the tide of men; their infinite hum waxing ever louder, into imprecations, perhaps into crackle of stray musketry —which latter, on walls nine feet thick, cannot do execution. The outer drawbridge has been lowered for Thuriot; a group penetrates that way into the Outer Court: soft speeches producing no clearance of these, De Launay gives fire; pulls up his Drawbridge. A slight sputter; which has *kindled* the too combustible chaos; made it a roaring fire-chaos! Burst forth Insurrection, at sight of its own blood (for there were deaths by that splutter of fire), into endless rolling explosion of musketry, distraction, execration; and overhead, from the Fortress, let one great gun, with its grapeshot, go booming, to show what we *could* do. The Bastille is besieged!

"On, then, all Frenchmen that have hearts in their bodies! Roar with all your throats, of cartilage and metal, ye Sons of Liberty; stir spasmodically whatsoever of utmost faculty is in you, soul, body, or spirit; for it is the hour! Smite, thou Louis Tournay, cartwright of the Marais, old soldier of the Regiment Dauphiné; smite at that Outer Drawbridge chain, though the fiery hail whistles round thee! Never, over nave or felloe, did thy axe strike such a stroke. Down with it, man; down with it to Orcus: let the whole accursed Edifice sink thither, and Tyranny be swallowed up for ever! Mounted, some say on the roof of the guard-room, some 'on bayonets stuck into joints of the wall,' Louis Tournay smites, brave Aubin Bonnemère (also an old soldier) seconding him: the chain yields, breaks; the huge Drawbridge slams down, thundering (*avec fracas*). Glorious: and yet, alas, it is still but the outworks. The Eight grim Towers, with their Invalides musketry, their paving-stones, and cannon-mouths, still soar aloft intact; Ditch yawning impassable, stone-faced; the inner Drawbridge with its *back* towards us: the Bastille is still to take!

"To describe this Siege of the Bastille (thought to be one of the most important in History) perhaps transcends the talent of mortals. Could one but, after infinite reading, get to understand so much as the plan

of the building! But there is open Esplanade, at the end of the Rue Saint-Antoine; there are such Fore-Courts, *Cour Avancé*, *Cour de l'Orme*, arched Gateway (where Louis Tournay now fights); then new draw-bridges, dormant bridges, rampart-bastions, and the grim Eight Towers: a labyrinthic Mass, high frowning there, of all ages from twenty years to four hundred and twenty; beleaguered, in this its last hour, as we said, by mere Chaos come again! Ordnance of all calibres; throats of all capacities; men of all plans, every man his own engineer: seldom since the war of Pygmies and Cranes was there seen so anomalous a thing. Half-pay Elie is home for a suit of regimentals; no one would heed him in coloured clothes: half-pay Hulin is haranguing Gardes Françaises in the Place de Grève. Frantic Patriots pick up the grape-shots; bear them, still hot (or seemingly so), to the Hôtel de Ville: Paris, you perceive, is to be burnt! Flesselles is 'pale to the very lips,' for the roar of the multitude grows deep. Paris wholly has got to the acme of its frenzy; whirled, all ways, by panic madness. At every street-barricade, there whirls simmering, a minor whirlpool—strengthening the barricade, since God knows what is coming; and all minor whirlpools play distractedly into that grand Fire-Mahlstrom which is lashing round the Bastille.

"And so it lashes and it roars. Cholat the wine-merchant has become an impromptu cannoneer. See Georget, of the Marine Service, fresh from Brest, ply the King of Siam's cannon. Singular (if we were not used to the like) Georget lay, last night, taking his ease at his inn; the King of Siam's cannon also lay, knowing nothing of *him*, for a hundred years. Yet now, at the right instant, they have got together, and discourse eloquent music. For, hearing what was toward, Georget sprang from the Brest diligence, and ran. Gardes Françaises also will be here, with real artillery: were not the walls so thick! Upwards from the Esplanade, horizontally from all neighbouring roofs and windows, flashes one irregular deluge of musketry—without effect. The Invalides lie flat, firing comparatively at

their ease from behind stone: hardly, through port-holes, show the tip of a nose. We fall, shot; and make no impression.

"Let conflagration rage; of whatsoever is combustible. Guard-rooms are burnt, Invalides mess-rooms. A distracted 'Peruke-maker with two fiery torches' is for burning 'the saltpetres of the Arsenal;' had not a woman run screaming; had not a Patriot, with some tincture of Natural Philosophy, instantly struck the wind out of him (butt of musket on pit of stomach), overturned barrels, and stayed the devouring element. A young beautiful lady, seized escaping in these Outer Courts, and thought falsely to be De Launay's daughter, shall be burnt in De Launay's sight; she lies swooned on a palliasse: but again a Patriot, it is brave Aubin Bonnemère, the old soldier, dashes in, and rescues her. Straw is burnt; three cartloads of it, hauled hither, go up in white smoke: almost to the choking of Patriotism itself; so that Elie had, with singed brows, to drag back one cart; and Rèole, the 'gigantic haberdasher,' another. Smoke as of Tophet; confusion as of Babel; noise as of the Crack of Doom!

"Blood flows; the aliment of new madness. The wounded are carried into houses of the Rue Cerisaie; the dying leave their last mandate not to yield till the accursed Stronghold fall. Deputations, three in number, arrive from the Hôtel de Ville. These wave their Town-flag in the arched Gateway; and stand rolling their drums; but to no purpose. In such Crack of Doom, De Launay cannot hear them, dare not believe them: they return, with justified rage, the whistle of lead still singing in their ears. The firemen are here, squirting with their fire-pumps on the cannon, to wet the touch-holes; they unfortunately cannot squirt so high; but produce only clouds of spray. Individuals of classical knowledge propose *catapults*. Sansterre, the sonorous Brewer of the Suburb Saint-Antoine, advises rather that the place be fired, by a 'mixture of phosphorus and oil of turpentine spouted up through forcing-pumps.' O Spinola Sansterre, hast thou the mixture *ready?* Every man his own engineer! And

still the fire-deluge abates not; even women are firing. Gardes Françaises have come: real cannon, real cannoneers. Usher Maillard is busy; Elie, Hulin rage in the midst of thousands.

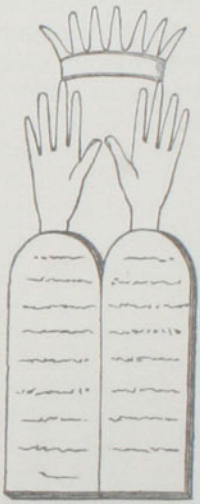
"How the great Bastille Clock ticks (inaudible) in the Inner Court there, at its ease, hour after hour; as if nothing special, for it or the world, were passing! It tolled one when the firing began; and is now pointing towards *five*, and still the firing slacks not. Far down, in their vaults, the Prisoners hear muffled din as of earthquakes.

"Woe to thee, De Launay! Broglie is distant, and his ears heavy: Besenval hears, but can send no help. The Governor surrenders not his Fortress; declares that he will blow it up, seizes torches to blow it up, and does not blow it. Unhappy old De Launay! it is the death agony of thy Bastille and Thee! Jail, Jailoring and Jailor, all three, such as they may have been, must finish.

"For four hours now has the world Bedlam roared: call it the World Chimæra, blowing fire! The poor Invalides have sunk under their battlements, or rise only with reversed muskets: they have made a white flag of napkins; go beating the *chamade*, or seeming to beat, for one can hear nothing. The very Swiss at the Portcullis look weary of firing; disheartened in the fire-deluge: a porthole at the drawbridge is opened, as by one that would speak. See Huissier Maillard, the shifty man! On his plank, swinging over the abyss of that stone Ditch; plank resting on parapet, balanced by weight of Patriots—he hovers, perilous: such a Dove towards such an Ark. Deftly, thou shifty Usher: one man already fell; and lies smashed, far down there, against the masonry! Usher Maillard falls not: deftly, unerring he walks, with outspread palm. The Swiss holds a paper through his porthole; the shifty Usher snatches it, and returns. Terms of surrender: Pardon, immunity to all! Are they accepted?—'*Foi d'officier*' (On the word of an officer), answers half-pay Hulin, or half-pay Elie, for men do not agree on it, 'they are!' Sinks the drawbridge—Usher Maillard

bolting it when down; rushes in the living deluge: the Bastille is fallen! *Victoire! La Bastille est prise!*

"De Launay, 'discovered in grey frock, with poppy-coloured ribbon,' is for killing himself with the sword of his cane. He shall to the Hôtel de Ville; Hulin, Maillard, and others escorting him; Elie marching, foremost, with the 'capitulation paper on his sword's point.' Through roarings and cursings; through hustlings, clutchings, and at last through strokes. Your escort is



Hands *issuant*, erect, out of the "Tables of the Law"—the best supporters of "Monarchy."

hustled aside, felled down; Hulin sinks exhausted on a heap of stones. Miserable De Launay! He shall never enter the Hôtel de Ville: only his bloody hair queue, held up in a bloody hand; that shall enter for a sign. The bleeding trunk lies on the steps there. The head is off through the streets. Ghastly, aloft on a pike. One forest of distracted steel bristles, endless, in front of an Electoral Committee; points itself in horrid radii.

"O evening sun of July, how, at this hour, thy

beams fell slant on reapers amid peaceful woody fields; on old women spinning in cottages; on ships far out in the silent main!" Such was the end of the mighty Bastille—the fortress of the French Monarchy.

A century rolls back like a tide: a mighty procession, sweeping back as in their smoky palls, of "ten tens," like the ghostly metaphorical kings of *Macbeth*—intervene between this present glimpse of the life of the charmed Silver Piece, and the sight which we next dramatically catch of it amidst the tropical beauties, and the fierce heat, and the splendid vegetative shows of the West Indies. To which we now transfer.

Changing the scenes of our story again, and going back, we raise the curtain for a new group, and for new events, in the Tropics.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

ISABELLA, THE NUN. TIME—JUNE, 1692.

"GOD smote Savannah-la Mer, and in one night, by earthquake, removed her, with all her towers standing and population sleeping, from the steadfast foundations of the shore to the coral floors of ocean. And God said—'Pompeii did I bury and conceal from men through seventeen centuries: this city I will bury, but not conceal. She shall be a monument to men of my mysterious anger; set in azure light through generations to come: for I will enshrine her in a crystal dome of my tropic seas.' This city, therefore, like a mighty galleon with all her apparel mounted, streamers flying, and tackling perfect, seems floating along the noiseless depths of ocean: and oftentimes in glassy calms, through the translucid atmosphere of water that now stretches like an air-woven awning above the silent encampment, mariners from every clime look down into her courts and terraces, count her gates, and number the spires of her churches. She is one ample cemetery, and *has* been for many a year; but in the mighty calms that brood for weeks over tropic latitudes, she fascinates the eye with a *Fata Morgana* revelation, as of human life still subsisting in submarine asylums sacred from the storms that torment our upper air."

This air is indeed stifling enough to choke one—sulphury and still; as I have known it ere the burst of a tornado. But all is clear and silent.

"Hand me up that bag—that bag full of money," said George Lestocq, a Buccaneer captain, commanding the Brig, "Daredevil," as he, in company with some of his crew, was turning-out and rummaging the cabin of an unfortunate ship which had fallen victim to piracy in his hands. We say nothing of what had become of the crew and passengers, who were not to be seen, nor of the

The English Man-of-War in search of the Pirate George.

intended fate of the vessel herself: for the Buccaneers of the West Indies of 1692 were not accustomed to spare either life or limb, or man or woman; nor to remit ships from burning or scuttling or destruction.

The bag was handed-up to Captain George by the obedient seaman who waited on him—a regular marine-wolf with eyes like stars, and covered with hair. The bag was found to contain innumerable Spanish dollars.

And amongst these was a PIECE of MONEY of the size of the dollars themselves, but very different otherwise, for it looked old as the distant Blue Mountains themselves.

After this piracy, and these probable murders on the profaned West Indian blue seas, the captain of this robber-ship steered his Daredevil for Savannah; where he landed alone, with his pockets full of money. He ordered his Brig to lie off, masked for a time, with anchor up. But with a guard of well-armed seamen, he landed under a rock on the beach; which guard he ordered to wait his coming down from the town; he being evidently bound-up to it on some errand of personal indulgence or of violence; none of his men knew which.

It was June, and the heat was a prodigious unbearable heat. At one end of the town, there towered a large Spanish Convent, whose old grey masonry and spiry turrets abounded in peephole windows and slender metal crosses. Music pealed from its interior. And the sweet voices of the female choir, for it was a nunnery, came, with the smoke of incense, as rolling melody out of the windows.

"I am like the devil in the Garden of Eden," said Captain George to himself, as with his bare legs and loose blue-and-white striped coat, and with his bright long knife in his hand, like a bandit, he cowered, (listening to the music,) between two buttresses under a projection of the wall; where a huge crimson cloth was let down and bowed out, supported by gilt props, to form an awning for shelter from the intolerable golden glare of this West Indian sun. On this great church cloth was emblazoned the figure of an opalesque gigantic saint, with unshod golden feet, and an embroidered crimson and white face boasting blue eyes and a glory to it. "I am like a thief," muttered the pirate, "listening to the footsteps of the indwellers who have said their prayers and are going to bed, before he calls in his band of desperadoes and ransacks the house. Strange that the beauty of this pale-faced young fanatical nun should so have fired me—maddened me. I can think, dream, and

speak, even, of little else! Pirate and Nun! Ha, ha! a goodly, gross alliance. Misfortune fall on that day that I, with gaping cursed curiosity—like an idiot as I was, or a hawk intent on new unproven game! curiosity that would have better become a child or a woman, than the redoubted George—a curse on that mad vesper-time that I slouched in the shadows, and heard the service, and caught sight of that one unrivalled angel face! She is immaculate—she sickens with horror at my sight—she rejects with disdain my heap of gold—she shivers at my jewels. The devil can do nought with her in the way of temptation. Though I have heard that some of these sworn nuns are not all prayers and psalmody after all. But she must be mine. And this very night shall she drink of my drear sea-cup. My barque is within signal—my men await me. And now that the service is concluded, and that the nuns pass the *triforium* back again to their cloisters (or to their separate cells), I will essay the bold deed. Caution! Doth any one see me; or can the stones prate?"

No one did, however, see the freebooter. And light and agile he was as a wild cat—for he was slender and small, though strong as a tiger-whelp (this renowned George!) He placed his foot upon one of many rusty torch-irons and lighted-up gaily within the ornamental work or fold, as it might be called, of a double ornamented buttress, catching at the metal spouts, or *gargoyles*, and clutching his way from crocket to boss, and from crossbar to mullion, until—as he would upon a ladder—he had climbed high the convent-wall, and was *in* safe at an upper window—like a fierce small eagle seeking a diamond in a hole in the face of a rock in the valley of Sindbad; full of its spires of crag with the white clouds sailing over them in the turquoise blue.

He traced (as if he knew the way) through the windings within the convent. All was still and stiflingly sultry, though dark enough within these upper passages. Twilight reigned in the arched Gothic corridors except at certain apertures with their tracery; which *blazed*, as it were, as you passed them with that blue light, without, of the tropic day. Numbering several

of these windows in his passage past them, but hearing footsteps approach, he cowered for a moment behind a sort of stone pedestal that flanked a large Gothic window —at, indeed, a giddy height, for it overhung the sea; and sharp rocks were deep down below. The tower in which he now was creeping sprang to a great altitude, and its cross almost pierced through the flags of cloud.

A nun in her robes was now seen, in the shadows, to approach. The folds of her dress could but ill conceal her marvellous beauty, though she was pale almost as a marble statue. She was stepping like St. Matthew's angel with sedate tread towards her cell when the pirate sprang out of his concealment and placed himself before her. He threw his knife down on the stones as he sought to seize her hands. She shrank back, shrieked and endeavoured to escape him; but he barred the way.

"Isabella! wonder of a woman!" George exclaimed. "You have driven me mad. I am possessed with a delirium of desire since I first saw you. I love you to idolatry. Nay, do not tremble; do not shriek. You may shudder at my name—recalling the tiger I am—a sea-shark that tracks the ghastly wrecks! But to thee I am but the child of gentleness. Forsake these gloomy walls. List no longer to these mumblings and mummings! Fold yourself no longer close in those black meaningless muffles! Come with me to Cytherean islands where the sun never yields but to that brighter day, where the moon, lavishing love, is regent. Come with me to fairy caves where the sea-blooms shall spread the couch for thy white limbs, and the corals contend which shall shine royallest—blush wildest, richest. Come where the sand is silver, and where the clouds, themselves, are love's heaven. And if you are sworn to psalms and hymns, and to all this cant, and to service and convent-kneeling; why we will have our great sea-churches, and a full choral peal amidst our stormy sails! We will have our billowy intervals of rhapsody, and our sunbright holy passages of intoxicating love. The sea Syrens shall warble the songs of the Holy Jerusalem to thee, and the waters shall bear the deep

musical burthen—waters rolling in purple more imperially Tyrian—in more religious catholicity of dye—than your brightest sacred service-cloths; which are but of perishable warp and woof. This old nunnish den of mortifying stone, with its idle smokes of incense and its pining fasts, was never made for *thee!* Let crones and the ugly to it! Let the mad and the mumbling to it! —idiots among the men, and ugly crones among the women. Allow to Venus her free air, and the round, swelling, desiring limbs of her daughters—glorious in

"My men await. My ship backs her maintopsail (for thee) within hail. Within the beckon of my finger is a boat."

their beauty. Cast down thy book of convent canticles; and abandon it to the grating and discordant use of sexless, withered, barren and battered, if innocent, old effigies, lifeless as figures of wood and of leather, which are the males of the monasteries; useless, in the Eastern fashion, even to guard the women, and to keep them for the embraces, truly, of such eager spoliators as I. And as for thy quires and services, and holy forms—they are not for thee, thou wonder of a maid! Venus is thy queen, thou beauteous nymph with a cleft rose-bud for a tempting mouth, and thy heaving bosom!

Off with these sombre swathes for a nun's habit! Cast them, and thy psalms, to chanting hags among the women. For thou wert born for the day. Thou wert sworn a servant of Aphrodite—ruling with a more absolute sceptre than chiselled crosier—charming men of flesh and blood like a goddess; not beseeching saints or shadows like a mope. Come with me then at this most favourable moment. My men await — my ship backs her topsail (for thee) within hail—within the beckon of my finger is a boat. I have a casket of priceless jewels to hang about thy marble limbs. I will chain thee in precious chains of gold. I have money wherewith to array thee more superbly than a queen. I can put the lives of men in thy hands. And I can give thee power to place thy foot upon crowds of the people of such superstitious holds as this; with its paralytic priests, its jingling gimcracks, and its mad moping women. Listen to me! Seek not to fly, for it is hopeless. I shall never, I will never let thee go. But I fetter thee with kisses, with a passionately loving gripe. And see! See, Isabella! The blood-stained monster George is at thy feet. He who is dogged by the sabres of a thousand revengeful brothers, husbands, and lovers, gone wild in the thirst of vengeance for his imputed crimes—I am he whose name muttered here in this so-called holy place would cause all your bells to tingle to denounce him — flinging iron curses proclaiming him upon the Tropic air, and of themselves cracking—angel-struck—in the intensity of their horror at him! He whose foot burns in fancy through your thick stones as foot of the fiend —He whose barbarities could disrupt and undo, in fright at them, this whole hollow grand old building, and heap its ruins, solid like a pyramid, over his at last judgment-overtaken body—found out by the lightnings of the Eternal—HE prays on his knees for your love."

"Man, away—tempter, away! Wretch—madman! Would you lure me by the catalogue of your hideous sins?" exclaimed Isabella, though she was almost sinking with fright as she struggled to disengage herself from the embraces of the Buccaneer. "Free me from thy

knowledge; which darkens me as veritably the Shadow of the Evil One! And oh! my last hope! blessed Heaven assist me! Save me out of this instant, this terrible peril! For I am sinking in the net of this frightful boaster, this devil starred in his own iniquities. Even on the holily inscribed stones of Heaven's own sacred house, doth he kneel to ME, thy vowed priestess! soliciting me—me, A NUN, to perdition."

"I yield you not," cried George, as he set his lips close till the blood came, and he seized from his girdle the bag of silver which incommoded him in his deter-

"I am sinking in the net of this frightful boaster—this Devil."

mined attempts to clasp the Nun over his shoulders and to bear her off. The canvas-bag broke in his hard gripe, and a heap of silver coins flew rattling out like a rain. Among the other silver-pieces there was ONE that illuminated for an instant, with an intolerable glow, the Gothic gallery. And it glanced sharp, and flew out of the Triforium window. As it swept past the dwarf pillars of the decorated arcade of which the Triforium-opening was composed, column and trefoil-heads were torn out as if by a Hand—a prodigious HAND that grasped them.

The sky darkened. The air turned thick blue—opaque—dun purple, as if in an eclipse. The stone-work where the Pirate and the Nun now struggled—the one endeavouring to escape and the other to seize—became black.

There was a trembling under their feet, as if the entire solid stone structure, in the high tower of which they contended, was shaking apart—as if it were ejecting its metal-clamps in a startled shower of iron, and tumbling into ruin of itself. A strange, heavy, lumbering sound—preternatural and awful to a degree—rolled beneath the sacred edifice, as if of the mighty "waggon" of the underground Dis waiting for the ravished. There were sharp reiterated shrieks in the air. The steeples toppled, and there was a clatter and a clang, and a storm as it seemed of bells, as they were swayed bodily in the motion of the belfries. Gushes of white lightning hissed almost as it might be called, (for there *was* noise), in at the ranged, traceried, terrible windows now, of the holy house. And the batteries of the thunder kept up incessant discharges, while the whole city seemed to heave and to roll away, as upon the sea itself in billows dark and dreadful. Earthquake was struggling up to day in the centre of the whole island. The sea went and came like water in a cup. Ships, houses, trees, mighty stones, and all the confused parts of the late landscape (when still in its fright of expectation) were tossed and driven, as if to the sky, like sticks and straws. Such was the mighty earthquake of June, 1692, in this disrupted island.

At the first shake underneath of the great convent, the Pirate George—well knowing the fearful meaning of that motion—abandoned his grasp of the Nun. He staggered back, and lifted by the flags of the gallery which literally rose to his feet like the deck of his own ship—as if vengefully rejecting him back again into his own sea—he tumbled headlong through the open window, grasping feebly at the broken ornaments of it. And the last that was seen of him was the keen flash of his knife (which he had again picked up)—bright for an instant upon the thick darkness without. The

Buccaneer-captain flung past the opening and dropped headlong, like a stone, into that well of billows. The sea boiled up almost as it seemed for the express purpose of swallowing him alive, and meeting him.

But there was One to escape from the horrors of that scene—from the torn walls, earthquake-battered, of her holy convent home. The crosses which spired and protested as they seemed to the lightnings were her rescue; were her protection. She fell indeed. But the enormous foliated metal crosses which sprang from every pinnacle and the minor groups of them of smaller size of polished steel which were set according to a quaint Catholic fashion, upon every "coigne of vantage," when the sacred building fell cracking like an egg-shell wholly in its hollow—these closed over in a defensive heap and struck in points starlike like cherub-swords above her; forming a sacred fence, and a sort of "angel castle"—from which she—found fainted—was finally extracted (as from out a symbol-guarded crossed and recrossed tomb) when the great sea had gone down and when earthquake and horror had ceased. And this almost miraculously saved one was Isabella the Nun. Rescued even out of earthquake!

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

MR. BOOTY AND THE SHIP'S CREW. TIME—1687.

NO circumstance connected with supernatural appearances has occasioned more altercation and controversy than the undermentioned in this story. The narrative certainly has an air of overstrained credulity; nevertheless, the affair is curious, and the coin-

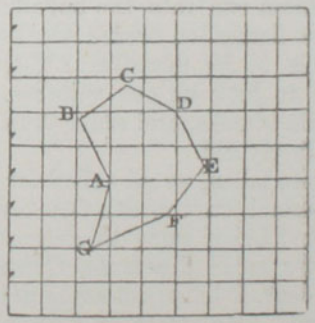


Chart produced in Court belonging to Captain Barnaby.

cidence very remarkable, especially as it was a *salvo* for Captain Barnaby. The former part of this narrative is transcribed from Captain Spinks's journal, or log-book, and the latter from the King's Bench Records for the time being. For both are extant and copied from faithfully.

"Tuesday, May the 12th. This day the wind S.S.W.,

and a little before four in the afternoon, we anchored in Manser road, where lay Captains Bristo, Brian, and Barnaby; all of them bound to Lucera to load. Wednesday, May the 13th, we weighed anchor, and in the afternoon I went on board of Captain Barnaby, and about two o'clock we sailed all of us for the island of Lucera, wind W.S.W. and better weather. Thursday, the 14th, about two o'clock, we saw the island, and all came to an anchor in twelve-fathom water, the wind W.S.W., and on the 15th day of May we had an observation of Mr. Booty in the following manner: Captains Bristo, Brian, and Barnaby, went on shore shooting colues (curlews) on Stromboli: when we had done we called our men together, and about fourteen minutes after three in the afternoon, to our great surprise, we saw two men run by us with amazing swiftness: Captain Barnaby said, 'Lord bless me, the foremost man looks like my next-door neighbour, old Booty,' but said he did not know the other that was behind. Booty was dressed in grey clothes, and the one behind in black; we saw them run into the burning mountain in the midst of the flames, on which we heard a terrible noise too horrible to be described: Captain Barnaby then desired us to look at our watches, pen the time down in our pocket-books, and enter it in our journals, which we accordingly did.

"When we were laden, we all sailed for England, and arrived at Gravesend on the 6th October, 1687. Mrs. Barnaby and Mrs. Brian came to congratulate our safe arrival, and after some discourse, Captain Barnaby's wife said, 'My dear, I have got some news to tell you; old Booty is dead.' He swore an oath, and said we all saw him run into 'hell.' Some time afterwards, Mrs. Barnaby met with a lady of her acquaintance in London, and told her what her husband had seen concerning Mr. Booty; it came to Mrs. Booty's ears; she arrested Captain Barnaby in £1,000 action. He gave bail, and it came to trial at the Court of King's Bench, where Mr. Booty's clothes were brought into court. The sexton of the parish, and the people that were with him when he died, swore to the time when he died, and we swore to

our journals, and they agreed within two minutes: twelve of our men swore that the buttons of his coat were covered with the same grey cloth as his coat, and it appeared to be so: the jury asked Mr. Spinks if he knew Mr. Booty in his lifetime: he said he never saw him till he saw him run by him into the burning mountain. The judge then said, 'Lord grant that I may never see the sight that you have seen: one, two, or three may be mistaken, but twenty or thirty cannot.' So the widow lost the cause.

"N.B. It is now in the records at Westminster.

"James the Second, 1687,
Herbert, Chief Justice,
Wythens, }
Holloway, } Justices."
And Wright, }

The above is vouched as a veritable record so far as evidence at this distance of time and the testimony in a Court of Justice of the persons concerned can sustain it. Besides there is an impressive air of truth about the whole narration and precision in the detail of the little circumstances, notwithstanding their absurd, (seemingly), and incomprehensible character. With that contradiction we have nothing to do. We leave it to our readers to assent or dissent.

It was in the year following these singular events in his voyage and this remarkable trial concerning them in the Court of King's Bench, that Captain Spinks, who was fitting up his ship as a Guineaman for an adventurous voyage to the coast of Africa, and who was in want of a mate, received an application in the River where his ship lay with anchor down as usual at that time, from a young man of sunburnt complexion and of a somewhat foreign look, but who had a very good mien, and who was a lively talker.

"I wish to ship with you," said the new comer. "I am a sailor—by which I mean, I hope, a good one and not a bad one; or poor one, at all events."

"I am glad enough to have a knowledge of you,"

returned Captain Spinks. "But I never saw you before in all my life; and though it is true I have a berth vacant aboard my smart ship, this 'Blue Dolphin,' yet I must take caution and be careful—and you must excuse me thereupon—with whom I fill my berth."

"Nothing more surely, nothing more to the point. I wish to force myself upon nobody. But look here, sir. Will you, in kindness, glance at these papers?"

The young man produced foreign-looking documents with huge seals bearing the Portuguese royal arms. And he placed them in Captain Spinks's hand. This was done with confidence, and with a good-humoured air of surety and safety.

"No, no," said Captain Spinks, shaking his head as he glanced at the writing and found that it was foreign. "I understand no language but my own." And then he turned to a fat black sailor who was cook aboard the vessel, and who happened to be standing idle near. Captain Spinks ordered him, by the name of Old Ivory, to call up Sam Voightlandts, and to tell him to bring his spectacles.

Now Sam Voightlandts soon made his appearance at his captain's summons—"Read this," said Captain Spinks. "You know all the languages of the whole round world, and can make this soon out."

Sam was a huge North-German, with a prodigious sea-hat on his head; and with brown leather breeches covering his nether man, abounding in dirty sea-green ribbons. His hair was grey, long, and uncombed. And being old, he *looked out* of his pair of spectacles; for that is the term for his glance.

"Dis burports to be," said Sam, with the slow gravity and disdainful deliberation befitting his present confidential duty; "dis would seem to be," he repeated, "a constitution (or batent) creating or appointing the within-named Senhor Meinheer, or Mister, Antonio Essen Barreiros, 'captain-at-sea of His Most Faithful Majesty, the King of Portingalle, and commodore of six-and-thirty cannons'—in consideration of the great services as discoverer amidst the Islands of the Farther India of his renowned ancestor Joseph Pinhal La Guarda De

Barreiros*——" But he was interrupted by his commander.

"Belay, Sam, belay," quoth Captain Spinks. "That is as long as an admiral's blue thong. Young man, your name? That must suffice for me."

"Pedro, otherwise Peter; Barreiros, otherwise Barry."

"I see, friend. This Antonio Essen and so on," replied Captain Spinks, "stood (or stands), in the genealogical ship-bill or family register, as paternal relation to thee; and that is why you bring his certificate."

"He was my grandfather," replied the very handsome young man, again taking off his broad-brimmed hat, from which his long dark hair fell out freely over his face. He made a bow, during which his silver buckles shone in his shoes—for he wore these dandy additions, and he was otherwise well-dressed spite of his sea-fashions: his silver buckles also, we say, glittered from under his wide sleeves amidst fine linen ruffles. For all three speakers were standing on deck in the slant sunbeams of a bright golden August afternoon. All the old-fashioned swaying ships were, as far as progressive motion was concerned, at rest round our "three men of the sea." And save an occasional lively run of "clicks" from the manned windlass in one or two instances, all was bright

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* See, later in the volume, the extraordinary adventures of the grandfather of this *real* Peter Barry; the young mate who shipped with the above-named Captain Spinks in his trading-vessel, the "Blue Dolphin." These will be found narrated in that section of "One of the Thirty" which is entitled the "Portuguese Discovery Ship," and in "Snake Island."

If search be made in the Custom-House Books for the Port of London for the year 1688, in the alphabetical arrangement of names of "Ships" and of "Captains," "Clearing out of the River," with their "manifests" and "bills of lading" certified by the proper authorities, there will be found—"Spinks, Master—August 7th:"—and "Blue Dolphin,"—entered outwards for the Coast of Guinea: Stephen Hill Spinks, Master;—carrying letter-of-marque."

The Author is aware that some of his statements (however true), are so singular as to be difficult of belief. But in every case he confidently refers to his authorities.

gold sun, red roofs, silver-plate of water run into scores or curls, now and then, by the longitudinal or arched swirl of an eddy, and multitudinous sticks of spars, hanging together like the loose-looking Dutch shipping in a sea-piece of Vandervelde's; and spotted here and there with a red ensign or with dots of blocks.

Intermingled in the bright yellow sunshine spread over the River-view were green trees and glimpses of country, queer ships—probably of war—with high gilt sterns, much image-work and cedar-coloured broadsides studded with red-mouthed guns, and the Deptford Dockyard with latticed windows (like a "military farmhouse") and tiled roofs.

"You shall be my helper and mate, young man. I like your honest looks," said Captain Spinks to Peter Barry after a few turns with him on the quarterdeck of his ship. "Go below now, and overhaul your berth. You will find the globous silver watch with the red ribbon still hanging up in it of Griffith-ap-Davis, my late mate—a Welshman to the backbone and every inch a sailor except for his shoes; for he *would* wear high-heeled shoes even on the yards, with great red Flemish roses in them. But Griffith-ap-Davis we threw overboard—don't be alarmed! (poor fellow he only died)—in the Tropic one burning afternoon in our homeward voyage. Being slain with a fever. So you shall have his berth and keep time by his own watch that stopped; if you please. That's all. Now go below, my friend, for I want some meditation alone; and I meditate upon 'my anchor.'"

"Thank you," said the new young mate. "I will go below, sir. And if I could find in my poor predecessor Griffith's locker—provided the commons were not too stale—a cube of white Dutch cheese and half-a-dozen rusks with a carraway in them the refreshment would be neither unacceptable, nor I flatter myself unworthily or thanklessly bestowed: if appetite were any correct evidence of it."

"Dive, my son, dive," cried the captain, winking slyly and good-naturedly. "Thou shalt be well cared-for if I

send thee something from my own old sea-fowl roost to fatten thee. Go below and take a thimbleful of the *schnaps* and an observation, with one eye out of the port, at the latitude of the exciseman coming there; who with the gilt king's arms in the head of his galley pays us the honour of a hail now and then, as he goes by."

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

THE BARBARY ROVER. TIME—1688.

PETER BARRY sailed duly with Captain Spinks in the good ship "Blue Dolphin." They had a prosperous voyage and fair weather until they arrived at Lisbon. Here they put in, being charged with a mail and certain important packets of despatches from the English Government to the British Minister resident at the Court of Portugal; for this was before the time of the Post-Office. They remained wind-bound at Lisbon for the space of ten days. And Peter Barry, who had not been in the capital of Portugal since his youth—although it was his native city—was induced to seek out some of his kinsfolk in the town and several of the ancient friends and allies of his family whom he found with some trouble, and moreover whom he had pleasure soon in bringing to the acquaintance of his captain; greatly for the purpose probably of proving to the latter the truth of his representations as to his (Barreiros or Barry's) respectable—nay, to his superior position in the world, and his character.

Evening after evening were spent ashore amidst the lights and amusements of Lisbon. Nor was the mate or his good captain permitted to escape wholly from the seduction and dissipation of one of the then most debauched capitals of Europe. Mingled with his good qualities unfortunately was developed in Peter Barry a disposition for gambling and a little other vice. Aye, and even in company with his captain he lost sums—considerable sums for him—and got into squabbles and difficulties innumerable in the streets and shops.

Lisbon, which has a spacious and safe harbour, and a population—now—of over 260,000 persons, is situated near the mouth of the Tagus, on seven hills, and contains many grand and stately edifices, among which one of the principal is the patriarchal church. The treasures of sacred relics, gold, silver, precious stones, and costly furniture of this venerable structure, are immense. The royal palace of Ajuda is one of the finest in Europe. The Square, called *Praca do Comercio*, is 615 feet long, and 550 broad; in the centre is a noble equestrian statue of bronze, of Joseph the First.

Being a city where you meet nothing but priests and continual ecclesiastical processions—most magnificent in their furnishing-forth, and parading the streets almost day and night with "bell, book, and candle"—Lisbon has at every hour something striking to show and to arouse-with. It is all dazzle to strangers—except in the bye-streets where you can scarcely see.

Peter Barry and his good-natured easy captain spent their time mostly in the streets. They almost dwelt under the arcades or lingered at the windows or in the marble vestibules and long galleries of the great mansions. Nor were the houses where public play was the rule of the day—and the night—forgotten. In fact these houses became the constant haunt of Peter Barry. He had grown very greedy of money and envious of rich things as the result of the moral mischief imbibed from his frequent visits to, and losses at, the hateful gambling-table. Every third house—including noblemen's palaces—was then a shop of chances of this kind. Besides Peter had formed seductive female acquaintances of no great repute. And from one cause or other he stood in manifest danger;—if his necessitated stay in this dissolute capital was to be of much longer continuance. He was being absolutely spoiled—nay, ruined. Captain Spinks at last saw all this clearly; and was eager to convey the young man away.

A singular adventure chanced some short time now. It happened that one day when an unusually superb procession—all priests, white robes, banners, swinging censers, aromatic smokes, and glitter—was passing

through the *Praco do Comercio* (and when litanies were at the loudest); that owing to the thronging of the people about it there occurred a momentary scuffle. This, arising from the desire to see, might have been quieted. But anger was accidentally provoked, blows were exchanged, and the disturbance rose into general malicious commotion. The thirsty, sweltering, gaping, passionate crowd went swaying, pressing, and squeezing against the seeming silver snake, or chain of light, to which, as by a bold figure, we may liken the glittering, grand church-procession as it wound its way in and out through the dark mass. Respect for the sacred banners even could not awe the people, or prevent them from crowding in upon the line of the *cortége*.

Amidst this distraction, clatter and noise of tongues, and in the now general hurly-burly prevailing over the square, the priests and choristers got separated and intermingled with the mob. And their white gowns were torn. Even the huge gilt crucifixes were seen over the heads of the people to toss and stagger, and some to tumble like the masts of storm-driven ships. Also some crowns of life-sized saints fell in the scuffle. In an eddy of the crowd several priests, too, sank in the dust. It was almost laughable—though one could scarcely control a feeling of fright—to see a Bishop tumble (caught in his two or three crimson and purple skirts) with his breast blazing with gems and muffled (over the shoulders) in robes illustrated with a whole gold biography of the saints. Several stones—precious, as their red, green, and diamond-like glories told—flew flashing from his vesture. And amongst them several silver medallions broke out bodily from a matchless chain which hung round his neck. Like a kite Peter Barry, who was standing near and fighting really for his foothold in the squeeze and press, saw the silver medals careering as they rolled about and seemed to invite a snatch. And, pouncing upon One that lured his hawk's eye with its beauty and extraordinary glitter, he thrust it eagerly into his bosom with the quickness of its own light.

In time peace was restored—the noises subsided—

respect and reverence again returned to the mob—and the procession gathered itself together again and passed on. And by night—when the bright stars came out which over the white palaces of Lisbon shone like lucid globes suspended in the universal clear dome of royallest purple—all was forgotten. There were then only guitars and lazy dances again;—the heat that you encountered like a thing at the corners of the streets and the bright lights in the sky and the murmur of tongues and songs from the open windows, and intermittent flashes from the bazaars when people passed.

We have said that all was forgotten of the tumult in the streets. There was one thing, however, that remained of it to remember. It was the singular Silver Piece. Peter smuggled it away with a strange fascination—with a grim delight which seemed to come of the very balefullest smiles of Plutus. He burned with thoughts of it—with love of it like a cherub from (as it were) a whole heaven of fellow silver-plate. He went aboard with it and hid it away in his berth as a fascinating prize which the world could not match.

The following morning saw the snowy sails spread of the "Blue Dolphin." And away she sped with anchors up over the bow, and the fairest of winds, towards the Barbary coast.

But mischief relentlessly dogged the doomed possessor of that accursed Coin. And fatal influences, so long as it was in his hands, were mustering against the unhappy and unconscious young man; who, in his unblessed greed, had accepted not only it, but the malediction that always went with it; unknowing that it was a Thing of the Devil.

It happened shortly afterwards, one stifling forenoon when running down the dusk coast of the swarthy Moors, and when the sea, in the intense heat, seemed almost half of an unnatural dun colour changing into specks and flashes of bright gold, and half of a sickly ultramarine breaking into hissing green with a steely froth, that Captain Spinks through his huge sea-telescope made out a creeping, low-lying, snake-like craft with lateen sails and a long black, dangerous-

looking hull gliding along the horizon. She hung in a cloud of haze when she was first descried. She showed no colours, and she spread her wide jagged spiky wings like a roused dragon, green from the fell embraces of the witch-like sea, his mother.

"An ugly, wizard craft as ever swam God's good sea!" said Captain Spinks. "And we've not wind enough to stretch out and to escape from under her grip, mayhap. But we'll try our chance. And if needs must, we'll fight like the devil, my boys! How say you, Peter, my young David? You are not ambitious, I suppose, of an iron collar with a loose ball to it about your neck; as holds the fashion with these Moorish sea-thieves? You can try a fall with this ocean Goliath, my young champion of Lisbon?"

Peter's answer was a flash of the eye and a curl of the lip, in the same instant that he drew his long sharp sword. He flung down the sheath and stamped hard upon it, flourishing his sword. And his eyes lightened.

"That's it," cried Captain Spinks, rubbing his hands, charmed at this display of fierce resolution. "Out all sail! And if we can't scrape clear of him, we'll blow this Algerine sea-shark, pirate and devil—for a very true copper-coloured devil I make him out—into the very reddest concave corner of his own burning pandemonium."

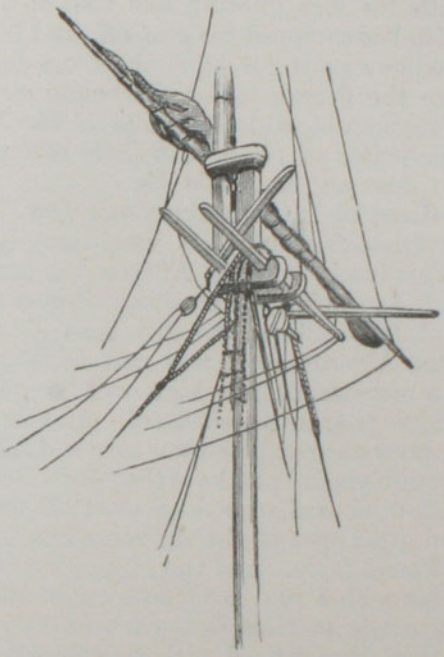
In the meantime there hung the pirate out at sea.

The hours of the day crept on slowly and gloomily. Afternoon came in due time. The fiery sunset of the African seas succeeded. A huge globe of crimson, the sun was fast sinking. There was no sound but the lazy wash of the green waves about the sides of the ship. The rover had crept near, spite of all the cloud of sails which the unhappy "Blue Dolphin" showed on this universal azure of the sea prospect, lighted as it seemed by *"Afrit" or African fires.

The Algerinepirate now grew sharp and slender, nearer and nearer. Her stem and stern were peaked up like the shining new moon, and her lateen sails of split cloth in a short while slid down in (as it may be

* The "Afrits" were Nubian Genii—very powerful and mischievous.

roughly, but truly called)—a cloth-muffle of demolition to her thickly-manned decks. She reduced her sail, preparing for her coming cannonade. Trumpets (nothing less singular) sounded to quarters amidst her crew above and below, and presently a sharp gun went off. In the middle of the white cloud of which gun-discharge—round as a disc—the ship of the pirates hung



Stripping top-hamper for action.

spider-like (with its fine netted cordage), but picturesquely; the warlike and fierce centre of a globed radius of spiteful smoke that sat on the water like a ball.

"Look at the devils!" shouted Captain Spinks, stamping on the deck in his rage. He pointed to the numberless round black heads of the Barbary rovers, who in their white kirtles, and with the snowy swathes about their heads, were bustling about, separating and

then intermingling again in the quick glitter of steel. The mob of black men in their white gowns and cowls looked like a Convent of Carmelites as suddenly struck devils. The whole show was grim and wild, but highly picturelike—terrible, we must indeed say, and enough to frighten civilised people.

"Here they come. Rally, men, to your guns. Have at them!" called Peter Barry almost in a frenzy of excitement, with his face glowing like that of a martyr or a hero. He had stripped his coat off, and bared his arms to the elbows as if for fight the most desperate, and resistance the fiercest. For the young man knew—and every man on board knew—that if the Barbary rovers got the better of them, but little mercy was to be expected. Aye, and but little life.

The most dreadful battle commenced, now, between the English trade-ship and her wasp-like flying-out assailant. This insect from the African dun sands. In the middle of the smoke, and crashing all over the roar and clatter of the conflict, the gilt beak—hung with chains—of the Algerine rover was now frightfully displayed like a monster Dragon high over the quarter of Captain Spinks's poor fractured vessel. And the dragon of which the prow was composed was torn and splintered, spearing through several planks of the "Blue Dolphin's" bulwarks. Now inboard, over the deck of the merchantman, the two great eyes of the dragon seemed to glare down like a horrid fable. And the black pirates, with a song, or rather with a wild howl, scimitar in hand, took a sort of a savage morisco dance adown the slippery deck; and then they retired with violent action, until they had fairly gathered in horrible crowd, in their last return, about their own bows. They now began to throw fireworks in plenty into the ship which hissed and sputtered; and some of the desperadoes got-up into the rigging of the "Blue Dolphin," and were slashing and cutting at the cords to prevent the ship's escape.

Peter Barry, with his Spanish blade in his hand, rushed, with the boldest of the merchantman's crew at his back, to beat the Africans fiercely again into their own ship. But there was no withstanding them. They

swarmed with their red fez caps and their striped turbans, their flying white gowns and their embroidered slippers, in over the bulwarks and through the chains, clambering and clutching through the portholes and straddling in by the anchors, clutching at the ropes, scrambling and crawling. They hung like apes, clawed like vultures—held on with the tenacity of cats, gibbered like monkeys, and smote with their bloody glaives like madmen.

The long moresco pistols and handguns were telling with dreadful effect all over the decks of the trader. Guns—we mean cannon—went off loudly, all in the midst of the fight. Blood was running—gunpowder was flashing. The young mate, who was fighting like St. George, cut his way into the thickest of the mob of the Moors. He made his way through them by a lane which he cut, where the scimitars were brandishing like scythes or sickles in corn. He escaped unhurt as by a miracle—and he alighted fairly on their decks. With a roar and a shriek the Moors fell back scared from before him, as if they had seen a vision of the helmeted St. Michael flashing rays of destruction all round and spear in hand. Peter Barry was followed by few or none of his own people. All were deterred by the desperate peril of pursuing the Moors into their own now gunpowder-blackened ship. The sudden fears of the English were justified for the immolation of the poor young mate. For this Algerine snake of a ship suddenly swung thundering off with a huge gap in her side dropping sawdust like powdery blood where the shaven timbers showed the wounds, and with spruce tackle and white sails hacked and hewn almost to threads and rags. But she dipped away; and up and down she went on the tumbling green water—heaving off her head at every move, and rapidly contracting into herself, till she showed, in the perspective middle distance, as the ruins of a ship, with all the glory beaten out of her. But the valiant Peter Barry was hard and fast;—left behind aboard her. There was an universal scream in the "Blue Dolphin" when the crew missed him from among them.

"Accursed emblem, thou hast done thy work!" Peter almost shrieked in fear as he tore the SILVER PIECE, which he had picked-up from amongst the spoils of the Bishop's vesture in the *Praca do Comercio* in Lisbon, from the ribbon by which he had hung it foolishly round his neck. "I am the only one now to read thy mystic meaning—fool that I was at the first to mistake thee. Go—for thy mischief is complete! And thou hast, at least, bought one for thy Dusk Prince, through these his devil ministers upon the magic sea. Coin—that wert minted in the fires of Hades—to thy Melter; though with me, (the Bought), with thee!"

The heaving, tossing sea rolled, in a short while, the two ships almost close to each other again. Both the Barbary rover and the merchant-ship touched and struck each other for an instant. Hands were instinctively stretched out to eagerly seize Peter Barry. But the pirate-ship and Captain Spinks's ship were torn, in the swirl and swell of the blue waves, finally hopelessly asunder. The merchantman, in this final escape, was in a few fearful minutes at some considerable distance, urged by sweeps wildly away.

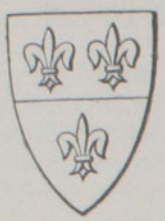
But now an awful tragedy was enacted on board the black murderous African. The vengeful Moors, raging that their prey had escaped their clutch in this dashing last successful move-off of the "Blue Dolphin," rushed upon the unfortunate mate, now captive in their hands, with their captain, a gigantic Nubian with a prodigious pair of gold-earrings jingling in his ears, at their head. A hundred scimitars were bared and flashed thirsty and clean in the sun; and a horrid clash of chains soon told the intended doom of the unlucky prisoner. The vessel of the Moors was at this moment rolling top-heavily and dipping up and down guns and all in the sea. A mast fell smashing now with all that remained of its tackle and furniture. And apparently maddened at the crash, and furious at the audacious, almost the successful attack made upon them on their own deck by Peter, as well as excited beyond all bounds by the shrieks and torture of their writhing wounded, the

mass of chains were hurled in a storm of iron to the bulwark, as precursory to the contemplated slaughter of their Christian victim. Now surrounded by his ferocious assailants, whose intention it seemed to be to hew him in pieces momentarily, on the planks as he stood, a first gash on the naked arm—which brought the quick-answering blood in a red ring—preluded but too surely the last fatal work. We will spare the reader—and ourselves—the further stage of this horrible murderous scene. Combating like a lion in a ring of steel, but weaker and weaker from loss of blood as Barry grew at every turn and disabled by repeated cuts, the black monsters completed their work by hurling at last the body of the poor young sailor—far now beyond more than the faintest indication of life in the clutching at rope or even at swords which cut his hands—into the sunlit waters. There was a circle of blood—the size of a small shield gules—and that was all till the new water rolled over.

So perished the poor young mate of the "Blue Dolphin." So fell poor Peter Barry a sacrifice to the unappeasable malignity of the SILVER COIN.

And on silver wings it flew on to still further mischief, and to ruin and terror.

The summers wax and wane. Fifty years elapse before the Genius which worketh to men's understanding in the neuter-individuality of the SILVER PIECE becomes recognisable as an intelligible thing again.



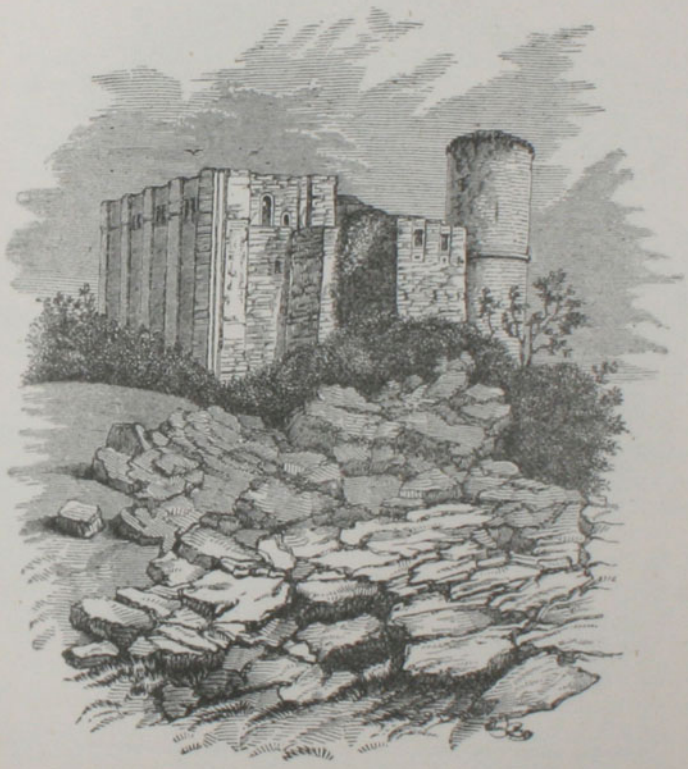
CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

CAT'S-CRADLE. TIME—1632.

IN our childhood we remember an absurd game which used to amuse some of our idle quarters of an hour with, perchance, a single playmate. It was performed with the fingers of both hands; upon which thread, usually white, was extended. After being wound over the palm of either hand, the threads were lifted with the opposite forefinger, and contrariwise raised apart; upon a principle that constituted the skein as a diagonal, mathematical thread-skeleton, or an open figure forming a puzzle removable to and fro, from either uplifted hand of the players. This game was called "*Cat's-cradle.*" The name in its German rendering supplied the denomination, (perhaps from the difficulty of getting-in, as equal to none but a cat) to a wild and gloomy castle, or rather a heap of towers, perched upon some sharp, high rocks amongst the *Erzgebirge*, or Mountains of Ore, between Saxony and Bohemia. The time of this phase of the history of the PIECE of SILVER is 1632, the year of the Battle of Lutzen, distinguished by the fall of Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, the head of the German Protestants.

The lord of this romantic, repellant-looking castle was a man of uncommon breadth of body, with a huge head and a fierce face; whose unamiable expression was not mitigated by a black beard which rolled down to his bosom, nor by his grey long hair streaked with sable. He lived the life of a hermit, shutting himself up with his books, his philosophic apparatus and his

chemical machines; which the few peasants who lived scattered about the foot of his mountain, and the woodmen who made long exploring excursions into the neighbouring forests, with their huge axes like those of headsmen over their shoulders, declared were contrivances, traps and gins, to catch wandering beautiful spirits, and



South-west view—from below the rocks—of the Castle called "Cat's-Cradle."

stray, winged, wondrous creatures out of the devil's world of the invisible. Be this as it may, the Count Tubal Daduk—for this was the title of the humpbacked nobleman—was set down by all the trembling people in the neighbourhood as a man literally in league with the Dark

One. The devil, indeed, was said to pay him occasional complimentary visits in a thunderstorm ; and to be entertained in his ruinous great hall, not by the comfortable gleam of Christian candles, but in the baleful splendour of false phosphorus-flames, and in the flashes of lightning of growling mountain tempests,

Giant-Rock—called "Alpen-Hootz," or "White Face"—in the neighbourhood of the Castle.

that came when the Devil came, and shook all the country.

It happened late one evening that an old traveller arrived at this picturesque village of few houses, which *crouched*—for that is the true word for its appearance—at the foot of the Count Daduk's mountain. The new-

comer was a very reverend-looking man, who seemed like a pilgrim except for the battered corselet on his breast, and for the colours of the sash bound around his waist, which proclaimed him a fugitive from the great field of Lutzen, and a *Protestant*. A sort of cloth was wrapped about his head; and he wore a broad-brimmed hat wherein was a broken feather.

The sunset was thundrous and glaring—red and ominous. There were great black clouds in the sky. The air was stiflingly hot. And as the traveller looked up at the castle—from its great height amongst the mountains, seemingly just over his head;—certainly it looked, of all places, the most unpleasant and the least encouraging to approach. It literally *frowned* from its brown shelves of rock. It was lurid-looking throughout its entire length;—sanguine occasionally in the copper-coloured, sulphury tinges of the wild—nay, the savage landscape. The castle had all the appearance of a hold of robbers, with its grim grey towers and multitudinous rusty grates. Or it seemed as if it might be the castellated retiring place or *hazum-gazum* or *gazebo* of some princely sorcerer, to whom earthly crowns were as naught; the thunders alone being his festal music, and sulphur-feasts his banquet.

"And must I make-up that wild path—old, wounded, wearied as I am? And will none of you shelter for one night a pilgrim-soldier flying from battle, where he has fought valiantly for the truth?" This was asked by the traveller of two or three wild-looking people who had gathered to examine him; and who scowled and frowned.

"For what truth hast thou fought?" said one. And all gathered around. "Thou art a heretic. Thy colours proclaim thee so. Thou art a vile Swede; or, at least, a Protestant. Thou art one of the children of that devil of a Gustavus Adolphus. We have naught of thee. Go up, if thou darest, and ask lodging and entertainment of the great magic Count up yonder. As a man of learning, which thou sayest thou art—though a soldier—thou wilt be welcome to him if thou canst show him the way to the Grand Secret. For avarice is his passion, gold is his thirst. And if you can teach

him to light *that* fire in which he might melt up all the rusty bars and dungeon-grates of his castle into the most precious metal, gold, why thou wilt have as roaring a welcome from him as his spare habits will admit, or as *fiends* may provide. For he keeps no household—save devils."

"And he is suspected to be Mulciber or Moloch," said a grey-headed sire. "But beware of thy tongue, neighbour Franz, for it may get thee into trouble. The Count has gibbets."

"He has a daughter," added a woman, after some pause, to the soldier; "and, wonderful to say, ugly as the Count Daduk is, she is reported to be a miracle of beauty. And she sits, up yonder in her father's Castle of Terror, only as a sort of angel in a dragon's den—and calm like one."

"I must on, then—ignorant and brutish people. I have that which shall procure me welcome from worse men than this mere ill-natured and churlish nobleman—for such I read him through your superstitious exaggerations. And on my way down the mountain, to-morrow, I will remember your unkindness—for my *remembrance*, merely, may be perhaps revenge. And I cannot avenge otherwise your ill-treatment of me. Part from around me then, ye cowardly and inhospitable tribe. When I come down, you shall have (perhaps) again a word of me."

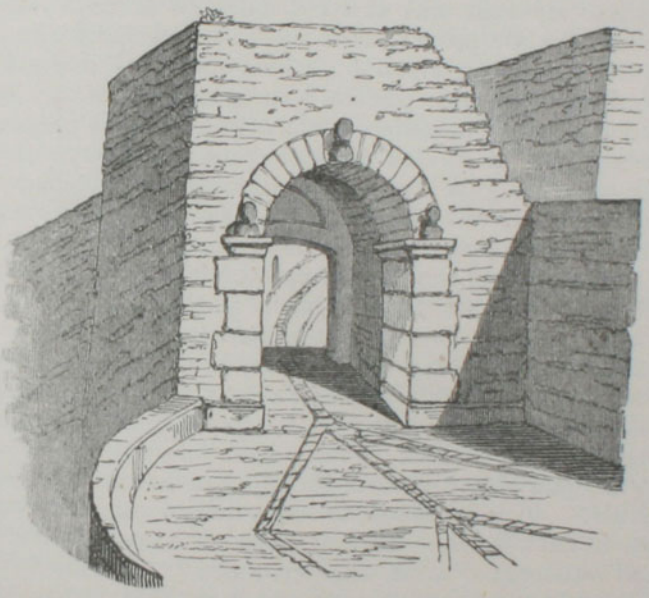
"If you ever, indeed, *do* come down again," said Abel Tiak; a sinister member of this community of half gipsies, half peasants.

"There are few fowls that wing down again from that gibbet-stone when they have once perched upon it," called out to him one of the villagers, named Yokel, after the traveller had gone on, and pointing exultingly to the grim castle on the rocks, which had now a cloud over it. And grim it looked indeed.

"I am protected by more beneficent powers than those you invoke." And the old pilgrim-soldier went on his way up the hill, with a staff in his hand which assisted his steps over the rough ground.

He found the path so rugged, and the way on ac-

count of the precipices was so dangerous, that he was a long time before he had mastered much distance. Dark-green woods of pines, mingled with some gigantic spreading trees, were dispersed about him. The deep gold light gleamed on the many grey faces of the rock, and gilded the uprights of several rough wooden defensible bridges which he crossed; where the water flashed and sparkled redly and angrily, as if hurrying into a fire-sparkling lake of Tartarus. Overhead—now



Overhead—now seen, now lost, as the cliff-battlements and the wood alternately opened—showed the savage towers of the Count's castle.

seen, now lost, as the cliff-battlements and the wood alternately opened—showed the savage towers of the Count's castle. There was perfect silence except for the tinkling of a stream when the traveller had left the larger water. But now and then a strange hoarse grumble of thunder, like a huge wild beast in the distant woods, for a moment aroused, and then shaking itself off to sleep again, was heard dubiously rising

from the sombre face of the country; which was just as Salvator Rosa might have imagined it.

And, by-and-by, with much toil and pains, and when it had grown nearly dark, the old man, after crossing two mountain drawbridges, with wooden supports and iron chains, reached the huge yawning ugly gateway of this forbidding hold. Monstrous old worm-eaten gates, as if hewn out of the planks of some giant *catafalque*, and covered all over with bosses and clumps of red iron, interposed to forbid further passage. Maximilian (for that was the old soldier's name) looked about him for some time in trouble and perplexity as to the manner in which he might make his desire for admittance known. He felt a creeping sort of fear, too, which terribly diminished his confidence; it inspired even dread as to his present personal safety. And directing his gaze downward almost with a feeling of fright that he was where he was, his eyes travelled wistfully over an expanse of lovely country with thunder-clouds glooming the greater part of it; and he saw the silver crescent of the new moon at the edge of one of the largest dark clouds. But he gathered more courage; and now going back into the shadows of the gateway under an enormous old Gothic portcullis which was all mouldered and dropping in heaps of rust, he caught sight of a metal horn, so large that it might have hung at the gate of the castle of the giant in "Jack the Giant Killer." This he seized to blow, and to summon some one to answer him. He was, with all that he had seen and suffered, so faint, hungry, and we may now fairly say *frightened* (for all he saw and more that he dreaded was sufficient to alarm), that at first the horn refused to give any murmur for his attempt to sound it. In fact, so heavy was it and so tired he felt, that it almost dropped like a half-ton of iron out of his hands. But at last, after several trials, there came a dreadful noise out of the horn, almost as if a voice of itself. The blast of the horn burst, as it were, preternaturally on the silence and startled one awfully; thundering round and round in the hollow archway, and even seeming to make the ground tremble under the feet, and causing the

chains to clash which were hung in festoons high within the gate. Looking up he saw three dead heads on either side of the dark archway.

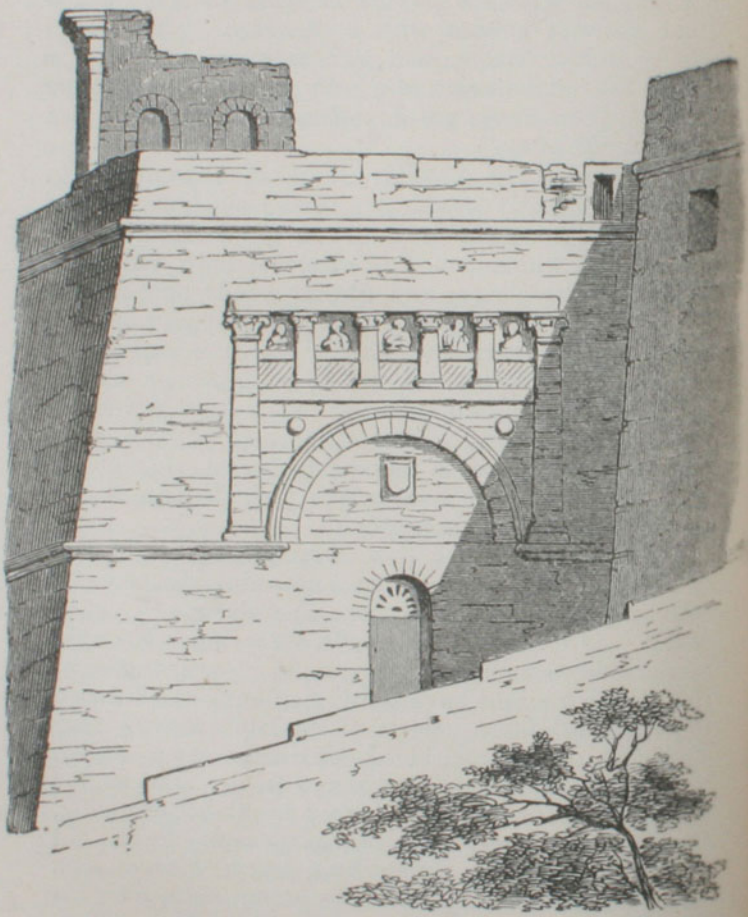
"May the gracious powers be good to me!" ejaculated the old soldier with a shudder. "Those are surely human heads; and this frowning gateway is indeed the introduction to a hold of horrors. Horrors of which those heads are doubtless the unspeaking but the best witnesses."

If it had been possible Maximilian would even then have quietly withdrawn in the shadows, slipped unperceived down the mountain in the dark side of the battlements which coiled in descent down the steep slopes into the shaggy and gloomy woods, and left the dreadful horn to answer itself. But slipping away in this safe and unperceived manner was now impossible; and at this moment, trembling with terror at the invisible, Maximilian awaited what the adventure should present; and what strange and perhaps giant shapes should come in answer to his blowing of the horn. A horn more tremendous perhaps than that of the Paladin Orlando himself.

There was no doubt that Maximilian's uncertainty in regard to the strange, uncomfortable sights which might present themselves from this alarming gateway of this very terrible castle, was most trying. Even the silence seemed unusually deep; as if expectant of some change which might have exciting effect upon a listener. Of real indubitable objects—formidable though they might be—of flesh and blood, Maximilian, as a soldier, had no fear; although he felt now feeble. But in the delay, and in the mystery of what might be preparing, or what might come, lay the discomposure. So the old soldier looked with penetrating, wary, excited eyes right and left of him. And he peered close over his shoulder very often, as if he thought an Ugly Thing might steal-up behind and startle him unprepared. The surprises, if any, that were preparing, would however take their own time; and all the impatience in the world would not compel disclosure too soon.

Maximilian was kept waiting a very long time

(during which the growls of distant thunder were all that had meaning), before any response was made to his summons of the horn. But by-and-by a lancet



"Food and shelter!—seek it of the bears, then. For you have no entertainment here."

window, deep within the arch, was thrown open, and the huge African head of a black janitor, with crisped hair and great gold earrings in his ears, was thrust out. Maximilian started.

"What want you here?" was the demand of the warder.

"A word with your lord. I am a traveller. I seek food and shelter," Maximilian humbly replied.

"Seek it of the bears then. For you have no entertainment here. Unless you wish a banquet of broken bones."

"My good friend, I have that which will soften your inhospitality. Show this token to your lord." And Maximilian threw up to the ugly querist the PIECE of SILVER which has now reappeared so often; and upon which the old soldier seemed to rely.

The black caught it, and went away. On his return there was a hideous clash of bars and bolts; and through many dark passages and under an arcade of festoons of chains as it were Maximilian was conducted into the Count Tubal Daduk's portentous presence.

He found him in a Gothic hall, which (so dim was the external light) was illuminated by very numerous fiery cressets. A damsel standing at his side with submissive looks but of a beauty that instantly struck intense admiration, was doubtless the Count's daughter; of her Maximilian had heard in the village below this Wizard-Mountain. She seemed in inexpressible trouble—nay, almost beside herself with fear and grief.

Maximilian, spite of his hardihood, trembled before the dreadful looks of this misshapen and ill-favoured nobleman or wizard.

"You send me a strange token, man," said the Count, bending on the traveller a look which pierced him through and through. "I must question elsewhere about thy mysterious money; for—in my secret knowledge—I distrust it much. You shall to rest with my hinds. And for your night's lodging you shall give me that Coin."

"Never!" exclaimed the soldier. "I will pay you in good current money, but with that token I part not."

"Say you so?" cried the Count, rising and stamping with his foot. "Off with his corselet—which bears the cross I see—and away with him into a dungeon.

Chains shall be his banquet. Darkness shall be the joy of his chamber; and in it he shall rest."

"Abandoned wretch! What should be thy policy with me?" cried Maximilian, as he struggled with two hooded ruffians who had seized him at the beckon of the Count.

"Save me, gallant soldier! Oh save me!" the Count's daughter suddenly cried, throwing herself at Maximilian's feet, and clasping his knees, totally regardless of the rage of her father. "Save me from *him!*"

The traveller and the Count's daughter Palenka (for that was her strange name) were instantly separated. And the lord of the castle paused a moment as he turned his shoulder contemptuously to the victims before he sat down, to pronounce the following—

"To safe keeping with both. I betake myself to my means—towards it—to ascertain the character of this silver token. If it be as I suspect, the THING is mine. I give him three days to yield it; at the evening of each of which produce him to me. And if before the third day he rendereth it up, he shall go forth. But if not—by the Gates of Tartarus, but I will close him in a barrel of spikes and send him rolling headlong down my magic mountain. Away! My oath is sworn. By Baal I swear it!"

The night passed. It was a night of thunder. The morrow came. It was a morn of fiery clouds and of half-darkness; during which the wheels of the day seemed to have rolled impossibly back, and to have brought Eve again and its stars, instead of the natural morning.

The Count with—to him from his suspicions of its power—the *precious* SILVER PIECE OF MONEY, betook himself to his secret chamber, locked and relocked; bolted and rebolted the doors of the Gothic passages which led to it, and shut himself up. He clothed himself in the robes befitting his forbidden studies—placed on his head a diadem significant of his rank in the Rosicrucian hierarchy, and plunged for tools and appliances amidst

his stores of magic furniture, and into his heap of cabalistic machines. His furnaces were lighted at his order by unseen hands; and he set sternly to work. Dark shadows descended around the grim tower in which this titled Archimage sat toiling; groaning in his agonies to wrest glorious new gifts out of the reluctant world of the invisible—if not with tears, at least with blood.

Bowls of hot metal, curtains which concealed the symbols of unutterable mysteries, forceful rods which compelled the presence of the most powerful supernatural shapes, tomes of wizard lore; and the means of spells which, liberated, might have shaken half a city or split in the sudden his own mad mountain: such means as these were now alone about the grim Count Daduk. He took the SILVER PIECE in his hand; and preparatory to casting it into the furnace in which a mass of hissing or singing liquid metal lay fiercely blazing, he struck it with an axe, the blade of which was marked all over with unintelligible but tremendous characters. There was a hideous crash as the two halves of the SILVER PIECE flew asunder even as if with a shriek, and the roof of the very, fiercely illuminated place in which he laboured was rent wide-apart as if by a Gigantic Hand. All the instruments of the wizard-art about the Count Daduk glowed for a moment with intolerable lustre; and there was a groan like thunder, which ran through the vaults and under the foundations of the whole castle; nay, under the enormous rock on which it stood. Still, though pale as ashes, prostrate on his marbles and amidst the ruin of his magic, and half dead, the Count persevered; believing that in the two halves of that magic PIECE of MONEY he yet possessed the grand Magisterium which was to convert all the pools of metal which were gathered in vases, in globes and into gigantic receptacles of various kinds about him, at once into a monster mass of gold.

Grappling, therefore, the two sundered halves of that PIECE of SILVER—so tremendous in its effects—the Count flung them into his boiling furnace. But they sprang out again *like thundershots*, blinding the eyes of the wizard. And they flew out from amidst the torn

stones, and from the fissure of the chamber like fiercest hell's rockets. At that moment an explosion which snatched (as it were) the breath away of, even, those at the foot of the mountain, shook it from base to top. The tower in which that unutterably Presumptuous Trial had been made was torn wide open longitudinally, from summit to foundations; and an avalanche of stones like a storm fell into the chasm from either side; which were instantly ejected again as a prodigious fountain of sparks shoots from out a volcano in one of its most tremendous fits of eruption.

And such was the end—amid fire and smoke, and the lights of the damned—of the impious Count Daduk. His daughter survived. And in memory of that great day (in which they had been both saved as if by a miracle) she bestowed her hand upon the brave old Lutheran soldier who had saved her life. For her father had doomed her as a human sacrifice to his gods.

Blackened ruins and withered grass alone now tell the site of Count Daduk's castle.

And a long interval of time occurs before we again take up the story of the SILVER PIECE.

In that part of Germany to which we refer as indicating the site of Count Daduk's castle, there will yet be found traces of the tradition which assigns its awful demolition to the Rosicrucian reputed feat alluded to in our story. It is a wild romantic part of the country, where the mountains are really romantic mountains; quite answerable to our ideas of mountains in supernatural old Gothic stories. Germany supplies innumerable appropriate scenes for such fanciful narratives. And even in this day, inquiries in the district that contains the ruins of this weird ancient castle will be responded-to in the evident local belief that it was doomed as impious.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

THE PORTUGUESE DISCOVERY SHIP. TIME—1588.

THE rapidity of the Portuguese conquests in Asia was wonderful. Calicut saw Gama land in 1498. Between that remarkable year and 1516 (less than twenty twelvemonths) his intrepid fellow-countrymen spread themselves from the states of the Zamorin to China; they visited as conquerors, and often described correctly, some of the maritime kingdoms of Malabar, the Coromandel Coast, the Gulf of Bengal, and the Peninsula of Malacca. They established themselves at Ceylon, and at the Ankedives and Maldives, and made Java, Sumatra, Borneo, and most of the Moluccas, as well as a part of New Guinea: traversed the Chinese seas, discovered the Island of Lew-Chew, and were driven by storms as far as the shores of Japan.

Such were the results of that enterprising spirit, that contempt of danger, that ardent love of glory, which inspired the descendants of the men who were formed in the school of Prince Henry, and led by the Gamas, the Albuquerques, the Perez, the Sequeiras, the Castros, the Silveiras, the Andradas, the Almeidas, and so many other captains, who bore the honour of the Portuguese name to that quarter where the immense eastern ocean seems to have fractured into a thousand islands the vast mass of Asia.

"Goa of the thousand spires!" called aloud the captain of the "Four Evangelists;" a high-sterned, sharp-prowed Portuguese trader, shining with gold; as, under her white reduced sail, she toppled from side to side in

making her way from the spot where she was descried a mile or two to seaward of a bold blue headland, blazing, almost, in the light of an Indian afternoon. For above and below seemed almost like sky in its light.

The light breeze flagged as the goodly ship, swinging on the long clear swells, swept towards the exterior horn of the harbour and lazily showed her painted sides to the inner faces of the quaint, chocolate-coloured, brick-and-stone-edged fort. As the "Four Evangelists" (they were displayed, sculptured and gilt, at full length, on the three-storied stern) drew into the harbour, a long dart of flame from a queer brass gun and the sudden hoisting of the Portuguese royal flag challenged the new-comer and demanded answer. And the ship gave the answer in three, first; and then in *one* large globe of smoke, and in five lumbering reports which seemed to set the bells of the innumerable convents jangling. But they happened to strike up at that moment for vespers. And bells and tolling seemed, soon, to become as a new life to the old city—quiet and dead as it had before appeared. The wind fell; the sails would no longer fill; the huge crown and gilt royal cipher to the maintopsail, were rippled all over as the sail dropped loose in its dragging folds, ruining into demolition the heraldic quarters. The ship had no longer headway—or, rather, instead of headway, she had sternway:—and therefore the anchor was let go with a splash like a great fish. The gilt head flashed its arrowy eyes almost in presumption, as it were, into the face of the enormous shining disc of the golden sun. And, with her cables down and her white sails furled, the day's labour of the goodly barque was now done.

Then arose a cry of joy, and, we grieve to say it, profane songs were sung; whilst the holy prayerful sounds of the church-bells were still in the mariners' ears. A boat on each quarter of the ship—the ship was almost Chinese-looking in its old fashions—came down, dip and splash, into the water. Instead of prayer and kneeling, as became true Catholics about to land during those sacred portions of time appropriated to

the Blessed Virgin's Vesper Service, and instead of response to those holy litanies, the rough mariners, dressed in their gaudiest, with their holiday trinkets and with flagons out of which to drink, and swollen pouches out of which to spend, came trooping trampling ashore. As if a mob of ocean Bacchanals, fresh from the orgies of some purple sea-encompassed isle, where the corals blush ruddy as the very sanguine sunsets in which the wild revelry was enacted and the wild songs sung—the crew of the painted and gilt barque jostled into the boats with a too eager haste, and with a too boldly expressed desire of enjoyment to please their burly, bitter, jealous captain. His brows lowered, and his eyes twinkled maliciously.

"Devils of men!" he shouted. "Hasty fools! Back! Into the ship, again, with the one-half of ye! Or I'll know if hemp can hang or fetters fret."

"Let *me* go, captain," begged Pedro saucily.

"Pity for *me*, captain. I want to see these churches," expostulated José, clearing his eyes of his hair.

"I long to say my prayers before some altar," laughed Manuel.

"I have a vow of an expostulating barrel of gunpowder to blow some silver saint clean out of his niche," yelled Hippocampo, mocking.

"And I've been as a lark in thy hot cage of a ship—a very devil who has sweated nearly all the fire out of him in thy penal hell—*senor* captain, these sixteen moons; and I think I've earned my foothold of earth, now, or the Black Fowler shall have blame of it!" This was ejaculated by a gigantic seaman, abounding in hair and named Cophaget:—Cophaget was an Anak.

"Move not, Pedro. Stir not, José," returned the captain. "My lark, Tellus Cophaget, who speaketh so wittily and so well, he shall to shore with me for this bout. Into the boat, seahorse Cophaget. And thou shalt find a willing wench and a rivulet of liquor, or my name's not Joseph Pinhal De Barreiros. I know how to encourage the modest."

The two boats put off, and rowed to shore. The

captain, Joseph Pinhal De Barreiros, sat in the stern-sheets of one boat—a regular hard-visaged Portuguese sea-master of the oldest day; with a steel breastplate over his sturdy chest, and a great ropy sash round his waist from which stuck the silver-covered butts of two horse-pistols: which might, without exaggeration, from their marine use have been denominated *sea-horse* pistols.

The beams of the slant sun fell golden behind on the golden slabby water-path of this train of slipshod mariners—half man-of-war's men, half pirates, as the crew seemed. They made their way towards a beautiful, though a small church; which, seated amidst picturesque rocks, and hidden nearly in the thickest Indian foliage, looked as if it greeted them warmly and whitely and tinkled with its many bells especially for them, from the top of a hill. It was situated about two miles from the circle of the city—semi-fortified this latter was—and the "santa-casa" stood almost alone, or with a few native houses only in its close vicinity, as if for shelter from man, if not from storms. The sky above was blue as sunlighted *turquoise*.

The bells ceased—the heavenly bells ceased. An image of the Holy Virgin, with a superb crown of silver, shook in her richly-decorated tabernacle and seemed to frown down upon that riotous, half-drunken sea-mob.

There was alarm, apparently, within the church. For there were frightened steps heard pattering up turrets; and the responses of a choir within, and the songs of a service which was celebrating, abounded in quavers, doubtless to an infinitely greater extent than was intended in the music.

"What date is that yonder over the door of this old rat-hole of hymn-singers?" asked the captain, spying at it, in mockery, with his great sea-telescope with the glasses jingling like castanets.

"Fifteen hundred and fifteen," returned Cophaget. "Dedicated and so forth. Founded and so forth. My sea-education helps me no farther, Captain Joseph. I was born in a powder-barrel, and went out into the world in the flash. And so I had scant time for either

letters or lantern to light me. I said all in a report, and made an end of it in a ball."

"Good, Tellus. This was the year of Gama. Down with the tablet! Do these crows of priests make answer? If not, apply me fire to their straw, and let us see what they have within this fine nest of theirs! Knock them up! They are asleep or on their knees, yet, or hear us not with their humming songs," said the captain, yawning.

At this, there was a great battery on the double-leaved doors, which set the iron bosses and steel clamps, the hinges and flourished braces clattering like a man in armour. A loose-armed knight galloping over a drawbridge.

A pale thin face, with a priest's cowl about it, was thrust out of a turret window. The man to whom the face belonged grasped a cross, which he waved; but he dropped it in his fright out of the window. And at this there was a loud laugh: one or two stones were also thrown, in sport, at the priest.

"In the name of Our Blessed Lady, to whom this building is dedicate," said the priest, "what want ye, rough men of the sea? If it be wine, we have none."

"Wine! And you have none? Ay, and banquet we want," called Captain De Barreiros. "Open your doors peaceably, or we may make way within these old courts, if you hesitate or resist (for ourselves), my good friend psalm-singer."

There was a hurried consultation carried on within. Then came a pause. Suddenly a great bell tolled violently, as if screaming for assistance; and sundry signals of pressure imposed, or of "church distress":—flags, in fact, were run up with all sorts of saints upon them (some head-downward) from a turret of observation with a spiry cross upon the top of it.

"In with the door! Break open the doors, ye sea-wolves! In with all and lap your fill!" cried Captain Joseph. "I have the utmost respect for Holy Mother Church, and would not harm one of these white lambs of her fold for a thousand moidores. But we are

hungry, and we are thirsty. And we want cheer to help us into the harbour, now that the wind leaves us nothing to do."

"Hear the captain! Hear the *padrone!* He wants but a book at his belt to be as good as a preacher or a priest," cried a mate of the "Four Evangelists," named Christobal Polenka. He spat, as he spoke, on the sand, and combed his black, twiny locks with his ringed fingers out handsomely.

At a new hammering the leaves of the great church-door were cautiously unclosed from within, and in a moment the beautiful convent mosaics were clanking with the sea boots, or the bossed shoes, of twenty of the man-of-war's men, or ruffians, whichever they might be called.

Captain Joseph, the mate Christobal, Cophaget and the others stared with great astonished, rude, ridiculous eyes at the rich convent furniture. After some slight superstitious hesitation they strode in, walked about with a swagger, trod up the steps of the altar, examined and mauled the candles curiously, sat on the embroidered kneeling-stools, took up and tilted, at first half in shame but half in daring, and then wholly in audacity, the sacred vessels. And they soiled with wet sea-sand and dripping shells, from their feet and clothes, the gorgeous footcloths and carpets, and washed their hands in the holy water.

"Silence that horrid clank!" called Captain Joseph, as the turret bell sent forth, every now and then, its convulsive and frightfully-agitated peal. "Run the toller through, if he persist! Or we shall have all the pious howling here from the city, at this rough inlook, at church-plate, of an old sea-dragon:—and no harm done!"

Two of his men ran instantly to execute the captain's order. There was one long frantic pull at the bell, and then silence. There was a sound, at the same moment, as of a heavy muffled something being thrown out of window. And then again silence; murder-silence.

"Villain!—dog of a heathen!—accursed sea-robber! Forbear, or I will cleave thee! Help, in Our Lady's name! Sacrilege! Sacrilege!" These and sundry other

terrific exclamations were shouted by a priest, who, pale as death, had caught Tellus Cophaget in the daring act of grappling a jewelled rosary, and plunging his huge fist, containing it, into his bosom.

"Shut the doors! Kill the thieves! Let them perish in their devil's-work!" cried a novice, full of ardour; who, prompt as his word, catching glimpse of the act of spoliation, had raised the metal crosier which happened to be in his hand, and struck the robber fairly on the side of the head with it. And down Tellus came. There was veritably a cross of blood on the side of his face, distinct and clear.

Instantly there was confusion. The sailors drew their long, sharp, Spanish blades, pointed their pistols, and attacked the priests, who, muffled in their robes and exposed to odds, could make but a feeble resistance, if any, to their lawless assailants. Some blood was spilt, and a most unequal combat was waged. On the side of the sailors, one man was badly hurt, being struck down by an image which was hurled from its place in a lofty top-arcade of the church, by a resolute, strong monk. The crew of villains did not abandon their sport, their ridicule and spoliation, until they had seized all the rich things that were readily portable. It was a grapple of glittering things.

"Come hither, my lark of the sea, who sang so well!" said the brutal captain, Barreiros, calling Tellus Cophaget to him, and fondling him, with a tigerlike sort of affection, much as he would a child; when Tellus's heavy foot was planted close on the altar steps from which Captain Joseph spoke. "Didst ever see thing like that? Ebony so rich, or silver so massy and so richly inwrought? By the book of St. Mark, or by my great deep-sea anchor (which is an oath more to the purpose), but it is a dainty rood!"

Tellus shaded his eyes, much as he would when staring at an object in the sun soliciting attention at sea; and which he suspected as a ship.

"Never did I see so fine a thing, captain. 'Tis a crucifix, is't not?" And the huge seaman involuntarily bowed before it till his monstrous hoops of earrings

met and jingled under his chin. Wonderful instinct of the movements of the SPIRIT in the heart.

"Note that SILVER MEDAL in the midst of the cross," said Captain De Barreiros, "with the ring of green, snake-glowing *smaragds* around it. The whole thing is worth a kingdom! But the silver piece, to which I have taken a violent and most uncontrollable liking, must content me just now. Make a spade, Cophaget my child, of thy sword, and dig me out this thing of metal. I will drill a hole in it with a red-hot wire, and verily I will hang it as a talisman about this neck of mine—this old sea-throat hoarse with ocean-bawling."

Cophaget did as he was told. But perhaps his hurry to obey his captain, his state of half-intoxication, or, that which is more likely, the terror he secretly felt at the sacrilege he was committing—he being, in his way, a devout Catholic—all this caused Cophaget to strike and scoop with his sword so smartly, and at the same time so agitatedly, that the SILVER PIECE of MONEY or MEDAL flew out apparently before the time of natural abstraction. And it tumbled with an ominous hissing clink upon the marble pavement. As it fell, a sharp split was heard—a *rend* as of torn stone. A slab disrupted; slit from end to end as if struck with a mighty invisible axe. And the two halves of the stone were thrown up in reverse, and tossed flat on their backs like the doors of a trap, or the boards of an open book.

"Santa Maria!" ejaculated Captain Joseph, with a grin on his face, but crossing himself, half in fright, although he knitted his brows instantly after as if in defiance, "but that is a strange sight. Methought a fiend, with a brand of hell-fire, was going to dart up and smite me out of that hole!"

However, the grim Captain stooped and picked up the ancient PIECE of MONEY and carried it away in his hairy bosom.

What came of this hideous violation of holy things, and what resulted from this unparalleled outrage upon the Church; also the fearful penalty which happed-to and befel not only Captain Pinhal de Barreiros but his godless crew—including his ship, devoted to evil, though

bearing so sacred a name—all this shall be told (for warning) in the chapter succeeding. Heaven preserve in us our reverence! And may good thoughts save us from evil influence and from the malific intelligences which walk the earth seeking out and making victim of those irreligiously audacious, and the inveterately profane! May we grow cautious in our oaths as in the way we walk! Swearing not at all, or only vowing for good; if we must swear anything.

Now, reader, attend awhile patiently, and you shall be made aware of the deserved judgments which fell on this abandoned captain and upon his desperate crew; whom even the silence of the seas could not tame, or impress into awe; or the blessed, beautiful clouds over the sea reduce into the reverential usual wonder. For these men, in their miscalled holy ship (perhaps sent forth with the benison of the Church when she was launched), had wandered over the wide ocean, and had seen no object save God's sea and sky out of the windows of the little craft, with its tiny white sails; as into which toy, in the comparison, the great white clouds over reduced it. Sea and sky spread-out to the horizon from around the lonely ship; from which ship you could almost mistake the sea for the sky, and *vice versâ;* as you sought, in the sky, almost *waves*, looking up into it until your head nearly grew confused; and you seemed to make out also amid the wide stretches, and plains, and roads of water, *clouds* lesser or larger, crowded in multitude, or single, in the sea.

Thus below was above, and above was below.

Sky seeming sea;—sea seeming sky.

"Anguigena—efflorescn," or "Snake-Flower:"—produced in the Island.

SNAKE ISLAND. TIME—1588.

IN a short time Captain Barreiros and his crew of sinners sailed. Anchors were tripped. And speedily the "Four Evangelists" with her glittering guns sped like a cloud into the blue of the far ocean going away into the distant seas upon her business.

An ancient inhabitant of the Island in the distant seas.

For a time the wind blew very fair. Under a pyramid of sail the gilt, streamer-bedecked barque—that "Four Evangelists" whose unfit name as the ship of a

crew of such hardened recusants (and for a captain so presumptuous and bold; nay, unimaginably ingenious in his wickedness), was the abiding witness against all evil —the stout ship, we say, grandly stemmed long and successfully the "purple wastes" of the Indian Ocean. She doubled Cape Comorin. She steered inside of the then almost unknown great island of Ceylon; and in latitude 10° when at about three-hundred leagues to

The Land—China—from which the Captain of the 'Four Evangelists' last came to the Island of his Destiny.

the eastward of this the ancient Taprobana the mariners swept round their sails and penetrated in the south-eastern direction; sailing to the Equator. The voyage was effected with song and dance—riotous song, half-drunken dance when the watches were safe set as they thought, and when the fierce captain abandoned his men to their nightly bad carousal. So passed the time for a certain period. But now—

"The storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong."

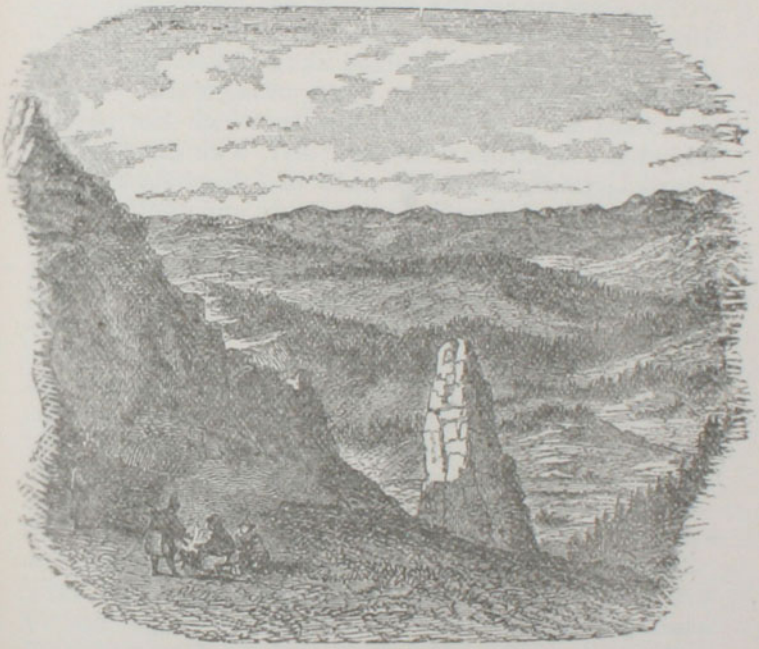
And a wild hurricane coming on, forced the straining and water-battered "Four Evangelists" into seas of which even the most experienced mariner knew nothing. Then after five weeks' driving and after they had attained to certain islands—found of intolerable heat when the tempest and the fierce rains following it abated—they discovered themselves to be in a wild latitude; quite beyond their own, or even any man's knowledge. The situation of the ship under these circumstances became alarming. The "Four Evangelists" was now in fact scorching directly under the Equator quite in a new world, deep buried amidst the inexpressibly wonderful and the then almost seeming supernatural chain of islands (with their superabundant overgrowth and magic skies) lying to the west of Sumatra.

Here the winds utterly failed. The storm-driven mariners almost fainted day by day with the intolerable heat. The seams of the ship opened and the pitch and tar melted out in streams. With loud cracks day and night the ship, as it were, burned up. The calms continued. Until partial fires took place in the forest all was silent. Life, air, blood, everything was stagnant—burning. And it was only by constant rowing—such feeble rowing, and that alone by night and in early morning, for the heat was too intolerable to admit of any exertion by day—it was only by continual towing and the aid of currents, we say, that Captain Joseph contrived to work his vessel between two rocky and lofty islands where he took anchor. These islands lay paired (with a few small others grouped about) in a bay of surpassing beauty even for the Indian seas. But magnificent as all the sights about the bay were, the splendour was toned with so many aspects of terror that no human eye could look upon the wonders without quailing in the fear of what next was to be shown.

In this bay of shaggy terrors, then—glorious as it was—anchors were at last dropped and cables veered-out. There were avenues of splinters of tooth-like rock which served for weird posts for the ropes.

"I shall lie here to gather breath for a month to

come," said Captain Joseph, looking round with glittering eyes in a daring but ghastly sympathy with the terrors of this fiery place. "And now my friend Christobal, for these open mouths of timbers of ours; which —thirsty as they are—suck-in by far too much of this equatorial green water for our lives to be secure. All hands—even your captain's—shall assist in tossing the ship over. And we will string her—failing these



Scene in the interior of "Snake Island;" with the pointed, isolated rock afterwards called by the sailors—"Beelzebub's Pin," or "Milestone."

thunder-splints of stones for bulks—to the huge trunks of the trees; which with their scaly green bodies like serpents, amidst this monstrous undergrowth, spire as if with palm-like spreading canopies into a heaven of itself on fire. Burning by day it seemeth, and smouldering by night. 'Tis a hell. 'Tis a devil's-hole into

which we have run. And we will make the most of its masters."

"Your will is law, captain," was the reply of the mate Christobal. "We will set upon this search for leaks. Though we may be stricken feverous to deadly strait in this den of poisons. And we may die, captain."

And the gaps in the ship were found and stopped in the heat.

The place where the ship lay was almost covered-in like a bower with the prodigious palms and the giant-trees that everywhere ramified like a fortification around the ship; or they were as beleaguering walls. Rather it looked as a thick, great net in which the painted ship was caught like a little gilt fly. Twining, twisting, massed; presenting thick walls of foliage starred with innumerable glaring flowers lustrous and of all colours; bound with chains of creepers and with tough ropes of great plants (hairy and almost animate, like polypi, as they seemed in their horrid convolution): prickly, bulbous, blistering, set with spikes trellised over with a strong shining network in which monstrous birds of gaudy plumage and with long tails, and in which brown shaggy apes were caught and strangled—the vegetation of this whole too-violently fecund region was that indeed of the glorious Equator, bursting with fierce richness. The myriad ferns were trees—radiated, arrowy. Groves of *cacti* drew up to thunder-splintered ashen trunks like classic terminals or like tall columns. A dank, noisome, coagulate steamy atmosphere (glittering even into pearly sparks in its malific activity where it thickened)—shaggy glens, Cyclop-looking, cavernous recesses, long-embowered walks dark even at noonday in their weight of foliage and with the massed woods abounding in lights (of nights) as phosphoric gases intensified and slimy wood and vegetable rottenness wrought and wreaked-up together to snaky baleful illumination; stars exaggerated in their size and strengthened into light as to little suns—a *sun* by day which shot fierce and fast its—in this place—intolerable universal arrows, and which made wood so hot that you

could scarcely touch it, and metal so painful to look on even that the eyes wept at it;—the globous moon, angry, wizard-like, red as shining down through the ragged spiky clefts of the wood-covered tower-like hills and through pestilential mists green at sunrise, purple and glowing bright with opalescent phosphorus at midnight:—all these horrors (even for the daring) were now round the alarmed, the despairing, the superstitious crew.

"Thy talisman has brought mischief, *padrone*. Truly didst thou say that we had run as into hell," said the mate Christobal. "We shall die. We shall die, captain. Methinks that COIN glares like a devil about thy neck. And see if the very chain hath not burnt thy ruff through—aye, even burnt black into thy skin—like a ring of fire to thy neck, captain."

"Out on ye! Would ye drive me mad?" shouted the captain almost in fright, bold as he was, as he tore the unlucky SILVER PIECE from before his scorched bosom; on which indeed it now shone with an unearthly and triumphant light—almost enveloping the man himself sometimes in its sinister red splendour like the conscious magnetic atmosphere of a devil.

It was now evening. The sun was low; crimson like the fire-illumined shield of a Fallen Angel shown lustrously; fiercely red amidst the architectural piles of the baleful and glowing "Martin's" Pandemonium. There was a murmur in the distant woods. Day had been hitherto still in them, as the sea is still in the fierce glare of the sun in his exaltation. Night had been a season of whispering, of noises—nay, sometimes as of a roar with the thick prolific life—insect-life and other life—of this fierce, insupportable, equatorial nook of vegetable transcendent glories. We have said that there were six or eight ropes made fast out of the hawse-holes and drawn through the red-painted ports and even out of the cabin-lights of one side of the now duskily gleaming—in the green daylight-reflections—Portuguese ship; for even the gilt of the ship had changed green—glowing.

"What is that?" asked the mate Christobal

anxiously, as one of the ropes seemed to twist and quiver as if with a small black knot upon it. There was as a sable "seizing," as a sailor would call it, caught on the rope—the spot was like a thing of life—it was locomotive.

"Look intently," said Christobal to Cophaget, who was next to him. "What may the strange thing be that playeth with the rope like a tiny dancer on a string yonder?"

"I know not," answered Cophaget, peering with all his might and in fright into the twilight. "Unless—— Snakes! Snakes!" he yelled in a moment. "Look out, there! Four of them are making inboard here as fast as they can crawl! By all the secrets of this horrible hole snakes are creeping shipwards-in on one of the ropes!"

"I see them wriggling hitherwards as on scaling-ladders over our rope-bridge one by one like a crowd of soldiers bent to storm a castle. Pedro—Orfila—Diaz—cast the ropes loose! Cast them loose in the name of God; or we be dead men! By Saint Jago, but I see more—more yet—more!"

And Cophaget spoke truth. For the four snakes, each following the other with deliberate, undulating pertinacity, were now, with alternate hissing rise and fall, close in on the deck of the ship. And more were following along the same slippery bridge. The crew were aghast. They rushed together—seized with horrible panic. The other cables grew in a few minutes blacker and thicker with new inroad. Like tense sloping strings the ropes were as fatal ladders to this new and altogether frightful *serpent-storm* as of a man's citadel. One after the other (their green basilisk eyes now glowing in number like stars) over each of the ropes—serving them as elfin-bridges—did the snakes—ministers of a dread retribution—come. At first they slid in twos and threes—then they crawled by dozens. At first they climbed slowly and stealthily the long, looser ropes till they curled over the bulwarks and came twisting and twining in, dropping like strings, or like the scattered, lead-

ing soldiers of a column of assault. And then they rushed on their prey, in venomous and incalculable bulk.

The spectacle was beyond name and word horrible! The snaky squadrons seemed to grow and grow; serpent following serpent in thousands, in small innumerable trail over those so suddenly improvised and fragile bridges. They moved forward with horrible success, impetuosity and relentlessness as if sorcery and some frightful fiat of punishment sent them. A tremendous horrid hiss, as the chorus, ran along the ropes to and fro as still more and more of the reptiles came crowding. They sought the ports—they trailed along the deck—they stung the heels of the masts—they coiled up the rigging like new ropes to it—they pursued with vengeful hiss the shrieking mariners as they sought safety—they dropped by twenties swinging like weights into the laps of the sails—they crept into the mouths of the cannon as into their own proper holes—they blackened the gilt-effigies of the saints at the head and stern of the ship; they wreathed in and out of the carvings like new snakes to the Laocöon.

The whole ship seemed alive with snakes. They boarded the cabins through the windows — they throttled the listless wheel as with new ropes in the affrighted helmsman's hands who instinctively rushed-to and grasped it. They rattled now from stem to stern over the floors of the ship, and seemed to knot and form spirally a soil of devil-like soaring cordage and a living, shining hamper—frightfully lively—of their own amidst the spars. The doomed ship and its wicked crew were apparently now wholly devoted to the vengeance and destruction of the "Infernals" in the shape of Snakes—perishing in their embraces, strangled, stung.

"Axes!—powder!—fire! Scuttle the ship. Burn her!" yelled the ruffian captain as he battled-with and evaded the snakes and ran from bowsprit to wheel of his ship and back again in his agonised endeavours to escape his horrid fate. The godless crew—the wretches leapt—wrestling with their horrible assailants—destroying many which were only to be succeeded by others

—like the tortured by the Furies. All was of no use. The brightness of the serpent-eyes—all of a ruby glow or shooting as it were magic emerald flames—the insupportable hiss—re-echoed by the rousing, monstrous hum and buzz amidst the thickets, hinting of yet more horrible motion—the rattling and crawl of the serpents over the decks of the ship—now almost their own in a devil-like mastery and blazing in a sort of Stygian revel, for the ship was fired—the cries, the shrieks to the Saints and for the pardon of Heaven—all these told too well their tale.

We will cease as to the sequel. Indeed was the retribution horrible. Indeed was the profanity of the wicked commander and his crew awfully punished.

Thirty years afterwards by another Portuguese discovery-ship, wandered out of its way, in those burning latitudes were the remains of the once gallant "Four Evangelists" discovered by accident. But few of the ship's ribs remained. Some gilded and painted wood, the steel weapons of the crew, now become rusted irons; beams, quaintly-nailed flooring, rotted or in powder, twenty long steel ship-guns of an outlandish mould and of a deeper green than that of the very waters in which they now quietly rolled; and fifteen skeletons—white as ivory—including that of the commander who was known by his signet-ring, worn as a mark of his rank as sea-captain in the service of the Crown of Portugal: these told the fearful tale of this; which might almost be called the snake-massacre of the terrifically-punished crew; whose guilt called up the miracle of the destruction.

Back amidst the crowding years which spring up before it like the fields of thick grain to the fleeing lark, which skims the rich brown surges of the cornlands. Now impels the magic sight which can trace the rock-like path of that Restless Genius; which can alone, in its condemned nature, attest to men's senses and understanding in the shape of the Minted Piece. The Silver Devil to be descried in the panoramas of this heavenly fresh and beautiful green world, traversing like a silver snake, sped through the years.

The wheels of time revolve; a century comes back from out of the Roads of the Past. And amidst the snow-swathed spires of the Alps, in the year of Grace 1478, we next stumble over (as it were) this latent, lurking silver-snake; lying there for doom.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

"LITTLE EYELET." TIME—MAY, 1478.

IN the evening of a bright hot day amidst the peaks of some of the grandest Swiss mountains, an inhabitant of the high ground, named Carl Hentzel, ascended from a valley; at the little town situated in which he had attended a market and been successful in his sales.

He had, among other things, been disposing of sundry of his goats, and some mountain cheese. And in a small leathern scrip which he carried fastened by a cord about his neck was the produce in money of his day's good luck. It was May of the year 1478—bright hot weather. And a mutter and a tumble and a roll every now and then (like thunder) told of the loosening of the snow and of the successive fall of avalanches in the stillness.

The great broad-pieces—few in number—which he had received in exchange for the animals he had sold and for his cheese contained among them ONE COIN similar in size, but of an exceedingly ancient and most puzzling appearance. It was of silver, but its glisten was of the dullest; and the coin had been probably paid to him in mistake, since its weight and its thickness proved it to be of a far greater value than the other silver pieces amongst which it, however, lay seemingly as like amidst like.

Even at this distance from his house Carl descried it, far up amidst the pine-covered rocks. And as he

hastened up the acclivities to join the woman and the child—mere dots—who seemed to have issued out of the door to gaze at him from between the mists which sullenly sailed in white strips, like long gossamer bridges, athwart the black chasms, or seemed to loop and twine like ribbons amidst the mountain spires; whilst, we say, he watched with cheerful smiles and a nod and a beck and a wave of the hand now and then to his wife and his only child—for such they were—he strained with greater and greater impatience upwards, and clambered on as if his will outgrew, indeed, that slow—that necessarily slow pace. But climbing and climbing he went on.

Unhappy man! Thou little knowest what thou bearest upwards as a prize to thy home. Thou little imaginest the character of that awful THING (and its tremendous import) which thou in all unconsciousness carriest in thy bosom to thy peaceful, thy so happy home. Thou seest not the Bad Things which follow thickly in thy path, tracking too surely thy doomed footsteps and toiling upwards to thy Ark of Safety with thee. A brand is borne by thine own hand, for fire, to thy temple of the domestic affections. Thou dreamest not in the slightest degree what that shining thing should imply which thou now extractest from thy pouch with such glee and flourishest with such semblance of triumph to thy little son as a promised gift—Oh! so long and so impatiently watched for—from out that little white dotted town in the verdant valley. Better that thou shouldst now cast it into the deepest split that ever yawned—fathomless and immeasurable—below the brows of any of those ice-slabbed juts that shoot heavenward above thee: sheer out from the noonday blackness of a monster well of perpendicular descent of perhaps a thousand feet.

But so we dream; and so do we walk blind into temptations in this world of darkness.

The little child and its mother (both) seemed to understand what was meant by the actions of Carl. For the boy clapped his hands and laughed as the silver piece of money twinkled in the sun—even from that

long distance. By-and-by Hentzel gained his dwelling. And embraces for his wife, and kisses and hugs for Little Eyelet (Carl's son), were immediately the lot of both. For the father was happy—very happy.

It was the eve of the Name-Saint of the little boy. And incense was burnt that night before the figure of the child's "patron," and fresh flowers—such as the mountain afforded—were gathered with no small pains amidst the green clefts below where they grew by the happy mother. These were intended not only to deco-

Proof of Karl Hentzel's skill with "Little Eyelet" before a strange nobleman—similar to the "archery feat" of "Tell."

rate the little nook of an oratory—crucifix-shrined—where Hentzel and his wife knelt to their daily devotions, but also to trim and to set off Little Eyelet himself, who was to wear his holiday-dress this very morrow that was coming. Happy child! He was shown overnight the fine things he was to wear on his Patron Saint's Day. There were gilt buttons and yellow ribbons with the images of the saints stamped in shining lead upon them; and Little Eyelet's heart leapt with delight. But there was a black cloud rising.

The little boy was nearly six years old, but extremely delicate in shape and small in size. His bright blue

eyes were clear as those of a cherub of heaven, and his waving locks of light gold clung to his waist and nearly reached his feet.

That night there were hollow sounds in the *valley;* and strange, mysterious rumbles of thunder woke and fell-off to sleep again as it seemed continually in the gloomed recesses of the mountains. Now and then the boom and bound and the artillery-like report of an avalanche, which mingled with the distant sound of the passing blackening or *silvering* storm (in the panoramic moonlight) disturbed the stillness up amongst these mountain solitudes.

"That will bring down the great eagle from his heights to-morrow," said Carl to his wife as they lay quietly in bed listening to the sullen rumble and the occasional *drop* of a thunder-shot amidst the ices, as it sounded. "This will bring the great bird down out of his skies."

"Look, Carl, at the little room!" cried Eyelet's mother suddenly as she started up, gasping her astonishment and fright, in bed. "*It is alight.* What in the name of Little Eyelet's blessed patron can it be?"

"Nonsense, woman, to look so frightened," returned Carl, as he cast—half asleep—a displeased glance at the small closet-like room with its pine beams built out sideways by the side of his larger one. "It is but the reflection of the moonlight which is shining in it, like a blue candle. That is all."

A gush of light streamed outside from the door into the passage, for where Carl and his wife lay they could see almost all their house.

"Where is Little Eyelet? Ah, where is Little Eyelet, Carl? Arise and see! Up, husband! Up!"

"All safe—foolish woman! Thou wilt, thyself, get up next," retorted Carl. "And disturb me worse with thy fidgetings. I hear him breathing as tranquilly as a happy baby in the Garden of the Angels. Would that I were as like a child of the saints!"

Both fell asleep. All through that night—in dreams doubtless, but as she declared in her actual waking

state—delicious music, such as might have almost made you weep holy, happy tears, stole round Joanna-Mary. She thought herself bewitched as she listened to these magic strains. And with the first of the morning, when she sought her child and before she caught him (as every day she did) to her bosom and imprinted on his red, cleft rosebud of lip many kisses, there was a magic smile on his sleeping face, as if the whisper of angels and the songs of heaven had only been the accompaniment of his slumbers through the whole thundery night. There seemed the soft light from the blue pavement of heaven in his reflecting eyes.

The morrow came. When the clouds cleared—rising thick out of the valleys—and when the ice-fields began to glow up into all their colours, and to show emerald-like amidst the grey and green rocks and the many-tinted trees (the more solid portions of the glimpses, as it were, of landscape), the sun came out gloriously.

The sun brightened into intensest gold on a beautiful natural platform in front of the Chalet on which Alpine flowers grew; the delight of Little Eyelet. The boy was dressed in his best, in silk and fringes. And according to promise, and as the grandest ornament of all, his father hung the silver medal or PIECE OF STRANGE MONEY round about the child's neck.

And Carl Hentzel and his wife, Joanna-Mary, went then to attend, she to the ordinary business of their little plot of ground, and Hentzel to look after the goats. Little Eyelet was set to amuse himself with the gilt and painted pictures of the Saints in a precious missal with a silver clasp, and with a red ribbon which to him was worth a Count's ransom.

A speck—a dot—is now seen in the bright blue. Two islands, as it were, of clouds with their dazzling convolutions are seen sweeping inwards towards this dark speck, which shows from between them as a dot of a black ship beheld far out on the blue far sea. The tall spires of the mountains and the snowy *aiguilles* soaring yet higher into the translucent azure with their dozens of sun-emblazoned peaks, range around near or remote; shooting up as a mighty wall to a chasm prodigious; or

peering over duskier slate-covered rocks with the solid white snows traced-up as wreaths of roads—wizard-like into the magic lands.

With incredible speed the dot—or aërial voyager whatever it be—enlarges—grows more and more distinct—approaches (downwards), in its sublime "drop;" as if charged with a message from the "Olympian" himself. Two wings which beat with deliberate and majestic sound are now seen to spread broad, like sails. It is the terrible eagle of the Alps which thus descends as on an invisible line. And it is a most monstrous *lammer-geyer* if we may judge from its already so large (although so distant) figure.

The sunshine travels (as over a dial) up the side of the mountain. It leaves the valley below and the little town of white houses (almost *fearfully* gleaming *usually* in Liliputian dimensions and in seemingly unnatural close brightness), at our feet as it were, and dark in ominous shadows. The clouds and the far-up sky—blue in its depth of light—are intensely sunbright. The eagle—for it is now unmistakably one of that royal devastating brood—pauses for some time right overhead in its inexpressibly majestic descent. It hangs motionless. For a long time so still it is that the eager and fearing eye searches painfully up in the hot glare after the eagle for its place in the heavens. Though apparently without motion it is travelling fast—dropping perpendicularly to us at a prodigious rate. It swoops with scarcely a beat of its wings, but with its own native sharpness of eye unerringly to its hit point—caught by its sight from inexpressible height—as on a long right downward line. Soon an awful rushing like the whistling of a cannon-ball is heard. It alone breaks the silence of these mountain-solitudes. Like an *aerolite* the eagle drops, till in mid-air—although comparatively near—arrested doubtless by the shrill screams of the child who sees this "*air-dragon*" of the mountains, and who clings in his terror to the wooden supports which jut from the house—the giant bird sweeps *aside* with his intolerable eyes and on thundering pinions, beating deep like the resounding hammers of a forge. Thus

grandly for a moment or two the eagle circles in *retreat*. But at last—with eye fixed like fire on his prey—and wheeling—wheeling in narrower and yet narrower circles, attracted apparently and fascinated in strange power by the glitter of that fatal Silver Piece, he takes an upward short soar for the final plunge. And with all his feathers beating as in a storm the eagle at last swoops.

An awful shriek is heard. It is Little Eyelet's mother who rushes—*but too late*—to the rescue. She trampleth fast nearly over the precipice—at the risk of her life (but what is life at such a moment?) over the giddy stones of that terrible aëry platform under the eaves. But it is only in that instant to see, borne far aloft—snatched to destruction—and in a few seconds almost out of sight, her ill-fated child. Savagely caught up by the wild bird into his height of heaven, and finding its death, and his burial-place, amidst the inaccessible altitude and rocky steeples which are known only to the rapacious creatures forced down out of the wilds of the sky; places to which wings only may attain.

We may imagine the horror—the frightful anxiety—with which the flight of that bird was watched. He reft in his fell talons that which was all the world to the shrieking parents. The day was indeed black to them. Though sunwards the eagle flew!

From behind the house Carl was attracted by the sight of the hovering of the eagle over his dwelling and by its sudden descent. And he instantly guessed the meaning of that fell swoop. He was one of the best marksmen of the whole country. To dart into his house for his bow, to snatch an arrow from his quiver with the speed of desperation, was now that which was done in the thought of a moment. He drew the arrow so fiercely to its head that the bent bow doubled nearly and broke clean in his hand. The tense string sprang with the force of a javelin. But at the instant that he was about to let fly and that the probably successful shaft would be flung quivering into the bird's vitals, like a flash the thought that his child was in the eagle's clutch darted into his mind, and he cast down his bow

and trampled upon it, and snapped his arrow across his knee in his mad agony; his terrific revulsion of despair was fearful!

High—higher—highest, the bird was now winging securely up amidst the air-hung pinnacles; bearing the child towards its nest, where rescue was hopeless, since

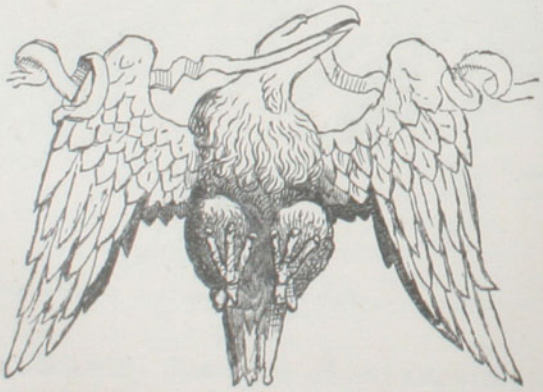
The "monster monument" of "Little Eyelet"—cradled, for the second time, amidst the mountains.

all was there as a perpendicular wall. The child's grave was sky-hung. Foot neither of man nor beast could win that cleft. Eye could alone reach it.

Miracle of terror, almost. The hole in the precipice to which the eagle was seen last to wing lay full in the view of the distracted father and mother opposite

(across the chasm) their very house. And there on a six-inch ledge of rock in the clouds, mocking them with its protracted horror (a tragedy whose dismal incidents were every day re-enacted; this as soon as the sun rose and his rays fell upon that knife-like width of platform with its single cavity) there was at last left to the winds the poor body of the destroyed child until the little white skeleton alone glinted.

Day after day—month after month—year after year there fluttered (long after nought was left but a white bone and fragments of the child's clothes) finery and trimming and loose rags, the toy of the gentler or the wilder winds. This sight was the monument into the child's parents' future—long after Carl Hentzel and Joanna-Mary had forgotten in the birth and bringing-up—aye, and in the manhood and maidenhood of other children whose life was happy—their pain at the death of Little Eyelet; their first-born.



CHAPTER THE TENTH.

THE BELLRINGERS. TIME—1433.

WE recognise again in its baleful effect the ever-traversing — never-resting — SILVER PIECE of MONEY, carrying evil.

"Run—run for your life. Marcus Mujik is for the bell-tolling. All Louvain listens to the skilful peal. Be not lost to your own honour, Bauchen Buttercuyp. Woman with such a husband in her very business—wife with so wondrous a bell-tolling, rope-pulling reputation. Away! Ere they yield the palm to thy Marcus; and that in spite thereat thou diest—diest the proper death of the overcome:—go and prevent."

This was said by an eager woman; a neighbour; as (wonderful for a Fleming) with her eyes dilated excitedly and her palms denunciatingly outspread, she rushed into a small wooden shop or bulk stuck out on one side of the great church of St. Peter at Louvain. The church had a stupendous steeple of 533 feet in height, and was a beautiful specimen of architecture.

The woman spoken-to who boasted extraordinary resolution—and an address and talent written in every queer turn of her face and in the mould of her boldly-developed even masculine brow, threw down a curious piece of clockwork which she was busily engaged in

looking-into for repair, and she tore off her green working apron. And—stripping-up her arms to the elbows—she was in the street before the *carillons* which then set up—close by—to sound the quarter, had struck one silver-sounding bell out of the many.

The year was 1433. All Flanders was then going mad after bell-tolling and skilful clockwork. And among the most astonishing artists in this then highly-prized department of science was—singular to say—Bauchen Buttercuyp; so called from her patronymic, for her father was Bacchus Buttercuyp, a great spirit-brewer of Louvain, and a great man of the town; hard of hearing, but hard of drinking.

Bauchen was the wife of Marcus Mujik. And he was one of the most celebrated professors of this noble science of campanology to be found in all the Low Countries, or in Italy or in Spain.

This bell-ringing couple—rivals in fame and in their estimation of it—kept their quaint little shop full of valuables; and it was stuck all about with small heraldic banners noting their honours from guilds, noblemen and persons of great renown. From their reputation in handiwork—and in science—there was continual application to their shop from all sides. Nothing came amiss for them to deal in. But they were principally famous for filigree-work, locks, ornamental keys, chains, and bracelets; for queer Netherlandish clocks full of puppet mechanism, for hand-bells and white-metal trumpets for the hands of painted figures of cherubim made in wood.

Bauchen the Bellringer, when she was so urgently interrupted by her anxious female admirer in her bell-tolling accomplishment, snatched up a Silver Piece of Money (snake amidst that Garden of Eden and floral wilderness of knick-knacks, to the bell-tolling Eve). This Silver Coin—which was of large size—had just been paid her (in mistake for one of the florins) by a customer. The customer had bought an embossed whistle for a certain eccentric public *columbarium* which he had established in conjunction with a rich but singular Brother of the Guild of Clock-Makers and

Clothiers who was half mad, but who had a turn for fancy fowl-keeping; and had contrived in his ingenuity this *columbarium* or Netherlands fowl-house.

It took not long before Bauchen was nearly round and in at the huge church-door. In the steeple of the great cathedral, for the purpose of stealing a march of display upon his dreaded rival—his own wife—the husband, the bell-toller, had already sorted his ropes to commence the grand proofs of his musical art. All the goodwives, children, and many of the men of the town were in the streets round the church, in their best clothes, intent no less on their holiday than on gazing up at the cloud-piercing steeple; from which they expected soon to hear those ravishing sounds coming as if from the heavens themselves. As Bauchen passed through, among her neighbours, she was greeted—even for Flemings—with enthusiastic plaudits, and a cheer that set her heart bounding. It is a sad thing to say, but she was (in fact) the only possible rival of her husband in the whole district; and she was the one from whom indeed he knew he had the most to dread, and the mo relentless opposition to look for. But her attention being called to her lack of her ornaments, Bauchen hasten indoors again—even with a speed that seemed mo marked and malicious—to fetch her Corporation-medal, presented her by the Burgomaster and the Syndics for some feat in that queer art to which she was devoted.

But now a rare bell-tolling began indeed from the steeple. And the wife—with ears sharpened by an agony of impatience and emulation—recognised the full, ingenious, truly grand inspiration among the bells of her enthusiastic husband—questionless a prince in his art. Her hands tingled with anxiety—indeed with suppressed *rage*—as if she already grasped a rope to surpass him. She flew along, leaving the posts behind her, in the rear of which, all in a row, were congregated her excited townspeople; now fairly enthusiastic by Marcus Mujik's astonishing feats upon his bells. They called aloud, however, that his wife—the Amazon of the Bell—"should soon outdo him." The SILVER PIECE of MONEY burned in her bosom; to the folds of

her garment covering which she had committed it, in her haste, when summoned out to this perilous trial-display.

And now the rocking steeple saw *four* hands employed upon the ropes for the ringing of those grand bells. For the mechanism of them was so perfect that in comparison slight exertions were alone necessary for the most tremendous effects, and to produce the most beautiful music. Flights of the bell-notes were flung out as it were of the belfry windows like presents to Paradise. And as he stood opposite, in his turn, working like the Archangel Michael amid serpents at the rebellious ropes, trampling them victoriously up into

The spire of the great church.

heaven's own blessed music, and watching his almost now murderously jealous wife with triumphant light askance out of his eyes, she was astonished at his nearly supernatural bell-tolling achievement. Never perhaps had man pulled so well. Powers other than human—an angelic group of Unseen-ringing Presences—seemed employed in realising the most exquisite bell-like effects. And after one superb flourish, as if of entry into heaven, a cheer—such a cheer as never rises but after battle fought and victory won:—this rose from below. It

carried joy to his heart. But his now utterly jealous and maddened wife—possessed by a devil as it were—plunged upon him unawares; and catching a smile of complacent triumph on his lips as he raised his thanking eyes to heaven, she grappled him like a Nemesis or a Norwegian Fury; and she thrust him forth—spite of

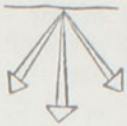
A celebration in Louvain.

the fearful clutch which grasped for life the irons of it—out of a large *quatrefeuille* of the enormously high steeple. Half way down which (indeed) the clouds almost rolled and spread flat along. Such a shrill cry of horror rose from the crowd below as staggered. The

terror-stricken woman—now recalled to herself—her arms wide-stretched as if at once in shrieking appeal and denunciation upon the bell behind; which in its hollow-sounding last swing only groaned deep out a sort of doleful thunder-roll as its knell over revenge and mad art-jealousy—even of a husband. It smote loud condemnation and told death to her on the clashing air. And thus was a strange Flemish Tragedy, to which the great thundering bells supplied the "choral," enacted in the Steeple of the Great Church of Louvain. And this was the end of Marcus Mujik the Bell-toller. All was the work of the fiend winged on the SILVER PIECE, as it wrought its magic in its invisible errand through the air, even in the bells.

Our detached episodes are only special illustrations of the power of the SILVER PIECE. It is as the true and ubiquitous hero of our legendary tale that we adduce the phases of the life of this seemingly unliving thing; gifted as it may however be with a devil.

On the previous page we give the representation (copied from an old picture) of the celebration, in Louvain, at once of the triumph of the Great Female Bell-toller, and of the obsequies of the renowned Marcus Mujik, her vanquished, (dead), husband.



The "Three Nails" of the Passion according to the Greek Rite.

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

THE TEMPLAR TRIAL. TIME—1312.

THE year is 1312—that of the general suppression, all over Europe, of the order of the Knights Templars. Paris gives the first signal of the sacrifice. England follows. Europe completes its frightful task.

Jacques Molay, Grand Master of the Templars, places his hand in a bag of silver which he has commanded to be brought to him out of the treasure-chests during a secret Chapter of his order. And he gives unknowingly a SILVER PIECE to a Knight. It is remarked not in its similitude to the others. But it is in reality the mysterious wandering PIECE which travels — like a spark from out of the pit of Orcus—from country to country—surviving through all time;—white, wan, and woeful.

"Thou art sworn to poverty. This is to help thee towards Jerusalem. Thy brethren shall give thee food and raiment on the way. This is as a gift from thy father-ruler; this be thy talisman."

Charles De Ramus set out on his long journey. He esteemed the SILVER PIECE of MONEY as a gift most considerable and not to be parted with under any temptation; since it was bestowed upon him by his revered Grand Master. And therefore he carried it by night

and by day in the palm of his steel gauntlet. But at Vienna his progress was arrested. And he was seized and thrown into a dungeon, being charged upon his badges of Templar recognition with participation in the scandals and crimes then so suddenly and so frightfully imputed to his whole Order, and to which they fell sacrifice.

Vault where the unhappy De Ramus—the "Last of the Templars"—was buried.

Horrors with the Templar great-ones were enacted in Paris. And in due time the unhappy De Ramus was brought-up on the charge before a council especially convoked to try the monstrous sins laid to the door of these priestly guardians of the Temple through all their various degrees of age and rank. And he was a knight of the order, though not high advanced in it; and therefore he was held responsible for the supposed crimes.

"Knowest thou Baffometus the Horrible? knowest thou 'Bophomet?'" was the question put in a whisper as if he who put the question shuddered at the name. This man was one of those inexorable judges who after three days of untold-of suffering of the young Templar had him brought bound before him. De Ramus was sinking worn and white to the earth; being already more than half destroyed in the tortures during these three days adjudged him for all sorts of trials for his secrets.

"I know not the name, ye devils of men. I seek death. And my fierce words may force it from ye; for ye have rent-up my flesh and pierced me."

"Place the torches about him that we may witness his last writhing," said the arch-inquisitor. "Son of the Devil, what be the treasures of thy lodge; which, when we have obtained, we shall cast in the sea?"

"They are not of my keeping," replied De Ramus. "I was not high enough in the sacred Templar ranks for their charge, or for knowledge of them." And at this Ramus fainted away.

"Render me thy secret password," demanded the judge when they had, with difficulty, recovered the prisoner.

"Never—while my lips may deny it. Faithful will I be to my oath, even unto death."

"Kneel down then," said the judge. The late Knight knelt. "I hand thee to thy dead masters. Axeman, do thy duty. Strike; and once for all!"

And with one blow of the bright blade of a monstrous axe the Templar was freed from the persecution of this cruel Tribunal; to which he fell so suddenly and so unhappily, a quick victim. His head flew from his body.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

THE ALARMS OF THE DESERT. TIME—1220.

UNTO the Desert—unto the place of sands and of the overarching sky, hot in the glare of intolerable sun—hath the Silver Piece passed. With the restless day perpetually hurrying-on the hours to the fires of the sunset and through the starred or star-

Device on the Pennon of Dent D'Airain.

less night urgeth that Silver Symbol, producing in its magic, and irritating into life, with its charmed gifts, the evils that shall be the lot of its temporary possessor; and only to be shaken free-of by the parting with this migratory, persecuting curse to some other new and unsuspecting hand. Such are the terms of the immortality of this fiendish silver sign through the ages. The

plagues of which are terrible, and its whereabout mysterious.

It is the time of the Crusades. Europe precipitates in its valorous outbreak of enthusiasm upon the dusk Saracen chivalry for the recovery of the Holy Tomb. The sands engulph passing divisions of the present new crusading army. The ranks of steel gather into themselves the flames, and in return are more or less consumed in the fierce suns of Palestine. But the glorious red cross, and the whole snowy banner of St. George upon which the red cross shows, the black and white, party-divided *Beauséant* of the soldier-priests of the order of the Temple, the lilies of France, and her *Oriflamme* or flame of gold, and the multiform cognisances of the knightly hordes out of Italy, out of Spain, and belonging to the Kingdom of the Latins; these with all the myriad and with that rich wilderness of heraldic devices, cover with its inundation of colours and of metals, with its cloud of steel armours and of glittering lances, the valleys and the steeps, and the dun wastes and the hot mountain-tops of Israel and of Syria, of Judah and of the Biblical principalities golden and glaring.

Dent D'Airain and Gomer De Tedesco, two crusading chieftains with a strong force of knights and of men-at-arms, are passing slowly through the desert on a hot afternoon, and are gasping for air and looking about them in a consuming intense thirst. Women accompany them. Dent D'Airain, a bold and daring leader, is bearing away an Eastern princess of unspeakable beauty, the daughter of an Arab emir. And he seeks now safety and shelter for his prize in the tents of the crusaders; then wholly camped before the white-walled Ptolemais in the expectation of storming it.

"How farest thou, Gomer de Tedesco? Friend of my banner, who hast aided it often in the moment of need in battle-rout or in single tilt! Nay, I say, the friend of my dear heart. Stand'st thou bravely these fierce flames of the desert—this breath of the furnace?

which well-nigh scorches-up mine heart—however large—within the very steel bracings which ought to keep out sun and stroke of steel?"

"How about thy princess Hermengilda? The last skins of the liquid element or costly water have been lavished, because they are hers, amidst her camels. Shall not her very jewels almost melt in the ardour of this—Oh! far too overpowering sun of Palestine? Or shall the rubies not blaze the more redly to it as fired sanguinely in the sun of the desert?"

"She is cared for," returned Dent D'Airain. "Painted awnings are carried in multitude over her. Fainting slaves—black as that Sathanas of whom churchmen talk—fan her, though they fall. Were forty of them to die, yet shall not my beauteous lily have one of its petals over-heated in this elemental fire of Afric. Truly an enchanter's burning is about us, and under us, and over us."

To beguile the way and to elude, if possible, the thirst which so sorely troubled the whole caravan, the two chiefs set their men to play; and they gambled, themselves, for handsful of precious coin. And medals and rings, and jewels of price having several times changed hands amidst this godless and dissolute knightly crew, a SILVER COIN was at last produced by Gomer De Tedesco. Which in one throw was lost to Dent D'Airain. It was the famous SILVER PIECE. And it was said by Gomer to have been given him in a pilgrimage by a white-bearded hermit of Mount Libanus.

Dent D'Airain laughed in triumph, and untwining his laps of chain-armour and twists of rings he dropped the PIECE of SILVER into a little bag of spikenard which he wore close over his heart. His thirst was immediately appeased and a refreshing coolness and many delightful sensations soon displayed their welcome effect over all his flesh. And at that moment he descried (in a strange joy) an Arab horseman with lance that glittered sharp even from the great distance careering over the, (else,) totally solitary expanse of de-

sert sand; coming out of a cloud and going into a cloud.

"A man, a man!" Dent D'Airain cried. "Speak him. He brings strange news. Great news."

He did indeed bring great news; for he was only a magic figure bringing Doom to the bold knight. The passing horseman was nothing than a chance-projected figure, so it was afterwards said, suddenly painted out of the colours and concentrated in the condensed vitality of the landscape, and flung-out of—as it were—the magic-lantern of the all-powerful MASTERS of the SILVER COIN for ruin and for dole.

But no one beside Dent D'Airain himself could see aught but the sky stretching for miles and miles, cloudless above, and the sea of dun desert. Nor could any one understand the strange mad exultation with which the Crusader spoke and pointed afar-off. His friends almost indeed feared that he had gone suddenly deranged in the intense heat, though his countenance contradicted such a supposition; for he was collected enough.

And so on this military caravan journeyed. They sought to beguile their steps with tale—even with song or chorus. But their voices seemed stifled in their throats. And the gay song and the carouse of a chorus declined into feeble hymns, and fell off at last into the choral chant of a half Latin, half *Provençal* Litany;—almost ridiculous in its quavers partly of fear and partly of incompetency. With which latter fact of singing, indeed, the terrors of the desert little consisted at any time; and less now.

It is in vain for men who dwell in crowded capitals, and who flock into populous community, to place before them the true picture of the superstitious brooding which besets the mind in these depressing wastes. And the East in all its parts hath terror of its own and influences of its own, in its mingled and almost dream-influenced life.

That which may be called the panoramic history of all nations of the East is so rich in strange and

romantic events and mysterious terrible suggestions; the tales of wonder and the supernatural, tenacious beliefs that abound through it strike such deep root and are so all-pervading and aweing, that the name of this East must always inspire a charm. Another life—a phantom-life—seems to us as the watch and witness of all Oriental occurrences. Unseen guardians still walk amidst its ruined citadels and abandoned cities. And its crumbling monuments, by man forsaken, are sentinelled by other and higher intelligences. Buried treasures of incalculable value, and genii-guarded stores of the richest; also accumulations of gems and spoil of fabulous character and surprises to an unbelievable extent, are supposed to be still scattered—for ever lost, or almost hopelessly so, to the curiosity of man. And these are distributed over all the ancient kingdoms of Asia, and even over those old realms whose existence, though true, has nearly been melted up as into the disbelief of them of history.

And the traditions of the shadowy beings who guard and warn-off seekers from these occult heaps—this wealth of glorious material things—are overpowering and cogent in almost all corners of the Vast East.

Every ruin in the East has its Spirit. But the Desert is the place to which the apparitions of the whole earth are supposed to be relegated.

"But, in a field where of necessity we are so much limited, we willingly pass from the consideration of these treasure or *khasne* phantoms (which alone sufficiently insure a swarm of ghostly terrors for all Oriental ruins of cities) to the same marvellous apparitions, as they haunt other solitudes even more awful than those of ruined cities. In this world there are two mighty forms of perfect solitude—the ocean and the desert: the wilderness of the barren sands, and the wilderness of the barren waters. Both are the parents of inevitable superstitions—of terrors, solemn, ineradicable, eternal. Sailors and the children of the desert are alike overrun with spiritual hauntings, from accidents of peril essentially connected with those

modes of life, and from the eternal spectacle of the infinite. Voices seem to blend with the raving of the sea, which will for ever impress the feeling of beings more than human, and every chamber of the great wilderness which, with little interruption, stretches from the Euphrates to the western shores of Africa, has its own peculiar terrors both as to sights and sounds. In the wilderness of Zin, between Palestine and the Red Sea, a section of the desert well known in these days to our own countrymen, *bells are heard daily pealing for matins, or for vespers, from some phantom-convent that no search of Christian or of Bedouin Arab has ever been able to discover. These bells have sounded since the Crusades.*

"Other sounds, trumpets, the *Alala* of armies, &c., are heard in other regions of the Desert. Forms, also, are seen of more people than have any right to be walking in human paths; sometimes forms of avowed terror; sometimes, which is a case of far more danger, appearances that mimic the shapes of men, and even of friends or comrades. This is a case much dwelt on by the old travellers, and which throws a gloom over the spirits of all Bedouins, and of every cafila or caravan. We all know what a sensation of loneliness or 'eeriness' (to use an expressive term of the ballad poetry) arises to any small party assembling in a single room of a vast desolate mansion: how the timid among them fancy continually that they hear some remote door opening, or trace the sound of suppressed footsteps from some distant staircase. Such is the feeling in the desert even in the midst of the caravan. The mighty solitude is seen, the dread silence is anticipated which will succeed to this brief transit of men, camels, and horses. Awe prevails even in the midst of society; but if the traveller should loiter behind from fatigue, or be so imprudent as to ramble aside—should he, from any cause, once lose sight of his party, it is held that his chance is small of recovering their traces. And why? Not chiefly from the want of footmarks, where the wind effaces all impressions in half-an-hour, or of

eyemarks, where all is one blank ocean of sand, but much more from the sounds or the visual appearances which are supposed to beset and to seduce all insulated wanderers."

Byzantine Crucifix worn over his white kirtle by the Knight, Gomer de Tedesco.

THE SAND-STORM. TIME—1220.

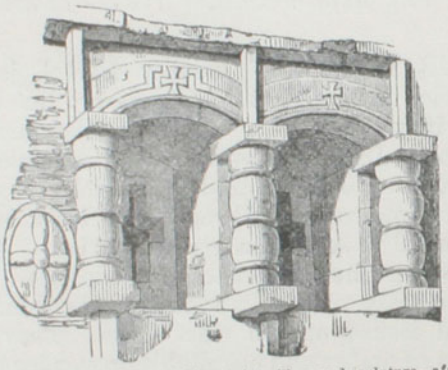
AFTER three days' further fearful journeying, buried in the heart of the desert but spreading as it were a green carpet in the midst of the terrific waste, Dent D'Airain and his chivalric company found a large *oasis*, in the midst of which rose pleasantly the spiry, dome-covered towers of a Greek Monastery, very beautiful to see and a great surprise.

Here, when their approach was descried from the building, a train of monks with Alexius their abbot at their head issued out to meet them. They came up with skins of water and hospitable provender to refresh. And the bells of the holy house—strange sounds in the desert—were heard to toll, as with the benevolently hospitable welcome, and with many a priestly benediction the armed company were admitted within the monastery and cheered with wine and good food. They were also invited to unarm and lie down to rest.

"We will deck thy sacred walls with our steel clothing, reverend Father Alexius," said the leader D'Airain. "And our horses and camels shall we stall in thy columned cloisters and beside thy beautiful Gothic-work fountains. And there shall arrive peace to our hearts and sleep to our eyes during these fierce hours of daylight-heat. But we shall pray your pardon if we, jealous knights, in our never-omitted soldierly practice, place guards not only over ourselves but over the arms

whereof we have so gladly disburthened, and which stand piled in thy great hot court. And this damsel of princely descent and her women — although no Christians—in all honour do we hand to your keeping. And as we have store of wealth we shall bestow of it and win your well-wishing—even your hearty thankful farewell." This was spoken by Dent D'Airain when he had dismounted from his horse.

"So be it all, my son," said the Father Alexius. And he departed into his oratory to confer with his Sub-Priors Apollinaris and Umbre. This upon points needful apparently for the accommodation of his guests.



"Triforium of the Monastery, with its quaint pillars and sculpture—afterwards buried in sand."

When the Father Alexius and his subordinates Apollinaris and Umbre entered the rich oratory, decorated with gold and precious stones—even in the desert—the Father Alexius closed carefully the doors and went and sat in his chair of state. He turned to Umbre, who sat deeply thinking—

"Devise something in thy keen wisdom, Brother Umbre. Thine ingenuity hath before this helped us well. Half of the gold and precious things in our *penetralia* is of thy indirect getting. As half of the anatomies of men hung up as curious memorials in our crypt is of thy indirect placing. This desert-road hath at bye-times been as a road of Mammon—paven hither-

ward with gold slabs—to us. This suspicious handsome crusader hath set guards over himself and over that he watches and carries. Otherwise in their sleep this very fierce noon might we have destroyed them all. And their camels bear rich booty. We have lured them fairly to wreck with our cheerful holy bells."

"Not one of the troop must away to tell the tale of those strange sacrificing services to which, when we win sojourners within our gates, it is our wont in our tolling to invite. Our net hath closed round the caravan. Distress yourself not, father, concerning the putting of the men to death. They are *ours*—and, yea, is their spoil ours—despite all their steel." This was said by Umbre with knitted brows.

"So be it, my son," replied the Father Abbot. "I leave it to your manifold arts. Are our brethren warned so to conduct themselves to the men as to secure us?"

"They are," said Apollinaris. "And either with chemical secrets or with the open violent hand is this entire goodly company (and all the precious things with which their camels are loaded) our own. The caves of rock beneath our spiry monastery shall alone, perchance, on some future remote day give account of them!"

"Of dun purple colour is the sky, and thick are the desert-clouds which have won so singularly and so suddenly up over the half of our burning heaven," remarked Alexius to his confederates as they returned along the galleries to the marble chambers in which they had left, scattered, their knightly company. All that was so bright before was now growing strangely dark as in an eclipse.

When the flagitious abbot and his murderous confederates returned to the knights and their followers, they found them in a state of considerable anger and impatience. The absence of their hosts, whom, with true military imperiousness, this warlike company looked upon as almost like servants bound to attend to their wants, and whom they expected to suspend services and the psalms which they blasphemously sang to the desert winds—this apparent forgetfulness of their guests as soon as they had entered within their walls drew dis-

pleased remark and many exclamations of disgust from the rude men of war who gathered and sneered round about the holy men.

"Come, sir priest!" said Gomer De Tedesco when the Abbot appeared, "we need a well-spread board, not mumbled welcomes—liquid to cool our blood, not prayers, now, or psalms. We want wine and not bell-tolling—fruits and confections, not canticles or candle-carrying—except to the banquet-table or to bed. Out with thy store! For we guess shrewdly that thou hast the usual abundant priestly provender—which if it credits thy grand house should be indeed royal. I and my men—the knight Dent D'Airain my brother in our country's loyallest crusading bands of steel—yea, all his caravan and cavalcade of women—black and white—shall to the tables. And we will have a jolly monk to sit between each of us to see that we lack nought (if he tastes nothing) and to keep us with his lewd songs in countenance over our delicacies. Though ye—no offence to ye, priests—look much more like a den of withered wolves than as gracious graceful monks."

The proposal of one monk sitting between two knights was fulfilled to the letter. For—interjected between each of the armed men—all down the sides of the long table—there sat a priest in his cowl from under which his eyes glittered like a Devil. At the top of the table, side by side sat Dent D'Airain and Alexius; with the fainting and alarmed Hermengilda—scandalised and pale at the bold and lustful looks of the warriors which Dent D'Airain scarcely repressed; and at the sinister and boding glances of the religious. Two or three of her excessively beautiful Arab women who clung to each other in fright and were sparkling all over with gold were at her side. At the other end of the table Gomer De Tedesco—who would not part with his sheathed glaive—sat in a great seat, supported in strange propinquity on either hand by the Sub-Priors Umbre and Apollinaris. Altogether it looked a grim and fearful company indeed. And the momentarily increasing darkness out of the building—although it was noonday—added to the awe and alarm of the scene. Which scene was however splendid

to a degree from the gold and silver vessels—filled with wine—and from the rich food in choice dishes of carved silver which covered the table. And which cups and dishes were thrown crashing to the floor when the riot deepened, and when fear was exchanged for clashing assassination.

There was then a noise as of long-rumbling underground thunder. The air grew denser, darker, blacker. Looking out of window the whole desert seemed *flatly rising*, far as the horizon extended, like a sea. And the sky—suddenly changed into darkness from the clouds of sand that filled it—appeared to be *descending*—from the zenith to the horizon—terribly to meet it. Earthquake, hurricane, horror seemed imminent. But in the glare of light—for torches had long ere this been brought and the priestly company and the knights alike caroused or watched suspiciously in hell's own red illumination—the sight without was unnoticed. At that moment a drunken knight seized the hand of one of the false monks which was clutching too soon at the gigantic emerald boss of a gold-collar which he wore, now swinging at the end of broken links.

"Robber-priest," the knight shouted, starting to his feet and striking his mailed hand on the table, so that he struck, now, magic green fire from his own split emerald. "Dog of a false monk, there is treachery in this vile damnable banquet of thine. Comrades, to your arms! We are betrayed."

But, alas, they *had* no arms. And after the knights had felt vainly at their sides for their swords all became an instant deadly grapple between soldiers and priests in which (even) the former had the worst. Gomer De Tedesco indeed bared his sword like lightning and struck through in instant thrust the robe of the arch-villain Umbre, from which blood sprang.

"Hold, madmen," cried Alexius. "Your efforts are the struggle of the hopeless! Ye are mine. Mine utter prey. Ye are all poisoned, ye men of swords. Your cups were filled from mine own fell barrel with a juice which slacketh not in its deadly work."

There was a shriek of horror at this. But despera-

tion and the determination to avenge their destruction supplied a power prodigious to the soldiers. And flinging off the robber-band of false monks, all the knightly company broke away and seized their weapons piled high in the marble court—now dark as the Forum of Pompeii before its extinction under the ashes of Vesuvius.

Ah, *dark—darker—darkest* grows the sky overhead! Awfully it deepens—from the bright blue at first with the fleecy clouds for heaven's islands, (and with the sun's light all-pervading,) to the infinite of "purple;" whence, from the supernatural spaces—God's spaces—the tremendous stars peep out—sharpening—sparkling—at high day. Mortal man—in that insupportably terrific hour, would seek escape *even down and through* the solid world!—winged to penetrate through the thickest globe itself with magic, piercing *horror*—startling the Realms of the Gnomes.

Lo, in the possible wildernesses within the great round earth itself, the lights of the PANDEMONIA begin to glow; and, dusk and terrible, the myriads of the Populace of Hell come gleaming—spreading—slow upon the vision. For the Hour of Doom upon this profaned Convent has come. Thrones of the Great Devil's Hold, evoke! Thine is this engulphment—this hollow great grave for the specious holy building. Rise, ye Bad Angels in your dusky light—once known—*now again known!*

Staggering, and in some instances falling, as they forced their way back into the banquet-hall—for the potent poison had by this time begun its deadly work and they were writhing in frightful pains—the knights and their men forced the ruffian crew actually to drain—at swords' point—of the very poison they had themselves brewed for their victims. So all beneath that profaned roof were even now involved in one common doom—falling one after the other—hosts and guests intermingled—to a floor streaming at once with wine and poison and glaring in dreadful lights.

And now down—down slowly—the whole edifice sank with its spires and turrets as if the earth had been hol-

lowed-out beneath to receive it. The roofs and the crosses were torn off by a fierce wind, and cataracts as it seemed of sand poured like the sea into the hollow of the convent. A great gulf was scooped as it appeared in the vast heart of the trackless desert for its tomb. And to the awful music of the tolling of the bells in its minarets as the very foundations of the desert-sands seemed to roll to and fro under them, rocking all like the masts of ships, did the great convent sink like a huge ship. It was enveloped in the surges of sand which from every side wheeled like mountain billows in a new, prodigious, and unheard-of whirlpool; swallowing the robber-priests and their victims alike in their now judgment-overwhelmed hold. And leaving the very name of the community of monks as well as the site of their monastery, a word of scandal, a tradition and a horror to the future generations to be cited in future history.

They say that the bells of this magic monastery are *still to be heard* dully tolling under the sands of the great desert; and that the faint sounds are occasionally caught in the halt of the solitary caravan even to this day.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS. TIME—1066.

CENTURIES pass, but the ever-living PIECE of MONEY—indestructible in the charm which it carries, in itself, through Time—still circulates. And this fatal One of the Thirty *may be even in London now.*

Simon D'Aumerle,* lord of Varenne, was marching through the woods of Mequinier with his Norman long-bowmen to join the Great Duke William, the intending invader of England. The ruler of Normandy with his ships full loaded with warriors was about to invade the Kingdom of England with assurances of success from the Pope.

As he passed through a village of wooden houses with his large Norman hound closely following—within the roar of the smithy fortunately—his white war-horse cast one of his steel shoes and began limping; to his rider's dismay.

"A misfortune this," cried Simon. "Which however might have been worse. Forward, men-at-arms, with your large kite-shaped shields which will keep the

* Refer to the story of his descendant, Mr. Merle—the obdurate father—at page 163 *ante*. There were two Simons D'Aumerle, ancestors of Mr. Merle, Colonial Broker, of St. Helen's Place, Bishopsgate, (see *Post-Office Directory* for 1858). One was the Simon D'Aumerle who fell—as above related—in the Battle of Hastings. The other was the Sir Simon D'Aumerle who is described as sailing to France at page 162.

sun off. And make for the road between the hills yonder, into which I will follow you soon but slowly. Priaulx and Petrus, take you my great banner with its guard and move by the *paven* way. Let the scouts and the light-armed men hover on the right. And move cheerily in the name and to the song of Roland. For the sun is declining towards its westerly harbourage, and we ought ere this to have been fifteen leagues forward. Richard Destrelles, thou art my squire of the body. Help me to dismount. And take my steed to the good-man farrier there, who (for fault of a better) must fit my brave horse, 'Whitestar,' with his new foreshoe; which shall be a fortunate shoe."

Richard Destrelles rode up. His master threw him his reins; and then, cased in his chain-mail and with his mail-hood or *camaille* loosely jingling like a purse of steel, the Norman chieftain with infinite weight and labour—for he was a heavy man—got to his feet; and he sat down by the side of the road.

The horse was shod while the warrior waited. And the Farrier with low-bent head stood still till the potent Norman Sub-Baron (for he was only a feudatory) had again attained to saddle-tree, and had looked with pleasure at the shoesmith.

"My thanks are yours, friend, for your labour. For my horse feels easier already in your good steel shoe. And now to pay for this cast of thy trade. Fourgeon, out with my travelling money-bag. And hand over to this good man a gold piece for this brisk turn of his farrier's skill."

The Norman lord rode on with a chosen few of his men-at-arms while his Esquire Destrelles remained behind to do as his master ordered, and pay the farrier. With many genuflections and with unbonneted head the man received his munificent gift for this chance exercise of his equestrian-fitting handicraft.

"This is too much for thee, churl—this gold piece which my careless lord—careless I mean of his money—hath bestowed on thee," said Destrelles, who was avaricious and tyrannical, and in every way a bad man; being cruel and envious.

The farrier, who was well broken-in to feudal humbleness, anticipated the frowning denial of his guerdon by the Squire; and he submissively said—bending low, though he looked sly—

"Aught then that my lord pleaseth—or that his worshipful squire deemeth right—shall be thankfully accepted by Stephen the Farrier; who may live after him."

"Give me, in that case, as change out of thy hoard—for I know thou hast a hoard—seven silver crowns. And then shall we be quits, and I be content; and you shall live as long after me as you like."

The Farrier went into his house and reappeared with a large leathern bag filled-out with nails and a steel horse-shoe, from which bag he produced and counted with due deliberation into the greedy Squire's hand, the seven coins he demanded. There was ONE in the number that bore mysterious Chaldæan marks.

"Away now, and say nought of this or thou shalt

"Beware, Lord of Aumerle! thou carriest in thy company that with the brand. Beware, mailed Lord!"

be hanged," said the Squire. And he rode on after his master, trying to gather pace.

As Simon D'Aumerle and his company of spears the next day passed a hovel in a wood at the door of which an old crone sat, rocking herself in the slant sun and listening in the hush to the sounds in the last

of evening, she started to her feet suddenly, and shaking her finger derisively, called after the troop—as if she saw something or heard something.

"Beware, Lord of Aumerle. Thou carriest in thy company that with the brand which shall smite thee and kill thee. Look out when the hustling of war-steeds and the shock of battle are on the wind. Beware, mailed lord, and turn back."

"A malicious witch," was the contemptuous exclamation, in answer, of the Norman lord; when what the woman said had been repeated by some of his men who had remained behind to hear what she was going to say. All and more was conveyed to him by his half-frightened but officious attendants; who turned pale, not perhaps for their leader but for themselves.

William the Norman and his bold barons and his motley force of mailed feudatories and of the great foreign archery flocking to his aid, passed over into England. And now were the two opposing armies preparing for the great Battle of Hastings; but very differently occupied.

Fear prevailed in both camps. The English, in addition to the apprehensions which even the most tough-hearted feel on the eve of a morrow whose close they may never see, dreaded the papal excommunication, the curse encountered in support of the unlawful authority of a usurper. When they were informed that battle had been decided upon, they stormed and swore; and now the cowardice of conscience spurred them into riot and revelry. The whole night was passed in debauch. "Wæs-heal" and "Drink-heal" resounded from the tents; the wine cups passed gaily round and round by the smoky blaze of the red watch-fires, while the ballad of ribald mirth was loudly sung by the carousers.

The sun sank through clouds and shone golden over the sea.

"Give me some crowns as the *largesse* to this harper," said Simon D'Aumerle now in the camp, after he had been listening *pensively* again to the "Song of Roland" sung grandly by a certain able minstrel. He roused himself as if by an effort to speak.

The coins were given to his chieftain by Destrelles. One remained after the harper had paid his honours to the liberal knight and had gone. And this Silver Piece, when he was suddenly summoned to the holy service, the Norman chief threw carelessly into his glove of mail. But that One was decisive of his fate. And he went into battle with it in his glove on the morrow.

There was grave deliberation and eager care in the Norman "leaguer," as it was called. The solemn response of the Litany and the chant of the psalm alone were heard from the lanes of tents in that silent night;

"The minstrel Taillefer was ordered to sing the song, or hymn, of Charlemagne (or of Roland).

except that it was now and then disturbed by the low clash of steel.

The English were in the morning found to be strongly fortified, in their position, by lines of trenches and palisadoes. They drew themselves up, in Danish fashion, shield against shield. The men of Kent formed the vanguard. The burgesses of London composed the royal body-guard; and they were drawn-up around the Standard. Harold, his brothers Leofwin and Gurth, and a chosen body of the bravest Thanes, took post in front. But, before the battle—early in the morning of St. Calixtus—volunteers from the County of Boulogne, and from the Aminnois, under the command of Fitz-

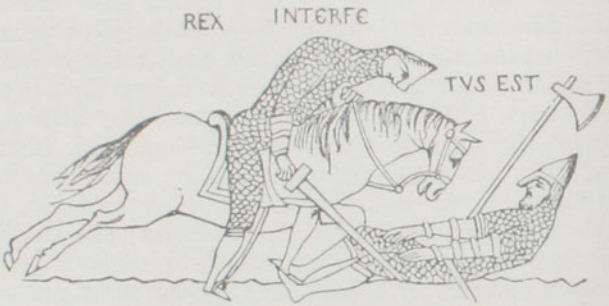
Osbern and Roger Montgomery, joined Duke William. The Norman forces were now put in battle array. And the combined cohorts under Aimeric, Viscount of Thouars, and Alan Fergant of Brittany, commenced battle with the no less eager English. The minstrel Taillefer, advancing before the consecrated Gonfanon, or great banner, had the honour of leading, singing and armed, into the fight. He sang the song or hymn of Charlemagne (or of "Roland") descriptive, under God, of the achievements of the Paladins, and the strife in the dolorous pass of Roncevaux or Roncesvalles.

But the English, glittering in their mail, met the Norman chivalry bravely. They routed their enemies in all directions and forced them back into a trench; where horses and riders fell upon each other in fearful confusion. More Normans were slain here than in any other part of the field. The fierce Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, the Duke's half-brother, distinguished himself greatly in his many furious attempts upon Harold's divisions. From nine in the morning to three, the battle was fought with varying success; the English suffering severely when they sought to improve the demolition effected by their charges from the vigorously plied artillery of the Normans. The foreign bowmen, instead of shooting point-blank, were now ordered to pause; and in their next discharges the flights of the arrows were all directed upward. One English Thane, armed with a battle-axe, spread dismay amongst the Frenchmen. He was cut down by Roger de Montgomery and his armour fell in steel splinters. The Normans have preserved the name of the Norman; but that of the Englishman is left in oblivion.

A cry is raised, in the invaders' ranks, that the Duke is slain. Confusion is the instant consequence amongst the Norman soldiers; deepening every moment into flight, there is a break in the battle. William hastens into the press, throws off his helmet, gallops hither and thither, pale as ashes amongst his men, and rallies a number. The valiant Harold, who fights like a hero, is at this moment wounded, like lightning, in the left eye by an arrow. He drops from his steed in agony, and is

borne fainting to the foot of his torn standard. The English give way on all sides, and retreat upon the king's standard as their grand rallying-point. The Normans press forward. And Robert Fitz-Ernest, who has almost seized the Saxon banner, is struck down at the foot of it and killed in his blood. William in another part of the field receives such a stroke on his helmet from an English horseman that he is nearly brought to the ground. The Kentish-men and East Saxons rally in advance of the last wavering line. But

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.



"Harold drops from his steed in agony, and is borne fainting to the foot of his torn standard."

Harold is no longer amongst them. Gurth, combating bravely on foot at the base of the standard, falls by the falchion of William; who now at the head of his main-body has forced forward. The English banner is cast down amidst the dead bodies and the Gonfanon is planted in its place.

It is now late in the evening. The English troops are entirely broken; yet has no Englishman been found to yield his ground except with death or frightful wounds. With nought less than with the sternest maintenance, each man of his place, the English have withstood—overwhelmed with force alone, and mastered with that which no valour and no devotion could countervail permanently, or resist.

We recur to Simon D'Aumerle. At the head of his

knights and the meaner lancemen he charged furiously again and again a body of Harold's bravest axemen. The whole air was in one resounding din of leathern targets and of the clashing of swords. The flights of arrows sang a hissing chorus in a cloud. The Norman cavalry, breast to breast, galloped fiercely hither and thither over the field; trampling the wounded and the dead alike, and overturning bodily the more rudely armed and less highly disciplined warriors of the English king. They penetrated deep in Simon D'Aumerle's part of the field into several of the huge wedge-like bodies of men into which Harold had divided that portion of his more reliable force. The pennons with their emblazonments "flashed like dropped stars" in all directions over the country covered by the battle; and the glitter here and there attested this valiantly contested battle-ground's fierceness.

And the Norman army until besmirched with dust and blood and disarranged and broken by the fury of the contest—which clouded all their glory and used their brilliance utterly up—shone like a cloud of silver with its long lines of knights with dots, in places, of red and blue flags.

In a crowd of contending horsemen and shouting his war-cry in heroic self-exultation—which cry was drowned in the ring and stroke of unnumbered axes and in the thrust and splinter of the thousand lightning-like lances—Simon D'Aumerle fought like the world's champion. But there came three arrows in quick succession; and they struck through the close chain-mail of the Norman lord, quivering in his body where they hit. His war-horse—which was wounded by a sword—reared high at this tremendous moment and made as if he would altogether overturn. As Simon turned his head to snatch in the reins, at the same time guarding his left side with his great shield, a side-blow of an axe (from a charging Englishman), descending with terrific weight, clove his steel basinet right through. And down the gallant Norman leader fell, bearing into the dust with him the luckless SILVER PIECE; which flew upwards out of his hand like a star.

How appropriately may we finish with the inscription on the tomb of the unfortunate last of the Saxon kings —"*Hic jacet Harold Infelix!*" How fitly may we bid farewell to the brave Norman leader—falling on his field of honour—with that tribute to the generous and the valorous—"he did his duty." And in the field on which was consummated the ruin of the Saxon kingdom, he lay, himself a ruin.

We now pass on in the next chapter to another phase in the history of this terrible piece of silver; which runs through our story, with its adventures, as the TRUE HERO of it.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

PICTURES FROM THE PORTFOLIO OF ADAM ROUGE-DRAGON, HERALD TO KING ARTHUR, OF GLORIOUS MEMORY.

How one Jaculus, a Cornish Boy, did utterly destroy a Terrible Giant. (A.D. 415.)

THIS fantastic but beautiful tale, abounding in poetic imagery and illustrative of a further passage in the history of the mysterious PIECE of SILVER, was furnished to the Author, years ago, by a young writer who had all the fancy and love of the intense and the new to constitute him—should he have persevered and should his literary stars have been fortunate—an author of acknowledged rank. His name was Edwyn Martyn—his birthplace was Newfoundland. His residence has been unknown to the Author for many years; who met him accidentally originally in London. His story is here presented in a dress only different, and only so far carefully elaborated as to secure the success it deserves. Some additions—with perhaps instances of farther art in the telling—are all that is concerned. All persons must unite, it is thought, in feeling the poetic taste, and enjoying the quaint, original manner—as well as the antiquarian tastefulness and intensity—with which this wild narrative is rendered. It is truly a beautiful fairy narrative—beautifully told; and it was supplied to give a scene in the long-continuing dramatic story of the Silver Piece.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN King Ambrosius had for many years ruled over the Britons, he was gathered to his fathers; and in his stead reigned Gurlois, his son.

To him, in turn, succeeded Arthur—the most potent Knight and Star of Christian Chivalry; as all the records of him avow.

The Princess Gundreda, twin-sister to Gurlois, wedded Alexis, Knight of the Silver Bow.

Their issue, Loriscus, was united in the bonds of holy wedlock to the chaste Livia of Provence.

We shall now tell the story of some of this family.

And in their Castle of Pendennis was born in the Year of Grace 498—Radegunda.

It happened on a certain day in the summer, that this Ladye sat with her maidens in her bower in the castle-wall. And it also happened that nighhand to this Castle one Belus, a swineherd, weary from the heat, had stretched himself beneath in the shadow, and was fallen asleep. The Ladye, unconscious of the neighbourhood of any man, was amusing herself innocently in talking above on the battlements. Perched on her wrist, as she reclined idly over these battlements, was a favourite falcon. And with her maiden, Bertha, she laid this playful wager; while, because of the heat, she and Bertha disrobed themselves of all but their white *subligacula*:—

"If my falcon return empty from his flight, thou, Bertha, shall wed the first man who appears on the rock. An' he bring back aught to his mistress, *she* sweareth that she weddeth him who thus accidentally cometh."

To this, with great reluctance, stipulating for five minutes' grace for the assumed *knight* to appear, Bertha at last shyly assented. Arrow-like the bird shot through the warm summer air. Then, wheeling, it dived beneath the archway of the Barbacan, grazing smartly its plumes with the iron spikes of the lift port-

cullis. And then did it sportively pluck the tall red cap from over the upturned face of the sleeping herd. By which movement awakened, he would fain seize the robber. But thereby he appeared, with staring, silly, and with but half-awakened eyes, before the Ladye and her maiden, looking down from the castle-wall.

Like liege daughter of that noble house, ever true to its word, however rash, she took the cap and descended to the indignant owner. Unclasping her costly necklace she bound it about the cap. And then replacing it on his head, she kissed reverentially Belus the Herdsman. He shrank back astonished at the maiden's freedom: much more so that it came from so great a lady. But she placed her hand in his seriously and religiously, and bade him call her "his betrothed."

And true to her vow, while her maidens (who had come up) deemed that which had passed but a playful jest; while her attendants slumbered on their thick pillows of silk and gold tapestry, she crept from her chamber, next morning, to meet her strangely-chosen lord. The guards affrighted imagined that they saw the Holy Virgin speeding back into the country from some errand of mercy within the Castle. With the trembling Belus, who shamefacedly knew not how to approach her, the lady therefore departed. And before the Grey Hermit of Constenton she plighted her troth unto him for ever, and became his wife.

By sunset, far away from the castle of her Fathers, she reposed in the hut of her Spouse. Unto them, now wholly each to the other devoted, when time was duly fulfilled, was born a son. And him they called Jaculus; or "Jac" or "Jack."

In those days, terrible Giants infested this land of England. They devoured the best out of all the flocks and the herds. They, also, bore away and ate living young children. It happened that, one day when Jaculus was gathering some berries that he fancied upon the hills, and at times was shooting painted wooden arrows out of his bow so far up into the air that it was to the amazement of the herd-boy who companioned, as a sort of servant, with him—that he looked

low down into the valley; and Lo, he saw a man of mighty stature walking along and casting a shadow over the grass like that of a long cloud. This monstrous Figure of a Man was striding towards the boy's native distant village. He carried a huge sack on his back; and, to the horror of the boys, they saw him toss therein some of the sheep and cows, and one or two of the children playing in the grass path. Then with a club as big as the trunk of a leafless oak, he struck upon the roofs of the houses as he passed; which fell at one stroke like baby houses. Presently shouldering the sack again, and with a slouching clumsy gait, he went his way up the valley; darkening an opening between the cliffs that he passed through, and disappearing amongst the woods.

And at this sight Jaculus felt the blood of his fathers tingle in his body; so that he just swore by the beautiful sky, by the fields, by the grassy hills—and by the thunder which he sometimes, in the summer afternoons, heard rumbling from amidst them—that he would destroy the Giant and all of this cruel and intolerable giant brood. This same Giant lived up high in the rock called St. Michael's Rock (otherwise St. Michael's Mount); and he had six brothers in other parts of England, mightier than himself. He was wont to stride splashing through the sea for plunder of the flocks to the mainland. How Jaculus kept his oath, and did utterly destroy all these giants eventually, the pictures of Adam, Rouge Dragon Herald to King Arthur, do plainly show.

This is the First Picture.

The letters indicate the *vignettes* or the part pictures into which the Magic Drift-Panorama (or this whole Picture) from time to time arrangeth itself. The whole being Glamour, or the enchanter's art.

A.

It is night—moonless, obscure. A veil of mist falls over the bright white face of the moon. The rain and sleet chase in floods each other angrily. The waves

glimmering in the dark like an army of angered elfins or miniature angels rush sparkling up the sand. The dim form of a mighty rock—ship-like—rests motionless on the waters. Black like a ship on the sea with its turrets and lines like the bosses and banks of oars of a great ship.

B.

A wood fire is blazing brightly. The smoke in dark wreaths curls up the wide gulf of a chimney. The walls of the hut are grimed and bronzed. On the settle the weary mother, grasping tight her baby and shuddering at every sound of the rolling wind without, sits lonely; while with eyes askance she glares to the roof, despairing of help against the Giants. Her hair is unbraided; her face is full of terror. At her feet a blood-hound lies stretched on the lustrous red-shining hearth. He stirs and snorts; for he dreams of attacking a Gaul: and he blows the fire with his breath.

C.

It is a mighty cave that openeth wide to the south. Within, a monster lamp of dully-gleaming brass flickereth, ruddy and awful. The cobweb-tapestried roof is alive and burning with flashing flies. Droppeth from one corner a tapping cascade of silver water-drops. Smokes emit and spout from fiery holes in the ochrey earthen floor. Deep-umbered in shadows riseth a Moloch-pile of bones and horns of beasts. Scattered about — remnants of ghastly Ogre festival — lie the severed limbs of children plump and fleshy. Lighted momentarily blue by the sulphur-flash from one of the fiery holes, is stuck upright the head of some all-royal ox, still glaring grand from out his filmed eyeballs. These eyes show as monster-opals in the fitful light. Strange jewellery in a giant's den of shaggy skins, and with the iron-sounding horn.

In a huge haven, as it were of rock, cast wide o'er hides, the terrible Cormoran, the Giant, is sleeping.

His snores roll away in thunder through the windings of the cave, and issue out over the sea like the snorts of a great beast. His hair—like torn ropes—hangs over his face, resembling a thick wood tangled after storms. His crimson tongue, as big as the sail of a boat, circleth over his chin:—the last as ebon black. His beard rolls over the cave, dyed with stains and flecks of bright-red blood. One mighty hand which quivereth sensitively in its supine strength grasps even yet—the plunder of the wood—as a tiny weed. This is a large draggled bush. Out of the grip of the other hand falls harmless betwixt his fingers and rests ponderous, his dreadful club. Like felled trees in the cleared forest lie long his legs; and his sandals might be the harness of great horses.

D.

Higher yet hath the storm-sea foamed. The pearl-floods scale the russet sands. Burneth globous a *nebulus*, now and then, like a star in the widths of the pale mists. Made—Davidlike—out in the centre-line of its mighty rising disc, standeth a slender Boy in the middle of the moon. Now with both hands to his noble temples he presseth back his flowing hair and looketh like a young angel to heaven. And now the eddying water rippleth—gurgling about him—as his trampling feet stamp eager in the sea. For the boy Jack is actually going to storm the Stronghold of the Giant.

E.

During this night of storm a goodly ship, with its flat white sails and its gold beak—fashioned in the form of the Imperial Eagle—hath been contesting with the purple (the then Imperial purple) billows, dashed off at top into celestial silver. Men with bucklers and steel-gleaming Roman helmets toss wide their braceleted bare arms; and they cry with shriek to the classic gods. This beaked ship is one of a Roman fleet bound up the Briton's Channel with standards, legionaries, and a Pro-

consul—the whole urging to the assistance of the Roman troops then camped in and occupying the woody eminences of Ancient Druid-Land or Oldest Britain.

"This beaked Ship is one of a Roman Fleet bound up the Briton's Channel with standards, legionaries, and a Proconsul."

There hath been wreck, as was found next morning, amidst the grey spikes of rock speckling that plain of

dun sands at Marazion.* The ship with the Golden Eagle lies on her side battered and in ruin; with a huge wound in her flank from which welleth, as from a scupper, a stream of shining coins, as if silver blood. The brown sands are silver-spangled with the money, and it lieth in heaps amidst the white eddies and the light green hissing runnels of the far-off sounding blue sea.

A monster-man—high as the steeple of a church—coming-on dark like a wonderful shadow upon the sunshiny sky, tramples over the rocks and splashes rudely amidst the whirlpools of the sea. He (savage-like) espieth the gilt wreck at a distance by its glittering; from a hold of his, amongst the hills up the country. And down he now cometh to rifle and to rend, and tear open the spoil—like an ugly Polypheme—with his huge hands. He thrusteth one hand up to the elbow in the bowels of the ship as into a human body, and he draweth forth a portion of the money; the which glittering stuff he understandeth not, but sifteth and droppeth curiously between forefinger and thumb like silver sand. And then he brusheth it forth like dust, from between his fingers. The Roman ship is silent of the hundreds which yesterday were carried in her—joyful at the sight of land and clattering their little short swords. The wild British waters were their grave. And—now that the tide is down—the Cornish Tablestones show as their pale green innumerable tombstones. The Giant Cormoran meanwhile trampleth brutish in the wet sands, and placeth his foot upon the bows of that great Roman ship; the body of which he cracketh like a walnut. At that moment he taketh in a hillock as it were, of wet sand, speckled with (to him) this silver money—dust in the ball of his *harnessed* foot:—for to the small sight of men his monster-sandal shows no less than as leather horse-harness, with brass bosses, big as the *umbos* of a gate. A pain, as if of a spear, ploughs up through his solid

* The sands of Marazion in Cornwall are not far from St. Michael's Mount, and are within twelve miles of the extremity of England in the westerly direction—the "Land's End" with its rocks, which are here extremely picturesque; as all travellers thereto know.

lumpy flesh into his prodigious thigh. He roars—dashes down his club; the spikes of which strike fire from the flags. And he runs inland with the dripping sand cleaving clammy and thick about his feet, kneaded as it is with money. One extraordinarily bright-shining little COIN, caught in his sandals, shooteth as it were darts of flame into the sole of his foot; which latter shakes the earth. Fatal PIECE of MONEY to the ship that carried it, as to the Monster Lout that upwards to his mountain-den bears it unconscious now in the

Company of Fays on their phantom-horses (assistant to Jaculus), skimming the marshes, in the last of twilight, on their inroad into the Giant's Hold.

mass of sand that clings like a ball in the hollow of his left foot. The curse is microscopical, but huge in effect because this monster is still in human form.

E.

A grassy place amidst the giant heads of the hills is now seen. The world sleeps save for the scream of the

ravening birds from the sullen sea and from the Roman wreck, wheeling blackly home. Broodeth Twilight. Swift as with the speed of the Ministers of Vengeance the champion-boy cuts up the clods. The mists are alive with shining helmeted phantoms, tearing like him the way, and onward rushing (to his flight) though he courseth like one alone; with the solitary country all around.

F.

Next yawneth a pit of wonderful depth, the sides of which shone as lined with flame.

G.

It is morning—calm, and with the fresh winds blowing. In the East the sun is rising. Streaks of open bright light mingle with the gilded mists. Day is dropping the successive veils swift from her glorious face. Behind a rock by the still water the Boy sits watching like a young elfin. His hands support his chin. His full blue beautiful eyes look eastward as expectant. His yellow hair hangs flowing and smooth. Behind him the purple cliffs print boldly out upon the sky. An acre, bright and green, of the grass seems freshly cut. A pickaxe, a spade, a lantern, truly a "magic" one, and a horn (with slings of green) lie at the Boy's feet.

H.

Smileth the bridegroom sun upon his beautiful blushing sea. The cloudy floors and the thunder-palaces of the deposed Night, and the elfin-films over them, begot of moon and water, sink, as in the theatre, in the leaden West. Now tears of joy (at rescue from storms) glitter thick and innumerable in the spearlike grass. And the cliffs, red with the flashing laughter of the Court of Morn, glow all-aspread in the resplendence of their beauty.

A monster human head, of the size at least of a shepherd's hut, juts out of the ground. The eyes

glare horrible. The thick hair enwreaths. The mouth stretcheth death-like and agape; and the tiger-tongue rolls restless and slaughterous. Out of the broken skull the thick blood welleth. It congealeth hard in the thicket of that starting black hair, and the gigantic grisly features convulse. A roar, like that of a death-smitten bull, resoundeth among the hills, and toppleth down a rock with the noise; which bounceth and splasheth away into the sea, dipping viciously amidst smoke and clangour and cataracts.

And now, somewhat aside, standeth the "Victor Boy." The Giant sinks. Vigorously to work setteth the pickaxe; making the earth fly, and gleaming red in the rushing light from out the pit. The quivering flames lick eager-like (here and there) as fiery tongues. Burneth now fierce that gulf of a grave. Like a cloud, or like rain, the grassy clods reiterate—falling in thickly. The alarmed seagulls spread wide their wings, spring high, and then poise to look and scream; but the vultures swoop swift, prying in closer and closer circles at that bleeding, enticing head. That head which rises as its own best black monument upon the stained hillock, and which glares horrible and half alive yet; as it seems.

The Scroll.

Herein, Reader, thou hast perceived how Jaculus, having come to the sands of Marazion, hath swum in the night, across the stormy water, to the Great Mount where Cormoran once did dwell. And there how that he dug a pit of wonderful depth Thou hast found; which straightway was set a-burning by the conjuration of one Minnistorides, a wizard, he bearing great hatred and horror at the dreadful Giant; and love of his country.

And this pit being cunningly contrived through stakes and straw and grass over the hole to deceive with nicety—Jaculus bloweth magically, when quite ready for the feat, on his silver-bound horn. At which obstreperous and dreadful noise, being taken

quite unexpectedly, Cormoran wakes in fury. And urging out with a dash to catch the insulting pigmy, in his haste the Giant FALLETH, unsuspecting, disgraced, and grievously, into the pit of fire. And thereupon he is speedily despatched by Jaculus. And this is the well-merited and perfect

END OF THE GIANT OF ST. MICHAEL'S MOUNT.

The COIN now disappears for a time. Where and what mischief it effected between this fantastic exercise of its power, and all the occurrences detailed in the preceding legendary account, and this coming scene in the Coliseum of Rome wherein (in this succeeding chapter) we again recognise it, mysterious and baleful, does not appear. It penetrates like an arrow through the clouds of the intervening centuries. And it is reckless—nay, unknowing—of the human stories into which it intrudes during that interval between its effects in Britain on the Cornish coast and its reappearance on the artificial sands of the Roman Coliseum.

We now thus pass on to another catastrophe it works amid the crowds of the city of the Seven Hills—the metropolis of the world—Rome.

For the generations perish like leaves; they come and go, rise and fall, succeed each other like waves, and are swept *flat*, as it were, by the passing winds of destiny; which cross the path of the marching generations, and, in extinguishing them, naturally take them along into that parade of misrepresented shadows upon the Wall of Time which is called History. But the COIN, itself, lives indestructible; for, like the "Wandering Jew," it is doomed to survive all.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

PART THE FIRST.

THE CIRCUS MAXIMUS. TIME—A.D. 312.

WITH the lapse of centuries the ever-active SILVER PIECE reappears on its accustomed errand of mischief and of ruin. Traversing the world upon its mission, like the blight it fastens upon that prepared; and wreaks its ill according to its curse.

It is 312 of the Christian era. There is a procession to the Great *Coliseo*. All Rome stirred with the first daylight to witness an immolation of the unbelievers of the Gods. This is to take place in the centre of the sands of the huge amphitheatre. The time is that of one of the many cruel persecutions of the Christians. And on this day a young woman—a professor of the new proscribed creed—and her aged father are to be offered up sacrifice; the means of their destruction are to be the wild beasts of the arena.

The mighty city hums with its thronging thousands. The ways are choked. All the successive orders of the Roman dignities and the Roman people come forth with Imperial ensigns and in the pomp of silk and gold and with loud-sounding choral songs and trumpets. Hymns to the Pagan deities are grandly chanted by the priests as in slow procession Virgilia—for this is the name of the Christian maiden as Maximus is that of her father—as father and daughter are led bound between tall lictors with axes scarved with the colours of doom, and the crowd of standard-eagles and "hands" behind.

But there is one that precedes them—pale but reso-

lute—panoplied in full armour, with his greaves of steel and his crested helmet—displaying barbarian ensigns; this last. It is Demetrius, a young Dacian, taken in arms fighting nobly for the independence of his country, and condemned to a curious and cruel trial—doubtless death—as the result of love conceived by him for the Roman Virgilia by chance sights during their long imprisonment in the dungeons of the arbitrary, cruel Emperor. The magistrates have offered Maximin and his

The Great Coliseo

daughter their lives if a champion shall be found to fight for them; he to maintain horrid fight and to succeed with certain fierce lions of Africa to which they are to be exposed, bound and naked, in the arena. And Demetrius consents—in his great love—regardless altogether of his own life. For which, indeed, he has small hope in this so unequal combat, inadequately armed as he is.

And now the gorgeous procession sweeps into the *Coliseo* to the loud bursts of long trumpets and of

Imperial music. The *porta pompæ* vomits them forth into the gigantic ring. Huge billows of faces rising in sublime *gradus*, like clouds smaller and smaller, expand over the *sedilia*, the *sub-sellia*—those subdivisions of seats

"His brave, generous looks and his grand mien struck admiration, and won the applause of the entire assembly."

which form collectively the *cavea* or grand hollow. These ascend from the *podium* at foot into populous terraces where the eye aches in its attempts to descry the *myriads* of half-lighted and seated people. The *Pulvinar*—the

station for the Emperor—glows thick with its Imperial gold:—it gleams with the thousands of shields of the Pretorians.

As the procession statelily wound round the other side of the canal—twenty feet wide—called *Euripus*, contrived for the purpose, like a river between, of securing the safety of the spectators in those fierce games exhibited in this wondrous Circus (deadly these games in their progress and end), a hand, from beside the Emperor seemingly, flung forth a PIECE of SILVER as a dole or an *honorarium* to the combatant Demetrius. He bowed low as he saw it in the air, and seized it as an earnest of the wonderment he was exciting; dropping it gracefully within his helmet, which he took off for a moment for the purpose. His brave, generous looks and his grand mien struck admiration and won the applause of the entire assembly. A monstrous shower of money followed this first signal of admiration expressed by the COIN; which spontaneous flight of treasure the slaves gathered up in the shields and lay by, pending the issue of that wild-beast combat which was to decide for the lives of the gallant barbarian and of his two unhappy companions. Mysterious dispensation! The flight and fall of that PIECE of SILVER is Demetrius' very condemnation—his consecration to bitter doom. Unknown was the fatal hand from which it came. It fell and was picked up: Which act sufficed.

But now the attendants crowding upon the games retire on either side from the *spina* or low wall which runs down the centre of the amphitheatre. Some of the boldest slaves climb the *metæ* or goals to witness intent the issue of the on-coming terrible battle between the man and the lions. Virgilia and her father are placed bound and nearly naked within reach of the starved lions at one side of the great central space of the terrible Circus. A loud-resounding flourish of music from metal mouths is given. The solitary armed man stands glittering small like a silver speck almost in the centre of the plain of death and waving bravely his bright little sword. The *porta libertinensis*, or of slaughter, is thrown wide open. And at the last signal, for which indeed

the keepers of the inner gates for a moment pause, out rush at a bound two monster-lions which have been tormented for days, and from which food has been long withheld for the very purpose of the barbaric excitement of this show. Rampant with rage and with flashing, fiery eyes they would dart first upon their more defenceless prey; avoiding the keen sword of the gladiator. But they are encountered, (standing between,) by the champion-warrior; who turning from one to the other in quick succession, deeply wounds them both. And now truly a fearful fight commences as the lions espying the bodies proffered to them behind Demetrius seek to tear him down ravenously in their frightful bounds to reach the Christian maiden and her screaming, writhing father; her father now crouches in the extremity of horror behind her, digging a frantic hole in the sands, with his hands, to hide him.

The valiant Demetrius is in a few moments almost hidden in a grapple by the lions, as he successfully for a time withstands them—his restless sword gleaming about their manes and throats like death-dealing lightning. The roar and yells and bounds and crushing of the furious beasts echo through the Amphitheatre; all the thousands in which are silent with terrific awe. At last the rolling thunder of a shout circling the *stadia*—a mighty shout that shakes almost all Rome—proclaims that one of the lions has fallen beneath the tremendous sword of the barbarian champion. But his armour is all blood-covered now and crushed as to steel coins in the contest; his sword breaks short in one last fierce stroke. He combats like a demi-god with the hilt; but he falls under the awful charge of the last of the devilish beasts. The show is stopped amidst noise like an earthquake. Men rush into the ring and surround with spears and despatch, after a fierce struggle, the surviving lion. The Emperor descends into the *arena*. Pardon is borne to the victims. But alas to one it is too late. Lifted by the Emperor's order and crowned with the glorious chaplet of conquest the victor-combatant has won two lives in that of his beloved Virgilia and that of her father; but—alas, alas!—he has lost *his own* in his triumph; for

his dead body is raised, this time on shields, and carried stiff out of the Coliseum.

Clouds roll over public events and private stories until we recover the fiery thread of our narrative, working backwards as we do, in the din of the Siege of Jerusalem.

PART THE SECOND.

THE FALL OF JERUSALEM. TIME—A.D. 70.

WE pass to another scene at a long interval in the history of the ever-reappearing PIECE of SILVER MONEY. We thus are nearing its sublime origin.

Jerusalem—the Holy City—is besieged. Each from his separate watchtower, Eleazar from the summit of the temple, John from the porticoes of the outer courts, and Simon from the heights of Sion, beheld three camps forming immediately under the walls of Jerusalem.

They harassed the Roman workmen by stones and missiles from the walls of the city, and by perpetual sallies. Under their penthouses of wicker-work the Romans laboured diligently; the Tenth Legion distinguished itself. The Jews set men to watch the huge rocks which came thundering down every now and then upon their heads. Titus ordered the innumerable battering-rams to play. At three different places they began clustering their thundering work. The besieged answered with shouts; but they were shouts of terror. The formidable, gigantic machines called *Helepoleis*, the "takers of cities," pursued their furious battering. At length a corner tower came rolling down. There was one of these *Helepoleis*, or battering engines, called by the Jews themselves "Nico," the Victorious, for it beat down everything grandly before it. "Nico" did not cease to thunder day and night. At dawn the battle always began again. Longinus, a Roman knight, greatly distinguished himself by charging singly into a whole squadron of the Jews; he killed two men and came safely off. Two monster walls had fallen; but still the precipitous heights of Sion, the impregnable

"Antonia," and the stately Temple, lowered defiance on the invaders. The antiquary still endeavours to trace among the defaced and mouldering reliefs of the arch raised to Titus, "the Delight of Human-kind," and which still stands in the Forum of Rome, the representation of the spoils taken from the temple of Jerusalem —the golden table and candlesticks, the censers, the silver trumpets, and even the long multitudinous procession of captive Jews.

The sacred gates were blocked up with rubbish, with balistas and catapults; the peaceful temple with its marble courts and gilded pinnacles assumed the appearance of a battered warlike citadel. Its courts were spotted and in some places strewn with the dead—men with swords broken or flashing, reeking with the blood of the enemy or of their own countrymen, rushed to and fro along the Holy place, and even trod into the Holy of Holies. Even the Roman soldiers, it is said, shuddered at the profanation of the Hebrew penetralia.

Titus, almost weary with conquest, determined to suspend the siege for a few days. He employed the time in making a magnificent review of all his troops, who were to receive their pay in bushel measures in view of the whole city. The troops defiled slowly in their grand attire with their arms advanced, all taken out of their cases, and their metal laps and breastplates on; the cavalry leading their horses, accoutred, shining in their most splendid trappings. The whole suburbs gleamed wide with steel, and gold and silver. The Romans beheld the spectacle with exulting pride, the Jews with consternation. The whole length of the old wall, the northern cloisters of the temple, every window, every roof was crowded with heads looking down, some with stern and scowling expression of hate and defiance; others in undisguised terror; some emaciated with famine, others heated with intemperance. For four days this procession continued defiling beneath the walls and never seemed done, for at night long trains of flambeaux and of lanterns circled the city. After seventeen days' labour, on the 27th or 29th of May, A.D. 70, the embankments were raised in

four separate places; that of the Fifth Legion began near the "Pool of the Sparrows;" that of the Twelfth about thirty-five feet farther off; that of the Tenth on the north near the pool of the "Almond Trees;" and that of the Fifteenth on the east, near the "Monument of John."

There was a deep and heavy silence over the whole city, broken only by the many robbers as they forced open houses to plunder the dead; on whom, if not quite expired, they would even try the edge of their swords.

A deserter who had at one time been appointed to pay for the interment of the dead at a particular gate, stated that from the 14th of April, when the siege began, to the 1st of July, 115,880 bodies had been buried at the public charge or "thrown from the walls," not including those interred by their friends. Others said that 600,000 of the poorer people had perished. A measure of wheat was selling for a talent, and the people were raking into the very ground for sustenance, scraping even for mould or dust or ashes if it was supposed to contain anything of edible refuse.

In the meantime the famine continued its fearful ravages. Men would fight, even the dearest friends would grapple each other, for the most miserable morsel. The most loathsome and disgusting food was sold and haggled for at an enormous price. The Jewish forces gnawed their belts, shoes, and even the leathern coats of their shields:—chopped hay, bark off the living tree, and shoots of trees sold at high prices.

"Food—food!—money to purchase it, or death! Kill me, and these two innocent babes who, with me, partake of this fearful vengeance of pitiless Heaven! Oh that the stones of these giant towers would fall and crush me! Oh, that I had never been born! Never had been reserved to see the misery of these two precious ones! Oh that I had never *lived* to witness the terrors of this foe-encompassed city; and the famine and destruction of its people thus by the Eternal Ruler abandoned! Jerusalem—city of my birth—city no longer mine nor of my people—but death's. City of destroyed regalities, of stricken lords of the priesthood and place of miraculous

history! Whose wail in that dread day that shall see thee sink into the gulf of final ruin shall be the loudest over thee? Whose grief and whose extremity shall surpass all these accumulated horrors within thy walls? Whose is to be that last shriek that shall the deepest compel into that dumb unpitying blue concave—witholding its lightnings—when the smoke of thy hugest sacrifice—THYSELF—shall rise in its utter fiery-tinged mass to the footsteps of the Throne of the immutable and sternly punishing Lord, who hath willed all this—wills it still?"

A woman was tossing her arms wildly in agony as these shrill cries escaped her. Worn and reduced into an object almost, itself, of personal horror to beholders, she yet challenged the extremest affright for herself—fear almost too great for pity—in her attitude as she lay with one almost dead child on the one side of her, and another just struggling for breath with its few items of life to cling to her long fingers; on the other. All three of this deplorable group of human-kind were sunk into a state that would have been the most heartrending in the world, had not callousness and utter indifference even to the most tremendous horrors possessed the whole city. Sense of self and of unutterable individual inflictions alone survived in Jerusalem now.

There was a very deep gateway which extended its arch of huge architectural stone over the wretched woman and her dying children. People had collected into this avenue; some to die, some to stab and plunder the living. Among the crowd were a number of soldiers who were tearing off their blood-bedabbled armour in their rage and hewing at the hinges in order to seek their wounds, and to relieve by oils or water the intolerable pain they were enduring. Disease and famine were elsewhere also doing their direful work. The incessant thundering of the battering-rams and the monotonous fall of stones and the cataract of rubbish in answer, with an occasional flicker in the sky as artificial false fires flew; these, with the subdolous, never-ceasing, rumbling flow of pounded marble and of fractured bricks out of the breaches, told of the activity of the

beleaguering army of Titus shouting now and then under the walls.

As the poor woman after a prolonged cry, which was only quieted by a sudden fierce blow from the blunt-end of a spear—this by a wounded soldier who *stood* (falling nearly to the earth) in the extremity of his hunger or pain, and whom the cry maddened; as the tortured woman, we say, shrank convulsively at the stroke, rocking herself on the now almost, indeed (from the battering engines), *shaking* pavements, a Jewish horseman of distinction (to judge from his armour and his trappings) would have dashed madly by this entrance of the arch had not his horse reared actually at the sight he sidelong encountered. An instant's glance of the rider as his horse fell to his fore-feet again seemed to tell him the whole history of the woman. And ere he urged again on, he thrust his hand into the bosom of his robe and threw her a large piece of silver. It was the fateful PIECE which has so often played-out its mission in our pages. The very piece it was; but—How got it there?

Elisheba—for that was the name of this Jewish woman—caught the coin eagerly in her clutch. And she started to her feet as if there were new life intensifying then through her limbs and lifting her, at this so probably powerful means of melting the relentlessness of those who yet had "food" to give. Several near her saw the action of the pitying horseman and understood that gift. But either through compassion or more presumedly from the very dead despairing apathy and indifference which possessed everybody, no one sought to plunder her. With flashing eyes like a fury or a sibyl—guarded for everything—clasping the coin hard and seizing her children in her arms, like a maddened Niobe daring and challenging if possible yet further stroke, she cleared her way from out of the archway and through the famine-stricken, pestilence-falling crowd. And she made her path good through a whole street that bordered the battlemented wall, where, because of the falling wreck and the danger of shot from the Roman engines, the road was freer. She feared not

stone, shot, or arrow in that eager haste to avoid the something dreaded as yet more terrible.

She passes and comes along with rapidity to some distance. She espies a point or nook in the wall where a hungry group are devouring something. With a falcon eye she descries bread. With a laugh of joy she madly kisses now her almost dying little ones; she places them tenderly under the protection of a ledge of stone lining the lower rampart. And then she springs upward—*upward*—scales a shaking stair, mounting from stone to stone unto the topmost ridge of the wall, now all hot glare, and crashes, and dust; where the fierce arrows fly, lightning like, by her, and the thunder of the conflict resounds, shaking the very foundation of the city. "Money! money for a morsel of bread. It is for my little ones," she shrieks, holding up the direful, mysterious COIN; unconscious in her tremblingly eager fingers. A soldier guarding a basket of bread snatches the coin; but with no intention of giving her any food. A colossal spearman, clutching the bread away at once from the grasp of the soldier and from the sight of the woman, deals both a dreadful blow. And Elisheba, tottering, falls backward over the edge of the rampart and becomes one more disregarded sacrifice of that groaning Jerusalem in the fiery hour of her bitterest trial. A cloud of smoke springs up vengefully from the chasm as if in answer to the woman's fall. And the noise of the tumbling towers goes on incessantly as an underbeaten chorus to the more salient exciting louder tune of the hail of stones of the catapults, and the sharper shrieks which come in as the shrill notes.

"Let her go!" cried the rapacious soldier. "She is but one." And the rain of missiles on the doomed city deepened. And the smoky sky became fuller of stones; their crash being the awful music of the fall of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem fell—overwhelmed with horrors. And the tide of our story rolls back to its beginning, which was in the "Thirty-Third Year" of our present count of time. The year of the Crucifixion; upon which last phase we are now about fearfully to enter.

PART THE THIRD.

THE TEMPLE. TIME—A.D. 33.

MORN breaks slow over the hills of Jerusalem. Reluctant Night still clings to the heavens of which she—Dark Daughter—is soon to be dispossessed. The earth is still hushed in awe, as if in expectation of the most solemn of all sacrifices. All nature trembles. There is silence in heaven where the stars are hidden. And in the nether deeps, and in the uttermost parts thereof, and through the length and breadth of the Kingdoms of the Condemned, is there hushed awe, and are there the bowing-down of Crowned Authorities, the shattering of diadems, and the snapping of shadowy sceptres. For a Sign is in the Empyrean and a Word of awful power revolves with the rolling world. A Word inspiring UNIVERSAL FEAR AND TREMBLING.

And now there gleameth no sun-glance on the lead-coloured Saturnian towers of sin-possessed Jerusalem. The early morning is but as a lighter night. There are low sounds. The thronging and murmur of a multitude is heard as to a world-momentous act. And the gleaming of a long procession of armed men to a Gloomed Hill is distantly seen. Which Hill shall be a name throughout the flights of the centuries for evermore.

Two men meanwhile maintaining most perturbed discourse and occasionally casting glances at the dark alarming sky, were seen to take their way toiling with gasps upward towards the Great Temple—that Temple of Solomon whose countless pinnacles and embattled walls stretched grandly along the summit of the now darkened hill; but from which, when the refulgent sun of

Jerusalem shone, it showed all royally gold. The name of the one man was Eleasah, a just Jew, humble in spirit and pure in heart—wholly a man of innocent and of beneficent life; and the name of the other man—so alone known under this name to his companion—was Jansa, (Iansa, Iudas)—JUDAS.

And as they went on their way, the man Jansa was perpetually seen to strike his forehead as if in agony, and the clouds of the place of dole went as it were and came in his frightful, haggard, pain-channelled visage—to be shown alone in the penal lights. The other man was seeking apparently to calm and to administer words of comfort; and to be putting inquiries, to which the man Jansa would or could afford no reply. And as drops of water unto fierce flame were his expressions of pity and his proffered help to Jansa; extorting almost hisses of anguish.

A bag was in the hand of this so-called Jansa which he held with a clutch that brought tincture of blood into his palm. And ever and anon he would pause to groan as one in the worst extremity groans; and his perplexed distress to witness was most frightful.

And they now reached the Temple. In at the Gate of Shushan, through the Cloister or Porch of Solomon, through the Court of the Gentiles they went—the one man anxious, the other in despair. And they only paused because Jansa in alarm would not permit of the farther passing in with him to his companion Eleasah; as if, for some secret reasons, above all things, dreading it. They therefore abruptly turned round at the high rails and the flight of steps which lead up to the Chel or Terrace.

"Depart from me, for I am a man of sin; and I may not permit of living lower creatures—much less of a human being—to remain within sound of my voice! Aye, or even within sight of my body! Depart—while thou art spared to do it, and art not destroyed, with me, in the lightnings of Heaven. For even looking upon me is unlawful, and standing by my side is sin almost ineffaceable. Go, while the thunders yet pause!"

Ere Eleasah could recover from his astonishment, and

his horror at the perplexing disclosure, which he could see was real and no effect of sudden madness as which he was at first disposed to think it, he whom he had hitherto known as Jansa (and as only a merchant of his native Jerusalem) disappeared within the inclosures of the inner temple seemingly; for Eleasah saw no other means of withdrawal from his eye except into the Temple. Eleasah now heard the wail of trumpets, and the distant beat of the High Priest's timbrels or drums.

Eleasah gazed about him in terror and in dismay. For the times alarmed, and man scarcely knew or could trust his brother. The Court of Wine and Oil is on one side of Eleasah; the Court of Lepers on the other. He turns. There again are all familiar objects. On the right of him is the Wood Court, and on the left the Court of Nazarites. But he no longer sees Jansa. There is the Gate called Beautiful; there are the Court of the Women, the Gate of Nicanor, the Court of Israel, the vast brazen altar and the ascent to it; but Eleasah espieth not his late companion. And he fears much, for there is a horror upon him and a dread and forecast of an unspeakable evil of which in some manner he is to be made witness or partaker; or which it is his part to denounce to all Time and to fling forth from him in the face of heaven, of men, and of the possessors of the very rebel seats floored beneath the foundations of the world. The devils in their place of chains and punishing fire seemed doomed anew.

Meantime the man called Jansa made his way towards the Interior of the Temple. And he seeks the Chief Priests and Ruling Authorities of the Jews there assembled. He enters suddenly within the precincts. All within started to their feet astonished and appalled as they saw him come. For the ground quivered under him, as if trembling to denounce a man of guilt unutterable. And there was that upon his brow which told of a horror *not yet* complete; even though it struck aghast.

And before the council he opened the bag which he had carried in his tightly-compressed hand; and he brought into the profaned place money, and he shook out from his hand in the sight of all—aye, upon the

marbles that clanked and split to their awful fall as if to the crack of the world—Thirty Pieces of Silver. Those which had been a Price. There was almost a scream as the visage of Jansa disclosed.

"Thou art Judas the Traitor," exclaimed one of the High Priests, shuddering and retreating. "Avaunt! Have we not paid thee?" And all hid their eyes in horror; turning pale.

Then Judas—for it was indeed Judas—struck his hands together in an agony that forced cries of pain even from those who witnessed it. And he groaned with a groan which came from the whole depths of his being, and in accents the most harrowing he said—"I am accursed in that guilty thing which I have done. For I have betrayed the Innocent, and Hell hath now all part in me. Earth rejecteth. And ah! no longer may I hope *for hope*. The celestial gates are closed and barricaded utterly against *me*—the abandoned both of men and angels! Take, then, this price which shall buy horrors, fruitfully, through the all-oncoming time—these for a rich harvest of TERROR."

And in an ecstasy of despair, after trampling, as if in possession, upon the Silver Coin, Judas the traitor—rejected through the Universe!—turned from before them and departed like a shadow out of the sight of the Elders of the Temple; who now drew their breath and looked for the first time round.

But before he went they said unto him—making therein themselves partners of his unpronounceable sin—"What to us—Man—is that which thou hast done? See thou *thyself* to the ruin which thou hast called down upon thyself, body and soul; for we only paid thee, and we are free."

And when Judas was gone from before them the Elders and the Chief Ones of the Temple took up these Silver Pieces and said unto each other—"By the Law are we not permitted to return these Coins back into the Treasury of the Temple, because therewith hath life been paid for. Let us devise therefore that which we shall do with the pieces; so that there be no blood on our souls."

And a space of land was purchased with the Accursed Pieces, whereinto the bodies of strangers were committed in burial. And it beareth the name of the Field of Blood unto this day.

But awaiting the return of the supposed Jansa, Eleasah remained without the boundary of the Courts of the Temple. And men came forth of the Temple, exclaiming upon Judas—"This is Judas the Traitor. Devils shall possess him utterly! This is Judas!"

And Judas covered his face with his hands, and writhed in the terror of his unutterable remorse. And when he saw Eleasah he flung himself at his feet, as if seeking to extort pardon to be yielded to the *extremity* of his anguish. But Eleasah turned from him in horror and pushed him away; and with raised and trembling hands he denounced him, through the oncoming Time, as the mighty mark, and the terrible name at which the worlds were to shudder. To be cast out of hope in either Place Present or Place to Come; a leaf out of the Book of Life to be burnt.

And in an uncontrollable inspiration, and in a holy horror at the malefactor, he cried—"The Silver Pieces, the price of that thine all-nameless guilt, shall wander on, as lights of hell, through the centuries. And as living curses, fastening upon hopes and upon life, shall they crush and consume—trample and annihilate! Those into whose hands they fall shall by varying plagues—ingenious in their change, yet alike fell and total—be followed and destroyed! And in holding them, even for an instant (in one or other shape) shall they find dole and doom. Undecaying—imperishable, shall they blend the phases of all nature into their purpose—masters (as devils) of it! And they shall live undestroyed through Time as things exempt, upon which no hand to hide or to change, through the ages, shall fall. But they shall be as magic things that pass, unwitted of it, through Time! As Fires upon the green world shall they fall—wasting, burning, blasting. Money of Hades, that shall buy to the Devil, and wholly over to misfortune, those alike hapless or happy—unconscious both. They shall

tempt, in their glare and glamour, as nets or clouds of gold (the handiwork of the servants of Sathan), binding and fastening (as in the false-seeming web or mist of jewels) the Wicked. But with mere physical ill and mere temporary evil hap shall the Good break through their floating spells, fighting against their bad power in the strength of the angel-helped will, and rescued by the springing soul. Shaken free of them, shall men walk freer—godlier. But held, or hugged, or taken as 'loved' to the bosom—though all unseen their origin—shall they bring tumult, shall they bring terror, shall they bring destruction! Banned through the rolling worlds, and passing as Charmed Signs through the Time to Be. Thus shall they sweep as fiery letters through the centuries, to be read alone of those magicians who gather into meaning the red-hot inscriptions on the Gates of Hell! And may Men take warning! As for thee—Child of the Evil One—thou art *worse* than the devils, for thou sold'st thyself for utter ashes, and for veriest dust! Thyself killing and consuming—foul magician!—the once-blessed soul within thee! Thine is the inexpiable guilt! Away! Get thee to Darkness! If Darkness shall not Itself again vomit thee out! Get thee then to an Orcus which shall grow the hotter—the whiter in fiercer light—that THOU art in it!"

And Eleasah turned, and went on his way in terror and in grief; weeping bitter tears. And darkness fell on the soul of Judas. Darkness not to be told. Darkness darker than the starless night. The darkness of the "eternal hopeless!" The darkness never to know—even in the flight of the (to others) pitying eternal time—a glance of the rescuing light!

(Such is the dole of the Seller of His SAVIOUR through the worlds to come. And as just and merited, so does the world admit the fearful—the unutterable doom. Recited, however, to modern inattentive—languid, doubting, misunderstanding, ignorant ears in the miraculous pages of the "Sacred Story.")

Ah sad—sad :
Ah foolish—foolish !

Modern men, and these ignorantly educated latter times in which the poor creature, MAN, and his contemptible, physical, vain-glorious, mechanical discoveries are assumed as paramount, and of undeniable because of immediate and practical value to everyday life, may be assured that instead of misrepresentation and mere dogma and mere symbolical, dialectical, convenient, and merely necessary and expedient and requisite teaching (as which modern science and modern doubt contends successfully that it is), that the Gospel IS TRUE and not philosophical only, and that the eternal mission of the SAVIOUR and the miraculous narrative of HIS LIFE ON EARTH are at once real, and vital, and exact; though not perhaps meant in the senses which are involved when reason sets in to examine:—for men, through reason, will never find out the things of God.

BOOK THE SIXTH AND FINAL.

A DREAM OF ETERNITY.

AND the long days, after these mighty events, passed. And Eleasah, the Just Man, was sorely troubled in mind; seeking the good and yet beset with doubt, trouble, and anxieties as to Man and his Final Destiny. He, Eleasah, this Jew, humble in heart and soliciting out of the revelations of nature comfort in those days of terror and affliction—he, this man of thought and of sorrow, went wandering about in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. And he haunted its steeps inconsolably to witness the setting of the sun as promising again of rising; and of its reappearance into the heaven of life indicative of man's birth into the better state. And the contradictory scheme of nature he was endeavouring to reconcile to his despairing understanding, and upon the power and intents of Providence he was dwelling ceaselessly, and into the great love of Goodness and of purity was he growing daily. And he feared—feared exceedingly—for "fear is the beginning of wisdom."

Then when he gazed upon the stars he said to himself—"If it were but permitted to this mean condition—to *me* as a single Son of Earth—to transcend these low bounds of my being, and to be allowed—though but for a moment— to witness in the truth the ever-

more wider-stretching splendours of the dwelling-place of that adorable and eternal UNKNOWN POWER who has hung the stars as lights in the impenetrable profound. But, ah, to man SO DISTANT. Methinks the meanest of the angels—for there must be *some eyes to see* when this human frame falls into atoms—must own felicity, must possess bliss in being witness of the fathomless wonder of that glorious open space; seeing the procession of worlds and partaking of the infinite happiness which makes the grandest music in their ceaseless rolling! Oh that I may at last win to those distant places of the blessed! And that I may one day join in the universal sense of life which proclaims praise in its harmonious thunder through the infinite concave, in a *personal identity* that may see and understand; as I do now."

And on the slope of one of the mountains round Jerusalem, and amidst the glories of an afternoon that was altogether flooded with sun, and that breathed the airs of the bright lost Paradise (aye, that very angels' land) did Eleasah, wearied with his languishing thoughts and after a day of long wandering and holy meditation, fall asleep quietly with his folded submissive hands. And he dreamt the following pictures; which were as if TOLD him:—

It was as the lower steps this dream—ascending into light—of the same celestial ladder, up which the Patriarch Jacob saw the angelic squadrons passing up within, and lost at last, in glory, in the Heavenly Gates.

"Dream-vision of the Infinite as it reveals itself in the Chambers of Space.

God called up from dreams a man into the vestibule of heaven, saying, 'Come thou hither, and see the glory of my house.' And to the servants that stood around his throne he said, 'Take him, and *undress him from his robes of flesh:* change his vision, and put a new breath into his nostrils: arm him with sail-broad wings for flight. Only touch not with any change his human heart—the heart that weeps and trembles.'

It was done; and with a mighty angel for his guide, the man stood ready for his infinite voyage; and from the terraces of heaven, without sound or farewell, at once they wheeled away into endless space. Sometimes with the solemn flight of angel-wing they fled through Zaarahs of darkness, through wildernesses of death that divided the worlds of life: sometimes they swept over frontiers, that were quickening under prophetic motions towards a life not yet realised. Then from a distance that is counted only in heaven, light dawned for a time through a sleepy film: by unutterable pace the light swept to *them*, they by unutterable pace to the light: in a moment the rushing of planets was upon them: in a moment the blazing of suns was around them. Then came eternities of twilight, that revealed, but were not revealed. To the right hand and to the left towered mighty constellations, that by self-repetitions and by answers from afar, that by counter-positions, that by mysterious combinations, built up triumphal gates, whose architraves, whose archways—horizontal, upright—rested—rose—at altitudes, by spans—that seemed ghostly from infinitude. Without measure were the architraves, past number were the archways, beyond memory the gates. Within were stairs that scaled the eternities above, that descended to the eternities below: above was below, below was above, to the man stripped of gravitating body: depth was swallowed-up in height insurmountable, height was swallowed-up in depth unfathomable.

Suddenly as thus they rode from infinite to infinite, suddenly as thus they tilted over abysmal worlds, a mighty cry arose—that systems more mysterious, worlds more billowy—other heights, and other depths—were dawning, were nearing, were at hand.

Then the man sighed, stopped, shuddered, and wept. His overladen heart uttered itself in tears; and he said, 'Angel, I will go no farther. For the spirit of man aches under this infinity. Insufferable is the glory of God's house. Let me lie down in the grave, that I may find rest from the persecutions of the Infinite; for end, I see, there is none.' And from all the listening

stars that shone around issued one choral chant—'Even so it is, Angel, thou knowest that it is: end there is none, that ever yet we heard of.' 'End is there none?' the angel solemnly demanded. 'And is this the sorrow that kills you?' But no voice answered, that he might answer himself. Then the angel threw up his glorious hands to the heaven of heavens, saying, 'End is there none to this universe of God? Lo! also THERE IS NO BEGINNING.'"

"Make His paths strait.

END OF THE STORY OF THE SILVER PIECE.

EPILOGUE CONCERNING THE

STRANGE MAN'S MANUSCRIPT.

THE Author of the Whole begs to assert, with all proper apologies, that this book is an ambitious attempt, doubtless, to produce a history as original as the far-famed "Shadowless Man" of the renowned Adelbert von Chamisso—that incomparable story, as it has been called—the most singular and new of modern times; and which dwells in every one's mind.

But newness and strangeness take a long time before they are understood and appreciated. The first edition of "Peter Schlemihl" appeared in 1814, with a dedication dated May 27, 1813. It was long before it could find a publisher; and when it was produced, it was published by a friend. It has been (in the account of it) suggestively added:—"It was just beginning to be known in the world in 1815, when the author left Germany on a voyage round the world." Truly "round the world," but never "in it"—like an author.

Now, if it be the lot of this, my work, for a considerable time to burrow, in darkness, its way to publicity, it shall be, at least, matter for consolation that it had ample opportunity, in its entombment, for revision; and that it suffered in good company. Not to evoke presumptuous comparisons, or to institute likeness between that charming story and my wild account, I may remind

those who know that the manuscript of the "Vicar of Wakefield" (to use the historical words recording the circumstance) lay "curled up in dust and neglect" for two years in a by-drawer of the publisher Newbery, after it had been bought at the importunity *even of Dr. Johnson*, who, moreover, himself confesses that he privately "*did not expect much of it*," for a most meagre sum. Poor De Foe walked all over London, and when he was "tired," his wife "walked also"—London, to his and her comfort, not being then quite so large as it is now—in the vain attempt to find a bookseller (for they were not called "publishers" in those days), to bring out his immortal "Robinson Crusoe;" and Chamisso was long finding a publisher, though the harvest is now literally of a world's growth; and the ears golden.

My story must be considered as, if upon a moral, still upon a very daring theme. "Hero," if I have one, it is no "living one." The time of my narrative embraces no less long a period than that of the Eighteen Centuries of Christianity; which is a bold experiment in adventures. The history runs through the entire Christian era, in fact. I confess the risk and boldness of my plan, while I reiterate its excellent moral, and the goodness of my intentions, though I am he who declare them as such. Through the various sections of my story, and ever reappearing, working as the unsuspected (and therefore true) "devil" through the fair humanities, passes the literal and real "Hero" of it—*A piece of silver*—"ONE" of the accursed "THIRTY"—the "Price of HIM that was valued!" My deduction, if the world will insist on a deduction, is the native clinging curse which rests upon money as mere money; and the proofs that the undue greed of it—a conspicuous vice of our time, as all allow—by a never-failing and immortal law, brings its own ruin—its own terrible retribution in the long run; and its devil's penalties and fire.

And I trust that I have everywhere treated the subject with the religious respect which it severely demanded. And further, especially in the closing scenes, which terrible scenes were the most difficult to manage, I have sought to be scrupulous. I have been

very careful, and I am still diffident, over my last chapters, which necessitated the utmost caution—not to offend prejudice. In conclusion, I may confidently assert that the direction-points which I have set myself to steer-by are the best, however I may have fallen short of the exceedingly great objects I had in view, and of the ideal at which I strove: that is, adequately to realise the unwelcome notion of branding money with all evil; which is remarkable as a protest in so wealth-desiring and so money-making an age. I think that a sufficient succession of *excitements* (at least) to the reader are to be obtained out of the events in my chapters. And I would maintain, respectfully, that excitement—only in the good sense—is, after all, the greatest teacher. And it must be so for this natural reason, that unless a truth is, somehow, forced upon attention, there is no chance, in the hurry and incessant tyrannous demands of the world, that it should gain notice. Readers are only taught by force, as it were. They are gained only by that in which they are interested; and all readers are interested by that which appeals the most forcibly and picturesquely to their imagination. Now, upon the imagination of my readers I have most largely drawn—supremely so in this story; though I am not afraid of obtaining my object if my readers will only give me their attention. For without this latter all our efforts as authors are vain; for we must not have our reader with one eye on the book and the other looking out of window.

THE EDITOR'S OWN PRIVATE ACCOUNT

OF

HOW HE BECAME POSSESSED

OF

THE MANUSCRIPT OF THE HISTORY OF

"ONE OF THE THIRTY."

"JEW, WANDERING. See SAINT GERMAIN."

"SAINT GERMAIN, COUNT DE.—A singular character, some way connected with the '*Illuminati*' (supposed *Rosicrucians*), of last century, and equally remarkable for the extent of his knowledge, the apparent boundlessness of his wealth (displayed magnificently for a time), and his mysterious connection with the French Court—especially with Louis the Fifteenth and Madame de Pompadour. HE IS SAID to have died at Schleswick in 1784. The curious should compare with his pretensions the Traditions of the 'WANDERING JEW,' which are collected together in the 'Chronicles of Cartophilus;' so called—lately published by David Hoffman."—*Dict. Biog.*

THE EDITOR'S ACCOUNT OF "ONE OF THE THIRTY."

SHALL I be accused of absurdity—of wilful misrepresentation—of a mere desire to secure dramatic effect—or of making, in self-delusion, some prodigious mistake, when I assert my belief that I have, really and truly, MET the singular supposedly mythic personage, glanced-at on the opposite page — the "Wandering Jew"?

I know this assertion seems preposterous.

But I will proceed with this little preliminary personal narrative, which is strictly true; and which I proposed to my Publisher—as he well knows—to verify by a declaration made actually and openly, "according to law,"* by affidavit before the competent authority if necessary; and which—further—eventually I will perhaps really do; and so place these circumstances beyond doubt or cavil; for full satisfaction.

I was always a strange, moody, unaccountable child; fond of solitude—drawing all my mental nutriment from reading—setting with indomitable perseverance to

* "Statutory Declaration;" before a Magistrate.

the perusal of every book which fell in my way; and studying and restudying my favourite authors with loving pertinacity. I grew very superstitious, contemplative, and fanciful. The faculty of "marvellousness" was largely developed in me very early. I read works of imagination with avidity. The town became filled to me with phantom romance-pictures. I led a life quite out of my real life. As time advanced with me, poetry and romance, also, *pari passu*, kept pace with my historical studies.

However, it was not until later times—and at an age when I was, from the innocence of a child, confirmed in the ways (shall I say in the wickedness?) of the town, that I began to speculate; truly upon strange things. I was always excessively interested in the mighty mysteries of the Story of the Crucifixion. The "Divine Drama" had brought a new sun to the wearied world: facts in which there lay the Only Hope of Humanity. I used to cry (when I was a little child) as I read the pathetic narrative of the sufferings, and the final sacrifice of that adorable BEING. His sayings to "the poor"—and about "the poor"—touched me. I, as a child, belonged to a family which was *not poor*, though certainly it was not overwhelmingly rich; but I was "poor in spirit." And I felt that I should be thus poor through a lifetime; which premonition my succeeding life has maintained as truth (for me), until now.

I was very fond of the Scriptures—particularly of the New Testament. I have still in my ears the bells of St. James's Church, Piccadilly; summoning to service on a sunshiny Sunday morning. I was very little at that time. I longed to go to church. There is a narrow passage from Piccadilly into Jermyn Street towards St. James's Square, where, by the side of my mother (a good, truly religious, then very young woman), I trotted to church; carrying the large prayer-book. The dull sound of the church bell seemed to pass high overhead as we walked affectionately between the houses, down this defile, under the great west-window, flanked by Sir Christopher Wren's Corinthian pilasters; at which, and at certain "ovals" of stone-mouldings I

was mysteriously awed—as at gigantic Taurine, or stone Cyclopean Bull's-Eyes—the dreaming fear of a very sensitive, precocious child; for I was then only five years old. I remember the stone cherubs and their carved puffed-out cheeks. I recall the communion-rails at which I knelt; and the deprecating, exciting flutter of my little nervous heart as the voluminous snowy surplice of the officiating clergyman at the altar swept statelily by me—almost touching. If one of those mighty mysterious beings the celebrants had paused and looked at me—or—distinction more insupportable—if one had looked-down and benignantly spoken a word—it would have been (let me say it reverently) almost as if God Himself had then spoken. I was a sort of little imitation Samuel. Ah, true unutterable instinct of the child's heart—to whom that House of Prayer is indeed "God's House;" and to whom the congregation assembled is as the hushed COURT of a KING.

Apart from this, it was not until later times—and at a very confirmed age in all sorts of interests and of knowledge, bad and good—that I began to speculate—amidst my many other pursuits and antiquarian and theosophical objects of inquiry; also, if possible, trying at settlement—whether there was not a possibility of a recovery—or a sight—or an historical identification reliable—of "One" of the Thirty Pieces of Silver; for which Judas (the TRAITOR JUDAS) betrayed the BENEFACTOR of the WORLD, the "SALVATOR MUNDI." The curiousness of looking—nay, of handling—such a momentous, true item; then really to be seen by the eyes, and to be felt—just as we might be feeling a crown-piece—for that size was (as it has been proven) the size of these inexpressibly portentous pieces of silver: why, this thought, this certainty of really beholding one of these *precious*—one of these AWFUL pieces, struck me as if the whole of London (if I saw it then) would be round me in the instant *as in a dream*; as in the dream (as in the real world—this other waking world becoming the UNREAL WORLD) in which I was last night—or rather this morning: for REAL

DREAMING (you know it, now, attentive reader), only sets in *after midnight;* when the Great Good Spirits have power.

The circumstances, in brief, of my having seen One of the Thirty Pieces of Silver—FOR I HAVE SEEN "ONE"—are simply these: In the year 1854 my place of residence was Harewood Square, Regent's Park, London, N.W. It was the advanced spring time; or rather it was the first month of summer—namely, it was June. And in the afternoon between three and four o'clock, after witnessing, as I came across Hyde Park, an eclipse of the sun, which was seen with great distinctness and satisfaction on this clear, sunshiny, hot afternoon in town—and which most London people will remember—I was walking eastwards, and came through Upper and Lower Grosvenor Street, and into Maddox Street. I was unoccupied as far as any particular business-purpose was concerned. At a jeweller's shop, of miscellaneous, foreign character, I saw—seemingly shrinking into a corner—wafted into the place, as it were, by mere accident—a dusty, small label or paper, on which was the following:—

"SHEKEL of the TEMPLE; identified as probably the original of One of the Thirty. Those 'Pieces of Silver' for which Our Lord was sold."

I beg the reader to understand that these are real facts that I am narrating.

I believe I pored over this piece of paper for fifteen or twenty minutes. And then I entered the shop; and half-ashamed of myself (for the curious, seemingly wild, subsequent inquiry), I asked where the piece of paper—with such a reference—had come from? The person in the shop did not know at first even of there being such a paper in his window. But he at last found it, and brought it out; and he showed me, on the back of it, I believe, a reference to a "Mr. Böhrer," dealing in curiosities ancient and modern. These were principally Swiss and German *knick-knacks* and odds and ends, and certain specimens of modern out-of-the-way art. Mr. Böhrer lived at a certain number (300 and something, if I remember rightly) on Holborn Hill.

As I was going eastward, and had time—and was moreover very curious after this coin—I determined to walk to Holborn Hill, and to examine and test this question of the Piece of Silver for myself. I found the shop of Mr. Böhrer on the north side of Snow Hill, between Giltspur Street and St. Sepulchre's Church, and I entered the house. I saw only a young woman attending in the shop; which shop was large, though plain and informal. The shop was old-fashioned, though certainly not cumbered-up with antiquities. Its arrangements—notwithstanding that they were quaint and unlikely for that part of the miscellaneous world of commercial London—were modern. Seeing that I had entered to inquire for such an unusual and unbelieved-in item in the great waste of the drift of the world as one of the occult pieces of that awful "Silver Thirty" (upon which it was assumed, speculatively, that the destiny of mankind has turned), and inasfar as I asked for this wonder amidst the commonplace rattle of the traffic of Holborn Hill, where I thus far had come, drawing-in under the shadow of St. Paul's; and even although from the shop-window I could descry the gilt Cross of St. Paul's itself, high elevated in the sunshine in the air—I stood at first perplexed and irresolute. I was diffident about asking questions of this young woman —fearing her misconstruction of me as at least an enthusiast—possibly a lunatic. But she seemed to divine—women are so quick in their generally accurate conceptions—that she had a sort of philosophic, enthusiastic (therefore irrepressible) old-modern antiquary before her. And consequently she went into the back parlour, and brought out a very respectable, staid-looking old German, who put me in mind of some of the Lutheran pastors of Swiss Communes or of North German parishes whom I had seen. I soon fell into discourse with this elderly gentleman. He was serene-looking and good-natured—impressing a stranger as an innocent, conscientious, serious kind of German shopkeeper. He was dressed in respectable black, as if he had recently sustained that sort of domestic trouble ("home trouble") which is touchingly marked.

Very soon—and at a pause which was a favourable point for it, in our self-possessed, candidly-interchanging conversation—he asked me into his back parlour; which soon proved to be the repository, *adytum*, or the *penetralia* in which I was to achieve to that wonder—the acquisition concerning which I so anxiously sought. When I made hesitating, submissive reference to the Silver Shekel supposed to be a *fac-simile*, or indeed One itself, of the "Thirty Pieces of Silver," he with much openness of manner and even with friendly sincerity, satisfied me that it was not for sale—that it never could be for sale. He implied that he would judge it unfortunate if at any time the owner (for he told me *he* was not the owner) should part with it;—nay, even yield it upon *any* inducement. He said that he had no objection to show it to me; though this was a favour. But those—thus far honoured in seeing it—must be the proper persons; seriously (upon religious grounds) desirous of examining such a wonder—and persons of respectable, and of *respected*, disposition and manners.

This innocence and calm seriousness—so unlike the fuss, subservience and boasts of usual business men—pleased me. I spent three-quarters-of-an-hour talking with great pleasure with this old German gentleman—for he was infinitely more this in his manners than impressing as a shopkeeper. He was out of place as this latter—especially on Snow Hill; which seemed to have nothing to do with either him or his shop.

In my short, but uninterrupted interview I learned even much of this respectable man's private history. I inquired, as he was evidently an experienced and an instructed collector of curiosities, whether he really believed there was a possibility, not only of the One he exhibited being genuine—but (further) whether there was any likelihood of there being in existence one of the "Thirty Pieces of Silver"—Judas's real silver pieces. He told me he saw no reason to assume absolutely the contrary. That irrespectively of the miracle, the distance of time was no bar; because coins of very many previous much more remote ages—indeed far-up and even to a scarcely believable epoch—were

every day being discovered and coming into the hands of the curious; that he himself had had many such —undoubtedly genuine coins. He spoke very sensibly and coolly—and perfectly without design, and with much honest, even with religious simplicity of manner and with knowledge.

"In some respects it is an awful thing to speak about," said he, "because the best evidence assures us that the Crucifixion *did really take place;* and that in the manner related in the Gospels. As for myself, I always did believe it, and I shall continue to believe it. In regard of the question of the survival into our own day —mad and wild as it may seem, but as it only *seems*—it is a wonder which disappears on comparison, and on close, candid examination. As to this important point, first, whether there is existent any one of the 'Thirty,' and next whether this which I have shown you, and which belongs to me and to my family, be 'ONE'— why I must leave that conclusion to your own sagacity. But I do not see—taking the fact by itself—any impossibility, or incongruity, in the idea. Such a piece of money may very possibly have survived down to this very day. Old coins—infinitely more ancient—of the Babylonian, Egyptian, and some of the unbelievably earliest—still strictly historical periods—are extant, and contemporaneous with us in public sight; and they are common objects to be met with, and are to be purchased. All the Museums show this. As to the history of the particular piece of silver—a 'Shekel of the Temple,' which particular coin is known to be that for which Our Saviour was sold—and mine as you will see is wonderfully old, worn-down, and corroded— the tradition as to the authenticity of it has survived in my family, with direct lineal assurances of truth for nearly three centuries. With respect to the accounts of this piece in my possession, I assure you that they— independently of me—are fully reliable, and are guaranteed sufficiently. *I* may doubt—*you* may doubt —every one may doubt (as indeed we may doubt of everything); but such are the facts. And bad and base indeed must any one be to misrepresent in

such a case —carrying imposition upon the most sacred things.

"I will show you this Silver Piece of Money," Mr. Böhrer went on, "which with this tremendous character (think as we may, and reject as *you* may) has passed down as an heirloom to my Uncle from his (and my) predecessors; who have all avouched, in writing and otherwise, its genuineness. And it has always been represented in my family as (however obtained) One of the True Pieces of Silver for which Our Lord was sold."

My heart really fluttered, and my eyes set hard in expectation. Mr. Böhrer produced this prodigy from a small drawer in an old cabinet lumbered-up in a corner of his back-parlour; which was light enough. The murmur of Snow Hill and the distant shuffle of the passers-by, with the rumble of the omnibuses—even the slant of sun which came into the back-parlour from a side window—seemed very strange. I stood, fixed with anxiety. Then Mr. Böhrer came tranquilly across the carpetless floor to me, and he seemed sad; looking at me all the time as if he were not holding in his hand the greatest treasure of the whole world. For he had the object in his palm—which was evidently not a coin, but a case—a morocco-case. But what was not *in* that case?

Out of this dark maroon morocco-case, and nestling as in a jewel-case for a reliquary on a heaped pillow of cotton on rich violet silk, lay — when Mr. Böhrer touched the starting steel spring—an old—*old*—old Coin of the size of a crown-piece; dusk—nay, dark. Dark, even black as with the occult clouds of the wonders of eighteen centuries—yet hiding deep-down in its centre the intolerable possible spark of an immortal magic fire. This was my thought as I gazed; for I really gazed on this slumbrous disc of magician's old iron (as it looked), marked cabalistically with scarcely recognisable Hebrew letters and marks; and the master (as a charm) of thunders.

And all this was really and truly on Snow Hill, in London, in Mr. Böhrer's shop, which shop everybody

may remember, and which will be found in the London Directory of the date—namely, in the month of June, 1854, for it was on that month, and in that year that I was there—really was there. Though the house is now down.

Post-offices cannot make wilful mistakes. These are all real facts which I am relating, and I shall sign my name at the end of this, to show how—and in what manner—this truly "STRANGE STORY" came into my hands—and from what exceedingly mysterious person I did (really) derive it: derive it as a trust—with an injunction, if the times were appropriate and proper for its appearance, to put it before the world. And that the times are fit for it, I think the period in which we live (anno 1873) will, with its daredevil characteristics—dangerous ones; threatening ones; fast ones; evil ones—abundantly—let me not say more than abundantly!—prove.

I was allowed to take this famous reputed "One" of the "Thirty" out of its case. I handled it. I felt it in my hand. I looked at it before and behind; and I was free to place it (and to replace it) in its magnificent morocco-case, made evidently with immense care. This case had simply a four-square, or Maltese, small gold cross stamped upon it, very neatly executed.

I will give only an outline of my doings in this account. I must make that which might grow here into a long story—short. I have to tell how this manuscript came into my hand—which the reader now perceives as a book, and which I have carefully edited and prepared for publication—under the jealous eyes of my Publisher, who loves good books and curious books, and who has insisted (with my freest good-will) on my justification of my reasons for concluding that I am writing a veritable account—an *historical* account—of the adventures of "One" of the real "Thirty Pieces of Silver."

Acquaintance (commenced in this way) passed up into respect and friendship for this Mr. Böhrer. I am sure I cannot tell whether he is now living. His old shop, and all the adjacent houses, have been swept

away before the improving hands of the people of the Metropolitan and Underground Railway, and of its Ludgate Hill "Extension." Mr. Böhrer may be living, either in England, or elsewhere. And if he be alive he will soon see and recognise this true account of himself, and this averment of his dealings with me. And in that case he can—if he pleases—bear willing and exact witness as to the truth of my story. Which I am sure he will, if the fact of my publication of his relative's papers reach him—and he see this Book anywhere.

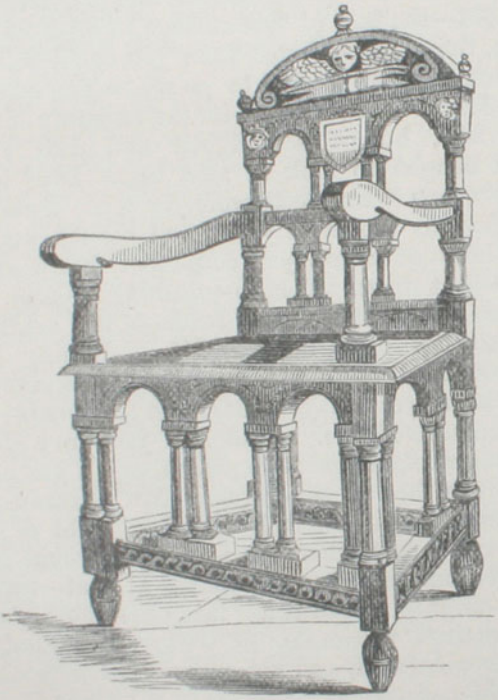
After a time, and not until our intercourse had become friendly, I discovered that the Silver Shekel which he had displayed to me, and which—for obvious reasons (believing as he did)—he guarded with a certain sort of, even, *sad* superstitious, fearing care—was the property—and privately the boast—of an old strange Uncle. This was a man of very singular character. I had heard of him years before. He was known as occupying—for he was an indomitable student—a certain seat continuously* in the Reading-Room of the British Museum. Very many readers and frequenters of that citadel of learning,—though it may be remarked, *en passant*, that the men of the most prodigious acquirements, and of the most remarkable depth of erudition are very rarely to be seen there—the "man of few books" being the man of "mind,"—many readers in the Museum Library will recall this person. He looked not of this world—*though he strove to look like it.* He was reverend-looking—though he had flighty manners sometimes. He was absent and forgetful—and yet he rallied *with an intensity of obviousness.* Wherever he was, his eyes were lamps that, as it were, shone-out by daylight. Everybody must see HIM, when he chose. As to his age—it was impossible to tell what his age was. He might have been thirty—one would think. He might

* I can verify the number, and I will do so if my readers—or any one among them seriously desiring the certainty—should wish it.

have been thrice thirty—for the man had a face for a frame; in which you saw very many other faces. These resemblances came and went like the dark clouds and the light clouds in the summer sky—in which we likewise look for faces. If you were young—there were ages and ages of beautiful thought to you upon that brow. The countenance was as a map of the world; marked with all the lines of latitude and longitude. If you were old—the face of this strange being seemed to pass back, flying fast—faster than you could follow—into his youth. He seemed to go where you could by no means follow or track him—for the visionary barriers lifted *to him*, but closed rigidly and like Death when you sought to look in after him. Dead leaves and ruins (thus when left) were *for you*. Sunshine, and the glorious bloom of youth and beauty, were for him—for he went where *you* could not follow—there BACK into that Past. Thence—seemingly—back and along those innumerable past roads of the centuries, bringing thither his Undying-Life. Issuing from thence he seemed to come—traversing back the old time—the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow—He and the Sun seemed one. Reader, if you are a speculating, thoughtful, imaginative person, and if you could have seen the face of this strange Mr. Carrodus, (to my grief and mortification I have lost sight of him now, and know not where he is)—there would have gleamed up from the lines and marks of that—rightly looked-at—mighty, beautiful face, the now "cold fires" of extinct volcanoes, as it were — read-about probably, or witnessed, and not experienced personally. Innumerable passions were there in all their human changes—thoughts, speculations, triumphs of the application of mind. Battle-wrecks and experience were written all over the changes of his countenance. There was life, and the grand stir of life—fleshy and ghostly. Mr. Carrodus—for that was his name—seemed a man left on the "Ebb of Time." He impressed, when he grew strong in his talk, as if he had only just stepped down accidentally from his private chamber (where he had left all the historical characters of the periods in

full face to face contact of discourse with him) to interchange at this moment confidence with *you*.

As I was a great lover of books, and moreover as I am a very eccentric character—for thus much I am pertinaciously assured by my friends—I became somewhat of a favourite with this unaccountable Mr. Carrodus.



Chair belonging to Mr. Carrodus—in the small old-fashioned House.

He lived in London, where he was very well known. He never seemed to want money; and he always paid his way very regularly—being very careful and particular, and "insisting on his change." Such a man is respectable, and to be trusted.

After Mr. Carrodus had discovered what sort of

person I was, I was invited on various occasions to tea at his lodgings. He lived at Greenwich; and he used to sit in the Park; or he was to be seen there reading one of his books under a tree in summer. His dwelling was a small, old-fashioned house at the top of Croom's Hill. And in his bedroom, he was almost walled-in with books in his bed. Thus he lived in London, or in the neighbourhood of London (similarly to his residence at Greenwich), for several years. He inspired respect and confidence wherever he went. But he would come-out sometimes with very strange remarks as if he had betrayed himself; when he would instantly stop, and, if possible, turn the conversation—but all was done very naturally. I mean—by implying that he occasionally hazarded strange remarks—which were obviously impossible, and which gave the idea that he had "lost his head" for the moment—that in talk that turned upon historical matters—perhaps occurring ages ago—he would come out with a correction suddenly as to trivial points—*actually as if he had been present at the time*, and was certain from his own personal knowledge that such and such a supposed circumstance *did not* occur—or that such and such a one *did*. This reality opened to the listener, in a moment, a sort of vision of *vraisemblance;* recovering, for instance, for the view, the assassinated Cæsar from the dead; showing Catherine, the Queen of James the Second of England, watching—huddled with her child—in the heavy plashing rain-storm under the wall at Lambeth Church, while De-Lauzun went to "look for the coach;" the parade of the Earl of Essex through the streets to raise the citizens of London in the time of Queen Elizabeth; when, as Mr. Carrodus once declared as if in a moment of forgetfulness, the "cap of the Earl of Essex (he wore no plume), was blown-off by a sudden puff of wind; and a tall boy, named Pytcherly, ran and recovered it and presented it to the Earl; who turned pale at seeing it 'inside-out'—(and, as it was whispered —a bone dropped out;") and such like. In a moment while Mr. Carrodus was talking thus, you would see, as in a glass, all the circumstances of the event, and wake-

up—as if by magic—to see yourself in front of the table, and Mr. Carrodus (the old man), talking to you; with the youth which you had taken FOR HIM retiring from over his shoulder.

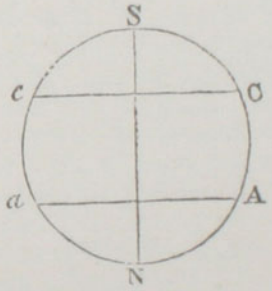
The most unbelievable part of my story is yet to come. And yet it is true. People have not the slightest idea of the wonders of romance that are transacting every day—nay, from obvious reasons, *still more signally at night*—about them here in London: this mighty maze of a Babylon of a capital. It is both real, and unreal, to the last degree. The Great Devil has his spread wings over it. The Angels have their tabernacles of encampment, in their little-suspected recesses, in it. The fires of Hell and the lights of Heaven interchange in this wilderness—this widest of wide awful wildernesses of human-dwellings; having almost only its chimneys as pouring-out its coarse smoky aspirations. God in His infinite mercy—as we unfeignedly think—can alone help the sins of this terrible town. Let the clouds cover it, unless great reforms take place in it soon! Not hypocritical political reforms—but real change—solid change—Christian change.

And yet abundant romance (and virtue too) is in London; which seems—and is—so commonplace.

Therefore commonplace London must be; and true this statement must be in regard of it. Because Human Nature is commonplace, as it touches the earth. It is wondrous and magical—beautiful to the last degree—as it urges on Heaven. There, in mortal life, it cannot enter. But this upper-confine, or the supposed last rim of contact, aspiring to the hoped-for lifting, bended hand of Heaven—this wistful, straining stand-point of the inexpressible human-longing, is on the verge—and essays the outer fence of Paradise—guarded, except to that despairing momentary inlook, by the "Glaives of Fire" of the Seraphs—INTENSE FROM THE THRONE OF GOD.

Back are the immortal longings for restoration revolved; and swift-convicted back into the "Ruin of Mortality" is the quickly-killed hope. There is no hope—and no possibility of rescue into the Kingdom of

God—nothing but the state of the lingering exile—"MAN AND WOMAN DRIVEN-FORTH"—whilst that fact stands, that (of "human sinful nature"), its clay-girths are laid together forged through the Devil's universal lordhood, and worked under its consummate terms—the manufactory lighted-up in the splendour of the illumination of Hades, the "Place of Ill and Woe"—the Devil's Own Terrible Hold—the Pandemonium blazing like a world with its Sinister Glories. For the cradle of the human race is "ASHES"—grand and glorious and tremendous cradle beyond word or idea. And the whole round of That Scope of the Senses is the lees and siftings, and the sedimentary deposit (so to speak) of the "Immortal Light"—purged wholly of itself. For of dead earth is the world; and is "Man:"—the flux of the "Fire"—First—Last—and Best. Best of all—because the "creature" has a soul that "can know God."



"Lines of travel of the real disciples of Theophrastus Paracelsus:"—that is, traversing the longitude and latitudes.

EXTRACTS FROM THE EDITOR'S WRITTEN OBSERVATIONS AT THE TIME.

MR. CARRODUS was accustomed to absent himself for, sometimes, considerable periods from his place of residence, and from the sight (and indeed knowledge) of his friends.

In the early part of the year 1870—I think it was about the first of March—Mr. Carrodus, at the conclusion of one of our philosophical evenings, told me that he was going to Paris on the next day; that he should be absent some time. And he gave me this information with proper precautions—as thus:—If I found that "something had happened to him" (he evaded my inquiries as to what he meant), he requested that I would act upon a "power of attorney" which he left with me; and that I would sell-off his furniture and effects which he possessed at Greenwich, and lodge the proceeds, in money—"cash," he said; "no 'bonds,' or 'shares,' or 'promises,' or 'contingencies;' or anything of that so frequently fallacious, windy kind," with the Magistrate's Clerk (to the kind care of the 'Sitting Magistrate') at the Police Court at Greenwich. All this was done—as the reader will find—scrupulously, and I hope honourably, when I had the occasion; and when the duty fell on me.

I really do not know what has become of Mr. Carrodus. I have never seen him since: nor have I heard of him once except in the following way.

I received a letter from him, when he was in Paris; desiring me to act upon the above-named disposition of his property. I was told to search in an old sea-chest with the arms of the ancient "Dutch Republic" painted upon it, and with a solid iron lock upon its front like that to a church door. Mr. Carrodus kept this chest in a corner in his bedroom under a dozen Viennese blankets. And an immense furred cloak from Astrakan, considerably the worse for wear, used to be loosely thrown over it; upon which a cat dozed.

According to Mr. Carrodus's minute directions, therefore, in a lock-up quaintly constructed in a corner of this old box, I discovered (covered with some reverend Latin books) a parcel of papers—very neatly kept. In his well-known, small, beautiful, carefully-punctuated handwriting I came upon THIS—placed in an envelope directed to me, and sealed with the "Carrodus *wyvern*." The words were these:—

"MY DEAR FRIEND H. J.—This manuscript which now comes into your trustworthy hands, owing to a remarkable accident, has formed the labour—'off and on'—(to employ the usual expression) of sixteen years nearly. For I think it right that you should know that I commenced this mysterious book in June, 1856, in London—therefore this is a long period. It may do *you* good. It can do ME no good. I do not need any help derivable from it. I seek neither honour nor profit—needing neither. All that I would remark is—THAT IT IS TRUE. The conditions that I impose are that you do it justice in the way in which you print it—in the mode in which you publish. *I have means to punish any infraction of this injunction.* As to the merits of the Book—this is the fact. THAT THOSE WORTHY ONES HAVE COMMENDED IT OF WHOM YOU LITTLE DREAM. If you search in the Encyclopædias you will find accounts of a 'Brotherhood' which is supposed to have existed, and which preferred singular claims adjudged of the most preposterous kind. In all channels except in those supposed to trace from the persons themselves—they are derided as egregious mountebanks where they are not sneered at (objectors have yet a sort of latent fear of doing more than this)—as fools—or at the most as mistaken enthusiasts. I have been in search of traces of this Society FOR A LONG LIFETIME. And in order to discover something to reward me—or at all events to cheer me on—I have wandered into most countries of the world. I am still upon this quest; important to me—Quixotic—nay, mad to the large—nay, to the immense majority of people. I want seriously to explore to some means of communication with these 'INVISIBLES.' I do not know whether the remainder of my life will admit of this—

IT MAY. These men are the disciples of Theophrastus Paracelsus —of Jacob Bœhme or Bœhmen. They are innocent, holy—REAL CHRISTIANS. As to the rejection of them—so much for the 'influence of authority in matters of opinion.' The world may—or may not—mark their 'footsteps' as it pleases. Farewell! I shall always be aware of what you do from that place to which I retire. Farewell, H.— J.—! and prosper. There is something candid, speculative, and unprejudiced about you; otherwise you never would have had any confidential request similar to this addressed to you—least of all any expression of opinions which I may have formed, or any impartment which I might have desired to make to the world—to which ordinary world in no measure do I wish to belong.

"PARIS:—The Tenth of June, 1870."

Such was this strange letter to me.

*Note:—Remarkable events followed in France after this date; as all the world knows.**

The reader now understands how this Book came into my hands, and he sees (now) that which I have done and am doing with it. I was at first reluctant —very reluctant—to publish. "One of the Thirty"—(this strange work of a very strange man)—is, however, now set afloat in the world of publicity to take its fortune. Go forth, then, thou queer Book of my friend, Mr. Carrodus! Go forth into the "world of thought;" and thou mayest perhaps encounter some persons that will understand thee. As for the general public—they will read thee for thy excitements—thy TRUE excitements. My part in thee is only that of the medium to put thee forth. *Thou art put forth.* Thou hast been conceived and *borne*—and thou art now "born." Let the world hear thy infant wail in first drawing the breath of literary life. Thou hast thy name and thy godfather. And now take thy "fortune." For the never-failing, infallible stars have written it for thee already over

* The reader will remember the *red-crosses* which swept through Western Europe during the latter part of the year 1870 (sign of the R.C. ?), and which were to be encountered at every corner even in London, although so unlikely to have such strange marks displayed in it.

thy head—in thy horoscope. For books have horoscopes. As for me—

> "I am weary of hunting—
> And fain would lie down."

And I will just close with one word: *Having read the book, if thou likest it—dear reader—say so; and if thou likest the book not—why, say that also*—only not in a hurry of objection to it, because that, I am sure would be unworthy my reader.

London:
Printed by Jas. Wade, 18, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden.