, who nursed Corporal Trim; only she is something the worse for the passage of a century or so.

Having no one motive to proceed or to recede, I should be satisfied to eke out the fag-end of my ill-wearing life on my easy couch in the hotel of Harschamp, looking on my old plan of the town (printed in the very year of the battle of Ramilies), for the gate of St. Nicholas, where Captain Shandy received his wound; and gloating over the pages of a Journey to Spa, through Namur, by the beautiful queen of Navarre, Marguerite de Valois, which it is worth coming to Namur to read. There is, I believe, a magic in *that name*—Oh! those Marguerites!

"This leads me to the principal points of your two long and delightful letters, which, strange to say, I brought here unopened from Brussels; having found them on my table, the night, or rather morning, of my departure. And first, as to your anecdote: I have been maliciously watched by two or three idle Englishmen at Brussels, the *fourriers* of my wife's travelling junta, who have forwarded their gossip to their scribbling friends in London,—patrons of the 'Age,' and contributors to the 'Court Journal;' and the story, with many commentaries and conjectures, is the result of their mischievous activity.

"The small basis of truth on which their superstructure rests, is the fact that, since my arrival in Brussels, I have, for many reasons, avoided all English society; and, above all, that of the set which, by connexion and party, were most likely to waste my time, had I given it into their distribution. Amused, interested, entangled—in short, bewitched with Brussels, its old quarters and its new men, its ancient school of art and its modern school of politics, I plunged into Belgian society, cutting all else; and on this, 'some d——d good-natured friends' (to use Sir Peter Teazle's energetic phrase) have built all sorts of ill-natured reports, which have been exaggerated in London, for the amusement of the Sunday-morning breakfast tables.* I have neither run away *from* my own wife, nor *with* any other man's; but an incident has arisen, of which your newspaper

* Similar absurd and malignant reports of the English party papers have appeared respecting the private life of the highest personages in Belgium, which would produce a smile in the well-informed, if the scandalous political purposes they are intended to forward did not provoke indignation. This petty warfare, whether it be of espionage or of invention, is a disgrace to the public who encourage, no less than of the tools who practise it.

authorities know nothing, but which has had powerful influence on my late, and will have on my future life. It is an incident that will astonish and painfully interest you; but one on which I cannot trust myself to dilate in a letter. I distrust letters: they were not invented 'for some wretch's aid;' but to betray the honest, and serve the purposes of rogues. During my short apprenticeship to foreign diplomacy, I have seen such things done with letters! Louis the Fifteenth, with his mistresses gloating over the broken seals of half the correspondence of Europe, while the post-master general stood shaking out his sack, is no solitary fact. I have seen things done equally vile; and if the actors had been private individuals, and not ministers, kings, or concubines, equally *pendables*.

"Now, though this be not a case of diplomacy, I will not commit my feelings and infirmities to paper; and give up the most intimate passages of my life to the chances of a dropped letter, or to the false keys of intriguing curiosity. Still, from you I will withhold nothing; and more especially on this subject, to which you are yourself not wholly a stranger. Let us therefore meet at your earliest leisure; and, if possible, here in Belgium, whence we can proceed wherever you please; for I will not now return to England, for I know not how long a time; and have written to Mr. Harris to this purpose.

"And now for my illness, and detention in this old historical town. The night before I left Brussels, I was at a fête in a forest (such a fête! and such a forest!) where I met the *notables* of the country, ministers, deputies, (all of the new coin, with the fire-stamp fresh and unworn on the bold-cut medals,) together with professors, artists, authors, journalists, and *savans*; intellect, in short, in all its varieties and departments. This party was given by a Madame Marguerite, a portrait-painter. I am not sure, but I think I mentioned her to you in my letter from Bruges: though I did not then know who she was. This, by the by, is the person with whom it is reported *je me suis éclipse*, because I was met in her carriage by Alfred Montessor in the streets of Brussels: though I have never seen or heard of her since her *soirée*, and probably never shall. An event, however, did occur on that night of the most agitating nature, which drove me from the crowd, into the darkest, dampest depths of the surrounding forest, where I threw myself on a bank under a spreading oak dripping with the night dew. In a word,

"A summer's night in greenwood spent"

did not exactly furnish 'the morrow's merriment;' for I set off for Namur with a burning fever in my veins; suffered myself to be detained on the road; in short, committed all sorts of imprudences.

"As you like an anecdote or an incident picked up on the highway of accident, here is one, to which I stand indebted for some further insight into national feeling here, and to an increase of fever into the bargain.

“My servants had begged of me to let them stop to breakfast at Waterloo; as I had left Brussels without much consideration for their wants. So I walked on, partly in my restlessness, and partly to shake off a swarm of brawling children and old women, who besieged me on the eternal field, with the usual solicitations of—*Commencez par l'église, monsieur. Je suis le guide pour le champ de bataille; et pour la botte de Milord Oxbrich.*” In raising my eyes on the lion which still crowns the monticule, (*‘ce monument gigantesque,’* says the Guide-book, *‘élevé au jeune héros qui scella de son sang l'indépendance de sa patrie,’*) the thought crossed my mind, that the hero had, since then, marched at the head of an hostile array against the independence of Belgium. At the moment, a young Belgian officer, loitering along the road, joined me. He was in command of a troop of horse, which was reposing under the shade of the trees, and formed a true *halte de brigade* of Wouvermans. Slightly touching his cap, he said,

“That monument is in a perilous situation. Without perpetual repairs, the lion will soon lie prostrate; for the mount on which it stands is but the earth of the neighbouring field, piled up without any solid foundation. But it has already survived many of its consequences, and has served its temporary purpose. Where are now the combinations of which the murderous and hard-contested battle it commemorates was to have been the seal? where the settlement of Europe, that was to ensure the peace of centuries? Since then, what an overthrow of all diplomatic arrangements!”

“Of not a few, certainly,” I admitted.

“A few!” replied the young *militaire*, with animation. *‘Par exemple! Belgium free; Holland driven back on its own resources; England reformed; Ireland emancipated; the legitimate Bourbons in exile; Spain and Portugal revolutionized! How little now remains of the great work of the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, to bear testimony to the political wisdom de ces braves rois, who in their estimate of Europe only overlooked the nations which inhabit it, n'est-ce pas, monsieur?’*

“There was something mortifying and unanswerable in the rapid sum-up of the final results of the battle of Waterloo. It only wanted that my young soldier should have known that he was walking with one of the party in England which had taken such a share in that congress, to make the ridicule of my position complete. To evade the topic, I asked him if there was anything worth seeing in a picturesque point of view, in that neighbourhood; and he replied,

“*Ha! Monsieur est artiste donc! Tant mieux.* Our Belgium furnishes so many fine subjects. A friend of mine, Monsieur Fournois,* has been occupied upon one of them,—the ruins of the Abbey of Villers close by. You cannot do better than visit it. When you arrive at Quatre-Bras, look to the east. You will see a long line of forest falling like a curtain on the horizon. It

* Monsieur Fournois has since produced some splendid views of the environs of Spa.

is the only part of the forest of Soigne which the hatchet of speculation has altogether spared. You will plunge into its romantic recesses; and in the bosom of a delicious valley, watered by refreshing streams, you will see the abbey. It was founded by St. Bernard, the adversary of Abelard, and has many points of interest.'

"At that moment, my carriage overtook us. My companion saw his mistake; but did not the less press on my notice his abbey of Villers, with that national pride which is now so very obvious in all ranks in Belgium. I proceeded on his recommendation; went some miles out of my road, and found the noble ruins of the beautiful structure, with the surrounding scenery, so much in harmony with my own gloomy feelings, that I loitered among them for some hours, arrived at Namur late in the evening, took to my bed, became delirious, and, instead of proceeding to meet my wife at Spa, remained for four days in utter unconsciousness. The Governor of the province, Baron de Stassart, who seems to have found me out by inspiration, provided me with every aid and attendance my state required. I have had excellent medical advice, and am now permitted to pursue my journey after another day's rest.

"I have interrupted my letter for a drive in the environs of Namur, from which I have returned refreshed and almost amused. Let no one visit these ancient and picturesque sites of the Low Countries, till they have set aside all classical associations, and replaced them by the stirring events and more touching images of the middle ages. This old Namur, for instance, what a picture! and what a monument! nestled in its lovely glen at the confluence of two noble rivers; overhung by its rocky and awful heights, bristled with the fearful engines of violence and destruction! The country on every side so beautiful and so rich! the cheerful, joyous peasantry, so well conditioned, so well dressed, so beyond the miseries and privations of the same classes in other countries!

"From the little that I have seen, and the much that I have heard of the Namurois from their excellent Governor and Governess, they completely answer the Abbé de Pradt's character of the Belgians in general: '*Voulez-vous un peuple bon, franc, hospitalier, labourieux, économe, ami de l'ordre et de la régularité, vous le trouverez dans le Belge.*' And yet these lovely valleys, these fruitful plains, peopled by a mild and industrious race, have for ages been the battle-field where the despots of Europe have met to vent their ferocious passions, and to spread desolation on the soil that lay in the way of their mad ambition. There is scarcely a nation of the great civilized commonwealth which has not a long account of wrong to settle with this devoted country, that cries for reparation; and if the diplomacy which is now at work shall establish for Belgium centuries of peace and of industry, (while it will ensure the largest sum of human happiness that it is perhaps capable of bestowing,) it will only discharge a small part of its long-accumulating debt. I am surprised that this has never before struck me. You will say that I am coming round to your opinions: but it is one thing to read

of victories in gazettes ; another to come into personal contact with the humanity they afflict.

“ In looking upon this paradise of the Sambre and Meuse, and on the gigantic citadel frowning above it, I did not wonder that that splendid fellow, Don Juan of Austria, conceived such a passion for the scene, and made it his favourite residence.

“ But I dare say, while you have the history of the ‘*race d’Agamemnon qui ne finit jamais*’ at your fingers’ ends, you know nothing of the memoirs of my Don Juan. The son of the Emperor Charles the Fifth by a beautiful Belgian,* he was the most favoured of all our Elizabeth’s suitors, and the bravest and handsomest cavalier of his day. He first came to Namur to watch the steps of the beautiful Marguerite de Valois, ‘*la femme la plus coquette et la plus spirituelle de son siècle,*’ says my old Chronicle. She was suspected of some French intrigue, (organized by her mother, Catharine de Medici,) when she visited Spa ; and Don Juan, instead of treacherously waylaying, fell in love with her—and with Namur too ; which he made the seat of his government and vice-regal court from that moment. His life and death form a romantic tragedy ; he died in the flower of his age, his beauty, his heroism, and his popularity ; poisoned, says Strada, by his half-brother, Philip the Second, who feared the ascendancy of his genius and his superior personal merit. Such was the diplomacy of those times.

“ You will laugh at these historical legends getting possession of my imagination : but Marguerite and Juan have for me far deeper interests than the virgins and monsters, of your legends of the Rhine, after which the English are running. The Marguerites of the sixteenth century (the first queen of Navarre, and this clever, beautiful, but fearful Marguerite of Valois,) would make a singular and amusing work. You will think that I am as mad about names as Mr. Shandy. Perhaps I am so, and on more points than *that* : but, above all,—I tell it you in confidence, Horace,—I am miserable !

“ F. M.”

Letter II.

FROM SIR FREDERICK MOTTRAM TO HORACE HARVEY, ESQ.

“ Namur.

“ Namur ! still at Namur ? Yes, still here. I sent you off a letter yesterday by our old friend Gen. C. with whom I ascended the heights of the citadel. The view from it is superb beyond description. As a military position, it is strong, though partially commanded ; and in the campaigns of 1790, 1, 2, 3, and 4, it was an important place. It makes me sick, melancholy, desponding to witness the immense sums unavailingly expended on such places, for the destruction of man ; while every *sous* given for its benefit is calculated, measured, and grudged. I cannot

* Marguerite Van Geeste of Oudernarde.

enter into technical details; but what men, what genius, what efforts have been brought to bear against this fortress of Namur! Louis XIV., William III., Lowendahl, the revolutionary Generals Valence and Hatry, have all been engaged in its siege; and on each occasion what has been the result of this employment?—carnage, desolation, and the transfer of a heap of ruins; without one permanent consequence, even to the short-sighted governments which so misdirected the resources placed at their disposition by the people. In short, dear Horace, we neither study modern history, nor visit the sites connected with the great events which bear upon our existences, political and social, as much as we ought. What is the Campidoglio or the Tarpeian rock to us! when compared to the plains and fortresses of modern Europe, which England has so often and so recently bathed with her best blood, to the exhaustion of her national resources, and sometimes to the detriment of her national principles. And yet, after all, the interest conferred upon this spot by the single pencil-touch of genius, its consecration by the ideal presence of Captain Shandy and Corporal Trim, exceeds all that history with its blood-stained pages has bestowed upon it.

“On our return from the fortress, we dined at the Government-house. The conversation abounded with information on the subject of this renovated, and, to me, interesting country. Namur, notwithstanding its commanding citadel, took its part in the late revolution; affording another instance of the influence of municipal institutions on the recent destinies of Belgium. After all that has been said on the merits of centralization as an element of force, of combination, and of economy in national government, it is at the same time an element as readily turned against the people as for them. The contrary system has prevailed in the Low countries. The House of Austria, as much from necessity as principle, left the details of local administration in the hands of the ancient municipalities; and the subsequent French occupation did not break through the habits of self-government of the Belgians.

“By the constitution of the kingdom of the Netherlands, councils, elected by the people of each district, and of a most popular character, formed a recognized part of the system of government; and when the revolt against the Dutch, or rather the House of Nassau, took place, there existed in every city a body enjoying public confidence, ready to receive the sceptre of power as it fell from the hands of the ejected authorities. Men, well known to all, were present on every spot, to lead the people, to moderate their passions, to control *brigandage*, and to maintain order; and thus the barring out of one city was converted in a few days into a national revolution. Such a man was our excellent host Baron de Stassart, governor of Namur, who having filled a variety of posts in the public service, was an ensign of probity and talent for his fellow-citizens to rally round. On the 1st of November 1830, Namur rose in arms against its Dutch garrison, and reduced it to a prompt capitulation. On the 2nd, Baron de Stassart took the com-

mand of the province by general consent; and, without any other authority than the voluntary and confiding submission of the people, he succeeded perfectly in his self-appointed mission of peace. The province continued the image of a united family, amidst the perils and agitations of the revolution; while it contributed its undivided energies to forwarding the new order of things which succeeded.

"It was at the fête in the forest that I first met the Baron de Stassart. He has *blanchi sous l'harnois* of civil administration; and was confidentially employed by Napoleon, both at home and in Italy. The Baron is a *littérateur*, as well as a statesman; and one of the few European men remaining, who, having been formed in the great school of the French revolution, entertain views extending beyond a municipality or a nation. Madame de Stassart is an accomplished and charming person, and *tient son salon*, as a Parisian lady only can do.

"I start for Spa to-morrow, by Liege and Chaude Fontaine, a route strongly recommended to me by the Baron. Everything I see and hear now interests me for this country; and, as the subject is new, I bless 'my sin of ignorance, which obliges me to make a course of *middle-age reading*, calculated to open new stores of literary and romantic associations to middle-aged gentlemen, whose habits of mind have been formed by the classic 'Goliaths of the Bodleian library.' I shall make the Ardeennes my head-quarters till my wife's return from Baden. I won't go there, 'that's flat:' she would not wait for me at Spa; for I saw this day her name in the *Eclaircur* (the Namur journal), among the arrivals and departures from that once famous resort of idleness and dissipation, that haunt of potentates and pickpockets. Direct to me then at Spa, if you do not come yourself. As time and space are now 'annihilated,' I can receive your answer in a few days; and shall wait for it: *et sur cela, je prie Dieu, &c. &c.*

"F. M."

Letter III.

FROM SIR FREDERICK MOTTRAM TO HORACE HARVEY, ESQ.

"Chaude Fontaine.

"The date of this will surprise you. I dare say you never heard of Chaude Fontaine; nor I neither, till I gave myself up to the sway of chance, which has certainly varied my life of late, if it has not improved my humour. I am as wayward as a spoiled child; and, like all spoiled children, I am governed by impulse; and live and loiter on, without object as without result. All the volition I have left is expended in writing to you: I make you no apology, for I know your kindly, and, above all, your steady feelings. I have but one means of lightening the tax my selfishness thus imposes; and that is, by keeping to subjects which have a charm for you. I have not made a step in this journey, that your idea and that of another person have not followed me. All here responds to your artist's taste, and to your philanthropic views: political

independence, according to your ideas; and a country beautiful beyond description.

“The road from Namur to Liege along the Meuse, combines every feature that makes the beautiful and sublime of river scenery: on its left bank, the mansions of wealthy *industriels*, the comfortable dwellings of rural gentry! clustering villages, the towers of feudal chieftains, or the spires of suppressed convents; on the right, a range of bold rugged rocks, shooting up from the very bed of the stream, coloured with the richest tints, and bristling with the vegetation of centuries. The valley of the Meuse constitutes one of the richest mining districts of the Low Countries, abounding in iron, lead, zinc, and coal; and the working of these materials, if it sometimes detracts from the picturesque effect of the scene, not less frequently adds to it, by combinations which confer a moral beauty on its mere pictorial loveliness. Numerous trim and prosperous villages, inhabited by the thriving workmen, rich in the images of rural comfort, are not less gracious to the eye than to the heart of spectators like yourself.

“There is not a bourg or a hamlet along the Meuse, that has not also its historical reminiscence. Even the little town of Andennes is remarkable as the site of the first monastery of the Low Countries, founded by St. Beghé, the nucleus of the chapter of *Dames Nobles* at Namur; and the fact induced me to stop, where no English traveller, I suspect, ever stopped before: but thereby hangs a tale. In the midst of the defile of the Meuse, stands the fortress of Huy, the key to its military pass. Rising boldly across the glen, as if to block the passage of invasion, it bristles over the antiquated town, which reposes at the base of the receding heights. The jagged forms of the old feudal castle mingle with the less picturesque outlines of a modern fortification, pierced with innumerable loop-holes, and presenting a succession of frowning batteries.

“Huy, from the circumstances of its position, has been the scene of military adventure in all ages. Here the powerful bishops of Liege aided their friends the Spaniards against the States-general; here the Spaniards defended themselves and fought against Louis the Fourteenth; and here (and not in Rome,) resided the general of those military monks, *Les Croisiers*, whose preaching and example assisted to unite the Christians of all Europe in the expedition to the Holy Sepulchre. Here, also, Margaret of Valois, my Queen of Navarre, whose journey I am reading, encountered an adventure coloured with more than the romance of her romantic age. I would tell it, but that you would accuse me of Margaret-mania; and, perhaps, not without reason.

“On approaching Liege, the genius of manufacture takes a gradual precedence over the genius of war and of feudality; and in the very environs of its seven celebrated abbeys, and under the stately roofs of its baronial chateaus, the fume of the forge rises, and the clang of the hammer resounds. The old episcopal city itself is—but I cannot enter into its details, because it is—*Birmingham!* I must not, however, pass over the

antique ecclesiastical palace of its warrior Prince-bishops, with its square courts and arched galleries of an almost Moorish architecture, which resembles the Doge's palace at Venice. In this palace, Marguerite was received with her little French court, by the gallant Bishop of Liege, Gerard de Groesbeck: but its chambers and halls are now appropriated to other purposes than those of princely show, or clerical luxury and holy gallantry. I lingered, however, amidst its ancient magnificence, and its present coarseness and trumpery, (for it is a sort of grotesque Palais Royal,) with an interest which, I blush to say, I did not bring to the steam-engines of Mr. Cockerell. But, notwithstanding my wayward humour, it is impossible for an Englishman not to be struck with the bustling activity of this prosperous city; or to withhold his sympathy for a brave and industrious population, thriving by their own efforts, under a free government of their own choice, and a king of their own election. Leopold is extremely popular here; and they are making active preparations for his approaching reception. He is expected in the town, with his fair young queen, in a few days.

“With all possible respect for the venerable city and its well-denominated *braves Liègeois*, I rushed from its hot, bustling, noisy streets, and plunged with delight into scenes of such quiet and refreshing beauty as reminded me at every step of Italy, and especially of Tuscany. The broad road that leads from Liege to the very verge of the Ardennes, winds along the garden shores of the silvery Vesdre, spotted with villas and pavilions, and fringed with orchards, flower-knots, and vineyards, which crown the summits of the most craggy rocks. Although my courier had written to Spa to order apartments and dinner, I found it impossible to gallop through Chaude Fontaine; so I sent forward Herr Kircher to make what arrangements he might, and have already lingered away three days in the environs of this elysium. There is a balsamic mildness in the air, which communicates its serenity to the feelings. The atmosphere is as genial as its fountains. I have been quaffing at its health-giving springs, which bubble up, warm and abundant, in a little island rising from amidst the peculiarly icy water of the Vesdre. This may well be the native region of Grétry and of Laïresse, (the Rossini and the Raphael of Belgium;) for such elements go to form such men. I am sumptuously lodged in a comfortable *auberge*, between the village and the vast and majestic ruins of Chauvremont, which looks like the watch-tower of the Ardennes.

The historical legends connected with this edifice (the very highest romance of history) I picked up on a book-stall at Liege; and I am now going to ascend its heights, and read among the splendid ruins the ‘*joustes et faits*’ of the Seigneur de Chevreumont, and of Noger-le-Grand, Prince-bishop of Liege, which, with the episode of ‘*La Dame Gerbage et le Chevalier Gisilbert*,’ strike with more novelty at least on the imagination, than Herr Roland and his nun, and their eternal loves. I heard that ‘legend of the Rhine’ sung, on board the Ostend *treckschuyt*, by a Miss Tyler, of Milk-street, (not, however, quite as Schiller

has sung it;) and it has ever since been staring me in the face, from half the Guide-books of the Rhine which strew the tables of every travelling party one encounters. In the temper I am now in, '*Il me faut du nouveau, n'en fût-il plus au monde!*' Whatever rouses my dreary spirits is a miracle wrought in my favour. I am off for Spa to-morrow, where I shall wait for your letters.

"Yours,

"F. M."

Letter IV.

FROM SIR FREDERICK MOTTRAM TO HORACE HARVEY, ESQ.

"Spa.

"*Now am I in the forest of Ardennes; 'the more fool I (perhaps): yet, alas! I cannot add, with Touchstone, 'when I was at home, I was in a better place.'* I really believe, that if I had my choice, from Indus to the Pole, this is just the spot I would select. Jacques, in his most wild and wayward mood, did not enjoy the Forest of Ardennes, or throw off more thoroughly 'all the penalties of nature, save those of Adam, the season's changes,' (pretty frequent here, by the by,) than I do. I have this antique little village all to myself: its hotels are empty, its streets almost deserted; and if its *redoutes* are open, I have not passed their threshold, nor met even the ghost of an English traveller to scare 'my eyes or grieve my heart.'

"I live in the depths of the forest, follow the wolf-tracks, and revel in sights which the English tourist in search of the picturesque (for 'the trade') never dreams of visiting. These gentlemen, thank Heaven! are now on their pilgrimage to the Rhine, with the Tylers, the Doghertys, the Montressors, and the Lady Frances Mottrams. I am lodged here, like (Peter the Great, when he visited Spa,) '*dans une hutte,*' hanging as it were by a peg from a wooded declivity above the *promenade de sept heures*, with one of those '*fontaines vives,*' as they are poetically called, gushing from a rocky basin, and tumbling among beds of flowers, of which Nature, or perhaps Christine of Sweden, first flung the seeds. My habits are as wild as my wanderings: I go by the sun; drink of the medicinal springs prepared in the laboratory of old Mother Earth; eat when I am hungry, and lie down to rest merely because I am weary. I shall stay, as was the fashion when Spa itself was the fashion some fifty years ago, till the wolves come in and turn me out; except my wife joins me sooner. On my arrival I found a note from her at the post-office, which is worth copying, as eminently characteristic; and thus it runs:—

"I was much disappointed not to find you here, as your note, dated Brussels, led me to expect. Without asking your motives for this delay, I shall only express a hope that it is not occasioned by indisposition; and that I may have the pleasure of seeing you at Baden, as soon as you find it your convenience to join our really agreeable party. We have lost, however, one

of its most pleasant members, Montague St. Leger; who was sent for to London just as we were starting. The old tory Duchess his grandmother has teased the whigs into making him envoy extraordinary to some of the Northern courts. Lord Aubrey has written to his whig friends to get Claude Campbell appointed secretary of legation. My maid thinks she saw a footman in your livery, in the streets of Namur, as we hurried through; but I suppose she was mistaken. The Princess of Schaffhausen is not with us. I mention this as a peace-offering. She is detained by law business in Brussels, and cannot receive us at her castle on the Rhine. Our society salutes you, with yours, &c. &c.

“ ‘ F. MOTTRAM.

“ ‘ P. S. I am sorry to say that dear Georgina Montessor is rather losing than gaining health; though she is still sometimes as brilliant and delightful as ever. She has derived great benefit from the skill of a very clever travelling physician, Dr. de Burgo, who is besides rather an amusing person, and plays sweetly on the guitar.

“ ‘ F. M.’

“ This precious document needs no comment! I have written her two lines, merely to say I shall expect her by the 23rd of next month. If she fails, the penalty be on her head!

“ Your letter, directed to Brussels, has this moment arrived, forwarded (with money) by Monsieur Engler. Well, there is no chance then of our meeting in the Ardennes! How your sense of filial duty would tell in poetry! Pope turned his to fame; and the maternal tenderness of Madame de Sévigné (recorded in such prose as none but she ever wrote) has made her immortality! After all, the affections do go for something, out of the frozen circles of English bon-ton; where a man takes it as a personal insult to be asked for his mother: I am sure any one of Lady Frances’s exclusives would. It is quite curious to see how she and Alfred Montessor stand in check of each other!—Ouf!

“ I break off and resume, as I am hunted by uneasy sensations, or as the sun shines or the shower falls; and have just been driven home. Home! (alas! I have no home)—well, sent back to my hut by a torrent of such rain as I never witnessed but in Italy. The more I see of the environs of this place, the more it suits my present tastes and views. I should like to raise a monument in the forest to the honest blacksmith who, some centuries ago, purchased a few ‘*bonniers de bois*’ from the Prince Bishop of Liege, cleared away the brambles that choked the spring of the Pouhon, raised a few huts, and thus laid the foundation of Spa,—the future rendezvous of political and amatory intrigue of all Europe. The forest of Ardennes smells of early English poetry. It has all the greenwood freshness of Shakspeare’s scenes; and it is scarcely possible to feel the truth and beauty of his exquisite ‘*As You Like It,*’ without having loitered, as I have done, amidst its tangled

glens and magnificent depths. I am living as if I had drunk from the lotos leaf, forgetful of 'friends, lovers, countrymen;' and as to politics, provided the five great powers do not, in their contentions about Luxembourg, meddle with my Spa, and throw back my poetical forest into the cold, clammy grasp of Holland, they may 'take all the rest the world goes round.'

"There is something extremely primitive in this place. The honest inhabitants are principally occupied with a minor and very simple branch of the fine arts, the painting flowers, and their own beautiful scenery, on all sorts of trifling elegancies, fabricated of the wood of the surrounding forest; which, when steeped in the mineral springs, receives a delicate tint, well adapted to form a fine ground for their vivid colours. In one of the little magazines of this domestic industry, where I was bespeaking a portfolio for you, I saw a large folding-screen painting by a delicate and very pretty girl. It represented the circumstances of Margaret de Valois' journey to the Ardennes. The artist was at the moment employed upon a 'halt,' where a sudden impracticability in the way obliged the royal *cortège* to return on its steps to Liege. There was then no Macadamized road to bowl along, from Namur to Aix-la-Chapelle. She showed me the coloured drawing from which she was working; such an exquisite thing! the grouping, the costume, so bold, so historical; Marguerite's white palfrey, the obsequious and gallant Prince-bishop, the Queen's handsome and favoured cavalier, so obviously marked: in short, it was a fine 'cavalcade,' in the best Flemish manner.

"In the corner was written, 'Marguerite.' One might have thought that the drawing was by the accomplished young Queen herself; but it was *marqué au coin* in more than the literal sense. I knew the style, and was surprised to find it in the hands of the Spa artist, by the orders of the Princess of Schaffhausen, the patroness of that Madame Marguerite I have mentioned to you, and by whom the drawing was made.

"The work, it seems, is destined for a residence, *un petit château* in the Ardennes, called *L'Oubliette*, which the *puissante dame* has lately purchased: a strange name, that; as if that stirring and ambitious spirit who is its mistress ever wished to be forgotten. I offered any sum to outbid the Princess; but the morals of Spa were proof against bribes. I could not even obtain a duplicate without her permission; and so the Princess has been written to. She is still, it appears, at Brussels, and does not join the party on the Rhine. She will probably pass through Spa to visit *L'Oubliette*, which, I hear, is a curious antique *gentilhommière*, delightfully situated.

"I have picked up some '*indigènes*,' in my wanderings, whose local information and peculiarities give an interest and almost dramatic effect to the place, and whose courteous civilities Timon himself could not resist. One is a Belgian Baron, of a noble Liegeois family, quite a character for a French comedy. He has visited Spa annually from the time of Marie Thérèse, and carries about an album, with the autographs of all the

crowned heads who have drunk of the Pouhon for the last sixty years. He turns out to be an admirer of the Princess of Schaffhausen, to whom he has been offering *ses hommages* at Brussels. Another is Monsieur le Bourgmestre, a modest, courteous, and very intelligent gentleman; and the third, a respectable *ancien avocat* of Brussels, who also has spent his summer in Spa for the last quarter of a century, with *madame son épouse*. He takes up the chronicle of Spa just where the Baron leaves off indignantly—at the French occupation.

“I have another friend, of a humbler class, who has made a part and parcel of Spa God knows how long, and who looks like the Merlin of the mines. He is a mineralogist, and lives under the craggy heights which overhang the town, in a hovel shining with spars, and filled with minerals and butterflies, made up in boxes for sale, by which the poor old hermit lives. His conversation is full of local information. He has walked and talked with all the *seigneurs et dames venus aux eaux minérales de Spa* during the long period of his residence here. He pointed out to me the old house ‘*Le Dauphin*,’ in the Grande Place, where, in 1774, lodged the two French celebrities, the *Princesses de Poix* and *de Henin* (the latter, the rival of Sophy Arnaud), with their circle of Craons, Beaufaus, and Boufflers, the *habitués* of *Madame du Deffand’s* salon, of whose absence she so much complains in her letters to Horace Walpole.

“My venerable cicerone has taken me also to the site of the *Mouton Blanc*, the *auberge* in fashion in 1773, when it was occupied by the Prince and Princess de Guiminée. The Prince is registered in the old man’s chronicle as ‘*commandant en survivance* of the gendarmes of the King of France;’ and the Princess, as ‘*gouvernante en survivance des Enfants de France!*’ A little farther on is the name of Madame de Genlis, *gouvernante en activité*, I suppose, to *les Enfants d’Orléans*: a curious approximation! Where now are *les Enfants de France?* and where *les Enfants d’Orléans?*

“We have visited, too, the apartment occupied by the witty Belgian Prince de Ligne, whence he dates his pleasant letters. He is recorded in the *Fasti* of Spa as ‘*propriétaire d’un régiment d’infanterie de son nom*,’ &c. I daily tread the promenade where stood the house (since burned) in which the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire and her coterie resided; and I scent the wild and self-sown successors of a garden of flowers, amidst which she bloomed—‘herself the fairer flower.’ I took home with me a published volume of Morning-Post diaries of arrivals and departures of the last century. It contains names and recalls events that stir one even to recollect! Sovereigns, ministers, warriors, celebrities of all casts and predicaments, have for many generations deposited in this paradise some of their mischievous energies: but Spa, long chosen as the favourite mart of every intrigue, the temple of every species of profligacy, is now regaining something of its original romantic quiet.

“It is the fashion here to hire one of the stout steeds of the country, to dress in a *blouse*, to sling a fowling-piece over your

shoulder, and, hiring a guide mounted like yourself, to proceed on sporting excursions into the Ardennes, which extends into the duchy of Luxembourg. I leave Spa to-morrow on such an expedition, and thus equipped. The handsome blue *blouse*, strapped on with a broad leathern belt, and a large straw hat, are just the most light, commodious, and becoming dress which reason and dandyism could combine to invent. I have two or three motives in undertaking this excursion. In the first place, the royal progress makes Spa one of its stations; my new friends are all in a bustle, and all

‘That world of businesses,
Which by interpretation are mere nothings,’

that have enabled me to vary the monotony of my own *triste* thoughts, are for the present suspended. In the next place, I am in want of more vigorous exercise than this loitering life affords; and I prefer the Ardennes to the Rhine, which I am determined to cut, for many cogent reasons.

“The very idea of the German principalities, and their eternal Badens, with their pompous insignificance and prim solemnities, makes me sick beyond the power of all their waters to cure. Amidst ‘the pleasures of these pathless woods,’ one is not certain of being elbowed at every step by those petty sovereigns of absolute Lilliputs, ‘some twenty miles in circumference,’ who, with incomes about the half of my own, expect as much servile homage as the Emperor of all the Russias. They were great nuisances when I was in Germany years ago, and for ever in one’s way: and now, that many of them have swelled into minor monarchs, despotic as the grand Turk, by the choppings and changings, the makings and the marrings of the European *top-sawyers*, I can imagine their courts to have become absolutely insupportable. You will tell me that I have contributed my mite to all this; and it is true: but when the arrangement of the balance of Europe was before the cabinet council, other views than those suggested by a journey to the Rhine *par terre et par mer*, predominated. Shut up as the last generation of statesmen have been in our own Island, it is not very surprising if we blundered a little in our calculations of foreign affairs.

“I have obtained a charming *carte du pays* from my friends for my tour through the Ardennes and into Luxembourg. My Bourgmestre tempts me with scenes of the golden age of pastoral poetry, and with *chasses* and *battues*, for which Nimrod might have pawned his crown. My old Baron talks of *monuments et autres vestiges des moyens ages; créneaux, donjons, et antiques castels*. Ah! *Seigneur Dieu! il est passé, ce bon vieux temps*. My old gnome of the mines boasts of the exhaustless treasures of the province, the iron, the lead, and the antimony, with a whole geology of various formations; and he has sent me to Martilly, where they fish for river pearls, which he called ‘*Les Marguerites des Marguerites*.’

"I must break off abruptly having just met Lord C——, on his way back from Frankfort. He is hastening home for private theatricals at Hatfield, and a *battue* in perspective at Strathfieldsay. I trembled lest he should discover my designs upon the Ardennes. He takes charge of this letter, and of some odds and ends of the *fabrique* of Spa, for your study. He is now at my elbow, and scarcely leaves me time to add, that I am, &c. &c.

"F. M."

Letter V.

FROM SIR FREDERICK MOTTRAM TO HORACE HARVEY, ESQ.

"Ecternach in the Ardennes.

"DEAR HORACE,—You have no doubt heard of Rome and her seven hills; but never, I dare say, of Ecternach, '*la ville aux sept collines.*' But to begin with the beginning, and give you an idea of my wanderings;—after bagging a whole *battue* of *gelinottes* and black game, starting a stag, missing a boar, losing myself in the endless windings of the forest, and having plunged nearly neck-deep in a torrent, by neglecting the advice of my guide, I at last came in view of a little *donjon*, a tiny château, with its turrets and crenelles, and all the external forms of feudal power in miniature—a toy to put on the round table of some fair disciple of pure absolutism!

"My guide advised me to apply for hospitality, never refused in these simple regions; and as I was cold, wet, hungry, and fatigued, I took his advice and we turned up an old woody avenue, and found a peasant smoking at the gate, with a *couteau de chasse* at his side, and a brace of dogs at his feet. I told my tale; and with the most patriarchal frankness he invited me to enter, stirred up the embers of a wood-fire in the small but antique hall, dried my *blouse*, got me bread and milk, and eggs, *à discrétion!* He excused himself from doing more, because madam, the housekeeper (at least so I interpreted his Walloon dialect) was away. Madame had gone to Spa. She had locked up the apartments; and so he could only do the honours by the old vestibule in which he received me. The whole property was, it seems, bought the other day by a Belgian lady for the price of one of Alfred Montessor's gold *nécessaires*. Several boxes of books, furniture, &c. still lay unopened, having just arrived from Brussels. The new *châtelaine* had not yet visited her purchase; but she would no doubt come in time to be present at the fêtes to be given at Spa for the King and Queen. My informant was a *garde chasse* of the former residents of the château, and had been reinstated with his dogs by the new purchaser, through the mediation of Monsieur le Bourgmestre. He was in unutterable amazement at all the improvements that were making, which he proposed to show me. Of these, the principal one was what he called '*un jardin Anglais,*' where he said a shrine had recently been erected to the image of a saint with whom he was not acquainted, or it might be a holy bishop of Liege perhaps.

“ ‘And the name of your new *châtelaine* ? ’ I asked.

“ ‘La Princesse de Schaffenhauseu,’ was the reply.

“ I have now ceased to start at that cabalistical name, and so followed my guide to the *jardin Anglais* (a part of the forest in all its primeval beauty, with a few walks cleared, and flower-knots planted on the verge of a sparkling fountain). The image of the saint turned out to be a fine bust of Shakspeare by Chantrey, crowned with a wreath of *immortelles*.

“ Do you not give the odious Princess some credit for this ? Shakspeare honoured in his own Ardennes ! And the garland ! — that I should have a claim upon *that* ! Yet it was labeled with my name. This garland had been given me by a Béguine in the church of her own St. Beghé at Brussels. I left it behind me at Monsier Jansens’ at the Puterie, who sent it ticketed to my hotel. Leaving Brussels in a hurry, I forgot my garland, as well I might ; but here I find it. The bust came ready crowned with it, and was accompanied by an order that it should be placed under a particular tree, the very type of that under which Orlando found his unnatural brother asleep. Oh, genius ! what is there in the world comparable to your inspirations ? Could you not, Horace, adore this Princess (if indeed it was to *her* taste, *her* enthusiasm, and appreciation of Shakspeare that this monument is due) ? I wrote down a few foolish lines on a card, which I left on the pedestal with an offering of flowers. Both may melt away before any eye shall dwell on them ; since none of the *routiniers* tourists will visit the Ardennes. But so long as I shall be capable of recalling one pleasurable sensation, this little incident will be worshipped in my memory and imagination.

“ Having rejoined my guide, who remained in the château to finish the fragments I had left, we set forth on a fresh expedition, finding every where hospitality and good cheer among the honest Ardennois ; breakfasts for nothing, and dinners for a franc, which the *Rocher* or *Laitier* could not give you for a *napoléon*. On the evening of the second day, my guide had got out of his track, by following instead of leading ; and so we might have spent our night ‘under the greenwood tree,’ but for a vesper-bell that tolled us to a little bourg, a *chef lieu*, in the forest, where I was lodged, not in a Kaiser hoff, or Berlin hoff, or Nassau hoff, or any other hoff consecrated to the greater or lesser divinities of the German Olympus ; but still with a *Puissance* ; for I was lodged with the Bourgmestre, in the *Hôtel du Gouvernement Communal*, where I feasted on venison and *gelinottes*, drank Rhenish and Moselle, and followed the chase (without fear of game-laws) for two delightful days. But lest you should think that I am boasting, I must ‘rise to explain.’ The good Bourgmestre was an honest peasant of the true Belgian stock, ‘*tête dure et bras lourd*.’ He had played his part in the tiny revolution at Spa, which followed the Four Days ; and so he is, in recompense, a magistrate, not indeed clothed in the ermine robe of corporate greatness, but in a *blouse*, rather the worse of the wear. When we asked our host’s

advice on the best route to the city of Luxembourg, he opened his eyes, and said,

“‘Surely you will not depart on the eve of the fête.’

“I asked ‘what fête?’ and he replied,

“‘*Ma foi, mon bon monsieur*, you must have come from a great distance, never to have heard of the fête of Echternach.’

“Leaving our intentions unexplained as to the fête, we accepted the peasant he recommended to conduct us, and proceeded to Echternach. The guide, as he trotted on before, in dress and figure was just ready for the opera-comique. He bounded on, by the aid of a long staff, three steps forward, and then two back; apparently practising some strange *pas seul* to a sort of *ronde*, the words of which I could scarcely catch. Each stanza, however, ended with—

‘Si nous ne dansions pas,
Larira, larira,
Le Diable nous emportera,
Larira, larira.’

“I endeavoured to stop him, and find out the meaning; but the only answer I could obtain was ‘*Saquer Dieu! vous ne savez pas?*’ not know our fête of Echternach! *Si nous ne dansions pas, larira,*’ &c. And thus we were danced and sung into a most romantic little town, even in the bosom of the Ardennes, or Grand Duché of Luxembourg. Echternach reposes in a rich valley, watered by the Sura, under the shadow of its seven hills, which are crowned to their summits with vineyards. It owes its origin to an abbey of Benedictines. It has had the fate of most Belgian towns; having been given to France by its Spanish despots, and again tossed back to Spain by the treaty of Riswyk. Its surrounding hills are full of game, and I mean to proceed through them, towards evening (firing a few shots on my way), to Luxembourg. And now for the carnival of Echternach!

“I was awakened this morning by the noise and bustle, not only of the inn, but of *La Grande Place*, on which it stands. On looking forth, I saw hundreds of well-dressed peasantry pouring down from the sunny heights that dominate the town, in holiday garb of every colour in the rainbow, and filling the streets, square, and market-place of the town. The church was the point of assemblage. I inquired from the fresh Luxembourgergoise, who served my breakfast, what was the fête?

“‘*Dame! vous ne savez pas? C’est la fête d’Echternach.* There is high mass, and after that the ball.’

“It was for this, then, that my guide had been practising his steps. The girl added,

“‘If we only ceased to dance on this day for one year, we should have the devil’s cloven foot once more in Echternach.’

“This was the first time I ever heard that the devil was scared by dancing and song; so having a passion for high masses (the last I heard was magnificent, in St. Gudule at

Brussels), I joined the procession, and got, within view of the church, but no farther. The peasantry were kneeling to a considerable distance, in the open air. Returning to the inn, I found it empty; so I took my place under its vine-covered porch, where a traveller was already seated smoking a cigar. He was very communicative; told me that he was an officer of artillery, on his way to Walferdange near the city of Luxembourg (the horse-market of the Low Countries), to purchase for the public service some of those stout horses for which the Ardennes has always been famous. The fête, he said, was a remnant of an ancient religious ceremony instituted to protect the cattle from the malignant influence of the demon. Satan, it should seem, had been in the habit of setting them dancing to his own music, by a spell rivalled by that of Paganini alone. The dance diabolic could only be counteracted by the dance holy, and the demon only beaten at his own weapon. When, therefore, this legend was in its full authority, the whole population, of all ranks and ages, did their best to outstep the common enemy; men, women, and children, bounding through the country, leaping and cutting, and pirouetting to the sound of fiddles, and to the echoes of their own voices, which reiterated without pause the fifteen notes of the very old tune that was the theme of this curious country-dance, and which still rings in my ears from the guide's ceaseless '*Larira, larira.*' *I must break off.

"Ever yours, F. M."

Letter

"TO THE HON. MONTAGUEST, LEGER, DUCHESS DOWAGER OF ——'S
LONDON.

"MON BON AMI,—Your despatch arrived this morning, and was laid before the council assembled round the eternal *couchette*. I am desired *d'en accuser la réception*, and to express the satisfaction of their High Mightinesses at your appointment. It is really a distinction for so young a man to be sent to so respectable a court; *d'ailleurs*, cold as an iceberg, and *triste comme mon bonnet de nuit*. Still if Claude Campbell goes as your Sec. of Leg. and you are allowed a few *attachés*, we shall make up a tolerable coterie of our own.

"I have quantities of news from the Home-department; but, unluckily, have mislaid your cypher. *Au reste, tout va son train*, as at Brussels. No. 144 lives *à porte fermée*, by order of her new medical friend, who sings *la mère Médlicot's* hymns to his guitar, *à ravir*, and mimics the Doghertys, *à mourir*. No. 32 drives out in the *bitzka* of No. 110, to see sights and study the

* A more detailed account of this wild legend, and the ceremony arising from it, will be found in that truly national work *L'Artiste*, a periodical recently commenced in Brussels, and dedicated, as the name implies, to the music, painting, and literature of the new kingdom.

picturesque, *entendez-vous?* *Le Page d'amour* takes all in good part, and hums '*J'avais une belle marraine.*' Poor dear boy! he is moving heaven and earth to get on our embassy, and has written to his mother to attack her old cavalier in the Foreign Office. He says drolly enough, he is already *half* a Whig—you know why.

"Lord A. reads Paul de Kock all day, and plays *carté* all night; it is said, with success. Cousin Anastasia, and her inseparables the Doghertys, have niched themselves in the *man-sardes* of our hotel. *Il cassent leurs nez contre notre porte* daily, but have never got beyond the ante-room. You know how Alfred Montessor *fait ses farces*, when he once begins. He, Claude, and the Doctor have actually dyed the Dogherty in a blue bath, and brought on the cholera, of which the Doctor, of course, cured him. We have a regular Carlist conspiracy here, half the faubourg St. Germain. Claude and I waltz every night, at the *salle de bal*; so *je m'ennuie très-bien ici*.

"Everybody is hastening back to Brussels, to get through before the Bartholomew puppet-show begins. As soon as Georgina M. has a good interval, we shall start. I shall wait there for your orders. *En attendant*, kiss dear grandmamma for me. Did she like her black silk mittens? Put in a word, too, for the diamond agrafe. One must *far effetto*, as the representative of Majesty.

"Count Cats'elbow is here. He and Alfred are great friends. The Princess has shaken us off. I believe she said true enough, when she called her castle on the Rhine a *château en Espagne*. It is rumoured that her late husband's heir is going to law with her, and that she will lose her estates in the Rhingau. Alfred says that, even so, she will be immensely rich. *Il s'y connaît, le bon homme*. In haste, *et sans adieu*,

"Ever yours, F. St. L."

Letter

"TO HORACE HARVEY, ESQ. &c.

"Spa.

"HERE I am again! No letters, a great disappointment! a posse of English, a great bore! They are now parading the streets under their umbrellas (for the rain is falling in torrents), and are making faces at the Pouhon, or tossing over the bagatelles in the toy-shops, till the hour for *redoutes* and *roulette* shall arrive to afford relief to their *ennui*. I have had a sort of bird's-eye view of the Duchy of Luxembourg, which does not exactly accord with that which I took of it from my study in Carlton-terrace. Luxembourg is so *enclavé* in Belgium, so naturally situated to form a part of the kingdom, so much a *sine qua non* of its existence as a nation, that to abandon it to Holland will undo the whole arrangement recently sanctified by the adhesion of the five powers. Imagine the King of Holland having a capital city within forty-four leagues of Brussels, with a fine Macadamized road, to march at a moment's notice upon its

citizens; or to launch a conspiracy from,—packed in an omnibus or a *diligence Anglaise*.

“This is one of the cases in which parchment rights go for nothing; the great natural right of self-preservation superseding all human arrangements. Belgium must insist upon the possession of this province, under penalty of political extinction; and the five powers having adopted the independence of Belgium as an element in their system, are bound in common sense and consistency to provide for the consequences of their own act. If the rights of Holland are valid, she has not (and, while the present system continues, will not have) actual possession; so that deference to William is a mere form: while the leaving so great a matter unsettled, and a ready make-weight to throw into any other dispute that may arise, is the shortest road to a general war. The present protocolling farce that is playing in Europe at the expense of Belgium, and ultimately of Holland too, now appears to me a lamentable weakness: and here, as elsewhere, ‘to be weak is to be miserable, doing or suffering.’ In pacing through the beautiful solitudes of this fine province, my mind, disengaged from passion, ran back upon the recent diplomacy connected with it, and thence to the general European policy of the party with whom I so long acted; and the result has been a conviction that, whatever may be the merits of the theories we adopted, our ignorance of details led us into many false measures.

“Luxembourg is a magnificent district, though in many respects, I am told, a *pays vierge*, and its resources not yet rendered fully available;—forests, rivers, mines, vineyards, lovely valleys irrigated by gushing streams, and its highest hills feeding cattle even in the heart of winter. How I should like to hear ‘the music of my hounds’ in the woods of Aulier and Cedrogne! This is the region of the artist, the novelist, and the sportsman. Its wooded heights and deep-embosomed glens perpetually disclose some feature of moral or picturesque interest; a fragment of Gothic architecture, a cross with its inscription, a forester’s cottage, a miner’s hut, or one of those small *castels*, or rather *gentilhommières*, the monuments of another race than the robber-barons of the Rhine. Their forms are quite as pictorial as the narrow perilous holds of the magnificent river ‘where power dwelt amidst her passions, and where each lordly bandit did

‘His evil will; not less elate,
Than mightier heroes, of a longer date.’

“I have almost concluded the purchase of one of these secluded *châteaux* (four leagues from Luxembourg, and twenty-eight from Brussels), which has seized on my imagination. I can reach it, from my house in London, in less time than the Duke of Devonshire takes to arrive at his castle in the south of Ireland, or Lord Londonderry at his residence in the north. There is but one hitch in this business: I should like, first to know whose subject I am to become, and whose wild beasts I

am to hunt. I have some, not very pleasant, recollections of the forest laws and usages of Germany. I was once shot at (by mistake) for a poacher, in a *busch-gang*, in Hesse Darmstadt; and in Hesse Homberg, I was called off from a *track* (a cowardly sort of butchery of game, where great lords and ladies fire at the animals driven towards them by the country people,) to hunt an unfortunate peasant, who had shot a hare, and who was hunted by the illustrious Nimrods, with more ardour and zeal than they would have shown in chasing a chevreuil or a boar. As yet, I have met with no such impediments in this country. I have only had to 'find out the forester,' and 'being in the vaward of the day,' to pursue my sports till the going down of the sun.

"I envy the antiquary or the artist who for the first time visits the city of Luxembourg, the *Augusta Romanorum* of ancient geography. It was one of the points in the defence of the Roman empire against the irruptions of the Northern barbarians; and the kings of France, considering it in the same light, have always regarded its possession by the Germans with grudging and an enforced submission. Accordingly, it has ever been an object of dispute in all the long succession of European wars, from the siege by Francis the First of France, to the present times. This, you will say, is a reason the more for confiding it to Belgium, a neutral power, in whose hands it will no longer be the instrument of national ambition—the weakness of one power, and the tyrannous strength of another.

"Luxembourg is the Gibraltar of this part of Europe; and its mines and counter-mines plunge as deep towards Tartarus as its fortifications rise towards heaven. Attached as a military dependence to the German empire, its civil possession as a part of the dissolved kingdom of the Netherlands, was a curious anomaly in sovereignty; and the inhabitants (if *they* indeed go for anything in diplomacy) are anxious to be re-united with Belgium, as well to escape the chances of war, as to re-establish the natural relations which exist between countries which God has joined, and which no man ought to put asunder.

"I have found here a public library, once very rich, and which still contains some curious manuscripts; particularly one of the ninth century; another, a Chronicle of the first crusades; and a third, a beautiful Pliny's Natural History, of the thirteenth century, recently bought for *twelve florins*! Where was Horace Harvey when this purchase was in the market! This collection has arisen from the destruction of the neighbouring convents, and especially the Abbey of Dorval, whose chronicles were the sources of the middle-age history of France, Germany and Belgium.

"I am interrupted.—A courier has just spattered and clattered through the tranquil streets of Spa. He has dropped me a despatch from Lady Frances, dated Baden. Her party go no farther, in consequence of the illness (or caprice) of Lady Montessor. The Confederation of the Rhine (to use their own jargon) is about to break up. Lady Montessor (says my wife) pants after England, 'there to return and die at home at last.'

—At last! She has been dying, in public and in private, at midnight assemblies and midday levees, for the last three years. Lady Frances makes a very polite apology for not joining me at Spa, as she proceeds direct to Brussels, where she hopes to meet me: though she thinks it more probable that this happy event will take place at Mottram Hall. All this is sheer farce; but I have no objection to return to Brussels. I have many reasons for wishing to see the Grand Anniversaire; and have half promised the Baron de Stassart to do so.

“I am, it seems, to have a copy of the skreen. Mademoiselle Lavinie L——, the young Spa artist, has read me a letter from the Princess, containing a very courteous acquiescence. She (the Princess) is still in Brussels, and will remain at her villa of Gronendael to receive her English friends. This is all of no consequence to you; but much to me:—how much, you shall know before long. Direct to Brussels. It is hardly three weeks since I left it: yet it appears three ages.—Adieu!

“F. M.”

Letter

“TO CORNELIUS MACDERMOT, ESQ. ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, SHANBAL-
LYMAC.

“Baden.

“DEAR MAC—Would I advise you to give in to Mrs. Mac’s great desire to come on a tower to the river Rhine in Germany? Why, thin, upon my daisy, I would not; and, mind my word, sorrow thing ever ye did would make a greater Judy of you than that same. Stay where you are, man alive; where as the song goes,

“You’ve everything dacent about ye,
A snug little cabin and farm,”

with the best bit of red bog in the county to your rare, and the river Shannon fornent you, that’s worth all the rivers that iver flowed, since the flood and before. Oh! Cornelius Macdermot, if I had ugly drames about this journey before I undertuck it, it’s now that I know, on ondeniable experience, that it’s the greatest omadauns I made of myself the day I quit Shanballymac; for, save and except my providential discovery of that garlogh of mine at Brussels, and the having set him up, sir, in the handsomest hotel and restorong (I’ll trouble you for change for that) in Europe, as I tould you in my letter *via* Mrs. Rafferty, and, barring that, sorrow else but sorrow and sickness, and every sort of murther and ruination, I’ve seen and known since I crossed the threshold of home.

“Well, sir, in obedience to your request, I now sit down to fulfil your commands, as to the journey, and other things too numerous to put in a letter. We left Brussels in our own Boroche: and, by that rogue of a Doctor’s advice, with veterinary horses to go on all the way to Colone with us, where all

the Hungary water comes from. My lady, and her frind, Lady Anny-Statius Macanulty, and the Frinch lady's made, and a tombore (maning a bandbox) full of caps and things, inside; and self and Kitty Kelly in the dicky-box, with the currier, as they call the Frinch foreign servant hired for us by Lady Anny-Statius, who does nothing but smoke a meer sham pipe; and if the whole is not a mere sham from beginning to end, or will turn out so, I'm intirely mistaken.

"Well, sir, the divel be in the Doctor, but he put his *comether* so upon the quality at the Belleview, that he contrived to flop himself into one of their fine coroneted carridges; saying, as we were all to travel together, and put up at the same inns, it would come to the same thing. And so, sure enough, we started from the post with them: but they soon gave us the go-by, and left us behind, and were at Aichs-la-chapel, while we were still trapesing over the battle of Watherloo, buying up ould brass buttons; Lady D. crying for an old bachelor of hers, one Ensign Roudlum, of Cloneen, who fell here in the Heavies; and Lady Anny-Statius looking for the tomb, in the church, of her second cousin, General Lord somebody, and other Lords and haros of her acquaintance: nor did we ever more set eyes on one of them, good or bad, until we overtuck them in this outlandish place; and only then itself owing to my Lady and her noble frind looking into all the inn-books, and cross-questioning the waiters along the road about great English Lords and Ladies, saying he had lost them on the road—*lost* them, oh musha!

"All this time, mind ye, Cornelius, that little-do-good, young Mr. W. W. Macanulty, (to get rid, I suppose, of his ugly ould wife,) started before us to prepare the way, as he said; though we never saw an iday of him, till he came down philandering on board the Damp-ship, as the Garmans call it, (and damp enough it was, for certain,) from out of one of the islands in the river Rine, in company with an ould English gentleman, and his daughter and son-in-law, a furren Count, with a *bushen* of slack hair on his face would stuff a mattaress, and just that sort of a buggaboo-looking fellow that would frighten the life out of you, if you met him in a loan place, for all his star and ribbon, and being a great officer, as Mr. W. W. tould us, in the Prussian service, and his particular friend.

"Well, sir, there you have us now on board the stamer, or Damp-ship, on the river Rine; and if you have, all I can tell you of it is, that it is no more to our own Shannon than I am to the Duke of Leinster. And if it put me in mind of anything, it was the new line between Carrigeenglass and Criggan-na-beeagh; neither house, nor tree, nor potatoe garden, to be seen or heard, so that it's going to Liverpool I thought I was all the time. As the morning was cold, and the rain pouring like ramrods, and the cabin choke-full, and every one calling for breakfast, and not a screed of a cloth on the table, I settled myself on deck close to the stame-chimley, to get an air of the fire, till I was as full of smuts as a chimney-sweeper. For I've

lost my appetite intirely since I left home, and only just takes *my morning*, which, with a drop of schnaps in the middle of the day, keeps me going till dinner.

“Well, sir, after a time, up comes our ladies, reeking with the hate, saving your prisence, to see the prospects; and Lady Dogherty sprawling over her maps and books to find out the names and places of the ould castles; but the divel a one of the real ones she saw, barring the pictures. And it’s small loss she had; for such bathered down, old gazebos you never clapped your two good-looking eyes on. Neither stick, barn, nor bawn; but just a scarecrow sort of a thing, stuck up on the top of a craig, like an ould raven’s nest on the highest bough of a reokery.

“So, sir, when my Lady began her parley-vous with Count Smutch, turning up the whites of her eyes, and calling us all ‘pilgrems of the Rine,’ as if it was to Patrick’s Purgatory we were going in the Shannon! and spouting poetry, like ‘Divel-doubt’ in the Christmas mummeries, with the young Countess, (who is in her honey-moon, and a nice little pullet,) I couldn’t restrain myself; ‘And I wonder at you, Kitty D.’ says I, ‘re-naging your own country—you that has seen the castles of Portumna and Mount Shannon, and Ballymac-Egan, and Bally-naleen, and the other great castles on the Shannon, where there’s smoke in the chimleys, and fire on the hearths, and claret in the cellars, and whiskey in the halls, and plenty every where.

“‘And does the Rine,’ says I, ‘run like the Shannon, two hundred and thirty-four navigable miles, from mouth to mouth; containing eight lakes; and more, from Limerick to Leitrim; and washing ten counties, Kerry included; and has it a Knight of Kerry, and a Knight of Glyn, and a White Knight, all alive and kicking, not all as one,’ says I, ‘as them ould pirates up there, in their ruins.

“‘Then, as for poethry,’ says I, ‘there has been more purty verses made on the Shannon than on any river in Jermamy;’ and so I liltis up the ould song—

‘You may thavel the wide world all over,
And sail from France to Ballinrobe.’

“Oh, thin, maybe the company wasn’t highly delighted, and such clapping of hands and bravoos! and maybe my lady wasn’t ashamed of herself; and Lady Anny-Statius blushed as blue as a blanket; and the ould English gentleman, one Mr. Tyler, from London, that we tuck up at the island, tould me, if he had known as much as he does now, it’s on the Shannon Steam Company he had bought shares, and not on the Island of Rolandsack, where his daughter was abducted by Count Smutch from a boarding-house where they stopped, and where his son lies buried, who died of the cholera, (Lord save us!) with ating too much fruit and other unwholesomes; which shows, as that rogue of a Doctor says, we should be on our guard, and keep to a regement, and beware of the savouries!

“ So, having said my say, I slipped down to the bar and got a glass of schnaps, and fell asleep on a sophy, in a fine room they call the pavillion; and never saw more of the river Rine, till I was landed at the White Horse in the town of Mens, a poor ould barrack of a place, full of soldiers—and a poor donny set they were; and that’s my opinion of the river Rine, which is a regular ould humbug.

“ Well, sir, here we are at the world’s end, lodged in a fine hotel, with our friends the Marquis and Marshuness, owing to the cleverness of Mr. W. W. Mac. And maybe I didn’t give the Docthor his congy; and would never set eyes on him agin, if I hadn’t been near kicking the bucket, by getting the blue cholera with ating too much bully and sour crout—an excellent furren dish, which I mistuck for beef and cabbage. And so, sir, nothing would save my life but an hot bath prepared for Lord Alfred, which he good-naturedly sent to my bedside; and the smell of it would kill a cat. But it’s bluer I came out of it than I went in; and had the clargy to me to clear off ould scores and make my will, settling everything on my Lady, except a bit of a codicil I kept back with regard to the garlock in Brussels and other persons—mum!

“ But after all, sir, that divel of a Docther recovered me; and so we shook hands, and are all to return together to Brussels for the fates. And W. W. is going to Frankfurt, to Mr. Cock the great banker, to fetch back his money. He insists on paying me interest and principal when he comes back from Brussels, which is more than I expected; and Lady Anny-Statius has written to the Marquis of Thomond, to get me made Deputy Lord Lieutenant of the county of Kerry; and wishes I was in it,—which I will, plaze God, to ate my Christmas pudding: And am yours till death,

“ I. DOHERTY.”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUR DAYS, 1833.

THE month of September 1833 was marked by a general movement, vibrating between the capital of Belgium and the ancient and gloomy cities of the Rhine, and giving life and motion to those silent, stagnant holds, where princely and priestly domination have so long held, and still hold in abeyance, minds whose energies, though latent, are not extinct. Three years of Belgian peace and prosperity had consolidated the revolution; had permitted prejudice to yield to curiosity; and had converted the timidity of foreigners into confidence. Travellers once more proceeded to the Rhine and the watering-places of West-

ern Germany by the magnificent towns and noble roads of the Low Countries; and tours were taken by all parties, for all purposes. Paris poured forth her *élégans* from the Chaussée d'Antin, and her *vieilleries* from the Faubourg; London emptied her new West-end, and saw her bon-ton reduced to its 'last man:' even *l'ultima Irlanda* contributed her portion of absentees, the representatives of her fancy and feeling, fun and ferocity; and more than one Scotch *feelosopher* took up his script and his staff, in search of German transcendentials and a German meerschaum, with the hope of enveloping himself in the double cloud of smoke intellectual and smoke material, the common attributes of Kantists on both sides the Channel.

Those ancient allies, gallantry and diplomacy, took the same route in the same vehicles; and mounting their britzkas and barouches, their *calèches* and post-chaises together, were charged with missions in which tender hearts and crowned heads were equally involved. *Attachés* devotedly attached, followed in the train of the stateswomen they served; intrigues of the cabinet and intrigues of the boudoir worked well together; exchanges of vows and of treaties, alliances matrimonial and political, mutually assisted each other; while all found a tour to the Rhine, a trip into the Taunus, or a peep into Frankfort, a conducive medium or a convenient excuse for their respective enterprises.

While the Emperors of Austria and of Russia were holding their *tête-à-tête* conference of seven days at Munchen Gratz, exchanging (says the legitimate journal of Frankfort) 'proofs of mutual confidence and attachment,' and laying plans for the future liberty and happiness of—Italy and Poland; while the King of Prussia, *en galop*, between Potsdam and Berlin, was directing the sword and grammar exercises of his squadrons and classes; the King of the Belgians was quietly and unostentatiously progressing through the free and prosperous country, to which he had been called, in opposition to the unjust aggressions of the great despotic powers, upon the principle of self-government. He was accompanied by his young and gentle Queen, and the few Belgian gentlemen and ladies who formed his staff and circle.

In all the greater towns and smaller bourgs, from Brussels to the Ardennes, he was received, not with '*des cris mille fois répétés*,' like the twice rejected Bourbons; but with the frank and honest expression of sentiment, which evinced a people satisfied with the object of their choice.* Every where the arts furnished the modes of the royal reception; and music, painting, and specimens of national industry, formed the offerings made to their King, by a people who had given arts and manufactures to Europe before Italian schools and Italian looms had illustrated civilization with their magnificent productions.

* At Vervier, the King having observed to the Burgomaster, '*qu'il protégerait toujours l'industrie*,' the Burgomaster replied, '*Il n'y a pas besoin; ça va bien comme ça.*'

Brussels, in the absence of the King, and in the interval between the two flights of the birds of passage, was occupied, in its Chambers with legislation, and in its streets with preparations for the anniversary (then fast approaching) of those four days which had relieved it from the tyranny of a foreign government, imposed by force, and perfectly unsuited to the wants and desires of the people. The decree for the celebration of this festival had been issued by the National Congress. The programme had been determined and signed by the Minister of the Interior, and by the council called the '*Régence*.' Composers, artists, architects and mechanics, all the talent and all the patriotism of Belgium, were called into activity to celebrate with propriety an event in which all were interested. The beautiful city seemed as if cleared out, to leave scope and verge enough for their operations. Hotels, restaurans, hotels garnis, were empty, and preparing for the reception of guests expected from all parts of the kingdom, and from nearly all parts of the Continent, who had previously bespoken apartments in anticipation of the solemnity.

By the 22nd of September, Brussels swarmed with strangers; some purposely to partake in the festivities, as in a carnival; others to enjoy their feelings of triumph in the success of their own painful sacrifices and persevering exertions. Many were led by a pure love of the arts to be present at the national concerts, to bring their works to the exhibition, or to inspect the productions of the new Flemish school, in their respect for the old Flemish masters. Many of the French and English fashionables, who had served out their time at Ems, Wisbaden, Baden, and other prescribed baths, had chosen the Four Days for their passage through Brussels, to avail themselves of its amusements; and the English gentlemen of the turf, who had horses to run, or who were led by a sporting spirit to the race-course of Montplaisir, were already assembled in the Bellevue, the Flandres, and the Hotel de l'Europe.

Among the latter, the Marquis of Montessor and Lord Alfred were conspicuous. They had returned to Brussels before the splendid *Brigata*, with which they had been rather joined than associated; and which had only advanced on their return as far as the *Grand Monarque*, at Aix-la-Chapelle, to repose in the most sumptuous of hotels, under the care of the most courteous of landlords. Other hopes than those to be tested at Montplaisir had hailed the return of Lord Alfred to the neighbourhood of the Gronendael; while the Marquis, completely out of his element at Baden, where there was no ballet, was glad to accompany his brother into what he termed a '*pays civilisé*.' He found ample occupation and amusement in the rehearsals of the *service funèbre* at St. Gudule, of the '*Faust*' by M. Pillaent, and of the new opera of M. Messmackers at the theatre.

On the morning of the 23rd, shortly after day break, a salvo of cannon announced the arrival of a day, which recalled to some, the loss of all they had loved; to others, the triumph of all they desired; and to the majority of the nation, that well-

fought battle in the heart of their metropolis, which had won for them their independence.

The dawn of that day, in 1830, had been an awful epoch. Brussels *cernée* by the royal army; the public functionaries dispersed; the city abandoned to the people and to a few brave gentlemen, with no ramparts but their barricades, no sound to cheer them but the toll of the tocsin, and the universal cry of 'liberty and arms.' Prince Frederick of Nassau had determined to carry Brussels by a *coup de main*; but the people, without leaders, and with a force composed of volunteers, Gardes Bourgeoises, and the gallant band from Liege, were equally determined to defend it with all the energies of despair. The heroes of the barricades took their position.

On the previous night it had been agreed that resistance should be attempted; and in the morning the royal army advanced to the attack. They moved on the city by the four roads of Flandres, Lacken, Schaerbeck, and Louvain. Each column had its artillery and a numerous cavalry; and batteries were erected to protect their advance:—the people had only their barricades, and the obstinate enduring courage of their national temperament. The four hostile movements were executed at the same moment. The first cannon was heard at a quarter past eight; and it was answered by the combined toll to arms of every bell in Brussels, which ceased only, at the set of sun, with the enemy's fire. Without, an army; within, an undisciplined population, consisting of men, boys, women and children; each gate of the city became the scene of a pitched battle.

The first victory, so humiliating to the Dutch troops, so glorious for the people, was obtained at the Porte de Flandres. At the Porte de Lacken, the enemy was simultaneously repulsed, and fell back on Prince Frederick's head-quarters, behind the Botanic Garden. But the main point of attack was the Porte de Schaerbeck; and it was made with a force of more than seven thousand combatants (the double of the whole real force of the citizens.) From this gate to the Park, the road lay through open spaces, protected by the fewest and least efficient barricades. At the moment of attack, there were but about sixty men posted at the gate, mostly of the free corps of Rodenbach and Niellon, and some Liegeois. Under the fire of the enemy, they chose for themselves a captain of the name of Hildorf, who, when his leg was broken by a bullet, continued through the whole day, from a neighbouring house, to conduct the defence.

It was through this route that the Dutch troops forced their way to the Park, after a murderous resistance; and they reached their destination by a rapid march, more resembling a flight, pursued by the fire of the people from every window and vantage-ground. The defenders of the gate itself, finding their post no longer tenable, repaired to the Observatory, to renew their efforts against the enemy.

At half-past ten, the Dutch were masters of the Park, and, it might have been thought, of the city; but, whether through cowardice, ignorance of localities, or want of tactical knowledge,

they suffered an old artilleryman, 'Charlier, *jambe de bois*,' to protect the passage from the Park into the Place Royale with a single gun; and he, with about twenty men, posted without order and without a leader, in the windows of the Bellevue and the coffee-house de l'*Amitié*, kept in check eight hundred disciplined soldiers. By twelve o'clock, the Dutch troops were confined to the ground they occupied; the moral force of the citizens was developed, that of the soldiers subdued, and the ultimate fate of the city decided.

Such were the events of the 23rd of September in 1830—about to be commemorated in 1833. The morning was fresh and brilliant. The tree of liberty, planted in the Place Royale, bore the tri-coloured flag of Belgium. The beautiful Grecian peristyle of the *église de Caudembourg*, converted into an orchestra, was draped between its Corinthian columns with the national colours. Every house was decorated, every balcony bannered! Every avenue teemed with peasantry, pouring in, in their gala-dresses, to celebrate the anniversary of the day in whose conflicts they had participated. The numerous *corps de musique*, convoked for the national concert to be given to the people, marched in, with banners flying, by the gates of Anderlecht, Flandres, Lacken, and Louvain;—those gates against which the enemy had, three years before, made their sanguinary attack. The music of Grétry, Rossini, Mayer, and Fétis succeeded to the roar of cannon and the toll of the tocsin. The museums, public libraries, galleries and exhibitions of pictures, were thrown open to a people who, three years before, had been steeped in blood; and who now, with a noiseless pleasure, a deep-seated and tranquil satisfaction, were standing in quiet wonder before the representations of their national scenes by their own national artists. Every where a sort of respectful deference was paid to a little band, dressed in a particular costume, with glazed hats and tri-coloured plumes. Maimed, pale, haggard, (some on crutches, and some supported by friends,) they were announced in a low tender tone by the demand of '*Place aux blessés*.'

The day of the 23rd closed, as it began, in peace not altogether divested of melancholy; for at the setting sun (that sun which in 1830 set over a scene of blood,) many hearts sank, and many eyes were wet, as '*la sonnerie des morts*' slowly chimed forth from the belfries of every church in Brussels.

The feeling of pride and sadness which closed the solemnities of this day, was deepened by the ceremony which opened the morning of the 24th. That day had been the bloodiest of the city's contest with a foreign foe. It was on that day that Brussels had been bombarded by the royal batteries, and that the temporary success of Prince Frederick's army was marked by pillage, devastation, and massacre. The battle was then still raging in its streets; every house had been converted into 'a house of mourning;' and, on the anniversary of that day, the memory of its disasters still gloomed the spirits of the people who had resisted, and finally overcome them.

On the morning of the 24th, a funeral service was celebrated in the church of St. Gudule, by that grandest and most imposing of forms and sounds, a requiem mass. Never, in the days of her bold Brabantian Dukes and splendid Burgundian Princes, had the capital of the Low Countries beheld in her metropolitan church a scene of more picturesque, more imposing, more magnificent ceremony; never did the vast nave of St. Gudule re-echo to sounds of greater force, or carry the hymn of grief home to suffering hearts with greater effect.

The choir was occupied on either side by the King and Queen, the two Chambers, the municipal authorities, and foreign diplomacy, all in deep mourning. The nave, the aisles, the chapels, were crowded with the multitudinous people to the very steps without the portals. In the centre of the nave rose a black cenotaph, on which was inscribed the names of the victims who had fallen in the four day's fight. Before it bent many a hooded head, and knelt many a proud but weeping heart; some mother, who, like Rachel, would not be comforted; some affianced and plighted bride, whose wedding veil was now changed for the coif of the *Béguine*, or the black crape of the Sister of Charity. The comrade, too, was there, who had fought in the same fight, and had performed the last offices—the friend, the brother, the son. Beyond these, the surviving band, the *blesés*, offered the tribute of their gratitude to Heaven, alike for the dangers they had encountered for their country, and for their restoration to reap the fruits of their victory. Even the most indifferent of the spectators had their feelings excited to a vague but powerful emotion by the music of a hundred voices, accompanied by as many martial instruments, mingling with and swelling the organ's solemn peal.

This imposing and almost awful ceremony was followed by another not less affecting. The whole congregation of St. Gudule, led on by the King and Queen, the senate and representatives, the ministers, the municipality, and the military, proceeded to the Place des Martyrs, where, over the tombs of those who fell in the Four Days, a funeral hymn was sung, of which the whole population of Brussels were the auditors. The day concluded with music, performed in the antique forum of Belgian liberty, the Grande Place; in front of the Hotel de Ville; in the Places des Barricades, La Monnaie, and Le Sablon.

All honours done to the gallant dead, and reverence paid to the feelings of their surviving friends and companions in arms, the two remaining days were devoted to recreating the spirits of the people, and to the amusement of their foreign visitants. The 25th was a day of brilliant bustle, of unclouded gaiety, and of general but temperate enjoyment. It seemed as if the whole peasant population of Belgium were pouring in the one direction, in cars, wagons, and carioles, or on foot. The centre of attraction was the race course of Montplaisir, where the King's cup was to be run for, and prizes of less distinction assigned to the victors. To this point the French calèche, the

English barouche, the German britzka, rolled in slow procession; while cavaliers, grooms, and jockeys, the sons of the turf of all countries, hurried on,—a spectacle in itself to the good Brabançons, who were seated in groups, under trellised porches of their guinguettes and restaurans, on the roadside.

The course of Montplaisir, like other courses, had its royal stand-house, its pavilions for the rank and fashion of all countries, its umpires, its clerk of the course, &c. all mounted on the English scale. A day the most brilliant and exciting shone upon an amusement in which all took a share, from the prince to the peasant; and was followed by an evening still more diversified by its amusements. The theatre was thrown open to the people, the best places being reserved for the *blessés*: and for those who, after the old Flemish fashion, preferred the enjoyments of the open air, there were rural sports prepared in the environs, the bar, the ring, the dance *à la ronde*, and music everywhere. The night closed by an illumination.

The 26th of September, the last of the four days, signalized in 1830 by a second bombardment of the city, and by the glorious cry of victory and the deliverance from the Dutch army, was dedicated in 1833 to a review of the troops by the King, to popular games given at mid-day by the city to the people, and to the '*Concert Monstre*,' executed in the open air in the Place Royale by the bands of all the Belgian regiments and the several amateur societies. The evening was devoted to the theatre, where the King and Queen were present; and the night closed with a second illumination of the public and private edifices, including the lofty and light spire of the Hôtel de Ville, and the Gothic towers of St. Gudule; a spectacle of singular and striking effect, visible over the wide plains of Belgium for many miles.

It was on this last day, about three o'clock in the afternoon, that a *cortège* of English carriages, loaded with imperials, tambours, cartons, and lady's-maids, lords, ladies, and lap-dogs, approached Brussels by the Route de Namur. It must have been a matter of surprise to the travellers to find the faubourgs deserted and silent; yet never had the *guinguettes* and other places of public resort been so tricked out. Triumphant arches crossed the road; garlands and bouquets of flowers hung over every door, and ornamented every window. There were merry-go-rounds which did not go round, wooden horses without riders, and feasts laid out in decorated arbours, which no guest had yet arrived to touch.

Three carriages had already passed on; but as the last of the train (a rickety calash that with difficulty kept up with the rest) approached the Porte de Namur, a voice from an occupant of the rumble commanded a halt; and the calash drew up at a small, whitewashed, green-shuttered auberge, decorated with the sign of a harp, and the motto of '*Caed mille faltha*;' above which was inscribed,

‘HÔTEL D’IRLANDE,
AUBERGE ET RESTAURATION,
PAR MONS. LAURENCE DE FEGAN.’

The windows of the Irish inn were thrown open, gay and garish with garlands and devices; while the general silence of the deserted faubourg permitted the accents of a singular song, accompanied by an untunable violin, to be heard.

To the musical query from a bard, who sat in the window,

“Why don’t you sell your fiddle,
And buy your wife a gown?”

from without, and from the rumble, was answered,

“I will not sell my fiddle,
For all the wives in town,
And if I sold my fiddle,
The folks would think me mad,
For many a follicking day
My fiddle and I have had.

A shout from the window and an exclamation from the rumble, were followed by the rapid descent of a bilious, bloated elderly gentleman, who was received at the porch in the embraces of Larry Fegan: it was Sir Ignatius Dogherty.

Turning to his fellow-travellers, he dismissed them with the intimation, “Yez may go where yez like; but the divel a foot further I’ll go till I get a drop of something to wash down the dust; for I’m choking alive with the drouth.”

“*Continuez, continuez, Monsur le Cocher,*” exclaimed Lady Dogherty in great confusion.

“Eh! gude God, the mon’s mad!” observed Lady Anastasia Macanulty. “What does it all mean, my Lady Dogherty?”

“It means, Lady Anastasia,” said Lady Dogherty to her noble fellow-traveller, “that Sir Ignatius, previous to his leaving Brussels, set up a favourite servant, that in Ireland is called a follower of the family——”

“Yes, yes; one of the clan.”

“Exactly, my dear friend,—one of our clan, in that hotel; and, with his usual generosity, he stops there now just to contribute something to the house-warming. But we will proceed, if you please.”

“Eh! gude God, to be sure. We shall lose all the royal festeevities else.”

“*Continuez, Cocher,*” said Lady Dogherty. “*Et vous, Monsur le Currier,* or, I should say, *Herr Muncher, allez au Bellevue, Herr Muncher, sive ou plait!*”

The old rickety machine was the next moment again enveloped in the clouds of dust which the lighter and more elegant vehicles had thrown up behind them in their rapid route. But either the suddenly increased velocity of the calash tested its

fragility beyond its powers of endurance, or some unobserved obstacle disturbed the even tenor of its way, and frightened the horses from their Flemish propriety; for precisely at the outside of the Porte de Namur, the whole concern, with its cumbrous freight, came with a crash to the ground, pitching the courier on one side the road, and the Ladies, Dogherty and Anastasia Macanulty, with the lady's-maid, into an enormous pile of vegetables on the other.

The proprietor of the stall, like the rest of his fraternity, had abandoned his little market to take a glance at what was passing within the gates; and so deserted was the spot, that no one appeared to offer assistance to the prostrate sufferers. The courier was disabled by a fractured limb; the postilion dared not leave his horses; and the ladies, more frightened than hurt, were still moaning amidst carrots, cabbages, and onions, when a light and elegant vehicle came flying past. From humanity or curiosity, it was suddenly stopped by its sole occupant, an English gentleman. His agile leap over the side of his carriage brought him at once to the assistance of the objects of his solicitude or inquiries.

Her dress steeped and stained with the juice of a crushed water-melon, Lady Dogherty, breathing of onions, and bleeding from the nose from a too rude contact with a red cabbage, was the first object that presented itself to the chivalry of Sir Frederick Mottram; who, with some difficulty, and more violence to his own risible faculties, raised her from the ground. Her Ladyship, with a promptitude of perception which no accident could blunt, where rank and fashion were in question, immediately recognized her deliverer; and with her usual mincing tone, and, as she imagined, graceful manner, expressed her hopes that he was well; regretted they had not met at Baden, where she would have had much pleasure in presenting him to a real German prince, her friend Count Katzenellenbogy: and made her never-failing inquiries for the Duke of Devonshire and the Duncannons, and a passing observation on Lord Chesterfield's last work, which she had in her hand, she said, at the moment of her frightful accident.

Lady Anastasia, "less studied in a sad ostent" to play the part of Lady Teazle in a basket of vegetables, claimed the acquaintance and aid of Sir Frederick, with the ease of a woman of the world, accustomed to make use alike of friends or enemies, acquaintances or strangers, as the exigence of the moment might require; and while the maid was shaking out the now, alas! well-worn Erin-green pelisse of Lady Dogherty, she took possession of Sir Frederick's arm, dusting her canzoù with her handkerchief in her disengaged hand, and coolly exclaimed—

"Eh! gude God, my dear Sir Frederick, what would have become of us, if we had not the gude fortune to meet you, and to have your carriage ready to take us into the town? There never was such a disaistrous journey as we hae made from Aix-la-Chapelle,—all owing" (and she lowered her voice) "to these excellent, but poor, dear, vulgar people endeavouring to keep

up with my cousin the Marchioness's party, who hae been shirking them at every step sin we left Brussels; for they hae no their ain carriage, poor creatures! and this crazy concern is just hired, do you see, for the occasion. But don't let us lose time, Sir Frederick; you'll just order your carriage to draw up, and allow it to set us down at the Bellevue, or we shall be too late for any of the gaities."

"We must first look to that poor wretch," said Sir Frederick, pointing to the courier, who was now assisted by Sir Frederick and his servants (but still continued looking round for the fragments of his pipe and pouch).

"Eh! leave him with the postilion," said Lady Anastasia. "Yonder is a cabaret, and we'll leave our maid to take care of the things, and tie up the old machine. Come, my dear Leddy, we shall be too late for everything."

Sir Frederick, however, insisted on replacing the wounded Herr Muncher in his own rumble, with his own courier to take care of him; and then, with a feeling of deep mortification, which even his humanity combated in vain, he placed the two ladies in the post of honour of his calash, and throwing himself sulki-ly with his back to the horses, proceeded along the Rue de Namur, which opens at once upon the Place Royale.

At that moment the Place Royale was the *salon* of Belgium, where the sovereign and the people of all ranks were assembled to hear the most extraordinary concert that was ever performed to the most multitudinous and attentive of all audiences. As the carriage flew along, it passed the *cortège* of English vehicles which were drawn up at the corner of the Rue des Petits Carmes, where it was stopped by a sentinel. The two ladies' heads were instantly thrust past Sir Frederick, so as completely to exclude his view; while the protrusion of Lady Dogherty's bulky proportions threatened to add suffocation to the calamity. Tender inquiries after the fatigues of the journey were addressed to the occupants of the carriages, with a narrative of the speaker's own misadventures, in which Sir Frederick's name was mentioned with the epithets of "kind friend," "old travelling companion," &c.

Sir Frederick was little ambitious of sustaining the character thus thrust upon him, before the audience which he suspected to be present; he therefore opened the opposite door, and let himself out, for the purpose of cutting his ridiculous protegées, *sans tambour battant*, and escaping unseen into town. He sidled along, therefore, his hat drawn over his eyes, and his eyes glancing from beneath his hat. The first carriage he recognized was his own,—the very easy, luxurious travelling chariot which Fegan (whose name over the Hôtel d'Irlande he had just read with infinite amusement) had carefully sent back from the Tower-stairs to Carlton-terrace. He looked no farther, but increased his speed; and finding that pedestrians were permitted to pass, though carriages were not, he entered under the arch which opens into the Place Royale from the Rue de Namur, and found himself in the midst of a scene and a society, and

within hearing of a music, which, taken altogether, combined the most extraordinary spectacle ever witnessed in modern times.

Sir Frederick placed himself close to the left of the church of Caudenberg, the central point to which all eyes and ears were directed. On an elevated *estrade* in the front of the peristyle, whose columns were hung with trophies, an orchestra of six hundred musicians were performing the national hymn, the *Brabançonne*, to an audience of many thousand persons. The still and breathless multitude filled the vast and beautiful area of the Place Royale to its utmost boundaries, stretching onwards to the right along the Rue Royale and the Park, descending the Montagne de la Cour in front, and filing off to the left through the spacious Rue de la Régence and Rue de Namur, as far as sounds were audible or objects visible.

The audience was composed of many generations; old men supported by their grandchildren, and babies on their mother's bosoms. In the strictest sense of the word, it was the Belgian people. Within a slight boundary of frame-work, over which some hundreds of red rude arms were leaning, sat the legislative representatives of the people, the public authorities, and such foreign guests as applied for admission by the sacred name of strangers. Without the barrier, stood the promiscuous multitude; and above their heads, in the windows of the surrounding architectural edifices, were crowded the higher classes, native and foreign: the public Hôtels de l'Europe, de Flandres, and the Bellevue, contained their own guests; and the other buildings sparkled with the beau-monde of the country!

In the balconies of the Hôtel de Merode stood the King and Queen, the *état major*, and a numerous society of Belgian gentry, brilliant in uniforms, or in the gaiety and freshness of a Parisian morning toilet. There was no military array, no body-guards. A sentinel stationed at the various entrances into the Place, to prevent the entrance of carriages from disturbing the music by their roll, was the only obstacle to the approach of all who could find standing-room; and not a gesture or a word disturbed the solemnity of the scene, or the exquisite harmony of the concert.

Sir Frederick Mottram forgot the adventure in which he had a moment before been so ludicrously involved; his narrow escape from the Montessor party, and from his own wife. He forgot all personal considerations. The scene he gazed on, the persons he beheld, the music he listened to, absorbed his whole attention, his imagination, and his feelings.

It was a curious sight to witness a member of the feudal aristocracy of Germany standing forward as the elected chief magistrate of a free people; to listen to a national anthem, the dirge of despotism! It was a singular event to see the descendant of Henry the Fourth, a daughter of the House of Bourbon, listening to the music of the *Marseillaise* and of the *Brabançonne*.

It was gracious to behold, in the ruddy countenances of the assembled multitudes, the evidences of a people who have strict-

ly realized the vague wish of her best ancestor, having each *le poulet au pot*, or something more substantial. But more remarkable, more striking, was the solemn silence, the deep and profound spirit with which these hymns to liberty were heard. There were no *vivats*, no explosions of sentiment, such as those with which France is accustomed to hail the freedom she has so often and so bravely struggled for, and so often and so lightly resigned. The pervading feeling was that of men, in earnest in all they do; and who, though they may again be overwhelmed, as in former times, by masses, will never be subdued in spirit: for the *têtes dures des Flamands* are at this day precisely what they were when Philippe-le-Bon of Burgundy reproached them with the temperament which resisted even his splendid despotism, and which they derived from their remotest ancestors, the sturdiest and the most awakened of the Franks.

The concert was concluded with a round of applause; and the multitude dispersed as quietly as they had assembled, pouring down the streets and avenues, and along the shady walks of the Park, each to his habitual or temporary home, to repose or to regale, in readiness for the *gratis* representation of the theatre, for the fireworks, or for the illumination of the Tour de St. Michel, (the beacon political and religious of the good people of Brussels.)

Sir Frederick still retained his seat under some floating draperies, to which a member of the chambers had courteously conducted him. A slight shower, which fell with the concluding bars of the concert, to the damage of many a *chapeau rose*, and *robe bleu céleste*,* gave him an excuse for keeping to his shelter, and it enabled him to watch, unseen, the *entrée* of the English carriages at the conclusion of the ceremony. His own travelling chariot led the way, occupied within by Lady Frances and her maid, and without by her livery-servant and page. Lord Aubrey's britzka followed; his Lordship and Lord Allington on the dicky, their two foreign valets within, and a courier and livery-servant behind. The third carriage contained Lady Montessor, stretched at full length on piles of cushions, and accompanied by her own woman, and Dr. Rodolf de Burgo; and on the coach-box were Mrs. St. Leger and Claude Campbell, *sous la même parapluie*. A sort of sumpter carriage closed the march, laden with footmen, maids, a green monkey, a grey parouquet, and a French dog; the latter three articles recent purchases of her Ladyship, and intended for her menagerie in London. After a moment's interval, Sir Frederick's calash appeared with the Ladies Dogherty and Macanulty. The whole cavalcade passed slowly through the dispersing but still dense crowd, and drew up at the *porte-cochère* of the Hôtel de Bellevue.

* The freshness and elegance of the Belgian toilet on the occasion of the morning festivities of the Four Days was very conspicuous, and had a very brilliant effect, particularly upon the occasion here described.

Apartments at high price must have been retained at the Bellevue; for the whole party, received at the gate by Lord Montessor and a host of English beaux, alighted and entered. Not so the ladies occupying Sir Frederick's carriage. After an altercation of some length with the porter and waiters, they drove to the Hôtel de Flandres and de l'Europe; and then, to the owner's mortification, he beheld his carriage slowly winding down the Montague de la Cour, his servants still keeping their seats. His first attempt in his own behalf was to seek his old apartments at the Flandres; but they, with every other room in the hotel, had been occupied for the Four Days, excepting only that one appropriated to the obliging hostess herself, who resigned her family *entresol* in his favour, till the clearing of her house on the following day should leave the suite he had previously occupied *au premier* disengaged.

A spot wherein to repose independently of his wife and her party being thus secured, he sought the solitude of the now silent, empty Park, to concentrate his thoughts, calm the perturbation of his spirits (ruffled beyond his power to control them), and to arrange something like a plan of conduct, not only for what might occur during his short residence in Belgium, but, as far as his wife was concerned, for his future existence. The soft, drizzling shower, which had caused such a rapid dispersion after the grand concert, was still falling, mingling with the rays of a bright evening sun. The Bassin Vert, the usual centre of the promenaders, was now deserted, and a thousand odours were exhaling from the dewy tufts of flowers which embalmed the adjoining bosquets of acacias and chesnut-trees.

To avoid the chance of obtrusion, Sir Frederick descended into one of the *bas fonds*, where the intertwining foliage renders retirement so facile, and affords a calm and delicious retreat in the bosom of a busy and bustling city. And now, breathing freely, and for the first time raising his eyes, he was about to throw himself on a bench, when he perceived that it was already occupied by a *Béguine* in full costume. She was leaning thoughtfully on her arm, and a small basket lay by her side. He instantly retreated. Associations more powerful than his will to overcome had rendered every circumstance and person connected with that order interesting, and even agitating to him; and before he had reached the summit of the acclivity by which the *bas fond* is quitted, he was seized, first with a suspicion, and then with a conviction, that the absorbed and pensive Sister of St. Beghé was the Sœur Greite of St. John's at Bruges—Madame Marguerite herself.

He paused for a moment, struggled with his feelings, his hopes, his desires, and his plighted promise; but an impulse stronger than all beside combated and conquered every wiser and more prudent thought. He returned upon his steps, and, bursting through the interwoven branches which formed an umbrageous bower over the seat he had left, he found it empty.

The *Béguine* had disappeared; but, in the hurry probably of escape, had left her little basket behind her.

The dense skreen formed by the luxuriant shrubs concealed the path she had taken. He took up her basket, which contained only a programme of the fêtes, some flowers, and a large drawing card, on which was sketched, with the most characteristic fidelity, and with a bold but feathery touch, a view of the scene recently exhibited in the Place Royale. The *Béguine's* coif was obvious among the listening multitude, leaning over the barrier of the reserved seats. The noble façade of the Coudenberg formed the back-ground; and among the many heads grouped to the right of the spot where the artist stood, it was just possible to distinguish one figure, holding back the drapery in which it was shrouded;—that figure was his own.

The *Béguine*, then, who had mingled among the people on this triumphant day, and who had taken this felicitous sketch, was the artist of the Ostend *treckschuyt*—was indeed Madame Marguerite. He arose; and was already hastening along the path, the forgotten basket serving as an excuse for overtaking the owner; but as he passed in front of the military orchestra, with his glass to his eye, and looking in every direction in search of his object, he perceived the plain, dark calash wheeling away from the iron gates, which open on the Place Royale, (the white coif of the *Béguine* just seen behind its curtains:) the next moment it was out of sight.

He was now no longer in a mood for tranquil meditation or sober resolve; still less for a rencontre with the members of his wife's party. He returned to replace the basket where he had found it, first buttoning up the drawing within his coat: and, after an hour's pacing under the shade of the plane-trees which shadow the eastern alley of the park, he returned to his hotel—having finally resolved, to resolve on nothing! to leave everything to the chances, and to do the *decencies* (as he mentally phrased it) by immediately presenting himself to his wife and her party.

On arriving at the Hôtel de Flandres, he found his own carriage entering the gateway; it having deposited the wounded courier under medical care, and dropped the Ladies Dogherty and Macanulty without the Porte de Namur; the Hôtel d'Irlande being the only shelter they could find, after traversing Brussels high and low, "*d'un bout à l'autre*," as Sir Frederick's valet expressed it. The man added, with a very sly look, that "their Ladyships had requested him to present their thanks and requests that the carriage might set them down at the theatre in the evening; but that, as one of the springs was broken, he had assured them *de son chef*, that *that* was quite impossible."

To dress, and to send a penciled note to Lady Frances, announcing his arrival, were Sir Frederick's occupations for the succeeding half hour. The following penciled answer was returned:—

"We had already learned from your friends (I believe I

should say your *relations*) the Doghertys, that you had arrived—I am happy to hear, in perfect health, We are all very in-commodiously lodged here; but as I share the room of my dear (and, I fear, dying) friend, Georgina Montessor, it matters little to me. I am glad you are better provided at the Flandres, as I know how much you are put out of your way by want of comforts. We are dressing for the theatre, (a gala night, and the King and Queen going,) having taken a morsel *au bout du banc*, by way of dinner. We have places in the Princess of Schaffenhause's box; pray join us. Alfred Montessor sends you his bone; as our men won't honour the Citizen King with their presence, even though tempted by the society of our Grande Princesse."

A bitter but irrepressible laugh followed the perusal of this cool and inconsequent *billet*. The dear friends of the dying Lady Montessor dressing for the theatre! The whole was a sedative; and he determined to take his wife and her party on their own terms, and to give the conjugal rendezvous, (after an interval to which a crowd of strange and unexpected incidents had given an artificial length,) in the box of the very woman who had been one of the most urgent causes of their recent separation.

In referring to Lady Frances's note (between his soup and his *pâté*), which he had at first only glanced over with irritated rapidity, the words "I believe your *relations*, the Doghertys," struck him first as a joke got up by the party, and then as an insult, a palpable hit at *other* relations, whose unpretending respectability had not secured them against the insolent mystifications of Lady Frances's noble friends, nor him from her own impertinent and unfeeling reproaches. He tore the note in a thousand pieces, finished his dinner, drank more than his usual quantity of wine, and then set forth for the theatre, flushed, and flurried with a thousand conflicting feelings and strong excitements.

The streets of Brussels, so tranquil an hour before, now resembled one of those fairs of ancient times, which, in the palmy state of the Hanseatic league, assembled at their great marts the population of half Europe. Persons of every condition and costume were pouring forth to watch the fairy lights gradually kindling along the platform of the towers of the cathedral, or sparkling with fantastic beauty over the spire, and even to the arrow on the summit, of the Hôtel de Ville.

It was with extreme difficulty that Sir Frederick threaded the crowd in the Place de la Monnaie, and fought his way to the portico of the theatre, and found himself at last at the open door of the Princess of Schaffenhause's box, which was crowded to excess, and resounded with the buzz of many languages. The theatre itself was thronged to its summit, the pit and balcony crammed to suffocation. Opposite, and on the right hand side of the stage, sat the King and Queen of the Belgians. The King's Staff occupied the box on the left.

Whoever has seen the parade of an Irish Viceroy's visit to

the theatre, in what Dean Swift styles "wretched Dublin, the capital of wretched Ireland;" whoever has witnessed an armed force conducting a respectable lady and nobleman from one neighbouring street to another, to pass an hour or two at a play; whoever has on that solemnity heard the clattering of cavalry, and the word of command given by the officer of the guard; and seen the entrance of the Lord Lieutenant and his Lady, in court-dresses, into a box draped and decorated with the by-gone insignia of feudal royalty (tiny pages holding up regal manteaus, aide-de-camps, comptrollers and stewards of the household, gentlemen ordinary and extraordinary, with state physicians in solemn black, and state beef-eaters in short petticoats and long halberds, all filling up the pageant); whoever has seen this, and estimated it as such things were once estimated in Ireland—as the Doghertys and the Doctor de Burgos still estimate them, would think very little, or rather would think nothing at all, of a '*spectacle gala*' honoured by the presence of royalty at Brussels theatre.

In the simple, plain box of their Belgian Majesties, the ladies and gentlemen who accompanied the Royal Family did not stand behind them the entire evening, deeming even a lounge against a wall a luxury. There were no pages, comptrollers, physicians, surgeons, dancing-masters (of the ceremonies), gentlemen ordinary, or gentlemen extraordinary; but, *en revanche*, the peaceful tranquillity and attention to the play were not interrupted by any uproarious expressions of party feeling, by oranges flung at the heads of the unhappy actors, or bottles at the heads of the objects of all this pageantry. No factious air was called for from the gallery, nor opposed by another factious air demanded from the pit; not a prisoner was made, nor a head broken. For nothing in the histrionic chronicles of nations less resembled a viceregal visit to the theatre of Dublin, than the visit of the King and Queen of the Belgians to the theatre of Brussels on the twenty-sixth of September 1833.

Sir Frederick Mottram stood at the threshold of the Princess of Schaffenhhausen's box, just able to see, over heads lower than his own, the royal party and the opposite side of the theatre. It was a grateful and splendid sight! The piece performing was '*Le Mariage Impossible*.' It had been chosen appropriately, as being the production of a Belgian author, Monsieur Grisar of Brussels whose brilliant *début* had been hailed with compatriot triumph.

There were some points in the play which the persons in the Princess of Schaffenhhausen's box might have applied to themselves; but these persons were in themselves a drama, and occupied with their own parts. In the front of the box sat the Princess and Lady Frances Mottram, each with a cavalier immediately in waiting, leaving the tops of the ladies' heads alone visible from behind. The *blonde coiffure*, wreathed with pearl, of the English lady, was contrasted by the jet-black head, bound simply with a diadem of brilliants, of the foreigner. Between

both sat, or rather fidgeted the frivolous *chiffonnée* impersonation of *Herbault's* last—Mrs. St. Leger; her *chapeau rose* flaunting its vapoury marabouts in the faces of the many aspirants for her universal smiles, who hung about her and filled up the box to its farthest verge. Among the men were Lords Aubrey and Allington (less of the *extrême droit* than the brothers Montessor, who were at that moment playing a family-game at *écarté* with Doctor de Burgo at the *couchette* of Lady Montessor); and Claude Campbell, with his fair tresses confounded with Mrs. St. Leger's marabouts, evidently the favourite of the day.

The rest, though chiefly English, were unknown to Sir Frederick. He stood, therefore patiently awaiting the conclusion of the first piece, leaning against the frame of the door. At the dropping of the curtain, when the box was thinned by the temporary departure of some of the gentlemen, he advanced, and was recognized by Lord Aubrey, Lord Allington, Claude Campbell, and Mrs. St. Leger. Lady Frances's head was turned to the adjoining box, and almost touching that of a young and beautiful person, on whose bright countenance sat the immortal bloom which poetry gives to Hebe, and painting fails to realize. She was talking to the French Ambassadors—the young, the good, the beautiful Countess de Latour Maubourg.*

The Princess, on the contrary, was stooping down her diademed head to some one who was addressing her from the balcony below. A garland of crimson roses binding the crimson brows of Lady Dogherty, marked her as the person thus distinguished by the "observed of all observers." The Princess appeared to excite in many of the audience much admiration, mingled with profound astonishment; odd doubts of the fidelity of their own senses, or of her identity, were heard to escape their lips; and the title of Schaffenhuisen, coupled with the name of Madame Marguerite, was heard on every side. Lady Frances at last drew back her head, and turning to address Lord Aubrey, found seated in his place—her own husband!

The recognition was cool, courteous, brief: one word on the last accounts of their son, another on the health of Lady Montessor, and then a broken sentence, an unfinished phrase, with an infinite deal of nothings, about nothing, and tending to nothing. On the re-entrance of Lord Aubrey, the bon-ton husband instantly resigned his place; and was joining Mrs. St. Leger, who, with Claude Campbell, was now perched on one of those high seats which flank the private boxes facing the proscenium in the theatre of Brussels, when Lady Frances, tapping his arm with her fan, said, "I suppose I may now present you to

* The death of this lady, a few months after the epoch here described, cast a shadow over the elegant and rational pleasures of Brussels; and left an impression of regret on all hearts, even on those of her slightest acquaintance, not yet dispelled. The Countess de Latour Maubourg was daughter to the celebrated Count Daru.

the Princess of Schaffenhhausen, the patroness of *your* friend Madame Marguerite!"

Sir Frederick felt the blood mount in his face, in spite of every effort to maintain an *aplomb* equal to the cool impertinence of his wife's speech. He answered, however, composedly, "I shall be happy to have the honour."

Lady Frances bent forward her head and whispered the Princess, who nevertheless waited to finish an audience obtained by the persevering efforts of Lady Dogherty. She at last slowly and carelessly turned half round.

"Sir Frederick Mottram desires to have the honour of being presented to you, Princess," said Lady Frances, half laughingly, half ironically.

"Sir Frederick does me honour," said the Princess, turning full round, in all the blaze of beauty and brilliants; the one enhanced by the blush that mantled on her cheek, and the fire that sparkled in her eye; the other relieved by the black head and robe by which they were contrasted. It would have been difficult to conceive a more striking picture than that presented at the moment by this splendid original. It struck even the *nonchalant* Lord Aubrey that he had never before seen the Princess so handsome; it struck Sir Frederick Mottram that the Princess of Schaffenhhausen was—Madame Marguerite; that Madame Marguerite was the Princess of Schaffenhhausen;—that—that—that he was himself "drunk, dreaming, or mad!"

The foreigner who had been leaning over the back of the Princess's chair now arose, and, with the true courtesy of a foreigner, offered his seat to the stranger. The offer was promptly accepted, if not with equal courtesy: Sir Frederick dropped into it. The Princess resumed her seat; the curtain drew up, and the gay *petite pièce*, '*La Gageure Imprévue*,' began amidst a cry from the pit of "*Chut—chut—silence!*" The Princess pressed her finger on her smiling lip with a significant air; the *causeries* of her box ceased, and all eyes were directed to the stage, to the relief of all who had nothing more to say, or who had more to express than words could tell, or eyes communicate.

Sir Frederick Mottram rested his hand on the back of the Princess's chair, his head upon his hand; and his quick respiration disturbed the only vagrant tress which had escaped from its brilliant confinement and floated on her marble neck.

The farce finished, the curtain dropped, the audience rose; and the departure of their Belgian Majesties, like their entrance, was followed by the unanimous acclamations of respect of the entire audience. But not one servile exclamation, not one party word, not one *flagornerie de circonstance*, disgraced the free expression of respectful good-will, which honoured those who offered, as well as those who received it.

Lady Frances gave her arm to Lord Aubrey, Mrs. St. Leger hers to Claude Campbell; the Princess took Sir Frederick's, which was hesitatingly offered.

“Pass on, Princess,” said Lady Frances, with an arch smile and significant nod of the head, and standing back to make way for the greater lady.

The Princess took her precedence. Her carriage was the first up; and she had reached the portico of the theatre in unbroken silence, save the utterance of an ‘*au revoir*’ to Lady Frances, as she passed her. She was already in her carriage, and her chasseur was on the alert to close the door, when Sir Frederick asked in a sharp tone—

“And I! have not I a right to demand an ‘*au revoir*?’ Have not I fulfilled to the letter the conditions imposed?”

“Then make one effort more,” was the reply: “fulfil them in the spirit, and then——”

“What then?” he asked, grasping firmly the hand which struggled for its release.

“Why, *then*,” she said, bending down her head, and softening her voice to a whisper—“then

“ Nous nous reverrons un jour,
 Pour raconter de nos fortunes:
 Oublions donc nos amours,
 Quoi qu’elles soient bien importunes.
 Qui plus y perd, plus y a mis—
 C’est quit à quit, et bons amis.”

She kissed the tips of her fingers, and drew back: the footman closed the door, the glass was raised, and the coachman received the word—‘*Au Pavillon de Gronendael.*’

The rain was now falling in a light, pattering shower, that scarcely dimmed the brilliant fireworks that shot athwart the midnight air. The crowds hurried from the theatre and the Place de la Monnaie to the Porte de Schaerbeck, to the Boulevards, and along the Rue Royale; the great object of the people being to see the last representation, which was to close the national festivities in honour of the anniversary of the Four Days. The fireworks represented the façade of a temple, on which was inscribed, in letters of living light, the simple phrase

‘26^{i^{me}} SEPTEMBRE.’

The happy multitudes read it with enthusiasm. There was one among them, ‘not of them,’ who read it, too, with a strange and deep interest; to whom it was a date, an epoch, never to be forgotten.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE OLD PALACE.

THE Four Days were over; the national fêtes of the anniversary of the Belgian revolution had terminated; and in the universal movement of the dense population which had filled the streets of Brussels, no riot, no disorder, not the faintest disturbance had arisen. The Hague might (as it was averred) have given its orders to excite commotion: not even an accident had occurred to interrupt the harmony, the solemnity, or the enjoyment of the festivity.

A short altercation on the race-course, not known beyond the parties concerned in it, between an Irish son of the Turf (or of the bog) and a Belgian groom, had occasioned more mirth than anger. It arose out of what was called the '*course des chevaux indigènes*,' in which a *vermeil* cup was to be contended for; when the sporting Hibernian had offered (in his own phrase) to *insinuate* his black colt Paddy Whack, in the place of a Belgian horse, which he characterized as 'a crater that would rather die than run.' The proposition, in itself an insult, was followed by such *dénigrant* observations on all horses in general not bred for the Curragh of Kildare, and all Belgian horses in particular, by the Irish gentleman, as threatened a prompt appeal to other means than a reference to '*les jurés*;' but the interference of Lord Montessor, Lord Alfred, and some English gentlemen, turned the whole affair to their own account of broad fun. The sporting Irishman, who had said more bitter things of Belgian racing than it might have been safe to translate to his adversary, was promised a fair field for his colt on another occasion; and having, in the true spirit of squireen chivalry, given his card, it served the double purpose of announcing his name, and recommending his hotel, for it was inscribed 'Comfortable Irish In, by Monsieur Lawrence Fegan, Aubergiste, Hotel d'Irlande, Porte de Namur.'

The fêtes, however, though over to the letter, continued in the spirit; and amusements both private and public detained the steps of the gay, and furnished an excuse to the idle for still lingering in Brussels. The exhibition of pictures remained open; the city had offered a brilliant ball to the King and Queen, and to all the strangers of note then in the capital. The splendid and hospitable mansion of the French Ambassador was twice a week the rendezvous of the elegant and the gay; and the British Ambassador gave agreeable dinners. The delightful operas of '*Zampa*' and the '*Pré aux Clercs*' were performed to full houses, alternately with the representations

of Madame Dejazet, one of the most charming of modern comedians.

It was in vain, therefore, that the '*Députations Orangistes*' departed to London, Frankfort, Toplitz, to solicit the restoration of the House of Nassau, and to represent the Belgians as in the deepest distress, commercial, financial, and political; as supporting with reluctance the revolutionary government, and ready, *les armes à la main*, to effect a counter-revolution. The Belgians continued, notwithstanding, to dance, play, and sing; to applaud '*Zampa*,' to attend the races of Montplaisir, and to study the pictures in the exhibition, crowding the avenues of the old palace from the opening to the shutting of its gates.

The several members of the Montessor party had each a motive or a necessity for remaining. The Marchioness, whose illness was no longer a *tic*, or a means of coquetry, could not travel—at least so Dr. de Burgo averred; and all who were, or affected to be, interested in what was whispered to be her approaching end, would not leave her.

Lord Alfred and Claude Campbell alone had broken off from an association to which both, in a certain degree, had become *à charge*. The latter had been recalled into service, and went in hopes of negotiating for the office of secretary of legation to his friends Mr. and Mrs. Montague St. Leger. The young diplomatist had left England deeply enamoured of his cousin and godmother Lady Frances Mottram; he quitted Brussels quite *engoué* with his *confidante* and playfellow Mrs. St. Leger, who had been the first to announce to him that he was superseded in the good graces of *sa belle marraine*, and the only one to console him for an infidelity, which had but anticipated his own by a week, or perhaps a day.

Lord Alfred had quitted Brussels suddenly and secretly; in dudgeon, in debt, and in utter disgrace with more than one of his party. He had run horses and lost at Montplaisir; and had actually left a large sporting debt unpaid to the fortunate owner of Paddy Whack, the master of the Hôtel d'Irlande, Porte de Namur. He had played *roulette*, and been cleared out at Baden. He had lost an enormous sum at billiards to Count Katzenellenbogen, at Aix-la-Chapelle, which his brother had paid. But his debts to the man of rank being discharged, Lord Montessor drew up his purse-strings, and declared off. Lord Montessor had shared his brother's hopes, and was even positive of his ultimate success with the Princess of Schaffhausen; and it was not until he had been himself the bearer of a second proposition on Lord Alfred's behalf, on the morning of the last day of the anniversary, that the cold, firm, and indignant refusal of the Princess convinced him that, in his brother's technical phraseology, it was 'no go.'

All farther ways and means therefore being cut off, Lord Alfred, on the evening when the little piece of '*L'Escroc du Grand Monde*' was performed, enacted himself one of its scenes, and made an abrupt exit from Brussels, which by no means

elicited the plaudits of his creditors, nor proved satisfactory to the friends and associates he had left behind him.

Lady Montessor, meantime, had been removed to a splendid mansion in the Rue Ducale, the hotel of an absent Belgian noble, who was waiting upon circumstances in his chateau near the Dutch frontier. The Bellevue had been voted close and incommodious by Dr. de Burgo, whose opinion, while it met the desires of the whole party, was more expressly calculated to suit the interests of—himself.

The members of the Montessor family had each their elegant apartments detached and independently of each other; but Lady Frances, the most devoted of friends, occupied a *lit de repos* in the Marchioness's dressing-room, and shared with Lord Aubrey those tender duties, that, in English high life, often produce scenes in which feeling and folly, piety and profligacy, are so strangely mingled. To such scenes and such characteristics a close parallel is presented in the history of French society before that revolution of which they were the precursors, and, to a certain degree, the occasions; and whoever has read the memoirs and letters of that epoch, will find in the circles of the Choiseuls, the De Grammonts and the Boufflers, of the d'Epainays, Du Deffands and the Espinasses, types of the habits and morals of particular sets among the highest class of the modern English oligarchy.

Sir Frederick Mottram neither resented the incivility of not being included in the arrangements of the hotel in the Rue Ducale, nor objected to the earnest request of his weeping lady, to be permitted to remain with the dying Lady Montessor, for the short time which it might please Divine Providence to spare her to her sorrowing friends. The intentions of Heaven, however, on this subject seemed anything but fixed. The autumnal skies, which wept and smiled alternately upon Brussels and its lingering guests, were not more changeable than the health, spirits, and looks of Lady Montessor.

Occupying an apartment which recalled all that is most splendid and tasteful in the boudoir of a Parisian *petite maîtresse*, (for all Belgian ladies do not 'live in kitchens,' and dress in 'bedgowns,') she sometimes drew her coterie round her easy-chair, where, sheltered from the sunshine by skreens of living jasmine and other odoriferous plants, she was all life, gaiety, and frolic. At other times, seated in the *demie lumière* of drawn draperies, she congregated them round the fire, where she lay shivering in cashmeres, on cushions of eider-down, with one cold hand clasped in her husband's, and the other in that of—Lord Aubrey,—fragile and faded as the flowers over which she moralized.

Lady Frances, meantime, sobbed over her tapestry; Mrs. St. Leger dropped pearly tears over the [pearl] purse she was knitting for Claude Campbell; and Lord Allington sketched clever caricatures of the whole group in the fly-leaves of his Rabelais, which he was now reading *avec délices* for the first time.

At other times, again, Lady Montessor would insist on her

friends adjourning to Sir Robert's box at the theatre, or to the musical promenades of the Park; and when they returned, she fell into hysterics of laughter at the absurdities discovered or mystifications enacted at the expense of friends and foes, natives or foreigners. Again, she was found in hysterics of tears, complaining of the neglect and seeming want of sympathy of those for whom she had lived and made such sacrifices, (and she turned her eyes on Lord Aubrey.) "She was abandoned," she said, "to the skill and care of one who, however skilful and kind, was still a stranger;" and then Doctor de Burgo threw down his eyes, and muttered something of 'professional duty,' 'intense sympathy,' and 'devoted respect.'

Au reste, the clique lived as exclusively to themselves in the Rue Ducale, as they could have done in all the most fastidious jealousy of an overflowing London season, when cousins come from the country, and exacting constituents threaten an incursion of the Goths and Vandals. The gentlemen, however, went once to the Chamber of Representatives, as a matter of mere curiosity: they were accompanied by Lady Frances and Mrs. St. Leger, old frequenters of the Duchess's box in the House of Lords, and well-known *habituées* of the ventilator of the House of Commons.

The exclamations of the Tory stateswomen at the elegance and accommodation of the handsome tribune to which they were conducted, were sufficiently audible to excite the attention of some of the young members immediately beneath them. The eloquence of the *orateur* who at their entrance was in possession of *la parole* was deranged. He was one to whose ears the lowest lisplings of female accents were familiar. The tonsured head, clerical precision of toilet, *ton patelin*, and sly side-long expression of countenance, declared him to be equally devoted to the service of the church and of the ladies. It was the Abbé de F——, the spiritual director and *vert-vert* of the *Dame Anglaises de Bruges*, the *bel esprit* of the English coteries of that city and of Brussels.

Singularly enough, the subject of his eloquent discourse was a woman; and his speech was sufficiently personal to attract the attention of the English party, who, like Horace Walpole, '*aimaient les noms propres*,' and who were almost tempted to encourage the speaker with a 'Hear him, hear him!'

On the Abbé's resuming his seat, the sudden rising of the member for Bruges excited universal silence: he was one who never rose but to command it. Concise, witty, and rapid, the speech of Monsieur Jullien had the point of an epigram, and the close cogency of a logical argument. The chivalrous championship he assumed 'for the nonce,' admitted of all the gaiety and playfulness which are the peculiar characteristics of his somewhat French eloquence; and carrying, as he did, the gallantry, if not 'the sense,' of the House along with him, his reply to the Abbé's philippic produced that '*grand hilarité*,' which, in the language of the English journals, may be translated '*continued laughter*.'

Lady Frances and Mrs. St. Leger were amused up to their bent. "Do you know," said the latter, "that this is infinitely more entertaining than either of our Houses?"

"Yes," said Lady Frances; "one tires of everything in the long-run—even of dear old Eldon's tears which used to affect one so very much."

"And then," said Mrs. St. Leger, "there is some difference between the fresh air of this delightful box, seeing and seen, and our mounting to the ventilator at St. Stephen's, and thrusting one's head through pigeon-holes, to inhale an atmosphere of smoke and candlesnuffs."

"Or to be treated," said Lady Frances, laughing, "with black tea and tallow-lights, by some rising young member, a candidate for our *soirées* and pic-nics."

"Come," said Lord Aubrey, gravely, "this is antinational; and, worse still, democratic and revolutionary."

"And yet," said Lord Montessor, looking round at the beautiful edifice and commodious arrangement of the chamber, "this is a splendid thing! I scarcely know an opera-house in Europe superior: and whenever the Nassaus recover their authority, and put down these Jacobin clubs, it will make a delicious *salle de spectacle*. Here are private boxes, you see; and a pit and two tiers for the public. By the by, how crowded they are! only look!"

"They are open, I suppose, to the *canaille*," said Lord Aubrey; "for you see there are men in *blouses*, and women in the dress of the Campine."

"Yes; but what elegant toilets in the front row! I'd swear that is a *nœud d'Herbault* in the *chapeau de paille de ris*," said Mrs. St. Leger.

"And look at the nun in the thick of it all!" said Lady Frances. "I never saw a real nun before; though I went as one to the Dowager Lady Lansdowne's masquerade."

"That is a *Béguine*," said Lord Montessor. "I have often thought a ballet of *Béguines*, in the high grotesque style, would be very effective. It would beat the dance of the dead nuns in 'Robert le Diable' hollow."

"There!" said Lord Aubrey, "you have all stared the poor *Béguine* out of countenance. She is off. Who would think she could say anything under that penthouse of stiff linen?"

"Humph!" said Lord Montessor, "I have my suspicions of that sisterhood. I saw a friend of yours, Lady Frances, in full chase of one, not very long ago."

"Why, there is Sir Frederick, I declare!" said Mrs. St. Leger, "stuck to the wall like one of the pilasters. Oh! now he sees us, and is struggling to get out."

"Pray let us meet him," said Lady Frances, with a mischievous laugh; "I have not seen him for five minutes since I introduced the Princess to him."

The next moment the whole party were rapidly descending the beautiful flight of marble stairs which descends to the Doric vestibule, Sir Frederick was already at the entrance, talking

to a gentleman, whose quick, intelligent eyes seemed to have assumed their spectacles to conceal their penetrating and observant glances. It was Monsieur Nothomb, the secretary of state. He had given Sir Frederick rendezvous at three o'clock, to show him certain diplomatic curiosities; and it was now a quarter past. The gentlemen were walking away together, when the English party came down upon the English politician with other expectations than that of finding him with a minister of state.

"Mottram," said Lord Montessor, "we have lost our breath in running after you; do stop a moment."

Sir Frederick turned round abruptly, and not much amused by the rencontre. "Lady Montessor," he said, "is better today, by your all being here."

"So well," said Lady Frances, with unusual cordiality, "that she insists on our dining with her; and has charged me to engage you to be of the party."

"I am engaged," said Sir Frederick coldly.

"You are always engaged," muttered Lady Frances, poutingly, and passing the hand she had withdrawn from Lord Aubrey's arm under Sir Frederick's. "Will you come with us now, to see the pictures? There is a sort of Somerset House business here, they say, that is very good indeed, and quite in your way."

"I have seen the *Exposition* already," he replied, drawing back his arm, "and I am particularly engaged at present with this gentleman. I am going to see some diplomatic documents which ———"

"Cannot we go with you?" interrupted Lady Frances pertinaciously, and triumphing in the evident perplexity of her husband.

The polite and inexhaustible courtesy of the young minister was instantly extended to the whole English party, to whom he was presented in form by the inexpressibly bored Sir Frederick. The honours were then done by the historical interests of the Palace of the Representatives of Belgium,—the monument of many changes. It was once the palace of the Council of Brabant, then of the *Etats Généraux*; and, in earlier days, it was the modest house in the Forest of Soigne, where Charles the Fifth retired immediately after the gorgeous ceremony of his abdication, to live in religious retreat, until he embarked for Spain.

In the official apartments of the minister of war were displayed for Sir Frederick's inspection the treaties by which the five powers severally acknowledged the present independence of Belgium, and the sovereignty of its newly-elected king. The seal of each subscribing sovereign was inclosed in a gold or silver box of handsome workmanship; and the documents were written on the fair pages of volumes so splendidly bound in crimson, scarlet, or purple velvet, that they might have served for the albums of a modern fine lady, or the breviary of a royal saint of old,

A man's writing, it is said, may be taken as a fair indication of his character. That of William of England was the stout, plain, round hand of the inditer of 'go it, Ned.' The signature of the Autocrat of all the Russias was dashed with such violence, that the pen had almost penetrated the paper, and the ink had spattered from the concluding flourish. It was obvious that the brother of the future Queen of Holland had recognized the sovereignty of the Belgian people, as a necessity, and not a choice.

"How very pretty!" said Mrs. St. Leger, looking only at the bindings of the volumes.

"Very," said Lady Frances: "I should so like to borrow one for a pattern for my book of butterflies."

"When they are done with, Monsieur," asked Mrs. St. Leger, (her head full of red-boxes, *démontés* diamonds, and other diplomatic perquisites,) "whom do you give them to? I should so like to have one—when they become useless."

"Do you mean that for an epigram, Mrs. St. Leger?" asked Lord Allington, while every one laughed.

"No, no," said Mrs. St. Leger; "they really would make such very nice *chiffonniers*; and I have seen such pretty things made at our Office, of the red boxes and other things, you know."

The conversation then took a gay and rather *spirituel* turn; supported principally by Lord Allington and the Secretary of State: while Lady Frances talked in a mutter to Lord Aubrey, and Mrs. St. Leger made eyes at the Belgian statesman. Sir Frederick Mottram alone appeared to take no interest in the conversation. He had seated himself at the table, and seemed deeply engaged in looking through the royal recognitions of the new and independent kingdom of Belgium. How many such treaties, formed at the will of the world's great (or little) masters, had been made, only to be scattered on the winds by the bursting hurricane of events, which no absolute will could control, and which no royal wisdom had foreseen! What now are the recognitions that placed William of Nassau on the Belgian throne! They are, what Mrs. St. Leger proposed making of those he gazed on—*chiffons*! It struck him that henceforth nations, not cabinets, would make recognitions; but what would his ex-colleagues at home think of the reflection?

Monsieur Nothomb was now obliged to return to the chambers; and the English fashionables agreed to walk through the Park to the *ancien Palais*, to see the exhibition of paintings. Sir Frederick Mottram, who had preserved the peevish look and tetchy manner of one annoyed in the extreme, was something surprised to find his arm suddenly interwoven in that of his wife's; Mrs. St. Leger selected Lord Aubrey for her cavalier; and Lord Montessoro, breaking off from the party, joined the charming representative of *Sophie Arnaud*, whose exquisite personification of the bon-ton of the days of the Henins and the Lauegais, had, on the night before, made more conquests than that of the English hereditary legislator.

The old Palace of Brussels, the residence of the Austrian and Spanish governors and ministers, and the site of many historical events, is now exclusively devoted to art, sciences, and letters. It contains a cabinet of natural history, the Bibliothèque de Bourgogne, the national gallery of ancient masters, and the exhibition of the products of the modern school. There are also some objects of antiquarian interest lying neglected, and almost unknown, in one of the old mouldering chambers, formerly used as a dormitory for the ladies of the court. Among these, is the cradle of Charles the Fifth, in which he was rocked by imperial hands in his native city of Ghent. It is a somewhat clumsy crib, curiously carved; and now, no longer draped with purple and gold, but covered with the produce of the spider's loom, and incrustated with the dust of centuries.

Beside it, on the floor, lie various pieces of the emperor's armour, finely chased in gilt, and of a massive weight; while the palfrey ridden by the brave Infanta Isabella at the siege of Ostend, a small Spanish horse, appears almost alive. On the death of her favourite steed, it had been stuffed by the Princess's order; and now, with the war-horse of Albert, shot in the fight, shares the fate of the relics of the immortal monarch of half the world.

Sir Frederick had already seen these various monuments of ancient times so little known; and he had haunted the *Exposition* incessantly, intruding on the precious time of Monsieur Joly, by endless questions concerning the arts, and making the acquaintance of many young and aspiring Belgian painters. He continued to lead them back to a subject on which they were not unwilling to dilate—the elevation of Madame Marguerite to rank and wealth, her efforts to serve the arts, and the interest she was endeavouring to spread by her example and her eloquence. She had bespoken a cattle-piece of Verbroeckhoven, views of the castles of Liege and Luxembourg of Bosuet, and an historical picture of the Four Days by Wappers.

It was singular, however, that in the haunts where it was so probable that the artist-Princess should frequent, she had not been seen; since her appearance in her own box at the theatre, she had not been met with in Brussels or in its environs.

Sir Frederick had soon discovered that the self-involved English exclusives knew nothing beyond their own party, its amusements, or the deeper interests that occupied them; and that the identity of the Princess of Schaffhausen with Madame Marguerite remained unsuspected by his wife, and might probably do so until her return to England,—an event which he had determined should be immediate.

During their arm-in-arm walk from the Park to the Palace, Lady Frances was as strikingly gay and talkative, as her husband was grave and silent. She even ventured on bantering him on his Belgian flirtations: adopted the hint of the *Béguine*, and adverted to the old story of Madame Marguerite, praying for grace in his eyes for her patroness the Princess; and, half se-

riously, half tauntingly, reproaching him with having banished her from Brussels, by his barbarous reception of her civilities in her own box.

"I think," she said, "her business to Namur (as her note of adieu calls it) is only a pretence to keep out of the way till you are gone. I see there is no use in contending with you, for it is *guerre à la mort*."

"Not on my part," said Sir Frederick. "But you may write to your friend, that I shall leave Brussels the day after to-morrow, when I desire that you may be ready to accompany me."

"Me!" said Lady Frances, with an involuntary start, and a compression of the arm she leaned on. "I leave Georgina Montessor, in her present state! You don't expect that?"

"I am sick of this parade of sensibility," he replied, petulantly; "sick of this grief *à la mode*; of this dying to-day and giving parties to-morrow! Lady Montessor has her husband, her friend, and her cousin Mrs. St. Leger, or her relation Lady Anastasia, to take your place at her sofa."

"She detests Lady Anastasia," said Lady Frances, almost suffocating with suppressed feelings; "never lets her inside the door, though she has almost forced it; and consigns her to *your* friends the Dogherties, with whom she is actually living at a public-house outside the Porte de Namur."

"*My* friends the Dogherties, as you please to call them, happen to be utter strangers," said Sir Frederick, "with whom chance has brought me into contact in the course of travelling: they are as much your friends as mine; for they pursued you with their vulgar familiarity, as they did me, till I peremptorily shook them off, with that obtrusive charlatan, Lady Montessor's new physician."

"The Dogherties *my* friends! they are no friends of mine, unless you admit them to be yours: at least, they are not *my* relations," said Lady Frances, forgetful of all the 'honours bright' pledged to the Princess.

"What does this silly and reiterated mystification mean?" said Sir Frederick, suddenly pulling up in uncontrolled provocation.

"It means *just that*," said Lady Frances, recovering her temper as her husband lost his—"It means that they are *not* my relations; and that they *are* yours."

"Do they say that?" asked Sir Frederick, so loudly as to extort from Lord Allington the observation that "there was a regular conjugal flare up."

"*It is said*," replied Lady Frances.

"By whom?" he asked.

"What does that signify?" she replied, lowering her voice and slackening her pace, that their conversation should not reach the party in advance. "What does it signify by whom such malicious and mortifying things are said? If they are true, one must submit to the humiliation, and keep as clear as we can of the subject;—you know, we have done so already with

other relations: and if they are not true, we may laugh at the calumny."

"You must answer my question," said Sir Frederick, with a stern and peremptory emphasis. "If it is a mystification of Lord Allington's or the Montressors'—or if it is a dull invention of that solemn, empty coxcomb, Lord Aubrey, I shall then know how to act; but if——"

"Oh! no, no; by 'those heavens that shine above!'" exclaimed Lady Frances, borrowing the words of a fashionable song, "it is not so. The persons you have named have nothing to do with it; and be it true or false, I am as desirous of keeping the fact from them as you can be."

"The fact!" he interrupted vehemently. "Why, you are mad!"

"Well, then, the story, the invention, the mystification—what you will. I would conceal everything of the kind from such men—men so extremely fastidious as,—as,—as——In short, Georgina Montressor alone has heard it breathed, and she has her reasons for not betraying a secret of mine."

"By all that's sacred! you'll drive me mad, if you are not so yourself," exclaimed Sir Frederick, stopping short, as they entered the court of the old palace. "What are you about?—what do you allude to? You do not mean,—I had almost said, you do not dare, to assert that the Dogherties are relations of mine? Why, his son was a helper in my stables, and then my groom—the servant who accompanied me here."

"Yes, yes, I know it all," said Lady Frances in an agony. "He is your cousin: his rapid promotion created great surprise among our people. But, pray, don't make a *scena* now: let us join our party. You see they are waiting for us under the archway. I beseech you!"

"I will not move one step," said Sir Frederick, stopping short, and turning full round, with his eyes fixed steadily on his wife, "till you tell me who invented so absurd, so malicious a story."

"Well, then," she replied with a propitiating look and manner, the tears swelling in her beautiful eyes, "only don't let them observe the ridicule of our position, and you shall know all."

"Well, well," he said impatiently; and he turned his back on the party, with the air of observing the Gothic fragment of a princely tomb, which lies on the pavement of the court to the left of the entrance.

"Why then," muttered Lady Frances, dropping her head over the antique monument, as if she knew or cared anything about any of the antiquities upon the earth or beneath it—"it was——" She paused.

"Who, who, who?" he vehemently repeated.

"The Princess of Schaffhausen," she almost sobbed out, letting fall her veil over her face.

"Did she say this—the Princess of Schaffhausen?"

"Yes; she heard it all from Madame Marguerite, her *pro-*

tegée. Lady Mottram, your mother, was half-sister to this Sir—Odious Dogherty. She had gone on the stage, was thrown off by her family, and changed her name; but when she married your father, (being as much ashamed of her family then as they had been of her,) she concealed from them her elevation. This Madame Marguerite is her niece, the daughter of Lady Mottram's half-brother, an officer in the French service, and, of course, niece to Sir Ignatius Dogherty."

This detail was made with a rapid utterance, but with an emphatic bitterness that proved the haughty victim of an interested *mésalliance* to have a secret triumph in the mortification she was inflicting. Sir Frederick affected to stoop his head over the monument, took out his handkerchief, as if to remove the dust which obscured the inscription, and then, when Lady Frances again took his arm, suffered her to lead him towards the *portecochère* of the palace. The party were sufficiently pre-occupied in obtaining admittance from the porter, not to have noted the continuance of the 'conjugal set-to' in the court: the hours of admission were over, the doors were closed, and *les lords Anglais* attached an importance to getting the *entrée*, which under other circumstances they would not have felt.

While disputing the point, and asserting that though the hour of opening was fixed, no hour for closing was announced, and that the public ought not to be disappointed, in a country where the public are everything, a young artist was descending the stairs which open into the porch. He immediately came forward, and, with a series of courteous bows, assured them that an exception would be made in favour of strangers. At his intercession, the whole party were admitted into the gallery.

The saloon of the exhibition is a long, lofty, and noble apartment. In ordinary times its walls are covered with a collection of the ancient Flemish masters, of great antique curiosity and pictorial value; but on the occasion in question, these were covered by a temporary skreen-work, on which the pictures of the modern artists were exposed. Although the gallery was closed for the day against the public, several artists of both sexes were still lingering before some of its finest paintings; or were seated in conversation on benches placed for the accommodation of the visitors.

"What a handsome gallery!" said Lord Allington, as the English party entered; "and it seems nobly filled too!"

"Yes, we are proud of our school; but among the most brilliant pictures of the present collection," said the young cicerone, "we count the works sent to us from English artists."

He pointed to the magnificent picture of the 'Fall of Nineveh,' by John Martin. The English party took the compliment as it was meant, and expressed their surprise at observing not only the work of an artist of whom the English nation is proud, but several charming landscapes by Constable, with sea-views, landscapes, and portraits by the Reinagles and other British artists.

"Come," said Lord Montessor, "this is liberal indeed!"

"It was at least a judicious idea of the directorial commission," said a gentleman who had joined his friend the artist, "to unite in the same exhibition the productions of the several European schools. It prevented any tendency to exclusion or intrigue; and it afforded the opportunity for comparisons of manner, style, and conception, between the foreign and national masters, by which all may profit, even in preserving their own distinguishing characteristics."

"The conception was generous," said Lord Allington, the only one of the party who brought either taste or judgment to the discussion; "but I should suppose that a great impediment to its execution must have been found in the expense. These are not times in which painters, like your Rubens, can rival in their pecuniary liberalities the princes who affect to patronize them."

"And therefore it was," said Monsieur Campan (the gentleman who had joined and addressed the group), "that the *Commission Directrice*, in inviting the foreign artists to contribute to the exhibition, undertook to pay all the expenses of conveyance. Under the old system here, such a union of talent would have been impossible. Indeed, it was not then known at Paris, that we even had an exhibition."

With a natural and national pride, the young artist and his friends then proceeded to point out the magnificent picture of the '*Troupeau effrayé par l'orage*,' by Verboeckhoven; the '*Christ in the Tomb*,' by Wappers; the '*Christ restoring the Blind*,' by Gallait; the '*Deluge*,' by Matthieu; with the works of Delvaux, Van Bree, Ducorron, Schaepekens, Mademoiselle Kindt, &c. They were animated by an earnest desire to obtain, for each, the approbation of the foreign visitors, and to do the honours by the salon.

The party, however, soon broke up into smaller groups. Lady Frances had advanced towards a picture, followed by Lord Aubrey; who, however, instantly retreated, as if by command. Mrs. St. Leger stood before the picture of '*Eléonore and Rosamonde*,' of Mademoiselle Fanny Corr, coqueting as she would have done before the high altar of St. Peter's. She had already collected around her a bevy of young artists, borrowed a catalogue from Lorenzo Zampieri, asked a question of Monsieur Madou, and furnished a subject both for the pen and pencil of Monsieur De Wasme. Like a true diplomatist, she had placed herself in relation with all within her sphere;—it is so easy for a pretty woman to attract, who gives herself the trouble to exhibit.

Sir Frederick Mottram stood before the fine statue of Count Felix de Merode, by Geef (of Ghent;) himself in pose and fixture of look, a living statue. The details communicated by his wife had made his thoughts a chaos. Thick-coming resolves were passing through his aching head; but his stern, and inflexible countenance gave no indication of the war of feelings which were agitating his mind. Meantime, the young men, whose

attentions were rendering the salon so amusing to the English party, pointed out some of the *notables* of the country who were present. Among these, was Henry de Brouckère, whose eloquent discourse in the Chamber, against the parsimony of the minister, and in favour of the claims of art, had induced the artists to purchase a picture out of the exhibition for the purpose of presenting it to him as an appropriate offering. Monsieur Cogen also was pointed out as a true patron of the arts: for he that pays a liberal price for good pictures is the best encourager of genius; and Monsieur C.'s recent purchase of Verboeckhoven's beautiful work—which unites to the fidelity to nature of Paul Potter, the life, the spirit, and the picturesque ideality, the highest departments of imaginative art—was a sufficient proof of his claim to the character.

Colonel Joly (the President of the *Commission Directrice*) and the Minister of the Interior were respectively named, as they passed together towards a picture in the distant part of the apartment. At the moment when the eyes of the English were turned towards them, they were returning the salute of a lady who had stopped before the 'Christopher Columbus' of Schaepekens, an extraordinary composition by an artist as yet scarcely 'known to fame.' The lady, though plainly dressed and deeply veiled, had something marked and original in her movement, air, and gestures,—a freedom, an ease and decision of step and attitude, which indicated the habit of self-reliance, equally removed from awkwardness and affectation. As she advanced, she attracted the attention of Lord Montessor.

"How well," he said, "that woman steps out! How admirably she treads the boards, as we say behind the scenes. Look, Allington! *Est-ce une artiste, monsieur?*"

"It is the Princess of Schaffenhhausen," replied Monsieur Verberckt, (himself a true disciple of Benvenuto Cellini, whose works were among the more remarkable objects of the exhibition.) "She was an artist before her marriage, and well known as Madame Marguerite."

"And she was more prized as Madame Marguerite," said another artist, who was conversing with Monsieur Verberckt, "than she ever will be as Princess of Schaffenhhausen."

"Madame Marguerite!" burst forth in simultaneous exclamation from the whole English party. But the Princess was now so close as to break off the farther observations, of which she was about to become the subject. She started back with an evident surprise and displeasure on recognizing her English friends, who instantly gathered round her, and placed their astonishment, which it was impossible to conceal, to the account of her sudden apparition.

"We thought you were at Namur!" was the general observation.

"I only returned an hour back," she said, "and took the opportunity of the gallery being closed against the public, to visit it *à tête reposée*. But you English have a *passé partout*. Europe has no retreat from your curiosity. You 'stop the chariot, and

you board the barge,' as your poet says, no matter who may be the passenger."

She spoke with bitterness and in good round English. The party she addressed smiled significantly; the foreigners drew back; Sir Frederick advanced a few steps, with a look of intense expression; the rooms became rapidly thinned; and, after a short pause, Lord Allington replied to the Princess's observation.

"Yes, we English are the Paul Pries of the highways and byways of the whole world; and, 'hoping we don't intrude,' we thrust our stupid phizes into every one's privacy, from the harem of the Grand Signior, to the mysterious melody of the statue of Memnon; no matter what reasons the party intruded on may have to escape observation or elude discovery."

"*Précisément*," said the Princess, coolly: "and then, like the *badauds* of Paris, who turn out to *faire leurs farces*, as they term it, you always pay the forfeit of your own bungling curiosity, by getting into some dilemma, worse than that you hoped to discover. You are a most thinking people, *vous autres Anglais*; an excellent people; but you are the mere results of your own beef and pudding, the sublimated distillations of your port and porter: and the same dogged, sturdy perseverance that has placed you at the head of the plodding mechanists and calculating boys of Europe, disqualifies you for the *finesse* of social intrigue, and the *finoterie* of political combination. Solemn politicians, you are notoriously the *cavaliéri paganti* of every cabinet. Great philosophers, you start at your own discoveries; and join the cry of the Sir Andrew Agnews against Locke and Hobbes—you are ready to gulp down the mysticism of dreaming Germany, to study the unknown tongues of Irving, and to preach conservatism, when all around is changing and progressing. You fancy yourselves the Paul Pries of Europe; you are but the George Dandins: and for the scrapes you get into, and the scrapes you are trying to get out of, the world will offer you no other consolation than: '*Vous l'avez voulu George Dandin—vous l'avez voulu!*'"

There was a dramatic vivacity in the delivery of this tirade, that would have placed the laugh of the auditors on the side of the Princess, had they not been themselves of the subjects of the diatribe.

"These are strange observations," said Lord Allington, "and new as strange, coming as they do from the ultra Princess of Schaffenhhausen. One would almost suppose they had been prompted by Madame Marguerite, the fair artist whose representation of that revolutionary scene before the Hôtel de Ville bears testimony to her principles being anything but conservative."

"*En effet*," said the Princess, laughing, "They are Madame Marguerite's opinions. Wrong or right they are honestly and frankly hers."

Here Lady Frances seized her arm with a compression so strong as induced her to draw the grasping hand through hers.

"But," she continued, "you none of you know Madame Marguerite; and yet she has long been desirous to make herself known to you. I have undertaken to present her to you all, when circumstances should favour the project; and (as I know you English celebrate all events by a good dinner, and love to discuss principles and pâtés, to enjoy soups and sensations at the same moment), suppose you all dine with me to-morrow, at my old *rendezvous de chasse*, La Gronendael, in the Forest of Soigne."

"You may count upon me," said Lord Allington, half in love, and yet half in distrust with the Proteus Princess.

"And me, and me, and me!" said Lord Montessor, Lord Allington, Mrs. St. Leger, and Lady Frances.

"And Sir Frederick Mottram?" asked the Princess; "may I not count upon him?"

"Sir Frederick Mottram, come into court," said Lord Allington, looking round. But Sir Frederick was gone. He was, in fact, rapidly walking to the farther end of the gallery, at the moment when his name was pronounced.

"*C'est égal*," said the Princess, gaily; "Lady Frances shall answer for him."

"I beg to decline the responsibility," said Lady Frances sharply: "let those answer for him who have led him from his friends and party."

"Led him!" re-echoed the Princess; "no one has led him—circumstances alone have forced him; and they are a power which, *bon gré, mal gré*, force you all; a power which imperial despotism itself cannot mediatize."

"We had better go," said Lady Frances impatiently; "they will certainly close the gallery."

"Which," said Lord Allington, "may never again contain so many originals as at this moment. So, pray let us prolong the exhibition, till we study a little more the principal subject of by far the greatest original in the collection."

"At least," said the Princess, drawing forward a chair, "let her choose a favourable light for her *pose*: none but artists and coquettes know how much depends on that."

"None," said Mrs. St. Leger, with an impulsive *naïveté* that excited a general smile.

"And stage-managers," observed Lord Montessor.

Lord Aubrey sneered, and Lady Frances muttered—"Stage-managers indeed—and manageresses to!"

"Then, here," said Lord Allington, throwing himself with an air of importance on a bench—"here I take my seat as umpire."

The rest of the party followed his example, with looks of eager curiosity. The only attendant who remained in the gallery was busied covering some works at the farther extremity. The Princess seated herself in an arm-chair in front of the group, threw off her bonnet, and drew herself up in the attitude suited to the *pose* for an intellectual and poetical portrait of the highest order. The picture of Pope Giulio, by

Raphael, was not more characteristic; nor that of Joanna of Naples, by Leonardo da Vinci, more pictorial. Her drapery was black, her complexion pale, her eyes flashing; and the background of a sombre picture, before which she was accidentally placed, gave relief to her figure, that seemed almost to make a part of the composition, and to be cased in the rich gold frame surrounding it; while a bright full shower of light, falling on her head, completed such an original, as Vandyke would have delighted to copy, and as Rubens seems never to have encountered in a female form.

Every one was struck by the brilliant and extraordinary effect produced. There was a momentary pause. Lady Frances saw before her the concealed mistress of her husband, a person who had doubly made her a dupe. Lord Allington regarded her as a political intrigante, endowed with great beauty, and as much ability as he had ever 'coped withal.' Lord Aubrey thought she made Lady Frances look *fade*; and Mrs. St. Leger saw the heroine of a German romance, painted by a member of the romantic school; while Lord Montessor exclaimed—

“There is a *tableau*, if you will!”

“Yes, *vivant*,” said Lord Allington, looking with the closed eyes of a practised connoisseur.

But the eyes of Madame Schaffenhause were not idle: they also seemed to read the countenances before her, (where not one high thought or noble passion had left its trace; where all was conventionally cold, or affectedly languid,) with the stern contemptuous gaze of one who knew them well, and who

‘—did but for a while uphold
The unyoked humour of their idleness.’

“Well,” she said, (the curl upon her lip yielding to a smile more of pity than of complacency,) “Well, will no one offer an opinion? The picture has been sufficiently submitted to your critical acumen to obtain, at least, a decision on its authenticity.”

“Copy or original, it has obtained our unqualified admiration,” said Lord Allington: “but what we want to get at is, the *prima intenzione* of the artist. We see the effect produced, but know not the motive of the combination.”

“Nothing can be simpler,” said the Princess, assuming a serious air, and an attitude of easy repose. “The best combinations are ever the simplest. To drop figure, then, for fact, and to clear up your doubts (I will not call them suspicions), you all received me in London, under a delusion in which I had no part, as the elder Princess of Schaffenhause; as the widow of one great diplomatist, and the daughter of another; as a disciple of the school of Kaunitz, and an agent of that of Metternich; as one whose illustration was that of forms and titles, whose genius lay in intrigue, and whose character, (shaded by vices which should have banished her from society,) was yet no greater impediment to her reception among the autocrats of

London, than it had been in the aristocratic circles of Vienna. You were told that I had been false to one husband, and something worse to another; but you supposed me high-born, and you balanced my elevated rank against my despicable life."

A look of annoyance and a struggle to suppress risibility were variously depicted on the various faces of the auditors.

"You do not expect that in courtesy we can reply to this charge," said Lord Allington smiling. "We leave it to Doctor's Commons to decide upon equivocal ladies, and take all upon trust till the jury pronounces sentence."

"Yes, but the character of the woman for whom you took me was not equivocal; it was known to all Europe, and the jury of public opinion had long passed sentence of 'guilty' on it."

"Then, you are not the real Princess of Schaffenhauseu?" asked Mrs. St. Leger eagerly, "who is said to carry about a printing-press, and who—"

"Not *your* real Princess—not the Princess of whom you must have heard so much in the diplomatic circles of the little German courts. When application was made to some foreign ministers for letters of introduction for me to London society, the carelessness with which such letters are given produced a farcical mistake. The parties knew not, or at least thought not, of the Princess Albert de Schaffenhauseu, the *parvenue*, whom the younger brother of the quondam minister had married a short time before his death, and with whom he had lived in retreat among the mountains of the Rhyngau.

"I was already deep in the honours paid to the supposed diplomatic celebrity before I was myself aware of the *qui pro quo*. That I should have availed myself of such a *prestige* in my favour, for a short time, was my humour, my whim—perhaps my philosophy. It answered purposes also which I had at heart to effect: it gave me the power to serve some, without doing injury to any. I was an artist let loose in a gallery of models; and I repaid my unconscious sitters in the coin they most appreciated. You all revelled in my salons, feasted at my table, and were pleased to benefit by the fashion you had yourselves conferred; and if some among you have not profited by my desire to serve you to the full extent of my wishes and exertions in your favour, it is not my fault." (She glanced at Lady Frances: after a pause she added,)

"You all intended to make use of me, that is quite certain; and my castle on the Rhine, like my house in London, was an item in your scheme of pleasure and amusement. That castle is literally a castle in the air—a ruin on a crag. But the house occupied by the Prince Albert and myself, like the rural residences of the other German nobility, is a plain square stone-house, with a blue slated roof, in the midst of slovenly grounds and fine scenery. To this anti-romantic residence I had intended to have lured you all; and tagging a moral to my tale, to have sent you home, like the *dramatis personæ* in the last act of a play, *chacun avec sa chacune*;—husbands with their own wives,

and bachelors with their own—egotism. For the rest, it matters little to you to know who I was before that accident which placed me on the same *grade* with yourselves.”

She paused and sighed.

“Oh!” said Lady Frances feverishly, “we have no right to pry, no right to inquire farther than——”

“No right,” interrupted Lord Allington; “but it is impossible not to have an infinite deal of curiosity, and an ardent desire of knowing all that the Princess may please to tell, on a subject in which we all must feel deep interest and intense admiration.”

“Exactly,” said Lord Montessor and Mrs. St. Leger. Lady Frances sullenly folded herself up in her cashmere, and Lord Aubrey took out his watch.

“The rest is soon told,” she continued with simplicity. “I am Irish by descent, Belgian by birth. My father was a soldier of fortune; my mother, an heroic Polonaise. Educated on charity, I have struggled through the flower of my youth for existence, honestly and diligently. I tried in England, and failed; in Belgium, and at least met with friends who appreciated, if they could not serve me. I had relations wealthy and powerful; but they flung me off. As niece to the late Lady Mottram, I am cousin to Lady Frances’s husband: and this relationship, which has occasionally brought us into contact for the last few months, has been the cause of the idle stories put into circulation by the mischievous humour of Lord Alfred. Even Sir Frederick found his poor Irish cousin *de trop*; and the other relations I have, who pursued me as the Princess of Schaffenhäusen, had thrown me off as Madame Marguerite the portrait-painter.”

Everybody stared.

“Your aristocratic, revolutionary Polish friends, I suppose?” asked Lord Aubrey sneeringly. Everybody looked at each other with suspicious archness, as if each thought the other might be the party alluded to.

“No,” said Madame Schaffenhäusen; “I have but two Polish relations living: a grandfather, an aged man, who has thrice refused to acknowledge the Russian despot, and has been thrice sent back to the dungeons of Warsaw; and an uncle, who is now perishing slowly amidst the eternal snows of Siberia. The rest of my mother’s kindred have been swept away by Russian bayonets.”

A tear she endeavoured to suppress glistened for an instant in her eye; but, as if ashamed of her weakness, she brushed it off, and added,

“Do not suppose I would profane a glorious cause by complaining here of a system to which all present are parties. The digression has been accidental. The other relations to whom I allude are known to you all; have been honoured by that notice which is distinction—Lord Allington’s; and they are nearly connected with——”

“It is time to go,” said Lady Frances, rising: “we are keeping the gallery open. You see the man——”

"A five-franc piece will settle that," said Lord Allington. "Pray go on, Princess; I am prepared for any *dénouement*. Your tasteless, worthless relations are known to us all, you say?"

"To all!" said the Princess, looking round significantly."

"Have *I* the honour, the high honour, of being so distinguished?" said Lord Allington, with unaffected gravity. "I really should prefer——"

"You!" said the Princess, drawing up with a humorous expression of dignity—"You disdain me!—you, whose grandfather lived by his own labour, a city banker, or law-lord, or some such plebeian thing! Talk of old blood in England! the Red-book, there, is but an ennobled ledger: all now are lords of trade, like the forefather of Lady Frances's ducal sire, who kept a grocer's shop; or Lord Aubrey's great grand uncle, who was a linen-draper and mayor of London in the time of William the Third. Oh, no! the persons who despise my relationship as a blot in the escutcheon of true nobility, have royal blood in their veins; they are the true conservatives, and represent the least changed of the primeval families of Europe—the Celts. They quarter arms with Abel, who, says an old heraldry book I have just picked up, 'bore his father's coat quartered with that of his mother Eve, she being an heiress.'"

There was a general laugh, and a cry of "Name! name!" from Lords Allington and Montessor.

"Sir Ignatius Dogherty!" replied the Princess, "uncle to Sir Frederick and Lady Mottram, and to their poor relation, a quondam distressed gentlewoman, Madame Marguerite."

Lord Aubrey arose with a countenance lowering with impatience and disgust; Lady Frances, in evidently deep and angry annoyance.

"Princess!" said Lord Allington, taking her hand and kissing it respectfully, "you are made to subdue those, whom you could not tame. I throw myself at your feet, the most devoted of your slaves and the most faithful of your allies. Accept at once my *palinodie* and my allegiance."

"With all my heart!" she replied laughingly. "We wits need be true to each other, considering the numerical superiority of pretending dunces we must strive to make head against. But here come the officers of the house to clear the gallery.—My dear Lady Frances, fear nothing from your uncle of Dogherty, that sage, grave man. I have my *petit brin d'aristocratie* like yourself. Ignorant vulgarity and unfeeling obtrusion are plebeian with me, all over the world; and I am quite as desirous as you can possibly be, to keep clear of these descendants of the Princes of Inneshowen, for they are no less than that. Just now, however, there is nothing to fear; our uncle is laid up 'in durance vile' for a debt of his gentle-blooded friend, the husband of your noble relation Lady Anastasia; and, if I do not liberate him myself, I suppose nobody else will. The Ladies Dogherty and Macanulty are gone off by the diligence for Cheltenham, to make trial of the generosity of a

wealthy English friend, a certain Lady Dixon: the box, therefore, still remains unopened; and if some Pandora, in the shape of an old Irish gossip or an Irish priest, (the usual depositaries of all Irish family secrets,) do not come forth with a Bramah key to open the patent lock, and let out mischiefs beyond the power of Hope at the bottom to remedy, the hateful relationship need not go farther. But I thought it would amuse you all just to know it."

"Yes, it's very amusing," said Lord Allington dryly.

Lady Frances neither understood the humour of her cousin's speech, nor its causticity: she hurried sullenly on, with an air of offended dignity; but the Princess followed her into the court, and, almost forcibly taking her arm under her own, insisted on dropping her at the Bellevue, her own carriage being the only one in waiting.

Seated in the same little dark calash which a few weeks before had been lashed on the deck of the *treckschuyt* of Ostend, the two ladies drove off together. Lord Allington looked after them; and taking Lord Montessor's arm, while Mrs. St. Leger took that of Lord Aubrey, said, "That is one of the most extraordinary women of her time."

"So she is," said Lord Montessor. "What a fine stage figure too! What a Ballerina she would have made!"

"She is a regular adventuress," said Lord Aubrey.

"But very amusing," added Mrs. St. Leger. "And, oh! how she does dress!"

"There are two sorts of adventuresses," said Lord Allington thoughtfully: "the one adventures out of obscurity, with honest and high intentions, seconded by great talents and bold conceptions; the other, with designs vague, unmeasured, and purely personal, relies only on a genius for intrigue, on a ductility of morals that bends to all occasions, and an hypocrisy that covers all defects. The Princess belongs to the first class, and is a rare example: you will find specimens of the second hanging about every old court and cabinet in Europe."

"Oh, you know what Lady D—— says," observed Mrs. St. Leger: "that, with some beauty, no passions, and no principles, any woman may be anything she pleases."

"You may take her word for it," said Lord Allington.

"Did you observe Mottram," asked Lord Aubrey with more animation than usual, "hovering about, all the time of the Princess's exhibition? There is something very strange in his whole conduct."

"Very!" said Lord Montessor. "I am much mistaken if, under that serious sentimental air of his, he has not given that worthy woman Lady Frances some cause of uneasiness."

"Oh! I assure you," said Mrs. St. Leger, "*elle est poussée au bout.*"

"I cannot understand that—when a woman is so handsome as Lady Frances, with one half the world at her feet, and the other half dying to be there."

Lord Aubrey smiled, and the conversation was interrupted by a rencontre with a party of English.

During the whole of a scene which had been pregnant with amusement to some, and of interest to all, Sir Frederick Mottram had continued to move about the gallery like an unquiet spirit. He had for a moment left it in uncontrollable agitation; but he again returned. Almost breathless with emotion and annoyance, he was without the will to depart, and yet without the wish to remain. Every feeling, every passion, every weakness of his nature was involved. Now catching, now losing a phrase, a word, or a name, he approached or retreated, as the interest of the Princess's relation deepened and touched him personally; until, at length, he stood fixed, immovable, before the fine picture of Marguerite de Bourgogne.* The image of the historical heroine confounded itself with the voice and tones of her singular namesake. It was not till one of the officers of the exhibition politely informed him that it was impossible to keep the gallery open any longer, that he was roused to an actual conviction of the circumstance of his position; and having first given the impression of being an English amateur, his wild look and abrupt exit left the conviction that he was an English maniac.

CHAPTER X.

THE ELOPEMENT.

“TO THE HON. MONTAGUE ST. LEGER, LONDON.

“Rue Ducale, Bruxelles.

“MY DEAR HARRY,—I scarcely know how to begin, or to tell you all that has happened. I cannot stop to use ciphers now, *par exemple!* What has occurred is really beyond beyond! What do you think? Lady Frances is gone off,—*rien moins que cela!* But with whom? you'll never guess. Well, then, with Lord Aubrey. *Je n'en reviens pas.* There never was such an absurdity—so unnecessary a thing; as Lord A. says, so English. Here is the history, as well as I can for the present give you any idea of it. All was going on well here; Georgina Montessor better, quite in love with her hotel in the Rue Ducale, and a little so with her new Doctor, who turns out to be *tant soit peu* a saint, notwithstanding his flashy appearance. Old mother Medlicot had arrived too, and was upon active service; which gave us all an opportunity to amuse ourselves a little, and we went to the Belgian House of Commons. It was very entertaining; some of the young opposition really well-looking, with dark heads; Henry de Brouckère like Lord William Wentworth.

* By Monsieur Court.

“ They never took their eyes off our tribune. Such a love of a box! so different from the ventilator! Then we went with one of the ministers to see the royal recognitions—very pretty. They’d make such dear albums! There we met Sir Frederick Mottram; and so bored a man you never beheld;—of which more hereafter. After that, we all walked across the Park to the exhibition of pictures: Lady F. all *gentillesse* to her *brutal*; which did not prevent their fighting all the same, like Lord A.’s story about the Kilkenny cats. We heard such high words, as they walked after us! In the salon of the exhibition, we came on the Princess of Schaffhausen; and such a romance!—but that will keep: only she turns out not to be *the Princess par excellence*, and only the woman we heard Prince Albert married, to spite somebody, I forget who. She is moreover a poor cousin of Sir Frederick’s; and has been mystifying him, Lady F., and the rest of us, *pour son bon plaisir*. But, what is most odd, she is that very identical Madame Marguerite whom Lord Albert *déterrait* as the supposed *friend* of Sir Frederick.

“ Well, there was quite a scene in the gallery. The Princess told us all, and discovered that the ridiculous old Irishman, who made such fun for us in the Bellevue, is Lady Frances’s uncle; and she put Lady F. into one of her fits of temper, which, you know, makes her beautiful face look like an Italian lake in a storm, as Lord A. says. After all, however, the Princess carried her off in her carriage to her villa, (for her power over her is like magic.)

“ When we returned to the Rue Ducale, whom should we find but Sir Frederick, pacing up and down the salon alone! You must know he was asked to dinner; but nobody thought he’d come, because he scarcely ever calls, and has been away at Antwerp, seeing the ruins. While we were dressing, it seems, the Princess’s *chasseur* brought a note to him, and her carriage, to bring him out to her villa, with an apology from Lady Frances for not returning to dinner; which I read to Georgina Montessor, who took it in good part, and said something about St. Paul and Mrs. Medicot. So we concluded that Madame Schaffhausen was making up the whole affair; which, after all, was the best thing that could happen, as Lord Montessor said. Lord Aubrey was, as usual, *peu démonstratif*, and unusually silent even for him; and he left us after coffee, having gone for a moment to Georgina’s room and found them at prayers, Mrs. Medicot officiating. He only kissed her hand, as usual—you know his way.

“ Lady Frances returned in the evening, and was set down by Sir F. himself, who went on to the Hôtel de Flandres; for there was no room for him here. I saw her for a moment, as I was going off to a ball given to the King and Queen. She looked very unhappy, and her eyes red with weeping. She said she was fatigued, but would tell me all another time. She bade me tell Georgina M. that a sort of a reconciliation had been patched up between her and her husband, by the Princess

his cousin, and that she was to leave Brussels the following evening for England, to stay for a year at Mottram Hall, but that she would rather go to her grave, and other heroics.

“Well, as I was crossing the corridor about one in the morning from Georgina’s room, I met little Hypolite the page with a note in his hand, which he thrust into his bosom when he saw me. It struck me at the time as very odd. The next day, about twelve o’clock, we were at breakfast. Lord Aubrey never breakfasts with us, and Lady F. rarely; so their absence created no surprise. But Allington, who had sat up all night with an English party at play, said that Lady Frances had been unusually early in her walk. (Ever since our return, she has walked before breakfast in the Park, a thing the most extraordinary for her.) After breakfast we were all to go to the Botanical Garden; but no Lady Frances appeared. Then, you know, came inquiries, and the whole thing came out. She was off with Lord Aubrey, her maid and page accompanying her.

“They have taken the road to Aix-la-Chapelle, and Sir Fred. has followed them; so there will be a duel; but neither of these men will stir to prevent it, which is very selfish. What will Claude Campbell say? Will he sing now, ‘*J’avais une belle marraine; que mon cœur, que mon cœur a de peine!*’ The most extraordinary thing of all is, that Lady Montessor, who, you would think, must die of a broken heart at this double treachery, has heard it with a resignation quite miraculous. She sent me immediately to the Pavilion at Gronendael, to hear what the Princess would say; but she had left the night before, nobody knows for where.

“It strikes me that Georgina is not sorry to get rid of Lord Aubrey, even at her friend’s expense. Since he had grown weary of being the *souffre douleur en permanence*, he said such very bitter things, and something so very disrespectful about St. Paul, who kept company, he says, with a coppersmith, and was no example for a gentleman. Though nobody can be more proper than Lord A. nor more regular at church. Besides, Dr. de Burgo is much more amusing.

“The delay in your appointment is monstrously provoking. Everybody says, if you are appointed to Hummenburg instead of Sweden, you ought to insist on having Claude Campbell your secretary—a small compensation. At all events, I shall stay quietly here till you come over. Ask Claude for the drawing of Lady M.’s funeral procession; it was so very nice. I am happy to say, she will have no immediate occasion for it. She drove out to-day. Lords Montessor and Allington leave this for London in a few days. Lady M. does not move till after Christmas.

“There are such nice Poles here, you have no idea! such divine musicians. I wish the Emperor would forgive them all, and take them into favour. They do so dance the mazurka! quite perfection! The ball last night was magnificent: rather mixed, to be sure—seven hundred people! But, oh! the music! The Queen danced all night; such a sweet toilet, so simple!

Leopold is grown fat, and is as handsome as ever. He remembered, and chatted with me, just as in Marlbro' House. There is not a word of truth in all you have read in the papers; they are the happiest of the happy. I am quite in love with Brussels now. But I must stop. Send me the 'Age,' the 'Court Journal,' all the papers that mention the elopement. What a sensation it *will* make! Kiss dear grandmamma for me.

"Yours affectionately,
"FANNY ST. LEGER.

"P. S. That odious Lady Anastasia is at last gone away, with her Irish friend, Lady Dogherty. The poor old beast that made us all laugh so is in jail. And what do you think! Lord Alfred went off from the races indebted to every one, even to old Dogherty's son (*un enfant d'amour*), who kept an hotel here.—Did you ever!!—Dr. de B. told me this in confidence, and in a manner *à mourir de rire*. He has told us also a conversation of Lady Frances's about Lady Montessor, that would render it impossible that the 'inseparables' could ever speak again, even if that poor lost creature had not taken the step she has done. But the Doctor hates the Mottrams, and calls him 'The Don.'
F. ST. L."

Letter II.

"TO THE HON. MONTAGUE ST. LEGER, LONDON.

"Rue Ducale.

"MY DEAR HARRY,—Just as I had despatched my letter by the embassy, an express arrived from Namur to Dr. de Burgo. Sir Frederick overtook the fugitives between Namur and Huy; a duel ensued, and Lord Aubrey is mortally wounded; so Dr. de Burgo thinks, by the statement of the Belgian surgeon; still *he* does not despair of saving him, and he has started for Huy. Georgina was half inclined not to let the Doctor go; but he was already off, and rode Lord Montessor's Taglioni. Mrs. Medlicot is going to put up prayers for his recovery, (that is, Lord A.'s) in the Protestant church. His dying in sin would be awful! *Au reste*, she thinks it a lucky event, as a step towards reformation, if he will but improve it. She has given me a book *où il y a de quoi penser*, really. I believe we are all worse than we are aware of. To think of Lady Frances, so rich, so admired! To be sure, it does make one reflect:—what a change for her, next winter! But then, carrying off Lord A. and mounting his head to such a step, *was* a triumph few women could resist.

"I was asked to dine at the King's, but could not leave Georgina, now she is so completely alone; for the two peers are gone to Paris. How provoking! I am *triste comme mon bonnet de nuit*; so, for God's sake hurry your departure. I won't close this till to-morrow's post arrives.

"P. S. A most amusing letter from Dr. de Burgo. Lord A. is really mortally wounded in the shoulder. The Doctor ex-

tracted the ball in a most extraordinary manner, with an instrument he made at the moment with an old pair of scissors and some harpsichord wire he found in the room; so he hopes he may not die. He quite astonished the Belgian surgeons and thinks them great blockheads not to see Lord A.'s danger; for they insist upon it there was no difficulty in the case.

"The Doctor had a long interview with Lady Frances, at a little auberge at Huy; never was such a *scena*; her hair dishevelled, and in a white *peignoir*. She put him in mind of Miss O'Neil, &c. &c. &c. Sir Frederick did not leave Huy till Doctor de B. arrived; but he would not see Lady F. The Doctor has been negotiating with all parties, but to no purpose; so there must be a divorce. Georgina thinks Lord A. must marry her; and means to preach him into it: *c'est unique!* Sir Frederick will I suspect, marry the Princess of Schaffhausen. She is so very rich, be she who she may.

"You will have all in the English papers before you get this. The duel, and its cause, have appeared in the '*Eclaircur*' of Namur, and in the '*Liberal*' and the '*Independent*' here. The liberty of the press is frightful. They are quite right in Austria and Prussia!

"Tell Madame Devy to send me a *douillette*, on my old pattern,—black *gros de Naples*, *doublée*, *bleu foncé*; and a travelling *capote* to match. What do people in England say of things here? I know you think that *cela ne tiendra pas*; but things go on so quietly, you have no idea. The king and queen drive about without guards or any state whatever. He looks so happy, and she dresses so very well—quite *à ravir*. In short, I am beginning to give up old Sir Francis Wronghead, as Lord Allington calls the Dutch King. Yet, if I was sure it would not offend *here*, I would drive to the Hague, to see the Prince and Princess of Orange. He is such a delight; and she, a *véritable grande Princesse*. I often wish everything was left to *La Diète* at Frankfort.

"*Apropos*: the dear little *Comtesse* has written to me from Deux-Ponts. She says things there are beyond beyond: worse than at Nassau and Hesse Darmstadt. *Les jeunes gens* all infected. The King of Bavaria has forbid them from travelling in France, or in Belgium and Switzerland: '*Notre excellent roi,*' she says, '*redoute notre contact avec l'esprit républicain;*' and she adds, 'you cannot conceive with what difficulty my brother obtained a passport for your republican country. It requires more than high recommendations to remove the interdict.'

"I really think Georgina is better since the *esclandre*. She says, she always suspected Frances Mottram would come to that. She was witness to the pains taken by the Princess to make her observe *les bienséances*, but it wouldn't do. What do you think of Lord Alfred and Count Katzenellenbogen being *aux petit soins* at Paris, *auprès Madame Christophe*, the black Empress!

"The Princess, the papers say, is living in great privacy at

her chateau in the Ardennes. Was there ever so enviable a woman?

“Adieu! F. St. L.”

Letter

“TO CORN’S. MACDERMOT, ESQ. SHANBALLYMAC, KERRY, IRELAND.

“New Gaol, Brussels.

“THE divel set his foot after me, the first step ever I made on the Dublin road of Shanballymac; for luck nor grace never attended me from that cursed hour to this. And better for me to have staid on the right side of the Shannon, and cut sods or pick-ed pitaties, before I went trapesing about the world at my time of life, gostering after the quality here, and foostering after out-landish places and people there; spending my hard thirty years’ earnings every where: and for what? I’ll be after asking you, Cornelius Macdermot. Why, then, for nothing at all but intire ruin to me and mine—neither profit nor pleasure, but the money running off like a mountain-straim after an hard day’s rain: and to find myself shut up like a wild baste in a cage at a fair, in a furrain jail; for it’s there where I am at this present writing, sorrow elsewhere; far away from kith, kin, and relations. Them that’s nearest and dearest to me are gone, like the rest; and it’s what, if you don’t make a last gathering for me, though you driv Terence Kelly’s cattle for it, and sould every baste and hedge-stake on the farm of Shanballymac house, I am a dead man, and a prisoner for life.

“Och! Macdermot, Macdermot, it isn’t with a dry eye you’ll read, or I write this: but let nothing tempt you to that murder of the world, becoming an absentee. Take warning by my fate; and helieve me, Mac dear, that if oncet it’s my great luck to set foot again on the green sod of ould Ireland, if Saint Peter himself opened the gate of paradise, and said, ‘Walk in, if you plaze, Sir Ignatius Dogherty, and take an air of the place,’ I’d look twice before I’d lose sight of Mangerton mountain. I declare to Jasus, my dear frind, I am so moidered, and bother’d, and bediveled, that though I have a power to tell you, and nothing to do but tell it, (for I am all alone by myself from morning till night, and not understanding a word that is said to me by them that is about me, good nor bad, no more than if it was Greek,) still my heart and my eyes are so full, that I can’t get out a syllable: and don’t know where I left off, nor where to begin. And I wish that, instead of sending my last by th’ ambassador’s bag, I had bagged off myself; but there’s no use in talking now.

“Well, sir, just as we were all getting a little pace and quiet at the German spaw, that I tould you of—but I forgot all thim furrain names—the divel be in my Lady and her streel of a frind Lady Anny Statius, but they must be off to Aches-le-Chapel, because thim great people got tired of th’ other place; and my Lady Dogherty declared to God, and upon her honour, that she’d lose her last lung if she lost sight of the Doctor. But

what do you think, sir? that raal scamp and Rabrah, if there's one on the face of God'screation, Mr. W. W. Macanulty, borrowed my ilegant thravelling carridge that cost me three hundred pounds before it left Mr. Hutton's yard in Dublin, to go, as he tould me, to Frankfort (a morning's drive, sir,) to fetch his own new bespoke galash: but from that day to this I never set eyes on Mr. W. W. Macanulty, nor my thravelling carridge either; and though Lady Anny-Statius and my Lady made belief he had gone on before us, and cut across the river Rine, to secure invitations from his ould frind the King, for the fates, the divel a word of thruth was there in the whole fiction; so, when we had to start, it was an hired galash we were obliged to take: and I had the greatest mind to pitch the ould she-dragon to the divel, and lave her to her great relations, only Lady D. persuaded me that she was to get me an order for a star and ribbon from King Leopold: for you're nothing at all at all at them furrain German coorts, if you're not hung over in gewgaws and scraps of ribbons, like a pedlar's box on a market-day. You might be the Duké of Leinster here, and nobody would care a pin about you, if you hadn't a scrap of blue at one button-hole, and a rag of red at another; and a donny cross on one side, and a star as big as a pewther plate on the other. And I wouldn't be after troubling you with all this bladerumskite, only by way of giving you some rational raisin for my great foolishness.

"Well, sir, owing to some mistake of the Doctor, in the map he made for us of the road, we missed the great people, till we came in sight of Brussels city; when the first thing we saw, outside of the gates of the town, sir, was a hotel or inn, that, if I had my desire to be King of Brussels, or of that inn, it's the last I'd chuse. It's little you'd think of the Kilmaine Arms, or the ould Stag's Horns, if oncet you see the Hotel d'Ireland, with an intire new Golden Harp, and 'Caed mille faltra,' over the *corte pochere*, as they call the hall doors here. But I need not tell you whose it is, poor lad! The moment I came within sight of it, and I choaking alive with the thirst, and my throat as full of dust as the Dunleary road, that was dry the day after the deluge, out I slithered, sir, and the first thing I heard was ould Kit Fitzpatrick's fiddle singing out, and and th' ould song,

' Why don't you sell your fiddle,
And buy your wife a gownd?'

—you know yourself. And 'What does ye plaze to have?' says a comely cratur in the bar, and in as good English as I am spaking to you at this present moment; and then a hulla-balloo, sir, and a '*mille murthur*;' and before I knew where I was, who should be hanging round my neck but Betty Burke! For, what would you have of it, sir, but Larry, the cratur who has more heart in his little finger than all that ungrateful Doctor has in his whole carcass, wrote for his poor mother to come and keep house for him, and see that he was not plundered

intirely by them furrain thieves; and so, two days before I got back from the river Rine, Mrs. Burke and Kit Fitzpatrick arrived by steam from Shannon river into the port of Antwerp, close by to Brussels, booking themselves at Limerick; and they coming in not a hair turned, and fresh as four-year olds, as I was tould. Well, sir, Larry was just returned from the race-course, after winning every bet he made; and when he and I and Mrs. Burke set down to boiled fowl and bacon and greens, a pot of ale and a tumbler of hot, and Kit playing up th'ould song, divel a bit I'd have taken my bible oath that it was in ould Ireland we were oncet again, in the little room behind the bar in the Stag's Horns.

"And so, leaving the ladies to streele after the great people and go to coort, and so forth, I settled down quiet and aisy at the Irish hotel; and was very useful keeping all together, and looking to the till, and one little turn and another, while Larry was running his colt, and betting with the best in the land, and winning lashings of money; and Betty Burke worth her weight in gold in looking after the larder; only the cratur had her ould failing—you know yourself—and kept looking at the people drinking, and took the Faro and the Lembick like mother's milk. And the house as full as it could hould—like a rookery, sir, with the first Irish families on the road, (and maybe there wasn't oceans of them.) We had Counsellor and Miss Rafferty *oh premieyere*, as they call it, which manes in the first flure; and their daughter and son-in-law, Major, and Mrs. Major Driscol, of the Heavies, H. P. And there was Mrs. Widow Murtagh O'Sullivan, of Goosegreen, county Cork, and three lively fine girls her daughters, that gave tay-parties and hot suppers to the young officers of the Guard here; and two of the Riley's from Tiperary. But the Rafferties went for a day to see the battle of Waterloo, and never returned, so that we had to send their account to their agent in Cork; and Mrs. and Miss O'Sullivan's went to see the ruins of Antwerp:—and, to make a short story of it, divel a pay they paid, till it brought ruin upon us all: my poor Larry having been traited mightily ill by a young Lord, after whom he is now gone to Paris to get back his property. And then, down comes all the tradesmen for furnishing the hotel, and for carving and gilding the harp. But, the cormorants! I cannot tell you the set of dirty blackguards they are, giving no credit, like as Ireland, for a year and a day, and having a little indulgence after: and it's all for ready money they work, says they, the dirty spalpeens! So they distrained the goods, and sould all in the premises—divil a screed they left, not as much as a feather-bed for poor Betty to die upon: for the Faro, sir, was the death of her. Her stomach couldn't bear it, after th' innocent mountain dew she was accustomed to from her cradle, the cratur; it sat upon her like a wet blanket, and was her death.

"And, och! Macdermot, the things she tould me with her dying breath, and in the prisence of her priest, that is Father Macgillicuddy, of the county Cork in Ireland, but now cojutor in the Irish Ladies Convent at Bruges, and preacher to the *Bé-*

guines, a sort of Sisters of Charity, like our Cork Ladies, in Belgium. And, sir, I'm bound on the cross and holy evangelists, not to let a word pass the threshold of my lips for one year and a day; and then Father Mac is to absolve me, and the world will know who and what I am. And it's little the Kearneys of Fort Kearney, and Lady Anny-Statius, or that *storkna voragagh*,* Lady Dixon, that is for all the world like a lane horse looking over a gate, thinks who I am; and, pace to the soul of my sister Honoria Dogherty, alias Lady—it matters not who; and also Fineas her brother, who died fighting for his king and country with *Boney* in Germany. But it will all come out, sooner or later, if I live to get back.

“And there is a great Princess in the secret, and Father Mac her director, and a Member of Parliament; and Nature's above art; as my best baby-linen-warehouse shirt would tell, if it could spake. And it's a wonder, you'll say, but a man that's under the greatest of compliments to me and mine, as Sir Frederick Mottram surely was, wouldn't come and bail me off. But here comes the thing that bates Bannaghar! If I am between four walls this day, it isn't for my own filandering and gallantry, as in the ould times, when myself and the high sheriff were locked into jail together, but for a blackguard that I knew nothing about; and went surety, at my Lady's request, for Mr. W. W. Macanulty: just a matter of form, says he, (a pretty form, that claps a man into jail for life,) besides lending him two hundred pounds, and his i, o, u, for his tailor's bill; being palavered out of my substance by Lady D., and her orders, and ribbons, and crosses; and the divel a cross of my money I ever seed, and had nothing but crosses, and plenty of that same, ever since.

“Well, sir, after waiting a day or two for poor Larry's return and Mr. Mac's arrival, I bethought me of my frind that wore my best shirt for a week and more, and I wrote him a civil note, and sent it to his hotel. Sorrow taste of an answer he sent, except, as well as I could make out their gibberish here, that his wife had run away with another gentleman, and that he had run after her. And then I wrote to the Doctor, the unnatural blackguard! and to this day he believes him to be the raal and undoubted son of sporting Jimmy Burke, and that I had neither act nor part in. And proof is, that my mind niver once misgave me about him, all the time he was my travelling Physician! not all as one as Larry, with his mother's roguish eye! But of that *more in a year and a day*, sir. And what was the answer? Why, that when I had paid him what I owed him of his salary, he would have no more communication with me, at all, at all! for that my low habits and bad company obligated him to cut the connexion! His own words, the villain of the world,—och murder! And if you knew all, as one day you will, a fellow I found flourishing about the streets of Brighton, with a pair of odd boots and a threadbare surtout.

* A tall gawky:—literally, the stake in the market-pace.

“So, sir, all my fine quality frinds left me to die here : if it wasn’t for the excellent jail allowance, (for I’ll say that of them Belgians, that they understand raal good living, and give plenty of it,) I’d been starved alive. But my heart is broke, Macdermot dear, and my appetite gone. I never recovered that stinking ould tan-pit they put me into at the German spaw ; and I’m as blue as a blanket after it to this day ; and except a taste of Faro, which the jailor gave me (a mighty genteel sort of man, and has a little English, and puts me in mind of Phadrig Flaherty) I’d have been dead in a furrain land long since, and not a frind to close my eyes. And at this moment there is a weight on my heart, that it’s with the greatest of difficulties I hold the pen. Och musha, musha ! With which, being your ould frind till death, I remain ever, my dear Macdermot, hoping an early remittance, if the last heifer on the land is put up to sale for it, who is ever

“Your most affectionate frind,

“IGNATIUS DOGHERTY.

“P. S. Och ! blood and thunder, here’s news ! The great Princess that I often mentioned to you, and that we kept skelping after from Ostend to the world’s end, and would never so much as look at my Lady, has sent her home d’affair, as he calls himself, to pay my debts, and a fifty pound note to pay my way back to ould Ireland. I’ve no time to say more, for I’m going to sail by the canal to Antwerp, and so straight across to the Shannon home ; laving a note to Larry to follow with a frind of his, and my curse on the Doctor on my dying bed, if I was on it. And have had lave from the Princess (a fine cratur !) and Father Mac to write to the Doctor, and tell him who he turns out to be—little Rory Burke, who passed for my natural twin-son, and was chosen for some bumps on his head, by the dispensary pottecary to be his prentice ; and when I get back to Shanballymac has lave to write the same to the Marchioness, his new greet frind, and as greet a scamp as himself, if it’s all true Lady Macanulty tould my wife, of her gcings on. But no more at prisent. It’s with the greatest of joy I tell you that I shall be my own postman, and will be after delivering you this at your own door ; and I’ll ingage it’s not by Brighton I’ll return, that set us all scattering over the world like a flock of wild geese on a common ; for it’s there, that divel of a Doctor—Lord pardon me for saying so of my own son ! (if it’s my son he is,) first driv into my Lady’s head that she had lost that lung of hers, and would never find it till she went up the Rine and tried the German spaws ! Well, its folly to grieve, Corney honey, but ye may tell them all at Shanballymac, that if iver they catch me in the charackter of a ‘Pilgrim of the Rine,’ I’ll give them lave to hang me up for a scarecrow in my own poraty field ; and that I’m free to confess its rightly served I am for turning up in my ould age an Irish absentee. And so farewell till we meet.

“I am affectionately yours,

“IGNATIUS DOGHERTY.”

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

TOWARDS the commencement of the winter of 1834, the British emigration of the autumn of 1833 had winged their way back to their own first, best country, which, in spite of its boasted supremacy over all other countries of the earth, sends forth more *ennuîés* in search of sensations than any other nation of the known world. The London papers teemed with arrivals of the noble and wealthy, from 'a tour on the Continent,' at their unrivalled seats in the country, or, *en passant*, at their splendid mansions or fashionable hotels in the capital. British heiresses returned the wives of foreign pauper Princes; young fortune-hunters came back the husbands of well-jointed dowagers: some, too, arrived who had left their wives behind them; others, accompanied by the wives of their friends.

Under the latter category, Lord Viscount Aubrey was gazetted as arrived at his mansion in Belgrave-place, where he was received by his *tout-tout* Colonel Winterbottom, whose councils with housekeepers and tradesmen had prepared a commodious and luxurious residence for its future frail mistress, one of the model mansions *à la Louis Quatorze* of the new West-end.

There was something in the unwonted boldness of this step, which violated all the decencies of vice, extremely consonant to the feeble, petulant, and inconsequent character of Lady Frances Mottram, and to the *laissez aller* insensibility of her noble paramour; whose vanity, flattered by the devotedness of the reckless mistress, took no cognizance of the deeper shame it would throw round the character of the future wife.

The Marchioness of Montessor's arrival 'at her Ladyship's mansion in Arlington-street, under the care of Doctor de Burgo, the confidential medical attendant of the noble family,' glittered in every journal; and was followed by a succession of 'we-regrets' and 'we-are-happy-to-announces,' according to the frequent variations of her Ladyship's health. The eye, if not the mind of the public, was kept on the stretch of expectation for her Ladyship's recovery or her Ladyship's death; events concerning which the public [(her tradesmen excepted) were equally indifferent, and equally curious. Not so, however, the journalists and chroniclers of fashion. Sentiment, eloquence, scandal poetic and prose, were pressed into the service of the last days of Georgina Marchioness of Montessor. Every bulletin delivered by the porter of Montessor-house was the text of a commentary, of an *éloge* on the virtues of the dying lady, or the skill of her excellent physican; of her Ladyship's resignation, Christian fortitude, and angelic patience; of the Doctor's unceasing vigilance, profound skill, and miraculous re-

sources. The scenes of the death-chamber, too, were narrated with dramatic effect. The solemn leave-taking of the 'afflicted and noble husband,' her last interview and parting admonition to 'her friend' Lord Aubrey, and the edifying influence of Mrs. Medlicot, and of the evangelical Kitty Cochrane, the Irish saint, were eloquently displayed.

At length, the last act came; and the Queen of Almack's, the leader of a political coterie, the new-light penitent of Mrs. Medlicot, and the illustrious patient of Dr. de Burgo, died, like a French lady of the old court of Versailles, supported by her husband and her quondam lover, wept over by his friend and rival, and in the midst of relations, admirers, and devotees. The 'Court Journal' announced the 'melancholy intelligence' with a mourning margin an inch deep; and half the other journals of the empire reiterated the astounding fact, that the Marchioness of Montessor, notwithstanding her rank, wealth, beauty, and 'all of grace and virtue that dignified humanity,' had paid the great debt of nature, like the most ordinary of mortals. Half the noble families of the empire went into mourning; and her disconsolate husband went—into the country, to join a *partie de chasse* at Belvoir.

Brighton and Shanballymac, meantime, had received back their complement of the 'Pilgrims of the Rhine;' and hundreds of future tours to 'the beautiful and abounding river' and its 'castled crags,' were already in preparation, to delight the world, and hold forth the bright examples of political wisdom, which preside over the beautiful scenes and happy peasantry of the Rhingau. Among the earliest announced was 'A Summer's Wanderings through Belgium to the Rhine,' by Catherine Lady Dogherty, dedicated by permission to her friend the Right Honourable Lady Anastasia Macanulty, and edited by Laura Lady Dixon.

Lady Dogherty herself, preferring a sentimental dependance on the wealthy widow Dixon in Cheltenham, to the rude exile of a residence at Shanballymac, had accepted the promise of a separate maintenance from Sir Ignatius, as soon as his embarrassed affairs could be reduced to order by his friend and confidential adviser and attorney-at-law, Mr. Cornelius Macdermot; a consummation so devoutly to be wished, and so difficult to attain in Ireland.

Whatever picturesque, romantic, statistical, social, moral, or political impressions, Belgium, its revolution, government, society, scenery, &c. had left on the mind and registered on the journal of Lady Dogherty, during her residence at the Bellevue; and whatever incidents or reflections, feudal, metaphysical, and mystic, Germany had afforded her, during her passage up and down the Rhine, her drive to Beiberick, or her *séjour* at Baden—those of Sir Ignatius were of a deeper and darker character.

A few drunken bouts with his beloved son Larry, at a Kermess, or in the Hôtel d'Irlande, with Betty Burke and Kit Fitzpatrick, accepted, the whole of *his* tour had been a series

of privations, mortifications, and tribulations. The unrepaid sums lent to young Mr. Macanulty, who had gone Consul to Algiers, through his lady's interest, with the still larger sums expended at the instigation of Doctor de Burgo, in show and making a figure, and the money lavished in setting up the Hôtel d'Irlande, and establishing Larry as a sporting gentleman at Montplaisir, had reduced the Baronet's moderate property, to one half of its original amount. His absence from home, the consequent non-payment of rents, the dilapidations of his property, with the breaking down of the Shanballymac Provincial Bank, and the blowing up of a mining speculation on the Shannon gave the *coup de grace* to a fortune, which his former successes as a popular Irish innkeeper and land-jobber had so slowly and laboriously raised.

After a year's residence from home, varied as the locomotive tendencies of the ladies Dogherties and Dixon directed, Sir Ignatius found himself, one November evening, seated in the window of the front parlour of Shanballymac-house, from which a legal execution had conveyed the furniture; while 'the people about the place' (to use his own words) 'had taken as many of the moveable fixtures as they could lay their hands on, th' ungrateful bastes!'

Sir Ignatius had drained the last drop from his tumbler, and shaken the last dust from his German pipe (the sole relic of his disastrous pilgrimage.) He looked at the sun as it set behind the mountains, and then on the Shannon which rolled majestically by, and he thought of the money he had left on the shores of another river. He thought of Ostend, and the Doctor's *rigmarol*, which had first turned the head of Lady Dogherty. He thought of Brussels, and all its 'moving accidents;' of his arrest at the theatre, his bills at the Bellevue, and his confinement in the debtor's jail. He thought of his tiresome tour on the Rhine; of his being dyed blue in the baths of Baden, and pinched black by Lady Dogherty's admonitory fingers every where; and he finally thought, that if all these melancholy reminiscences would turn out but 'an unaisy dhrame,' what fun alive it would be to awaken and find himself rid of Miss Kitty Kearney, of Fort Kearney, and once more seated by a rousing turf-fire in the old bar-room at the Stag's Horns, singing,

"Why don't you sell your fiddle,"

to the obligato accompaniment of Kit's instrument, and with Larry bearing a chorus, and some of his old gossips and cronies playing audience.

Whoever may feel an interest in the fortunes of Sir Ignatius Dogherty, representative of the Princes of Inneshowen, if their love of the picturesque should carry them to the Lakes of Killarney as it led them to the Rhingau in 1833, may turn a little out of the direct high-road to Kerry, and behold at the four cross-roads of Shanballymac a square, white-walled, blue-slated house, with a flaunting sign, bearing a noble pair of ant-

lers, and the inscription of "NEW STAG'S HORNS, BY LAWRENCE FEGAN DOGHERTY," where they will find the spirit of Sir Ignatius's dream fully accomplished.

The arrival of Larry Fegan, his son 'and darling without end,' a few weeks after his own return to Ireland, had bound up 'every corporal faculty' of the Baronet to the point he had long contemplated, of returning to his old vocation. He expended the fragments of his fortune and credit, therefore, in fitting up the as yet unfinished Shanballymac-house as an inn, and in furnishing it in a handsome style. The announcing the new establishment in all the Munster papers, the settling Larry as its master, Kit Fitzpatrick as its resident bard, and Mr. Macdermot as its honoured and permanent guest, was a work as rapidly executed as conceived: for, unable to lay aside his newly-acquired dignities, Sir Ignatius conciliated his tastes and habits with his family pride, by becoming a sleeping partner only in the house.

While Lawrence's name, therefore, figured on the sign, and his handsome person on the Kerry race-ground, bringing custom to the shop by his sporting accomplishments and popular qualifications, Sir Ignatius looked to the business *ex amateur*, sat on a stone bench at the door, had a word and a joke for every guest, and a welcome for every passenger; and having made over 'a bit of land' to his lady, for the payment of her separate maintenance, on condition that he was never to hear a word more from her, 'good or bad,' for the rest of her life, he soon forgot the disastrous consequences of his temporary gentility, and taste for picturesque travelling. Be it hoped, therefore, that the worthy Baronet is destined to pass the remainder of his days on his own terms, indulging in his 'sup of hot,' and singing *Shan-van-vough* to the delight of the tap-room of the Stag's Horns. Larry, meanwhile, talks openly of 'my father Sir Ignatius;' and sinking his former stations of tiger, helper, groom, and valet of his cousin Sir Frederick Mottram, is already taking his place among the squireens of the country; and recalls to his proud and doting father the flower of that old, but now extinct race, 'the Rakes of Mallow.'

But the same ardour of feeling which rendered Sir Ignatius the fondest parent of one illegitimate son, had aggravated his aversion for the other. The Irish, who are the best of haters, as of lovers, and whose national virtue it is to be true to their kindred even to the third and fourth generation, are alive to filial neglect, and feel more than wiser but less sensitive parents,

"How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is,
To have a thankless child."

It was, therefore, strictly consonant to the temperament and character of Sir Ignatius to hate the elder born of Betty Burke's twins with the same intensity with which he loved the younger; and when he read in the papers the pomps and circumstance of

Dr. de Burgo's professional career, and remembered his insolent sneers and cruel conduct to himself, he could not resist writing to Lord Montessor a statement of the birth and breeding of Rory Burke, and putting the illustrious patron on his guard against the ingratitude; insolence, and scheming policy of his own son.

Lord Montessor was amused by this letter, which he handed over to Dr. de Burgo, who laughed at it as heartily as his Lordship. Whether the statement was true or false, his Lordship gave himself no trouble to inquire. His confidence in the Doctor's skill was not to be shaken; and as for the parentage and personal morality of his physician, these were of little consequence to the high-born voluptuary.

The divorce of Sir Frederick and Lady Frances Mottram, in the interim, was proceeding in due course, and, it was generally thought, would be followed by the nuptials of the foolish and faithless wife with the dull and seduced lover. Events so calculated to become topics of private discussion in all the particular circles of the great world, and subjects of interesting intelligence to the public at large, were considered as benefactions by the journalists, during a parliamentary recess,—when they formed convenient pendants to a 'fatal fire,' or a 'horrible murder;' and supplied the tardy letter from 'our own correspondent' at Paris, Rome, or Timbuctoo. A divorce is always a piquant theme; and in the present instance the parties were of sufficient fashionable notoriety to give a protracted interest to the epigrams of private scandal, and the coarse allusions of party malice. As Sir Frederick had placed himself in that political position, in which 'the Tories called him Whig, and Whigs a Tory,' it was a full month before the partisans of 'both their houses' ceased to make his domestic afflictions a point of attack for *damaging* their several opponents.

To Lord Aubrey and Lady Frances the press was something more lenient, and became as soon tired of serving them up for the edification of the Sunday morning's breakfast-table, as the parties themselves had become tired of each other.

Although Lord Aubrey intended to let judgment go by default, and Sir Frederick was determined not to profit by his wife's dishonour, nor to bring forward any pleas in aggravation to enhance the damages, still 'the law's delay,' and the slow length of parliamentary forms, held in suspense the disgraceful transactions: and they, whom feeling and inclination had long eternally separated, were still bound by the cold and iron links of legal bonds to each other.

Meantime, bets were booking at the clubs of London, and rumours were circulating in the coffee-houses and reading-rooms of Brussels, of which the marriage of Sir Frederick Mottram and the Princess was the subject. In an age from which no secrets are hidden, the relations in which the Belgian Princess and the English Baronet stood to each other had become as much *publici juris*, as the last English novel, published by Bentley, reprinted by Galignani, and pirated by Melini, all in

one week. Domestic life, like domestic literature, has now no copy-right; the protagonist and the author are alike the victims of private speculation or public curiosity; and they suffer or write for the universal public.

The Princess had added one more romantic trait to a life which already showed how far beyond the utmost imaginings of fiction is the romance of real life. She had given up to her husband's heir (to disinherit whom the Prince had married) the estates of the Rhingau, spontaneously, and without any claim on his part; retaining only the personal property, and the pavilion in the Forest of Soigne.

Between this pavilion and her chateau in the Ardennes, she had divided the interval of time which had elapsed since the anniversary of 1833. Balking curiosity by gay evasion, and answering an argument by an epigram, she left private interest in doubt, and public curiosity at fault, as to her real views and future intentions. Sometimes she worked in her old *studio* in the Basse Ville, sometimes she went on service as a *Béguine*. Her active energies still seemed to require employment, and the habits of her adversity continued to be those of her preference and her taste.

"I belong," she said to Lord Allington, who suddenly appeared at the Pavilion of the Gronendael, during the summer of 1834, as an envoy very extraordinary from Sir Frederick Mottram,—“I belong to a propaganda, that of the age we live in; and I cannot share my mission with less noble objects. I reject the hand of the husband of Lady Frances de Vere.”

“What! after having taken such pains to win his heart?”

“To touch, not win it; and that, too, for purposes in which my own interests had no part.”

“Then,” said Lord Allington, “you have been mystifying us, all along?”

“I have only played your own game,” she replied. “When you English oligarchs received me into the sanctum of your mysteries political and social, you had hoped to make use of me for your purposes: I availed myself of the hint, and worked for my own, which were those of my country.”

“And, *femme avant tout*,” interrupted Lord Allington, “you turned the head of the man, while proselytizing the politician.”

“I flatter myself,” she replied laughingly, “I have succeeded in both. But there ends my mission.”

“And then?” asked Lord Allington.

“Why, then,” she replied, drawing the voluminous folds of the *Béguine's* habit over her dress, and adjusting the white coif before a mirror, “I shall end as I began—a *Béguine*.”

“As you began!” said Lord Allington, sinking into the depths of an easy-chair, and gazing with amused surprise at her sudden transformation. “Princess! how I should like to hear your story!”

“I will get some one to write it, like some other noble authors; and you shall be my editor.”

"With all my heart: but first I must learn the fate of the hero."

"Oh! you would have the hackneyed *denouement* of all novels. Let us try something new. It may be well, perhaps, to leave one's reader, like one's lover, in doubt. At all events, we will try the experiment in our 'forthcoming work,' which, with the style and title of 'THE PRINCESS,' may aim at serving a great cause, while detailing domestic facts."

"Or, what is better," interrupted Lord Allington, "amusing fictions."

"We'll try both," said the Princess, gaily; "and if we fail, the honest public will, at least, give us credit for our good intentions."

* * * * *

BELGIUM meantime, and her affairs, continued to advance in prosperity and stability, in illumination and in wealth. Every successive event proved that her revolution had been, not an accident, but a necessity; that it was a step forwards for the great family of Europe, and (as far as it has gone) a successful experiment in self-government. Thoroughly democratic in its principles and tendencies, the career of the new government has been blotted by no excesses, and stained by no legislative extravagances. A perfect and absolute freedom of conscience, unattained either by France or by England, has left the true interests of religion on a basis firmer and wider than established monopoly could ever boast. A total overthrow of aristocratic privileges has left property undisturbed even by a momentary alarm. The authority of reason is respected in the Chambers, and that of the laws prevails in the tribunals; and maugre the political preponderance of a Catholic hierarchy, and the lingering endurance of much deep-rooted popular prejudice, the diffusion of a steady and beneficial intellectual light is gradually manifested even in the smaller cities.

At the aspect of so much moderation coupled with so much firm resolve, foreign states have begun to feel the importance of the stand made by the Belgians under the banner of national independence. The old cabinets of Europe, which had kept back their envoys on the confines of despotism, waiting at Frankfurt upon events, have at length discovered in the 'bloody and needless revolution,' a power and a permanence worthy of respect; and Brussels, which, in 1833, had no diplomatic residents save those of France, England, and the United States, has since received the representatives of the other great powers, and their dependant followers.

Fertile, laborious, commercial, and rich, Belgium has entered boldly into the question of free-trade, and is hourly rising superior to prejudices which belong neither to the age nor to her equitable government. Pressed on one side by the hostility of Holland, and on the other by the uncalculating jealousy of the French miners and manufacturers, she does not seek protection in reciprocal restrictions; but has sent commissioners to Paris, to join in that greater commercial revolution, which is the des-

ted supplement of the political regeneration of constitutional Europe. This is worthy of her intelligence, and of the frank and manly character of a people formed for freedom.

The industry and commercial spirit thus announced, afford the strongest guarantees for the beneficial influence of the new government on the peace and prosperity of Europe. Admitting that the independence and political existence of a nation consisting only of four millions of people, must in some degree repose on the will of the neighbouring powers, which have as many million of bayonets under their command, still, in the rapid progress of civilization, the dominion of force is hourly declining; and it may be hoped that the well understood interests of all the limitrophe states will range them on the side of Belgium integrity. A general war may again deluge the fields of Belgium in blood, and subject its cities to the law of the strongest; but, if the lessons of the past have not wholly been given in vain, it will be long before Europe will again be visited by a calamity so dreadful. It is not therefore too much to augur a protracted and a brilliant existence to this infant state, or to look with confidence on its future destinies, reposing as they do on the same foundations with those of French and English liberty, and the future prosperity and intelligence of the great Germanic body. Of this, however, Belgium is sure—that it can never be worse than it would have been, under the Mezentian embrace of Holland, and bound hand and foot to the will and pleasure of the three great bulwarks of ignorance and slavery.

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THE END.



