THE HOLIDAY BOOK

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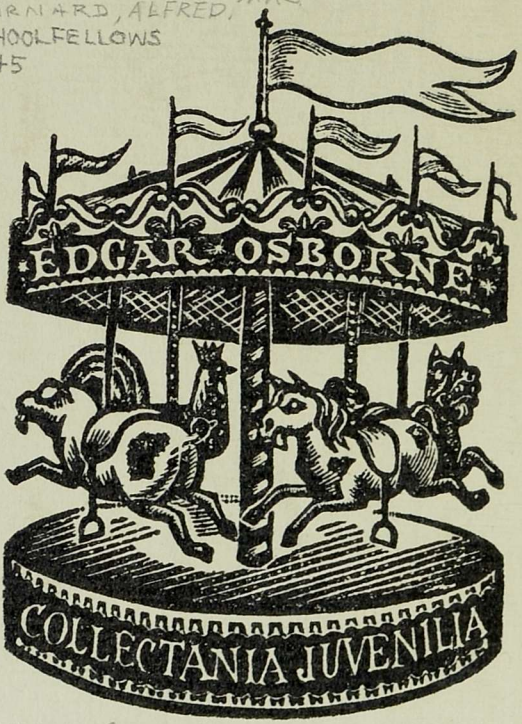
BARNARD, ALFRED, MRS.
SCHOOLFELLOWS
1845



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III.

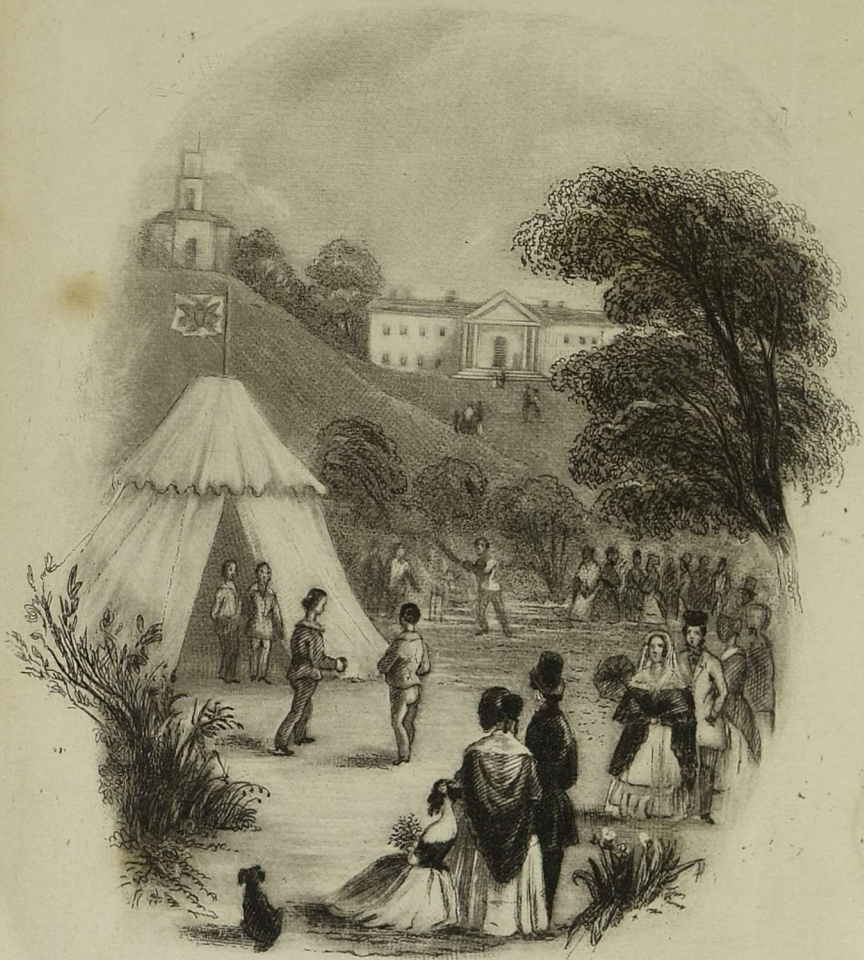
A. C. Stearns

the Gift of her

Affectionate Brother

Thomas

Sept. 9th 1847



THE Schoolfellows; OR HOLIDAYS AT THE HALL.

By Mrs. Alfred Barnard

LONDON:
Published by Joseph Graham
1845.

THE SCHOOLFELLOWS,

OR

HOLIDAYS AT THE HALL.

"Do not imagine, my dear Charles," said Mr. Maitland to his eldest son, "that I send you to boarding-school because I am dissatisfied with your progress under Mr. Forrest, or with your conduct at home; my reason for so doing is, that with the prospect of sending you forth into the world a year or two hence on matters of business, I wish to give you a little experience in the trials of that miniature world—a boarding-school. You will there learn self-control and self-depen-

dence in forms to which you are yet a stranger, and which a home education could not present to you; your principles will be tried and your temper exercised, I trust beneficially, for, at the age of fifteen these are somewhat fixed. I can give no special rules for the avoidance of evil, I can but give general caution and advice, trusting to your religious principles and your conscience for the rest."

Thus spoke Mr. Maitland on announcing to his son that he was, after the Christmas vacation, to be placed under the care of Dr. Watson, who received a limited number of young gentlemen at his house, about thirty miles from Liverpool, where Mr. Maitland lived. Charles had hitherto been educated at a day-school in his native town, but Mr. Maitland thought, that besides the advantage to his son of a short absence from home, it would enable him to enter his father's counting-house with more authority towards those who, having known him as the boy and the youth, would be otherwise less likely to respect

him as their master. Charles saw these reasons and acquiesced in them, though he dreaded leaving his parents and sisters, and being cast among strangers. The Christmas holidays passed too rapidly away for Mr. Maitland's family circle, till at length the time arrived at which Charles was to accompany his father to Fairlawn, thus was Dr. Watson's residence named. The weather was not very auspicious for country rambles, but Mary Maitland, who was two years younger than her brother, obtained leave to accompany him in a parting visit to many of their favorite spots; besides which, there were many old friends to call upon, and many young ones to take leave of; and Mary was surprised that every body seemed to think that the six months of her brother's absence was a very short time indeed, and that Midsummer would soon arrive. *She* did not think so; she loved and admired Charles, from whom she had never been separated except during the visit of a few days to a relation a few miles off. Her only consolation in his going to school

was, that Dr. Watson would immediately discover his superior abilities, and that Charles would gain unheard-of honours; she thought she could never love him better than at present, but she should be so proud of him when he should be at the head of his school, which she was quite sure he would soon be. But how sadly she should miss him in her evening walks; and who would assist her in her garden, in fastening her little arbour, and in making her oiled frames in the spring? There were many things which a girl could not do in the garden; she could not rake up the dead leaves and put them into the pit to decay, nor could she make the hot-bed for her tender annuals; and the gardener was always too busy to attend to her. These considerations were by no means compensated by the promise that she was to have the pony upon which Charles used to ride to school from Mr. Maitland's residence, about two miles from Liverpool; indeed Mary thought she should not like to ride the pony at all, it would be so melancholy without Charles. Little Louise was

as much vexed as her elder sister at the prospect of losing Charles, for though too young to participate in all Mary's regrets, she had her own causes for grieving. Charles could swing her higher and more steadily than any one else, and he always took her on his side when her cousins came to play with them; besides, Mary did not like marbles, and Charles said *she* was a capital player; she should never have a game at "three holes" when he was gone. The youngest of the family Edgar, only five years old, had his personal regrets also. Charles mended his playthings with his "infallible" cement, which really did its office well until the next blow was applied; Charles wound his top so evenly and tightly; and better than all, Charles would always explain the prints in any of the "grown up people's" books, which his mama had from the library. Never had Charles's full value been felt till this moment, and now he was going away!

The last visit paid by the young people was to the gardener's wife with whom "master Charles,"

was a great favorite, and whose lamentations were many that he would be so far off that she could not send him the first egg laid by the bantam hen which he had given her, as usual. "You must give it to little Edgar instead of me," said Charles, "he will be delighted with the present."

"Yes, master Charles, but you will want it the most; I will answer for it you will have nothing so good as a new-laid bantam's egg," said the good woman.

"Then I must learn to be content without dainties; and I can tell you of somebody that even wants the egg more than I shall; poor Phoebe Webster; I am afraid I shall never see her again, but let her have the egg in remembrance of me."

"Bless your kind heart, sir, that she shall, and another besides; she'll never climb May-hill, the factory work has killed her. Well, after all, though my girl does not look so genteel nor wear such delicate clothes as those girls, she is ten times more healthy, and I like to see her come

home from her work in the fields, as rosy as a peony and as hungry as a hunter."

Charles was sorry to interrupt the good woman's self gratulations, but he was obliged to take leave, and hearty were the good wishes he received from her, with many respectful admonitions to Mary to be sure and tell the cook to let her know as soon as they heard from "young master." The leave taking with Phoebe Webster had been more painful; she was the daughter of a former servant of Mrs. Maitland, who living in a manufacturing town had sent her eldest sister to work at a mill with her father, and the bad air and want of healthy exercise, had brought the poor girl at twelve years old into a decline; she was now, as Charles said, come home to her grand mother's to *die.*

At last the hour and minute of parting arrived, the last words were said and the last embrace given; and Mrs. Maitland sat down with her daughters to watch the retreating sound of the carriage wheels as they grated upon the frost-

bound gravel of the shrubbery drive. Soon the closing of the lodge gate was heard through the thin air, and the grating of the wheels ceased. Mary was listless, yet restless; Louise was unusually silent; and Edgar seemed to find relief in the variety of his playthings only.

Upon his return home, Mr. Maitland brought intelligence of his having deposited Charles very comfortably at Fairlawn; he liked the manner and appearance of Dr. Watson, and the situation of the house and grounds. Charles assured his father that he would write home every particular occurrence relating to himself, and that he would be perfectly unreserved as to his health and comfort. Mr. Maitland knew how well he could depend upon his son, and he left him with the hope that his best anticipations would be realised.

Before the pony was taken up from grass in the spring, Mary had somewhat recovered the departure of her brother; she still missed him very much, but it had ceased to be strange that

but one horse was brought to the door in the morning, and she had left off watching for the touch of the riding-whip upon the study window, which used to announce Charles's return in the afternoon. Mary was very angry with the pigeons for not missing their master at feeding time; and as much pleased that Spot was unhappy for the first few days of his absence. Poor Phoebe Webster died early in May, as the gardener's wife had predicted, notwithstanding the frequent present of bantam's eggs from "master Charles's hen."

Let us now see how Charles himself was going on, and whether he had begun to realise Mary's proud expectations.

Dr. Watson's school comprised some boys as old as Charles Maitland, and many much younger; every thing was extremely well regulated; the pupils were well taught, well fed, and well exercised. Further than this Dr. Watson did not imagine his duty to extend; morality not being charged in the bill. It happened that the

second master was a very singular person, a pedant; bearing a deservedly high character for learning. Dr. Watson knew that Mr. Nicholson's abilities were a high recommendation to his school, and he was therefore content to overlook those singularities which detracted very much from his authority over his pupils. There are always some badly-disposed lads in a school, and this was the case at Dr. Watson's; these vented their love of mischief upon Mr. Nicholson, whose natural amiability and acquired absence of mind caused the offence to be too readily forgotten. It was the custom to make a new pupil the tool whereby to tease the usher; and Charles Maitland, whose happy ignorance of anything like ungenerous conduct made him peculiarly open to the trick, but just escaped being drawn into giving a serious offence to Mr. Nicholson, and thereby making himself uncomfortable with the usher, and perhaps incurring a reprimand from Dr. Watson, who now and then interfered, often with more intemperance than

judgment. Charles owed his escape to a word from one of the younger boys, who, having overheard the plot laid against the new comer, gave him a hint of what was intended.

"What led you to interest yourself thus for me?" asked Charles of little Arlington.

"I liked your face when you first came into the school-room," was the reply.

"And I like yours, so let us be friends, my fine fellow," said Charles, holding out his hand, which was gratefully accepted. It was not long before Charles had an opportunity of showing his good feeling for the service rendered him, for Reginald Arlington was one of those unhappy beings whose virtues and whose faults are so intimately blended, that without the inculcation of strong principles to determine the bias, evil is as likely to be chosen as good. Reginald was the younger son of a baronet, whose ancestors had acquired wealth by commerce, and a title by the parliamentary influence purchased with that wealth; the mighty occasion of a

baronetcy having been the presenting of a county address. The present Sir William Arlington had married a woman of family, and thus the spirit of aristocracy was likely to be infused into his children. The eldest son had imbibed it in a high degree, and was the overbearing, tyrannical, eldest son of his aspiring parent; the younger was amiable, and might have been estimable, but bad example and early education had dwarfed his better propensities. His elder brother was at a public school, and Reginald was sent to Dr. Watson till his age should enable him to take William's place, on the latter going to college. Reginald was intended for the church; that is, he was to have a rich living from his father; to be the man of the world during six days in the week, and to officiate at the church belonging to Arlington Hall on the seventh day; and nature seemed to have formed Reginald expressly for such a fate. In the meanwhile the weaknesses of his disposition rendered him the tool of the evil-disposed among his schoolfellows, while his good qualities lay dormant.

Charles Maitland soon found that Reginald's time was really wasted as to his learning; he was slow of comprehension, but exact and correct in execution; and the poor boy's frequent punishment moved Charles's compassion, because he saw that a little trouble in explaining difficulties would enable the transgressor to avoid them. But Mr. Nicholson was too absent to perceive this, and Reginald's class did not come under Dr. Watson's immediate correction. Charles therefore undertook to assist the boy himself, not by doing his exercise for him, but by showing him how to apply the rules which he now learned by rote, without making any further use of them; and he had the gratification of finding his protegé both industrious and thankful. Mr. Nicholson was surprised at the sudden improvement in Arlington's lessons, but he testified his astonishment only by looking at him earnestly over his spectacles when he brought up his exercises, as if he expected to see some wonderful metamorphosis in his personal appear-

ance, which should account for that in his syntax. The progress of Reginald Arlington was not so complacently regarded by his schoolfellows, especially those of his own class. Murmurs arose, and hints were given of unfair dealing, which at length reached Charles Maitland's ears; but, conscious that what he was doing was perfectly honourable, he paid no attention to what he heard. This continued for some time; Charles wrote home to his sister Mary such an account of Reginald as to raise not only her interest for him, but that of his father; and, upon mentioning the murmurs which he occasionally heard, Mr. Maitland advised him to disregard them, and to persevere in his path of kindness to the friendless boy.

Things were in this state when Charles was summoned one evening into Dr. Watson's study. For a moment he feared that something unfortunate had occurred at home, for Dr. Watson held an open letter in his hand; but he saw that the expression of his master's countenance was clearly that of anger.

"I am sorry to have this occasion of finding fault with you, Maitland," said Dr. Watson in a grave and pompous tone; "you have hitherto conducted yourself with propriety, and I could not have supposed you guilty of a dishonourable action; but I cannot overlook such an offence as this."

Charles was too much surprised to make an answer to this speech, though it was evident one was expected, as the Doctor paused a few moments before he continued.

"I have received a formal complaint to-day from Mr. Carter, respecting your conduct in preventing his son's obtaining the Latin prize for the third class at Midsummer, by enabling Reginald Arlington to rise to the top of that class by assisting him in his lessons, particularly his Latin exercise."

"I am aware—" began Charles.

"I am glad you confess your fault," interrupted Dr. Watson; "I therefore hope it will not be repeated. Of course I have all possible

respect for Sir William Arlington, and wish his son to do my establishment honour by his proficiency; but I must feel such a remonstrance as this letter contains very deeply, coming as it does from a gentleman who has already entrusted me with his three elder sons, and who has two more to place under my care when at a fit age. Let me hear no more of assistance given to Arlington, or I may be obliged to refer the matter to Mr. Maitland."

At this threat Charles found himself able to speak. "I cannot allow you, sir, to imagine that I have acted dishonourably towards either Carter or any one else. I have never told Arlington one word either of his exercise or his construing; I have merely given him directions how to apply the rules which he has learned in his grammar, and have taught him how to find the nominative case in his construing. I could not see the poor boy continually punished, without wishing to assist him."

"Extremely benevolent indeed!" said Dr.

Watson contemptuously, "but equally unjust to the other boys of the class. I can allow no such favour, sir; my school is conducted with the utmost impartiality, and I cannot have my regulations set aside by any one. I must desire that in future Arlington may do his lessons alone."

"May I request then, sir, that those lessons be properly explained to him by yourself or Mr. Nicholson?" said Charles respectfully.

"*My* duties are not to be prescribed to me," said Dr. Watson angrily; "and as to Mr. Nicholson, I have no doubt that he performs his; he is a man of profound learning, and I place implicit confidence in him. I did not request your presence, sir, to hear complaints against my usher; but this proves you to be the ringleader in the schemes of annoyance of which I understand Mr. Nicholson is frequently the victim."

Charles was now completely roused, and he defended himself vigorously, but respectfully. A long conversation ensued, which apparently

established his innocence of this charge, but left him still open as to the former one. He avowed that his father knew and approved of the instruction he had given to Reginald; but he promised that in future he would leave the boy to act upon it without his interference. "I have little doubt," he added, "that Arlington will carry the prize, notwithstanding this mean conduct of Carter and his father."

"Do you know who you are accusing of mean conduct, sir?" asked Dr. Watson. "Mr. Carter does not possess a title, it is true; but he is Sir W. Arlington's equal in every thing else, and I cannot allow you thus to slander him."

Charles had learned Dr. Watson's character in this little conversation too clearly to venture upon any answer, and with as respectful a bow as he could accomplish he left the study. Upon entering the schoolroom he saw a knot of the boys gathered together in one corner, among whom he noticed those whose mysterious murmurs had before reached his ear; and, by the

manner in which they regarded him as he walked to his desk, he guessed that they were aware of the purport of his visit to Dr. Watson's study, and were watching its effect upon him. Reginald Arlington presently crept near him almost stealthily, and at the same moment, in reply to some inaudible remark, Carter exclaimed aloud, "He dare not; my father declares he will remove me if I have not the prize, and then Harry and Jack will not come to school here."

Charles felt that this was a crisis, and, speaking loud enough to be heard by the gang in the corner, to whom he turned his face undauntedly, he said to Reginald: "I am not conscious of having acted wrongly in having instructed you, and it will be my greatest pleasure to see you retain your place at the head of your class, which you will do if you continue industrious and careful. Never mind these troubles, my little friend," he added, putting his hand on Reginald's shoulder; "remember all I have said to you, and you will do very well."

"How good you are! I wish I were like you," was all that the grateful boy could say; while a laugh of derision, and "What a capital preacher he would make!" "How much do your sermons cost?" "Well, Carter, we have gained the day!" came from the opposite corner. Charles felt as if he could have knocked down his tormentors, and perhaps his countenance showed his feelings, for one of them said in a lower tone, "Let him alone; depend upon it he can fight."

Thus this matter ended. Charles had not vainly trusted to his young friend's diligence, for, to the surprise and annoyance of his competitors, Reginald's lessons continued to be correctly done, and he kept his place at the head of his class without any apparent difficulty. Maitland said nothing, but secretly rejoiced, and still more that the boy's whole character seemed to be much improved by what had occurred; he had gained moral courage, and was no longer the irritable but powerless victim of many unfeeling tricks and dishonest evasions by the older

boys. As the holidays approached, an angry feeling again showed itself towards Arlington; Carter declared that if he did not obtain the coveted prize he would not return to Dr. Watson's, as he was certain Arlington could not have won his place without Maitland's help. In this he was seconded by many who thought Carter, with his purse full of money, and his frequent consignments of delicacies from home, a more profitable and agreeable friend than Arlington, who rarely enjoyed such results of maternal affection. It was therefore all the selfish part of the school against Maitland and Arlington.

Another trait in Arlington's character, which gained him the ridicule of his schoolfellows, was, that he loved to talk of his home, of his amusements there, and of his sisters, whom he dearly loved. Had Reginald been the eldest son of Sir William Arlington, this conversation would have drawn around delighted admirers of his father's park, horses, and pictures; but poor Reginald felt what his schoolfellows rudely told him

—that he had no share in these things; that he was to be a country clergyman, not a rich baronet. Once, indeed, one of the boys said, "If your brother were to die, Reginald, you might boast, but it is of no use now. Do not you wish he might die?"

The question was probably not felt by the speaker, but it was by the hearer; and Reginald's astonishment at such an idea being presented to him was equalled only by his indignation at the supposition implied, that he did not love his brother. Now he might have recourse to Charles Maitland, whose steady good sense quelled the passion which had been thus provoked, and whose pity was further excited by Reginald's exclamation, "I am sure I should be sorry indeed if William were to die, for my father and mother are so fond of him, and every one says he is such a fine fellow."

CHAPTER II.

It was within six weeks of the holidays, when upon the occasion of Dr. Watson's birthday a grand fête was given at Fairlawn; one of those fêtes which are intended rather to advertise to the world how very superior all the arrangements of such an establishment are, than to convince the residents that their school is the most delightful one in existence. A large circle of friends, and numerous strangers, attended the games on the lawn, where all was in holiday appearance; tents, flags, swings, were provided for the occasion, and called forth ample praise of Dr. Watson's kindness and liberality. The boys did enjoy themselves; their cricket-matches were aided by young visitors, and received the admi-

ration of those who declined joining in the sport; even Mr. Nicholson seemed to enter into the pleasures of his pupils, laying aside his usual absence and reserve.

Towards the end of the evening, refreshments were served to the younger part of the company in a large booth near the house, and the school-bell had summoned them to the spot, when Charles Maitland missed Arlington from among those boys with whom he knew he had been playing half an hour before. Waiting till all had entered the booth, he then asked one of the young boys where Arlington was, but nobody could give tidings of him. Charles hesitated a moment, then hastening to a part of the grounds where his young friend had been playing, he called him as loudly as he dared to do without risking being heard by others. In vain—no Arlington answered; and thinking that he must have gone into the house, Charles was leaving the spot, when he saw his friend's jacket hanging upon a bush at a short distance. He went to

fetch it, in order to carry it into the house, when to his surprise he saw Reginald himself lying upon the grass behind the bush, fast asleep. With some difficulty he awakened the boy, and having made him put on his jacket, he remonstrated on the impropriety and danger of lying down upon the damp grass.

"You have been very careless, Reginald: remember how it rained yesterday, and the ground under that sumach never catches the sun; it is quite wet there," said Charles.

"I was so tired with playing base, that I could not help lying down, and then I fell asleep without intending it," replied the boy, shivering strongly.

"You had better go to bed at once; run off into the house; I will bring you a piece of bread and cheese or cake, if it be not all gone; run away and get to bed, and cover yourself up warm."

"Thank you — thank you," said Reginald, "but do pray get me some water to drink."

They parted: Charles found a bit of cake, and, regardless of himself, took it to Reginald, with a few strawberries which he begged of a friendly guest; he found the boy shaking so violently that he could scarcely carry the fruit to his mouth, but knowing that it would be vain to call Mrs. Watson's aid to the sufferer, he procured a draught of hot water for him, and covering him well over, desired him to try to go to sleep as quickly as possible, before the other boys should come to bed. When he went down he found one of the monitors about to read prayers, and neither Mr. Nicholson nor Dr. Watson being present, there was no need to account for the absence of the poor boy. He gave him a look when he went to bed, and finding him in a sound sleep, hoped that all would be right in the morning.

The first words, however, which met Charles Maitland upon entering the dining-room next morning were a recital from Reginald's bed-partner of the strange behaviour of the poor boy

in the night; of his groanings, and talkings, and kickings, which very much alarmed his friend.

"Is he getting up?" asked Charles.

"I suppose so. I struck him, I believe, and he cried himself to sleep; but they are all getting up in my room, so I suppose he is."

Charles waited for no more, but hastened upstairs. Reginald was dressing himself, but shivering as he had done on the previous evening, and, in reply to Charles's questions, complained of severe pain in his left side.

"Get into bed again directly, and I will send Mrs. Watson to you," he said as he left the room. Mrs. Watson was alarmed at the state of the boy, and sent for the surgeon, who at once declared it to be a case of severe pleurisy, and that the sufferer must be bled directly. Charles begged to be present, and Mr. Mosley found him so intelligent that he gave his directions to him, in preference to Mrs. Watson, respecting the treatment to be pursued; and, by Reginald's earnest request, Charles was appointed to attend upon

him during the day, and to sleep in the sick room, whither Reginald was removed at night. Dr. Watson, finding it a serious case, wrote at once to Lady Arlington, and on the following day a trusty female servant arrived from Arlington Hall, to nurse the poor child till he could be removed home. For some days Reginald was in danger; and during that time Charles scarcely left him, as the sufferer, though patient, gentle, and extremely glad to have the servant from his own home to wait upon him, preferred being attended by Charles. The surgeon, too, placed confidence in Maitland's judgment, and spoke so warmly in his favour to Dr. Watson, that the latter was obliged to treat Charles with more consideration than he had hitherto done. The servant, Mrs. Lewis, declared that her young master owed his life to Mr. Maitland, and expressed this so strongly in the accounts which she sent to the Hall, that a message came back desiring Lady Arlington's compliments and thanks to her son's friend. Reginald had a

short but severe illness, and as soon as Mr. Mosley gave leave he was sent home under the care of Lewis. The poor boy's gratitude was unbounded towards Charles, who he repeatedly declared should come and see him at Arlington Hall in the midsummer holidays. To this Charles could only return an evasive answer of thanks, assuring his young friend that he should be very glad to hear from him, and that he would answer his letters as quickly as he could. Thus the friends parted; and Charles was extremely surprised when, on opening Reginald's first letter to him, he found an enclosure containing "Lady Sarah Arlington's compliments to Mr. Maitland, and she will be happy to see him at Arlington Hall, to pass some weeks with Reginald during the midsummer vacation." Reginald's letter corroborated this, adding that his mother had given leave for Charles to spend the whole six weeks at the Hall if he pleased.

Charles thought it better to say nothing of these letters in the school, but sent them at once

to his father, who gave his full consent to his accepting the invitation, but wished him to return home as usual for a fortnight before going to Arlington; the matter was therefore so arranged.

Maitland's care in not mentioning his invitation to his schoolfellows was, however, useless, for Lady Sarah herself announced it to Dr. Watson, and from the parlour the intelligence speedily spread to the schoolroom. Many were the comments made upon this, some of them not very pleasing to Charles, and exercising in no slight degree his self-control and forbearance.

"Maitland has managed well for himself," said his old opponent Carter; "he is a quiet fellow that knows his own interest. It is a fine thing, to be sure, for a merchant's son to visit at Arlington Hall; but I suppose he will dine at the upper servants' table."

"Maitland is too proud for that; he thinks himself a gentleman, I can tell you," said another.

"Do not *you* visit at Arlington Hall?" said one who disliked Carter, and knew well that it would sting him to answer the question.

"Certainly—oh yes—of course—my father does; he was high sheriff of the county last year, and of course he visited Sir William Arlington."

This was true; but it was also true that, although obliged to associate during his year of office with Mr. Carter, Sir W. Arlington had studiously avoided continuing any acquaintance with that gentleman, who had also risen by commerce; but there is a great gulf between the first generation and the fourth in such cases. Charles Maitland was not aware how the above question had avenged him: Carter had endeavoured to build a neighbourly acquaintance upon his school fellowship with Reginald, and had failed: the lands of Arlington and Westwick joined, and the trout stream which ran through both might have been a medium of communication, but the aristocracy of Lady Sarah, reflected

with brilliant lustre in her elder son, forbade this. Mr. Carter's complaint against Maitland had thus a twofold object—to serve his own son, and injure his neighbour's.

By Arlington's illness and departure, Carter obtained the prize, but Dr. Watson and his pupils were well aware that, though obtained, it was not deserved, as, when the holidays arrived, Carter had not so many credits as Reginald had gained when he was taken ill. Dr. Watson, however, kept to the letter of the rules of the school, and gave Carter the coveted prize.

Charles returned joyfully to his home, where he was received as gladly. After the first affectionate salutations were over, Mary begged her brother to come and see the pony and the rest of the pet animals. Spot had already gladly welcomed his master with rather obtrusive caresses, and Mary was delighted to see that the pony recognised Charles, putting his nose out to him, and following his voice when he spoke. "Does he not look well, Charles?" asked Mary.

Does he not look well Charles.

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"I have enjoyed my rides very much, but you see I have not overworked your steed."

"No, indeed, you have let him grow quite fat; I must give him more exercise now I am at home."

"You will not have much time, I am afraid," said little Louise; "for they say you are going to Arlington Hall, but that is not true, is it? You will not leave us again, will you?"

"I believe I must, Louise; I have promised to go and stay with poor Reginald, who is not very strong yet, I fear," replied Charles. "But let us make the most of this fortnight, for I assure you I had rather stay at home all the time, were it not for Reginald's earnest wish."

We need not say that the fortnight flew away too quickly; Charles had so much to tell and to hear, and there were so many friends to visit, that the time seemed to fly; and at last when the day of departure arrived, not half had been done that had been projected. Mary wondered what her brother would do among the great people whom she supposed he would meet at Arlington Hall,

and Louise said she was sure he would not be half so merry as at home.

"I shall see beautiful gardens and conservatories, I believe;" said Charles, "and I will not forget you, Mary; if I can procure you any new seeds or plants, I will send them."

With this promise, which touched Mary's ruling taste, her brother departed, rather with a sinking heart, as he felt awe at the new scene upon which he was about to enter. It was very different to first going to boarding-school; there, however, he might see new faces and new ways; he had only his duty to attend to, and by doing that quietly and steadily, he knew that he should gain the good-will of his master. But now duty was not the only consideration; he was going to stay with people whose habits, manners, and perhaps principles, were totally different to his own; he had, besides, a great dread of Lady Sarah Arlington, as he had heard from Carter that she was a very high, proud woman, who was very likely to be uncivil to him all the time he was there. This Charles

could not believe of a well-bred person, and he attributed the imputation to Carter's jealousy of the preference shewn by the invitation. Nevertheless, Charles dreaded the introduction, and was not glad when the coach arrived at the spot where Reginald had desired him to be set down. On alighting, he saw a servant in a fine livery, who, touching his hat, asked if he were Mr. Maitland, and upon receiving an answer in the affirmative, said that Mr. Reginald was waiting in the plantation for his friend. Charles walked on in the direction the servant pointed out, and presently saw before him a handsome gateway, with pretty lodges, leading into a fine park. The servant opened the gate, and Charles passed on with a beating heart, but not all his apprehension could prevent his admiring the scene which presented itself. The Hall was not visible, but on the left hand a fine open glade, spreading down to a large sheet of water, shewed in which direction it was situated, The lake was glittering in the evening sun, and the shadows from majestic oaks

and more fragile birches were clear and dark upon the green turf. The servant pionted to a bye-path which led off from the carriage drive, and Charles saw at a little distance Reginald coming to meet him. Each quickened his pace, and the friends soon met.

"Dear Reginald, how well you look!" and "dear Charles, how glad I am to see you!" were the first greetings. Reginald was nearly recovered; he was thin but looked healthy. "I should be quite well but mama will give me so much medicine," he said complainingly. "Now which will you do, Charles, dine with the company, or drink tea with us in the school-room? I dine early at present, and if you would like it as well, I shall be so glad to have you with me this first day. But as you please."

Charles gladly accepted the invitation, and, having shewn him his bed-room, next his own, Reginald said he would wait till he was ready, and then conduct him to the school-room.

"I thought Maitland would prefer his tea with

us, Miss Carrington," said Reginald, after having introduced his friend to a lady-like person who was just preparing the meal for three little girls, one older than Reginald, the others much younger.

Charles soon found himself at his ease. Some remarks on the beauty of the prospect from the windows of the room, and some admiration of a stand of splendid geraniums, brought on a conversation with Miss Carrington and her eldest pupil, and Charles's awe and apprehension subsided, till a recommendation to Miss Arlington to prepare for the drawing-room, reminded him that the most terrible part of his day's business was yet to be done.

"Do you go into the drawing-room to-night, madam?" asked Reginald.

"No," replied Miss Carrington, "your sister only goes in."

"I suppose we must; but I know Maitland had rather take a walk into the park or gardens."

"Thank you, Reginald, but it would not be

right," replied Charles. "I had better go with you and be introduced to Sir William and Lady Sarah Arlington at once."

"Certainly," replied Miss Carrington, and Charles prepared to attend his friend.

"These are my hours of penance," said Reginald, as they crossed the great hall; "I had much rather stay with the children, but my mother insists upon my going into the drawing-room four times a week, and sometimes it is agreeable, when we have any pleasant people here; but now there are two schoolfellows of William's whom I do not much like, and you need not like them either."

Charles smiled at this permission, but had not time to thank his friend for it, as the servant at that moment opening the door of the inner drawing-room, he found himself in the much-dreaded presence, and the introduction, "Mr. Charles Maitland," "Lady Sarah Arlington," pointed out to him the object of his apprehension. Lady Sarah surveyed the new comer languidly but closely, and, after expressing in very proper

terms her gratitude for his attention to her son, desired Charles to consider himself quite at his ease at Arlington, and hoped that Reginald would do all he could to amuse his friend during as long a stay as Mr. Maitland chose to spare him. Charles was pleased with the lady's speech and manner; and was occupying himself in looking at some prints which lay in an open portfolio upon a side-table, when a gentleman approached him, and, holding out his hand, said, "I am very glad to see you here, Mr. Maitland; we owe you a great deal for your care of our poor boy, and I thank your father for letting you come to hear me say so."

Charles was taken by surprise, but he looked at the gentleman's good-natured open countenance, and a slight resemblance to Reginald confirmed his idea that it was Sir William Arlington who thus addressed him. But he knew not what to say in answer. Sir William saw his embarrassment, and added, "No thanks to me, sir; I owe them to you; make yourself happy here; Regi-

nald will see that you have a horse if you wish to ride, and there is a boat on the lake, and fishing tackle in the study; Reginald will tell you all about that."

So saying, he left Charles very happy, and quite reconciled to remain at Arlington Hall till the end of the holidays. "Come here," whispered Reginald, "and I will tell you who these people are. First, the young man who is standing near the window is my brother; and the tall young man near him is Mr. Portman, a very great person in his own eyes, and also in William's, as he is the eldest son of Lord Portman. The other is James Sinclair, a fine, clever fellow enough, but *I* think him a little bit conceited."

Thus initiated, Charles was amused by listening to the bits of dialogue and conversation which occasionally came within his hearing; and they were sufficiently various to give him some idea of the characters of the speakers. Towards the middle of the evening he found himself the object of observation to the three young men, and pre-

sently William Arlington, drawing his brother aside, said a few words, which were followed by both crossing over to Charles, and Reginald introducing his brother to his friend. The evening passed without any other notice of Charles by any one except Reginald, and he was not sorry when the hour of retiring arrived.

"You will call me in the morning, Reginald? I shall never find my way alone to the breakfast-room," he said, as they parted for the night.

Reginald came for him as he requested, and upon the two lads entering the breakfast-room at an hour not to be called early, they found, to the surprise of Charles, no one present but an elderly gentleman whom Charles had noticed on the preceding evening talking earnestly to Lady Sarah, who seemed too much fatigued to reply, or even to listen.

"Good morning, Reginald; I am glad to see *your* friend is more sensible than your brother's. I never see Mr. Portman at breakfast," said the gentleman.

"Maitland is a stranger here, sir, and I am impatient to shew him the beauties of the park; he has been walking upon the terrace already this morning."

"So much the better; and where are you going to take him first?"

"To the glen, sir; Charles Maitland sketches, and we shall begin there," replied Reginald.

"What is your friend's name?" asked Colonel Eversley.

"Maitland, sir, Charles Maitland."

"Where does he live?"

"At Liverpool, sir; his father is a merchant there."

"Oh, very well," replied Colonel Eversley; "'t is a common Scotch name, but I had a good friend of that name once; he was killed at Albuera, poor fellow."

"Do you mean Colonel Maitland of the —th, sir?" asked Charles.

"Yes: are you related to him?" asked Colonel Eversley, surprised.

"My father is his nephew, sir."

The old gentleman immediately held out his hand, saying, "This is a pleasure, indeed; I never expected to see any of my friend's kindred, as I have enquired for them in Scotland without success, and now chance has thrown you in my way. Well, I liked your face last night, and I like what I hear of your kindness to this young fellow; but now we are friends for a better reason still."

Charles was glad thus to have made an acquaintance, and after a short conversation the old gentleman and himself became much pleased with each other. Just as they had finished breakfast Mr. Arlington and Sinclair entered, and the former told Reginald to prepare immediately to accompany him to a pigeon-match, which was to be held about a mile off, where his assistance would be wanted.

"I am engaged this morning, William, cannot you do without me?" asked Reginald.

"Nonsense; you must go," replied his brother.

Poor Reginald looked at Charles and then at his brother inquiringly, "Never mind me," said Maitland, "I can amuse myself I dare say; pray go, if you wish it."

"But I do not wish it; I would rather be with you."

"Then pray, master Reginald, do as you please," said Sinclair scornfully. "We can manage without you. That young Carter will be glad enough to go with us," he added, turning to Arlington.

"You know Sir William does not like these matches," said Reginald in a low tone to his brother.

"You need not interfere with my amusements, Regy, so come like a good boy; *you* shall not be scolded," said his brother.

Charles would have been glad to say a word of advice to his friend, but he dared not, till Sinclair turning to him, said, "Perhaps Mr. Maitland will go also?"

"Not against Sir William Arlington's wishes;

and truly I should have no pleasure in the sport, it appears such deliberate murder," replied Charles.

"A saint! eh?" whispered Sinclair to young Arlington, as the latter turned away contemptuously.

"I don't know; he is no friend of mine; Regy picked him up somewhere."

Colonel Eversley had been busily engaged in reading the newspaper during this little scene, till, upon Arlington and Sinclair leaving the room, he said to Reginald, "Stand to your orders, my boy, and do not mind any thing but duty; that is the way to be a good soldier and a good man."

Charles and his young friend went on their sketching excursion, and the former enjoyed the beautiful scenery of the park extremely.

CHAPTER III.

When Charles Maitland met Lady Sarah Arlington at luncheon, she gave him a gracious invitation to join the party at her dinner table, but she insisted that Reginald should dine with his sisters, although he pleaded warmly that he was sure a late dinner would not hurt him ; his being too young was an allegation he could not deny, and he was obliged to submit. He passed, however, his mornings with his friend, and Charles was of great use to Reginald in leading him to the regular employment of his time, especially as regarded his drawing, which he pursued with Miss Carrington and his sisters. At first Maitland was not allowed to join these drawing parties, but Miss Carrington was so much pleased

with his gentlemanly manners, and saw also how great was his influence over Reginald, that she petitioned Lady Sarah to permit Mr. Maitland to join the school-room party in sketching, and receiving a careless affirmative, Charles became a constant visitor to the school-room, where he was soon a favourite with the youngest boy, an idle but clever child. Charles also made some progress in Lady Sarah's good opinion, partly in consequence of Miss Carrington's praises, and partly from his unobtrusive attention to her ladyship's habits of listless indolence. Sir William Arlington was glad to have some one with him who would listen to his praises of his superior sheep, his first-rate cows, and would admire his rare fowls and birds; and in doing this Charles was sincere and enthusiastic; indeed, the home farm, with its aviary and domestic animals, was a scene of real enjoyment to him. Thus some days passed happily away; when, one morning just before the hour of dressing for dinner, as Reginald and his friend were sauntering in the

conservatory, they saw Mr. Arlington and his two friends at a distance, accompanied by a fourth person mounted on a shewy horse.

"What can that mean? It is Carter," cried Reginald.

"Yes, I think it is," observed Charles.

"My father will not like that; he and Mr. Carter quarrelled about the poachers last year, and Lady Sarah will not visit Mrs. Carter because she says she is a low-bred person; so I wonder William dares to bring Edward Carter here; but, of course, he will not stay to dine."

Maitland was surprised to find his schoolfellow in the drawing-room before dinner, and not so much surprised that he WRS recognised by him only by a distant bow, Carter being at that moment engaged in endeavouring to render himself agreeable to Mr. Portman and William Arlington. As Charles was passing through the hall to the dining-rcom, Sinclair brushed close to him, saying, "Sir William need not know of these pigeon-matches; we met Mr. Carter at the

gate of the park, if any questions be asked. You understand, sir?"

"Yes, sir; it does not affect me," replied Charles.

Sinclair looked at him for a moment, doubting apparently as to the meaning of his words, and Charles saw that during dinner he was closely watched whenever he turned towards Sir William, near whom he was seated; he was not sorry, therefore, when, the ladies having retired, the conversation became general. He had also observed that there was every appearance of Carter being on the most friendly terms with the young men, while he assumed towards Charles an air of superiority, which the latter well understood, and heartily despised.

In the evening, Lady Sarah mentioning a sketch of Maitland's, which Miss Carrington had shown her, and praising it very highly, Colonel Eversley asked to see the drawing; and, after great hesitation, Charles was obliged to fetch it. As he was standing a little aside, in order to avoid

the praises which were given to his drawing, he overheard Mr. Portman say sneeringly to Carter, "He is to be an artist, I suppose?"

This was answered, in the same tone, with some disparaging reference to "cotton bags," "spinning fellows;" the remainder of the sentence escaped Charles, though the look which accompanied it did not. Carter remained at the Hall that night, and his faint observation respecting his departure on the ensuing morning was easily overruled; in fact, he became quite domesticated there, rivalling Sinclair in sycophancy towards Portman and Arlington, and far excelling him in attention to Lady Sarah, which won so far upon the latter, that she seemed to forget her dislike to his family in acknowledging him to be a "very agreeable young man." Charles meanwhile was making great progress in the good opinion of Colonel Eversley and Sir William Arlington, who, notwithstanding the showy manners of Carter, began to suspect that Maitland might be a more advantageous acquaintance even for his elder son.

"Oh I hope it will be a fine day to-morrow, do not you, Reginald?" exclaimed little George Arlington to his brother one morning.

"Yes, I do; but why are you so anxious about to-morrow particularly?" inquired Reginald.

"Oh, do not you know? Miss Carrington has begged mamma to let us drink tea at the Dairy, and we may because it is my birthday. Will not you go too?"

"I should like it very much; do you think Miss Carrington will let me? Will you ask her?"

"Oh yes," cried George, running off; and a moment after, returning, he said, "How I wish Charles Maitland would go!"

"Well, ask Miss Carrington about him too; I am sure he would like it," said Reginald.

George made his request to Miss Carrington without delay, and brought back the answer, that she dared not say "Yes" without consent of Lady Sarah. "I will ask mamma," said Re-

ginald; "if I try to persuade her, I think she will let us go, as she likes Charles so much."

The application was successful; and Lady Sarah even said she thought she should drive down to the Dairy before dinner, if visitors did not prevent her. The young people were very anxious about the weather, and Reginald was repeatedly sent down into the study to watch the barometer, and to carry word into the school-room whether the mercury were rising or falling. Charles entered good-humouredly into their anxiety; little George had become extremely fond of him, declaring that he liked him because he did not treat him as if he were a baby, and only in the way, as Mr. Sinclair did. On the morning of the important day the sky was cloudy, and Charles feared, when he arose, that his little friend would be disappointed of his intended pleasure. He had just finished dressing, intending to ask the gardener's opinion as to the weather before he met Reginald at breakfast, when he heard a gentle tap at his door, and, opening

it, saw George with a countenance of great earnestness.

"Pray, Mr. Maitland, go and look at the glass in papa's study," he said. "I went down stairs just now, but some one was there—I think Mr. Carter; and I do not like him; so I came to ask you."

"I will go directly," said Charles. "I am afraid of these clouds, but come down with me, and then you can tell your sisters how the glass stands."

They went down stairs to the study, and Charles, hearing voices as he opened the door, was about to retreat, when Carter asked, "Is that you, Arlington? Come here."

"It is me; I merely wish to look at the barometer," replied Charles, rather surprised to find Sinclair and Carter in the study, as the young men were not generally to be seen so early as eight o'clock. Both seemed confused by Maitland's entrance, hastily laying aside the guns they were examining, and beginning some abrupt remarks upon the weather.

"I think we shall not have any rain to-day," said Charles.

"Oh no—no—certainly not," replied Sinclair hastily; and then, turning to Carter, he whispered something which made the latter exclaim, "You may trust to that."

After examining the barometer, Charles remembered that Sir W. Arlington had, on the day preceding, referred to a book in the study respecting the art of transplanting large trees, and as he wished to read the description of the experiments Sir William had mentioned, he now went to the bookcase to search for the book, intending to show Reginald the account. He found several books upon the subject, but he could not find the descriptions Sir William had mentioned; and he was soon absorbed in reading several things which interested him, forgetting that he was not alone in the room, till Carter said, loud enough to catch his ear, "I shall tell him to be gone presently."

"Am I in your way?" asked Charles, rather absently.

"Perhaps you will take your book into the dining-room, sir?" observed Sinclair civilly.

"Directly. I beg your pardon, but I am searching for a certain chapter, and cannot find it."

"You can leave it, I suppose, till after breakfast," said Carter.

"I half promised Sir William to find it for Colonel Eversley, and I wish Reginald to see it," replied Charles, still opening the books.

A short conversation ensued at the other end of the room, followed by Sinclair approaching Charles, and saying, "We are busy here, sir, and time is important to us."

"I ask pardon," said Maitland in astonishment; and, instantly leaving the room, he stepped out upon the terrace, where he found the under-gardener tying up some roses. To his observations upon the beauty of the flowers the young man made a very short and almost surly answer, which surprised Charles, who had hitherto found him intelligent and communica-

tive respecting his occupation, and ready to give instruction in some of the nicer details of it. Charles thought the man might be in haste to finish his present work before the family should come down to breakfast, and that this made him less civil than usual; so, holding back a large branch, he offered to assist in tying it.

"No, sir, I want no help; my hand shakes, that is all," said the man, taking the string from Charles.

"What is the matter? are you ill?" asked Charles.

"No, sir, not ill."

"What then? something is the matter, I am sure. Can I speak to Mr. Arlington for you?"

"*You* are very good, sir; I am sure you have nothing to do with it, said the man, less gloomily.

"Nothing to do with it? What do you mean?" asked Charles, half curious, and half anxious.

"This pigeon-match, sir; it vexes me so I cannot bear to speak of it."

"I know nothing of it indeed, nor do I wish to hear, as I believe Sir William disapproves such things," replied Charles; and he was turning away, when the man said, "But is it not downright robbery, sir?"

"I do not know to what you allude, and therefore cannot judge," replied Charles.

"Why, sir, the case is this. I believe Mr. Sinclair ordered some live pigeons to be sent down from London, and they did not come, for I believe the man would not send them till he was paid for the last he sent. However that may be, the gentlemen have trapped some of my son's birds, and mean to shoot at them to-day."

"But surely they will give them up if you ask it," said Charles.

"No, sir; I have asked Mr. Sinclair, who has the management of it, and he is so angry with me that he says he will not give up *one*."

"Of course you will be paid the value?"

"Why, Mr. Sinclair did offer me money; but the pigeons are my boy's, and are not common

ones, some of them, and we all love them, sir; money will not pay us."

"You had better speak to Sir William."

"Oh no, sir; that would be worse and worse; for Sir William is so fond of Mr. Arlington that I should not like to make mischief. Then, again, my lady calls such sports *gentlemanly*, and proper for my young master, so that would not do; but I do say it is downright robbery."

"Are you sure of what you say? How do you know your boy did not sell the pigeons?"

"Oh no, sir; they are trapped; we missed them yesterday evening, and found them among the pigeons at the farm. Mr. Carter says pigeons are fair game for any one who can trap them; but he is no gentleman," said the man indignantly.

"I will speak to Mr. Carter myself," said Charles.

"It is of no use, sir, indeed," said the man, shaking his head. "I came to the Hall last night, but the gentleman would not listen to me."

Maitland was much vexed by this conversation, but feeling certain that the birds would be given up if a proper remonstrance were made, he contrived to mention it to Carter before the rest of the party assembled for breakfast. To his surprise, Carter denied having trapped the pigeons, till, upon being pressed hard, he admitted that Wright had made a true complaint. Maitland urged the restoration of the birds, but Carter angrily replied, "Very likely indeed! when the match is to come off this morning, and there is no time to get any more. No, no, Arlington and Portman are good fellows, and I will not serve them such a shabby trick as that."

"It is more shabby to kill a man's birds against his will," replied Charles.

"Nonsense! the man will be paid if we win the match, which we are sure of doing. Now, Maitland, I have a word of advice for you."

"Well?"

"Know nothing of the affair, and leave me to manage matters with Arlington. He thinks the

birds are from London, and we wish him to think so; it would be unfair to bring him into a scrape with his own people."

"It is a bad business, Carter, and you will be sorry when the punishment comes," said Charles gravely.

"Well, that will be time enough to preach. For my part, I like spirit in any one; I have no notion of being always so prim with the old gentlemen, though it may answer to *you*, certainly."

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, it is very grand to stay here for a month, and be praised by Sir William all the time: for my part, *I* enjoy the pleasures proper for a gentleman; but you are quite right in your way."

This insulting speech roused Maitland's temper, and he was about to reply rather angrily to the insinuations it contained, when Mr. Sinclair and Colonel Eversley entered, and the former, drawing Carter aside, seemed talking of

some important matter. Thus no more passed between the schoolfellows.

The day became fine and bright; Charles dined with Reginald and the young folks in the school-room, and saw nothing of Mr. Arlington's party during the morning. At four o'clock the young party set off with Miss Carrington to the Dairy, where a young woman, who had formerly lived as nursery-maid at the Hall, and was now married, was to join them with her two little baby girls. George was in very high spirits, gambolling round Charles Maitland, and quite heedless of the advice of the latter, not to heat himself by such violent exercise in the burning sun. After passing through an open part of the park, they entered a wood which formed part of the drive, when Miss Carrington said, "I thought we should have no rain at present, notwithstanding the morning was so cloudy, as I observed the spiders' threads unbroken last night."

"That is a true sign of fine weather," said Reginald; "but I cannot think how they throw

them out to such a distance; see, Miss Carrington, here is a thread quite across our path; it is a pity to break it."

"Oh, I do not believe they are spiders' threads at all," said George; "how should they be? spiders make their threads only from the tops of the trees to the ground."

"This matter has been a puzzle to wiser heads than ours, George, till those wise heads observed, and studied, and watched closely; and at last found out what had before been a mystery. Some of our older and most intelligent naturalists thought the spider could really fly, as they could not otherwise understand the power of shooting its threads horizontally, or straight across, as you would say, George," replied Miss Carrington; "but the little insect not only does this, but can shoot a thread up into the air to an immense height, and then sail away upon it."

"Oh, I hope that is not in England, for I dislike spiders on the ground, and I should not at

all wish to have them flying about my head," said Augusta Carrington.

"It is in England, my dear child," replied Miss Carrington.

"But how? I want to know how," cried impetuous George.

"Have a little patience, George, and I will tell you all I know about it. The white threads in the air had been observed long before any one could guess what they were, or, indeed, endeavoured to do so; till a gentleman named Lister ascertained that they were spiders' threads, and Dr. Hulse confirmed the opinion. Mr. Lister says he saw them on a calm day floating above the highest pinnacles of York Minster. Since that time, naturalists have inquired into the subject, and there have been many suppositions which are not yet arrived at certainty."

"I can understand the thread being blown up and about by the wind, but you say there are more threads in calm than in windy weather; how should the spider be blown about high up

in the air, without wings or wind, Miss Carrington?" asked Augusta.

"That is the difficulty, my dear; and it was thought that warm currents of air from the ground carried up the insect and its thread, as a fire balloon is carried up by the rarefied air it contains; but there were found to be objections to this, as the thread is so very fine; and these gossamer webs *fall* before rain, even in the warmest and most unclouded weather."

"They would fall, I think, Miss Carrington, in hot weather, if this theory be correct, because there would not be so much difference between their temperature and that of the atmosphere, as in cooler weather; but unless we imagine the spider itself to be a balloon, I cannot see how its flight is thus accounted for," said Charles.

"I should like to see the spider fly," said George. "Have you ever seen it, Miss Carrington?"

"Yes, my love, and have been highly amused; my little traveller was soon out of reach, and as

The introduction to Lady Arlington.

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the thread was broken I saw no more of him; therefore my experience is very limited in the matter. I have read of a gentleman who placed several gossamer spiders together, purposely to watch them. They crawled about for some time, then turning their heads towards the wind, they threw out from four to eight fine webs each, several yards long; about half a minute after, they sprang off and launched themselves into the air. They then sailed along, lying on their backs, with their legs curled up. The gentleman says he followed one which had thrown out two branches of thread, and was lying at his ease at the point where they met."

"I wish I could fly so," said George. "Why cannot men, Miss Carrington?"

"I might say we are not intended to sail in the air, George; but that would be a poor answer to you, and perhaps scarcely a just one, as we were not apparently intended to sail upon the water; yet we have so used the faculties which God has given us, that we are able to do this as

well as many other wonderful things. I should rather say, that could we perfectly understand and apply the means with which instinct supplies the spider, we might imitate his acts; and I do believe that if ever man accomplish that strange wish of his *to fly*, it must be by applying to his own use the theory by which modern naturalists account for the flight of the gossamer spider."

"Oh that silly fable of Icarus; but people are wiser now," said Reginald.

"There is a deep meaning in that fable, Regy, but you are too young to understand it;" replied Miss Carrington.

"I have read of the attempts to fly, and I thought it might be done," said Miss Arlington; do not you remember that gentleman who talked so much about it last year? Papa said he had heard of the crying philosopher, the laughing philosopher, but not till then of the flying philosopher. Did not you think he would manage it one day, madam?"

"I was certainly a little impressed at the time,

and still more by what we read together, my dear," replied Miss Carrington ; the writer almost succeeded in shewing, that if we could once spring up, we might sustain ourselves in the air; but his first steps in flying were not firm enough to convince me."

" What is the theory of the gossamer spider, to which you alluded just now, madam," asked Charles.

" Mr. Murray advances electricity as the means or cause of the power of the insect. He says that his opinion is formed by many hundreds of experiments, all tending to one result. The form which the threads take denotes electrical agency, being that called by philosophers a pencil, the threads never mingling or becoming woven together by any direction of motion ; also when the thread is thrown out vertically, or upright, it always remains so, and when others are thrown out horizontally, or in a sloping direction, they always preserve that direction. Now here must be a cause stronger than the force of the

wind, because often opposed to it, always independent of it, what can that cause or power be? You know that in fine clear weather the air is *positively* electrical; in such weather the little insect rises rapidly and perpendicularly. When there is a smaller proportion of electricity in the air—that is, in weather less clear, the ascent will be difficult, and the threads inclined more or less from the perpendicular; in cloudy weather the spider cannot ascend at all. Thus in the damp of the evening the gossamer webs fall to the ground, as I dare say you have seen."

"How was this discovered, madam?"

"By observation and experiment. Mr. Murray proved that the thread is negatively electrified; that is, you know, has less than its share of electric fluid. He then says, that such a thread, darted quickly through the air, would of course by friction gain electricity, and it must ascend till it becomes equally electrical with the air that surrounds it: thus the researches of science confirm our common experience, shewing us *why*

the quantity and height of gossamer webs in the air indicate fine weather."

"I see how you would apply this to an aerial machine, madam," said Charles.

"Fortunately *I* can only dream of such things, but I have often thought that aerial speculators might profit by watching the gossamer spider. It is curious that this idea of electricity was hinted at many years since but not further noticed. I was interested in the question and delighted to find that it had been carried out by Mr. Murray. I am inclined to refer many incomprehensible appearances and experiences to electric agency, and I think that one day what we now call Mesmerism may be stripped of its absurdities and impositions, and find a respectable place in science. The strange yet regular darting motions of the gnat tribe have been referred to electricity. To the same cause Dr. Millar attributes the forms of dust when violently blown by the wind."

"I cannot think why people want to fly, when

they can travel so quickly by railroad," said Augusta.

"I do not see any great advantage to be gained by flying, Augusta; but it has been said truly, that 'power, whether of body or of mind, has a constant tendency to exert itself;' and thus the inventive faculties of man never remain idle. Abilities have been given to us for wise purposes, and those purposes would not be fulfilled were we content with the present state of our being, either morally or physically. Improvement is as much the law of mankind as change is of inanimate nature; besides, were we to put a stop even now to speculation and invention, how many pleasures and comforts we might lose!"

"Yes, but I cannot think the power of flying would be useful; we do not need it with our present way of quick travelling."

"Just so might our forefathers have reasoned, when the heavy waggon took place of the pack-horse; and in fact so did people reason when, it

being proposed to light Edinburgh with gas, the citizens said that their old oil lamps gave sufficient light, and Walter Scott was thought almost 'daft' for urging the attempt. My antiquarian friend, Higgins, in his '*Celtic Druids*,' says, that he thinks it possible that ships may one day cross the Atlantic to America by means of steam, but he speaks of this as of an event which he cannot live to see, although at that time he was in health and strength sufficient to meditate a journey into Armenia, purposely to explore the old convents there, in search of manuscripts relating to the Holy Scriptures."

"Did he go, Miss Carrington? and what did he find?" asked Miss Arlington.

"No, Ethelind; Mr. Higgins died soon after the meeting of the British Association at Cambridge. A friend of mine, who saw him there, gives a beautiful description of his resignation and cheerfulness under constant and hopeless suffering. Although acknowledging that death was very fast approaching, and that each day

might bring the blow, he still retained a vivid but calm interest in the discussions which were taking place around him; for one day only I think he joined the assembly of the association; but, lying upon a sofa, he listened to those who came to visit him, and to relate the proceedings of the day. It was indeed a picture of the good man awaiting death, and I own the description, given with the true feeling of a kindred spirit, brought tears to my eyes, leaving me in a grave mood for many hours afterwards. I will give you a little book to read to-morrow, Augusta, which will shew you the benefit to all classes of improvements and inventions — I mean '*The Results of Machinery*,' by Lord Brougham, I believe."

"Did you ever read '*Peter Simple*,' Miss Carrington?" asked Charles.

"No; but I can guess to what you allude, as I have seen the extract about the carpenter who believed that every thing was to come round again in a certain number of years; and cer-

tainly, when we look back into past ages, the man's idea does not appear so very absurd; but the events do not happen a second time in the same country."

"No; but all nations undergo the some routine," observed Charles.

"It must be so while the mind of man remains the same under all latitudes; but I think Peter Simple's shipmate goes farther than that. We must be content to know that the world is progressing, *upon the whole;* we must not watch every little start, or every trifling check, and hope or despond according to the events of the minute."

CHAPTER IV.

The Dairy, to which the young people were proceeding, was an ornamental building placed in a thick grove of trees near the park farm. It consisted of a kind of hall opening upon a trelliced terrace, and having a large bay window on one side, looking towards the stream of water which ran through the park. Behind the room was the Dairy and the residence of the dairy-woman, whose garden stretched down to the stream just where it was dammed up by sluice-gates, to ensure a proper quantity of water within sight of the Hall. Lady Sarah occasionally took refreshment at the Dairy, and it was the favourite resort of the children whenever any young folks were staying with them. The plan for the present afternoon was to drink tea

in the dairy-room, and afterwards to have a repast of fruit and posset. Reginald had, with the assistance of Charles, rigged a large ship, which was given to his brother many years before, and he reckoned very much upon sailing it this evening. The first question upon arriving at the Dairy was, "Is the ship come?" for it was to be brought down in a cart by the under-gardener; and, having a satisfactory answer, Reginald was impatient to launch it, but Miss Carrington thought it would be better to wait till after tea, as perhaps Lady Sarah would drive down before her dinner hour. With some difficulty Reginald agreed to wait, and tea was ordered immediately, that all might be ready for Lady Sarah's presence. Mrs. Newby, the former nurse, had brought her two pretty girls to do honour to the birthday, and she begged that her nephew, a boy of ten years old, might be present at the sailing of the boat, a request which was readily granted.

Just after tea Lady Sarah arrived; Charles

stepped forward to assist her to alight from her pony-chair, but, to his surprise, she refused his arm coldly, and, without saying a word, entered the room. Miss Carrington's countenance was overcast at this, for she saw directly that her ladyship was in one of the fits of temper not uncommon to her, but extremely disagreeable to every one around; and the governess feared that the storm would break upon her head, as was too often the case. The boat was, however, made ready, and Charles and Reginald towed the miniature ship into the middle of the stream, while John Newby directed its course from the shore. The plan succeeded admirably, and the ship sailed steadily and well, doing credit to its workmen. After enjoying this for some time, it was brought ashore again, and the children, all gathering round it, were assisting Reginald to take down the sails, when Lady Sarah, who stood at a little distance, said, "Miss Arlington, come to me; you are too old to partake in such amusements; they are fit only for boys."

"Why, mama, you have been enjoying it yourself. I wish to see the sails taken down, as I could not understand what Mr. Maitland said about the double blocks yesterday, and he promised to shew me," replied Ethelind, keeping her place near Charles.

"Indeed, Miss Arlington, this is very unbecoming," said Lady Sarah crossly; "Mr. Maitland may understand such things, but it is not at all necessary for you to do so, nor for any young *gentleman*."

The accent upon the last word struck Charles's ear, and he raised his head, as he was kneeling by the ship, with a look of inquiry, which perhaps her ladyship felt, as she turned away, saying to Miss Carrington, "I shall see you in the boudoir after breakfast, Miss Carrington."

The scene had passed rapidly, but it left some degree of gloom upon the party, which was not quite dispersed by seeing Lady Sarah drive away in her pony-chair. Charles wondered what could be wrong; her ladyship's manner to him

was almost rude, and he was standing alone, thinking over all his acts of the last few days, in order to ascertain in what manner he could have offended, when Miss Carrington approached him, saying, "Something is wrong, Mr. Maitland, but I think not with you; Lady Sarah is liable to these inequalities of temper, and I suppose I shall find that it arises, as usual, from some trifling annoyance, which will find vent in altering the children's lessons, or in a long lecture to me upon some new scheme of education."

"And what will you do, madam, if this temper last till your interview to-morrow? I much fear I am unconsciously the cause of this, and, if so, I beg you will forgive it."

"Do not be alarmed," replied the lady, smiling; "a pleasant party in the drawing-room may disperse the cloud — nay, I have known sunshine return upon wearing a new dress which struck the fancy; I have learned to endeavour to do my duty to my pupils, and not to be distressed by these storms. But, be-

lieve me, I also impress upon them, as much as lies in my power, the necessity of an equable temper, both for their own sake and that of all around them."

During this short dialogue the children had placed the ship under a tree, and Reginald was looking at it with great admiration, when Augusta said, "I know, if we were to take it to the foot-bridge, it would float down to the waterfall of itself, as the water runs so quickly that way; and I dare say it will go more steadily than it did with the sails set."

"A good thought, Augusta; but will it not go over the waterfall?" said Ethelind.

"Oh no, that little rail will prevent it; do let us try it," replied Augusta, preparing to seize the boat.

"Stop, stop; we must tell Miss Carrington what we are going to do," said Reginald, and he ran off, soon returning with Maitland, who proposed towing the boat up to the bridge; "if we can get past that weeping-willow," he added.

"Oh yes, I will manage that," cried Reginald; and little George ran off, clapping his hands, to join Miss Carrington, who was playing with Mrs. Newby's little girls upon the grass. The whole party proceeded to the bridge; Reginald climbed the willow, and, with the help of Charles and John Newby, passed the towing-rope beyond it; the children stood upon the bridge, and Charles, having unfastened the rope, pushed the vessel into the middle of the stream, where it went along at a steady pace towards the fall. Many were the exclamations of delight at the success of the project, and, on arriving at the end of the voyage, it was agreed by all that it must be repeated. Again, therefore, the party set off towards the bridge, John Newby having undertaken to climb the willow. John was a lively fellow, accustomed to all kinds of rural adventures, and his aunt said he was quite able to manage the towing-rope. John climbed the tree, one limb of which reached far into the stream, and, willing to shew his fear-

Charles rescuing John Newby.

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lessness and skill, he ventured upon this branch, instead of ascending the main trunk, as Reginald had done, by Maitland's direction. Charles, who was at some distance behind the rest, guiding the ship with an oar of the boat, called to the boy to desist, but he did not hear the advice, and, raising himself upon the branch, he tried to stand upright, but, not seeing a thick knot of the tree, where a limb had been taken off, he knocked his head, lost his footing, and fell into the water. This was so momentary that Charles scarcely saw the attempt before he heard the splash, and running up, he saw the boy struggling in the weeds growing by the bank, which was at that place much broken by the roots of the tree. He immediately rushed to his assistance, at first without effect, as the bank gave way under his feet; but, with the aid of Miss Carrington, he gained firmer footing, and holding out his hand, drew John out of the mud and weeds to a spot whence he could step ashore without much difficulty. The boy was much

frightened and extremely wet, nor had Charles escaped unhurt; for, besides being wet as far as his knees, he had hurt his left hand with grasping the bow of the willow. All directly went back to the Dairy; Mrs. Newby was almost hysterical in her thanks and praises to Charles, without whose prompt assistance John might have been drowned, as near the spot there was a very deep hole, of which fortunately no one was aware till told of it afterwards; had they known it, fear might have prevented John from seconding Charles's efforts to save him.

"We must dry you, Mr. Maitland," said Miss Carrington, after John Newby had been put to bed, "but we can scarcely do so here, unless you will go to bed till we can procure dry clothes from the Hall."

"I think it will be better for me to hasten thither myself; I shall run all the way, and the exercise will prevent my catching cold," he replied.

"You are right; but your hand requires atten-

tion ; the housekeeper, Mrs. Probart, is a capital doctress, she will dress it for you. We shall find you in the school-room when we return ?"

" Thank you, madam," replied Charles ; and acting up to his words he set off at full speed to the Hall. Having changed his dress, and submitted his hand to Mrs. Probart's skill, he took a book and awaited the return of the young people in the school-room.

" Charles was very willing to escape from the thanks of Mrs. Newby and the praises of the whole party. Reginald had been anxious to return to the Hall with him, but Charles positively refused, feeling that he had better be alone a little while, as the escape from a great danger made him feel rather uncomfortable. He was sitting quietly by the school-room window absorbed in his book, when Colonel Eversley opened the door saying, —

" Why, my dear boy, they told me you were almost drowned in trying to rescue a boy who is quite drowned ; tell me, is it so ?"

"No indeed, sir; a boy fell into the water and I helped him out, that is all; he is quite safe, although much frightened, of course."

"What is the matter with your hand?"

"It was torn by the bough, of which I laid hold carelessly in my hurry, sir," replied Charles.

"Is it much hurt? Let me see, we soldiers are all doctors."

"Oh no, sir, not much; Mrs. Probart has dressed it and it will soon heal, I dare say."

"I see you are a hero," replied Colonel Eversley smiling. "But there is a long story about this matter, in the drawing-room, and Lady Sarah almost went into hysterics on hearing somebody was drowned, and that you had risked your life to save the person."

"I am very sorry the accident should have been so magnified, and much obliged to her ladyship for her interest in me," replied Charles coldly, remembering what had occurred at the dairy.

"Oh you need not trouble yourself about that;

Sir William is a good-hearted fellow, and really likes you, but as to my lady, I do not understand her."

Charles was half tempted to tell the colonel what had passed at the dairy, but trusting it was only a caprice of her ladyship's, he forbore, and desiring him to be careful of himself and his hand; his friend left him, to carry into the drawing-room the intelligence that Charles was safe, and no one drowned.

Miss Carrington and her pupils returned very much fatigued; the young ladies and George went to bed immediately; Reginald and his friend remained with Miss Carrington. The conversation turned upon the art of flying, and thence to railroads, when Charles observed that the Duke of Bridgewater would have been in despair indeed, could he have guessed the rapid increase of railroads.

"Why so?" asked Reginald.

"When congratulated upon the prospect of success aud remuneration for his great undertak-

ing, he replied, 'We shall do well enough if we can keep clear of those tramroads,' thus indirectly acknowledging the superior convenience of land over water carriage," replied Charles.

"I place the Duke of Bridgewater among the first class of benefactors to this country, and hence to mankind," observed Miss Carrington.

"But the ancients had canals, even in Babylon," said Reginald. "I suppose the duke only copied them."

"True, Reginald, but those very works of the ancients, which shew the vastness of their ideas and the skilful application of the knowledge which they possessed, prove their ignorance in one great point of inland navigation — the construction of the lock. For want of this the canals of Babylon were choked up, the Pallacopas became a stagnant marsh, and the great canals of Sesostris and the Pharaohs were lost in valleys of sand. It does appear very strange, that so simple an invention should have escaped the mathematicians who built the pyramids, or the

artificers who but just fell short of the art of printing; especially as the remains at Petra shew that the use of the syphon was not unknown; therefore, they must have been acquainted with the property of fluids to rise to their own level. With all my respect for the ancients, I must give them up on this point," said Miss Carrington.

"I do not imagine that conveyance of goods was the object in the construction of Egyptian or Babylonian canals," observed Charles. "That was accomplished in so regular a manner by caravans, that inland water carriage would scarcely enter into the imagination of our *old* friends. The Egyptians were never nautical; the Arabs were the sailors of India, and the trade of the Phœnicians was entirely maritime: the canals of the ancients were merely for agricultural or domestic purposes. If I were to search for an ancient use of the lock, I should do so in Ceylon, I think; but there the waterworks were not executed for the purposes of navigation; the river and lake-dams are, however, curious."

"In China also?" asked Miss Carrington.

"Perhaps so, that 'vast repository of ideas partially carried out, and inventions unimproved, has certainly given Europe many arts, but I think the Chinese scarcely needed the lock. No, the Cingalese seem to have worked well with water: their tanks are wonderful efforts of art; and if, as there is every reason to suppose, Ceylon was colonised very early, I should look there for many relics of the arts of the ancients. They are more likely to be retained in the island than on the continent, where political convulsions have been so frequent."

"Do you then really think, Charles, that the ancients knew as much as we do?" enquired Reginald.

"Knowledge was not so much diffused, and the sciences were used by the priests both of Egypt and India as the means of enslaving, or at least, of controlling, the minds of the people; therefore it is difficult to decide the limits of knowledge: but we have evidence from ancient

historians that certain effects were produced, although the means are not clearly revealed to us, and we must refer these results to the means with which they would be effected at the present day. Thus, the description of the Cave of Irophonius must be explained by the laws of mechanics; the evening statues of the Gods at Antium by the same laws. Optical illusions were common in the temples; and the phantasmagoria is rather a rediscovery than a modern invention. In the initiations of candidates to the sacred mysteries, we read of scenes which must have been produced by the application of science. While each country possessed its irresponsible and exclusive priesthood, secrecy was possible. In after times, when the Greeks had habitual communication with Persia and Bactria, the magi were dispersed, and their secrets less rigourously preserved; then, long after, the conquest of Egypt by the Romans, deluged the imperial city with priests of inferior orders, who made a traffic of the secrets of the temples; and lastly, the heathen convert

brought with them what knowledge they possessed. But science was thus lost, and perhaps deteriorated; we can now therefore only judge by effects," said Miss Carrington.

"Has it not been said, that gas was one of the instruments of imposition by the priests?" asked Charles.

"I have no doubt of it," replied the lady. It has been shewn, likewise, that Numa possessed the art of drawing down the electric fluid, the discovery attributed to Franklin; nay, the same knowledge has been attributed to Zoroaster and Prometheus; and the spikes upon the temple of Jerusalem have been referred to as conductors, though Josephus seems to have been ignorant of this, their use. The magnetic needle is alluded to in Homer; gunpowder is certainly no modern discovery; the screw of Archimedes has not been improved upon. Aristotle states that the Greeks employed mirrors to survey the heavens, and a remark of Strabo refers to lenses. Roger Bacon says, that Cæsar surveyed the coast of Britain

with a glass; and the Arabian nights contains a description of a telescope, as well as of a flying machine; and we can scarcely imagine the delicate antique gems to have been engraved without the use of magnifying glasses. This is a long list, Reginald, but I could increase it."

"All these scientific appliances were of service in religion probably. To go back to the lock, *that* is purely a national invention, and therefore, less likely to be discovered or regarded," replied Charles.

"Yes, you know probably to whom it is attributed?" asked Miss Carrington.

"No, madam."

"To Leonardo da Vinci; but there is an earlier claim. When the Duonio of Milan was being built by Philip Maria Visconti, about 1440, difficulty was found in conveying materials from the Alpine quarries of Candoglia, and some contrivance became necessary for lifting vessels from one level to another. The river Ticino and the canal had brought the marble to the suburbs of

the city, but there it remained till the ditch of the city had been rendered navigable; but at a higher level certain sluices were devised for passing the vessels by an alternate increase and decrease of the water. These must have been the precursors of our locks, though less complete. The sliding flood-gate we learned from the Turks.'"

"Then you give up Leonardo, madam?"

"As an inventor, perhaps, but not as an improver; it being conjectured from his manuscripts, that he introduced or invented the lock-gate turning on hinges, the little doors in the gates, so useful in moderating the flow of water, and the formation of the gate at an obtuse angle, in order the better to sustain the pressure of the water. Our own Brindley perfected all these."

"That strange Duke of Bridgewater should be praised for patronising Brindley," said Reginald.

"Yes, I would place his name by that of Colbert, who planned and directed the canal of

Languedoc, with its 100 locks, its 36 aqueducts, and its elevation of 600 feet above the level of the Mediterranean; but what a contrast in the situation of the two men! Colbert, the trusted minister of the *great* Louis, able to command unlimited supplies of money and artificers — with the eyes of Europe upon his gigantic undertaking, which was to unite oceans, to facilitate commerce between the different quarters of the globe; and a private individual, seeking in the exercise of a hitherto buried faculty, to assuage the pangs of disappointed affection; depending upon his own resources solely, upon his own perseverance, upon his own genius. His resources far from large, his perseverance opposed by the habits of his birth and order, his genius unaided by early education, how nobly does he stand forth in the prosecution of those works, which have deservedly classed him among the benefactors of mankind! I cannot tell you how much I admire that man."

"I quite participate in your admiration,

madam," said Charles. "The duke's coadjutors, too, Brindley and Gilbert, deserve thanks, for had he not met with such men, probably his enterprises would not have been prosecuted to their completion."

"Probably not. I have read of Brindley that when the moment arrived for admitting the water into the Barton aqueduct, he was so nervous, that he ran away and hid himself, leaving Gilbert cool and collected, to superintend the crisis, which was to confirm or confute the clamour with which the project had been assailed. My theory respecting genius would lead me to say, that Brindley was far superior to Gilbert in that respect; the latter seems to have possessed as much perseverance as his employer, under difficulties which would have alarmed a person of finer temperament."

"What do you mean, madam?" asked Reginald.

"At one time, when the duke's credit was extremely low, and ready money was exhausted,

Gilbert was employed to borrow from among the Cheshire farmers such small sums as they could command. On one of these occasions he was joined by a horseman, and after some conversation the meeting ended with an exchange of horses. On alighting afterwards at a lonely inn, which he had not before frequented, Gilbert was surprised at being greeted with evident and mysterious marks of recognition by the landlord, and still more so, when the latter expressed a hope that his journey had proved successful, and that his saddle-bags were well filled. He was unable to account for the apparent acquaintance of a total stranger with the business and object of his present expedition. The mystery was solved by the discovery that he had changed horses with a highwayman who had infested the paved lanes of Cheshire, till his horse had become so well known, that its owner had found it convenient to take the first opportunity of procuring one less notorious."

"I wonder he dared go on with such a horse;

I should have been afraid of being taken up instead of the highwayman," said Reginald.

"Gilbert would easily have been identified had that occurred," replied Miss Carrington. "I tell you this anecdote to shew the difficulties, in *one* way, which attended the formation of the first great canal undertaking in England; the other impediments, *mental* I may call them, were equally great. Brindley was called a madman, an enthusiast, a person unworthy of trust; the duke was assailed by the '*faineauts*' of his order, who proclaimed him utterly lost to all decency for leaving the circles of his equals, the betting-stand, club, and assembly, to seclude himself by the 'humble hearth of the black-and-white-timbered manor-house of Worsley, or, of the still humbler village inn, where three hard-headed men, of simple manners and attire, discussed a project unnoticed by governments, and deemed hopeless by the few besides themselves who gave any attention to the matter.' He possessed, however a taste for pictures, as his collection testified,

but this might have been implanted by Wood, the antiquarian and scholar, with whom he travelled. I should have been pleased to add the Duke of Bridgewater's name to our aristocratic agriculturalists, but it was not so; he neither planted nor cultivated, except as connected with his canal undertakings. He built a house commanding a wide view of the works he constructed and the land he fertilised, but he added neither garden, shrubbery, nor conservatory; and it is even said, that some flowers having been planted during his absence, he ordered them to be rooted out. The only trees which he patronised were some Turkey oaks which had been brought down from London."

"I wish he had loved planting," said Reginald.

"Agricultural pursuits were not followed by our nobility at that time as they are now, when a peer invents a new drainage tile, and dukes give their personal attention to the irrigation of their farms. The country was neither so thickly populated, nor so well cultivated as now it is. A

column is still standing, which was erected as a land-lighthouse, in 1751, on what was called Lincoln heath, where the roads were then so bad, that the late Lady Robert Manners, when passing from Blisholm to Lincoln, was accustomed to send a groom forward to ascertain whether they were passable; and so intricate, that a family lost their way twice in one night, when returning from a Lincoln assembly. I have heard an uncle relate almost similar tales of the present highly-cultivated domain of the Earl of Leicester, upon the authority of his father," said Miss Carrington.

"How much I would do, if I were a landed proprietor," said Reginald.

"You may do it in your allotted sphere, Regy," replied Miss Carrington. "If you enter the church you will have great power, not from the possession of lands or money, perhaps, but a higher and firmer power to do good, depending upon your own character and conduct; a clergyman may indeed lead and influence in worldly as well as in religious affairs; but to do this worthily he must

be himself industrious, active, well-informed, an enlightened *farmer*, and a liberal-minded *gentleman*, as well as a pious minister to his flock, I can imagine no situation in life so capable of being made useful, and so easily converted into the means of evil."

"Remember Oberlin, Regy; would he have been able to do so much had he not been a pastor?" asked Charles.

"Oh no; but *we* cannot make roads and build bridges; that is all done," replied Reginald.

"Certainly not; to be useful to our fellow-creatures we must strive to be *in advance* of our age; not too much so, or power evaporates in enthusiastic scheming; but just enough to lead without bewildering our inferiors. Here lies the difficulty, and prudence only can overcome it," said Miss Carrington.

"Did you ever see any of the water meadows which were mentioned in the drawing-room an evening or two since, madam? I thought you looked as if you knew something about the matter,

and I intended to ask you, but forgot it till now," said Charles.

"I was much interested in Mr. Litcham's account," replied the lady. "Some years since a friend drove me to a farm where this mode of irrigation had been successfully tried; it was the first instance in our county, and was much talked about. I enjoy anything relating to, or dependent on, the application of science to everyday life, and I was interested in this matter; but even had I been indifferent to such things in general, I must have admired this triumph of skill and patience. The water was conducted in small rills, at different levels, along the sloping meadow, forming a miniature territory of land and water. My exclamation was, 'What a delightful spot for American shrubs!' and my next wish, that the space thus drained were a hundred times larger than I saw it, so evidently beneficial was it. I believe the expense was enormous, and therefore the plan could be followed only partially, and by rich owners or tenants. That day was classed by me, with many others in my life, to be remembered

with pleasure and instruction; another, is that on which I passed *under* the Bridgewater canal near Warrington; another, when I first saw Ely cathedral, its majestic towers rising proudly over the rich meadows of the isle; another, when I trod the turf which had been Lord Bacon's garden, and traced in idea the spot where his 'fair banquetting houses' had stood. Believe me, young men, such days live in all their freshness through the storms and tempests of life, giving even to the darkest hour some gleam of light; when the present is cheerless, and the future threatening, it is well to be able to find consolation in thoughts of the past: and my earnest advice is—cultivate your affections, and your taste, were it only that in the decline of life, when friends have been taken away, and present pursuits have become wearisome, there may be something for the mind to rest upon, to refresh, and to cheer it. Better even to have but one idea, if that idea be but vivid and engrossing, than to fritter away mind and intellect in frivolous pursuits and senseless compliances with the fashion of the world."

CHAPTER V.

On the morning after the excursion to the Dairy, Charles was sauntering near the bit of ground which was given up to gardens for the young folks, before breakfast, when Ethelind Arlington met him; she was lamenting that the gardener had refused to lend her some hand glasses to place over a number of cuttings which she was endeavouring to raise, and she said to Charles,—

"I think, Mr. Maitland, you can tell me how to make frames with wood, and to cover them with something which will attract the heat; Reginald said you once mentioned it at school."

"Yes," replied Charles; "my sister always forces her annuals so in the spring, and they would answer for your cuttings, I have no doubt."

"Pray describe them to me, and I will get them made directly."

Charles did so, saying that he thought tin would be more serviceable than wood for the frames. Miss Arlington was delighted; and at breakfast she asked Reginald to try and get them made for her directly, which he promised.

"I should like to surprise your sister with these frames," said Charles to his friend when they were alone; "let us go into the village and find a tinman; I will procure some oil and muslin, and we will make them at once."

The proposal was agreed to, and they walked to the village, where they soon found the person they wanted. Charles was struck by the extremely respectful manner in which the man spoke to him, and still more surprised when, having received the order, the tinman said,—

"I believe it is to you, sir, that I owe so much; you saved my boy's life yesterday."

"Was it your son, then, that fell into the river?" asked Reginald.

"Yes, sir; and they tell me that but for this good young gentleman he would have been drowned; *he* cares for people not so rich as himself; I wish others did."

"Indeed your son was not in such danger, and I merely stepped into the water; any one would do that," replied Charles.

"I beg pardon, sir; some young gentlemen think that we working people are only to be trampled on, and of no value but to do as they please, however unjust it may be," cried Newby bitterly.

"What do you mean? Has any one ill-treated you?" asked Reginald.

"Oh, master Reginald, you know nothing of it, I am sure, and cannot help me; it is of no use telling you," said the man.

"Yes, indeed it is; I will tell Sir William; you know he is always ready to do justice to every body," answered Reginald.

"I know that, sir, but I shall go to Squire Carter with this complaint, if I am not paid as I ought to be."

"Do not go to Mr. Carter; you know my father is not very friendly with him," said Reginald.

"I wish your brother were not, sir; then this would not have happened."

"If it be anything about my brother and Carter, pray go to my father; he will be doubly angry if you apply to Mr. Carter," said Reginald eagerly.

"Why, sir, the matter is this," said Newby; "Young Carter has been very busy lately getting up pigeon-matches; and not content with killing the poor birds for no purpose but to win money by them, he has trapped my son's pigeons to save buying them for his cruel sport. They say he has lost so much money, instead of winning as he expected, that he could not buy birds for his match yesterday, and he dares not ask his father."

"What a shameful thing! But he will pay you, of course?" said Reginald.

"I fear not, sir; mine or my son's were com-

mon birds, and he denies having trapped them; those that were killed are put away, and the others came back, so I have no redress, I fear. But I shall go to Mr. Carter if his son do not come and settle it to-day. You can tell him so, if you please, sir."

"No, no, Reginald, *you* had better not interfere," said Charles.

"I dare not; my father forbade these shooting-matches last year, and I know how angry he would be about this matter; if I mention it to any one, Sir William may hear of it, so we will know nothing about it, Charles."

"Perhaps you are right, sir; I would not vex Sir William. But are you one of the party, sir?" asked the man of Charles.

"Oh no; I heard of the business by accident yesterday, but I have nothing to do with it."

"Mr. Wright said you were not one of them, but Mr. Carter told me something about your wishing to be *incog.* in it, for fear of losing Sir William's favour. However, I know now that

is not true; young Carter is not particular when it suits his purpose to tell an untruth."

Maitland knew this well, but he said nothing to confirm Newby's bad opinion of his schoolfellow. Mr. Portman and Sinclair had left the Hall on the preceding day, and William Arlington had requested that Carter might remain a few days longer, to which Lady Sarah consented, though she would have better liked that her son should have chosen a more purely aristocratic associate. However, as William Arlington was to go in a few days upon a visit to some of her ladyship's titled relations, she cared less about this acquaintance, as should William by accident learn any bad manners from Carter, it would be remedied by a visit to Portown Castle.

The conversation between the friends, as they returned to the Hall, turned of course upon the conduct of Carter, which Charles was glad to find Reginald properly disapproved; and they each resolved not to interfere. On arriving at the lodge gate, their attention was attracted to a

little crowd of children in the pretty garden there, who seemed to be watching something upon the wall of the cottage. Reginald and Charles stopped by the hedge, and at length enquired what they were doing.

"Look here! look here, sir! shouted several young voices. They accordingly entered the garden, and upon a fruit tree nailed to the wall saw what Charles directly pronounced to be a cameleon. "How did you procure this creature?" was Reginald's first question.

"My brother brought it yesterday, sir; he is a sea captain, and he gave the children this odd animal. You should see it change colour, sir," added the woman who lived at the lodge.

"I should like that, indeed," replied Reginald, while Charles was busy examining the movements of the creature. The woman said she did not like to remove it herself, as her brother had desired her to let it remain in the sun till his return from the village; so Reginald said, that as his

sister's morning lessons must be nearly over, he would go up to the Hall, and ask them to come and see the cameleon at once. The woman advised this, as she said that though her brother had proposed giving the animal to her children, she should ask him to take it away with him on the following day, as she was afraid of having it under her charge.

Reginald soon returned with the school-room party; Augusta and George were delighted beyond measure with the stranger; Miss Carrington and Ethelind thought it ugly, but curious.

"Are cameleons ever tamed, madam?" asked George.

"I do not know, my dear; I never saw one before—have you, Mr. Maitland?" asked the lady.

"Yes, ma'am; we kept one for some months, and gave it to a friend, who had better means than ourselves of tending it during the winter, but it died in the spring," replied Charles. It was apparently tame—that is, it knew the per-

sons of our household; but it changed colour at sight of a stranger."

"This is nearly white, you see; is that its usual colour?" asked Augusta.

"I think it is cream-coloured, because it is in the sun. I never saw ours so pale, because it was kept in the kitchen, where there was not much sunshine; but my father saw it afterwards upon a fruit-tree nailed to a wall, and he described it as just this pale colour."

"Then of what other colours have you seen it?" asked Miss Arlington.

"It was generally of a dull lead-colour, but upon the approach of a stranger it became green; if at this time the sun was brightly shining upon the cage, the green was almost what we call an apple-green; if the weather was cloudy, it was a dull myrtle-green. I never saw it quite black, but it was always dark when sugar was given to it, of which it was extremely fond."

"Then it did not live really upon air?" said George.

"Oh no; it lived upon very minute flies, which it caught with its long tongue; and we taught it to eat many things, as of course it could not catch many flies in its cage. It used to turn its eyes about in a most extraordinary manner; they were very prominent, as you see this creature's are; and do watch him, for he can turn the eyeball in such a manner as to look along his back."

"The eyes are very ugly," said Augusta.

"But very intelligent," observed Miss Carrington. "I admire the animal extremely."

"We thought the cameleon the most sensible creature we ever had, except our hawk," said Charles. "If we could have kept him alive through the cold of our climate, I believe we children should soon have tamed him; we all became attached to him, so much so, that my father gave him away partly because he could not bear that he should die in our care. Have you ever seen the changes in the creature's colour accounted for, Miss Carrington?"

"Yes, I have; but very inconsistently with your description. I have read that the colour depends upon that of the substance which it is near, or in front of, and that it takes hours to effect the change; but you say it changes rapidly."

"Oh yes; in five minutes you would not recognise the animal; and I am sure it is not dependent upon external circumstances, at least not upon other colours of other substances. Mr. Murray, in his '*Researches of Natural History*,' attributes the changes to the feelings of the animal acting upon its skin, as the passions of the human mind change the colour of the skin, by means of the quicker or slower circulation of the blood; but I do not quite like this, although I decidedly refer the changes to the feelings of the creature. Mr. Murray too speaks of the colours as 'depicted in such varying shades that the magic of the necromancer's rod takes not the sense of vision more completely captive than do these ephemeral and sportive hues." Now,

however wonderful and beautiful the cameleon's change of colour may be, it does not quite deserve these expressions, as the colours are not vivid, nor is the change momentary."

"We cannot imagine a stronger impulse than fear; and if it be five minutes in changing colour at the approach of a stranger under this impulse, it is not probable that a less vivid sensation would produce a more rapid change. The appearances are probably caused by increased or decreased temperature of the animal's body; but I should like to have it for a few days, in order to examine it completely under various circumstances. As that is not possible, we must take leave of the stranger, and return home to our business," added Miss Carrington, turning to Ethelind and Augusta, who unwillingly followed her.

Upon reaching the Hall, Miss Carrington found that Lady Sarah had inquired for her and requested her presence in the boudoir as soon as possible. The summons was obeyed, and Lady Sarah, in a severe tone, said, "I am extremely

annoyed, Miss Carrington, at the intimacy which appears to exist between the Misses Arlington and the young man whom I was obliged to notice for Reginald's sake. I wish I had never done so, as I sedulously avoid all low associations for my children; however, I must desire that he be not encouraged to forget the distance between himself and my daughters."

"Madam!" exclaimed Miss Carrington in astonishment.

"I cannot send the person away, on Reginald's account, but I wish to impress upon you that I would have my daughters as little in his society as possible. William, I see, is not very friendly with Mr. Maitland; he, probably, detected at once the low birth of that person: had I known that he was merely the son of a shopkeeper, I would have sent him a sum of money as an acknowledgment of his kindness to Reginald, but I should never have invited him here. This all arises from Sir William sending the boy to such a school as Dr. Watson's."

"I think your ladyship has been misinformed," began Miss Carrington, but Lady Sarah interrupted her. "Mr. Carter is my authority," she said; "he assures me that Mr. Maitland keeps a shop at Liverpool; a mere tradesman, fit only for the servant's hall; a pecuniary recompense would have been more proper for him than to visit my sons on terms of equality. You must see this unfortunate business as I do, Miss Carrington."

"Excuse me, madam, so far from my doing so, I consider Mr. Maitland's society as a great advantage to Reginald, and the young man himself would be an ornament to any rank in life; his talents and manners, as your ladyship knows, are equal to those of any one whom he meets here."

"But a shopkeeper's son, Miss Carrington?"

"I am not an unprejudiced judge, madam," replied Miss Carrington, drawing herself up proudly; for, according to custom, she had been allowed to remain *standing* during the dialogue. "*My* father was a shopkeeper. Mr. Maitland,

however, is not so; he is a merchant, and resides at a little distance from Liverpool. I must say, I do not consider Mr. Carter an indifferent person in this case."

"Why not, Miss Carrington?"

"I have observed much which has probably escaped your ladyship; and I must say, that of the two young men I infinitely prefer Mr. Maitland, both as to intellect and principle. His influence over Reginald is constantly exerted to counteract the defects of character which are but too prominent in him, and his talent for drawing has been of infinite service to all of us."

"I do not know to what you allude. As to Mr. Carter, his father is a man of property, and although *I* cannot associate with his family, this young man may rise in society by his acquaintance with my sons; such things are not of so much importance to young men as to females. I shall make further inquiries; in the meanwhile, I desire that the sketching parties may be discontinued, and no encouragement given to the young

man to pass his time in the school-room, as I find he has done."

Miss Carrington promised acquiescence, and with a heavy heart and fatigued limbs left the presence of Lady Sarah, more disgusted than ever with the subterfuges of pride. Charles Maitland had been such a frequent visitor in the school-room, that she felt it would be difficult to dismiss him, but it must be done. She repined a little for the loss to herself, as she had enjoyed his conversation upon rational subjects. He had gone forward in his short life with open eyes and ears, and his judgment had evidently been directed by an able guide. She distrusted Carter, having detected him in some very dishonourable endeavours to induce Reginald to do that which he well knew Sir William Arlington disliked; and to the advice of Maitland Reginald's correct conduct was to be attributed. Miss Carrington determined to ascertain exactly the position of Mr. Maitland, in order to preserve to Reginald a friendship which was even now so valuable to

him, and which might have a beneficial influence upon his whole life. Accordingly, having obtained the information she desired from Charles, she wrote a note to Lady Sarah, and the result was a summons to the boudoir.

"I have received your note, Miss Carrington," said her ladyship. "I find you are correct; and Colonel Eversley tells me that Mr. Maitland's uncle was in the army, and was a gentleman much respected; therefore, I suppose, I must not break off his acquaintance with my son. It is right to be cautious in these things, Miss Carrington, as there is nothing so hurtful to young people as association with their inferiors."

"Association with superiors devoid of principle is far more hurtful, madam, and ought to be guarded against very strictly," replied Miss Carrington leaving the room.

On the following morning Charles was in the breakfast-room, looking at a newspaper, when a servant said that Mr. Newby was in the hall, waiting to speak to him. Charles went out and

found that the man had brought the tin frames which had been ordered. Laying them out of sight, lest George should pass that way, he was just in the act of paying the man, when Carter entered from the breakfast-room, and lounging near Charles, seemed to be scrutinising his movements. A few words passed in a low tone between Newby and his employer, which evidently roused the curiosity of Carter, who came up to Maitland just as he was saying to the man, "You will be careful not to mention this matter in the servants' hall, if you please."

"Certainly not, sir; and I shall be grateful all my life to you; I wish you every happiness, sir, as you deserve it," replied Mr. Newby, with a low bow.

"Upon my word, acting popular in the village too; and may I ask the price of this great favour?" said Carter sneeringly.

"A mere matter of business," replied Charles, turning towards the spot where he had laid the frames; then remembering the intended secresy, he suddenly stopped, and asked,—

"Do you want me, Carter?"

"Oh no—but—now tell me, there is a good fellow, what did that cringing fellow come to you for?"

"Only business."

"That is no answer."

"It is all I can give you at present; in a few days you may hear more of it perhaps."

"It would be but civil to tell me now," said Carter persuadingly.

"It is not my own secret only, and it is a secret we wish to be kept so," replied Charles.

"You will not tell Sir William, then?"

"Certainly not."

"Nor her ladyship?"

"Not at present."

"Do tell me—I will not mention it."

"I cannot."

"You were paying that fellow money—what was it for?"

"That is the very secret," said Charles, laughing.

"You are very ill-natured to laugh at my distress," said Carter sulkily.

"Distress, Carter? I was merely amused at your curiosity," replied Charles, wholly unconscious that his companion was really annoyed at what had passed.

"I do not like that man; he is a mischievous fellow."

"He is a good workman, and that is all I know of him."

"Was that money paid for work, then?" asked Carter, somewhat relieved.

"To be sure; what else should it be paid for?" said Charles, astonished.

"I thought he might have made out a tale"—

At these words the recollection of the pigeons struck Maitland, and he turned gravely to Carter, saying,—

"I do not interfere with the pursuits of others, Carter, and I answer no questions respecting my own affairs."

"Upon my word, you are a great gentleman;"

and Carter left his friend with an expression of countenance partaking both of contempt and apprehension. Charles seized his treasures as soon as his companion was gone, and calling Reginald, they went into the gardener's tool-house to finish the frames, which they completed to their perfect satisfaction. After luncheon, Charles and Reginald took the frames in triumph to the school-room, where they received the thanks due to their workmanship, and were requested to assist Miss Arlington in sowing her seeds and planting her cuttings.

"You had better do it at once," said Miss Carrington; "there is a black cloud coming up, and I observed that our friends the flying spiders had put forth none of their filmy threads this morning; we shall have rain soon."

"You may call them 'friends' now, madam. I shall never be afraid of them again, though I could not feed and tame a spider, as the prisoner in the Bastile did," said Augusta.

"I have read of a man whose life was saved

by his observations upon spiders," said Miss Carrington.

"Indeed! How was that, madam?" asked many voices.

"When you return I will read the passage to you, but it is better not to delay now, lest your little barometer should prove as true to you as those did that I shall tell you about."

The sowing and the planting having been properly performed, and the frames placed over the spots, the young folks stood for some minutes admiring their work. "I must bring Wright to see them; I am sure he will have some made directly," said Ethelind. "Mama will admire them also, I am certain."

These words recalled to Miss Carrington the injunctions given in the boudoir, but as she inculcated openness to her pupils, she did not choose to falsify her precepts by hinting at concealment in any case, and she merely observed, "I dare say Lady Sarah has often heard of the invention; it can be no novelty to her."

When they returned to the school-room, Augusta reminded Miss Carrington of the man whose life was saved by a spider.

"You have misapprehended me a little, my love, but you shall hear the anecdote to which I have alluded; and the lady read as follows—

"'Quatremer Disjouval, a Frenchman by birth, was adjutant-general in Holland, and took an active part on the side of the Dutch patriots when they revolted against the Stadtholder. On the arrival of the Prussian army, under the Duke of Brunswick, he was immediately taken, tried, and, having been condemned to twenty-five years' imprisonment, was incarcerated in a dungeon at Utrecht, where he remained eight years.

"'Spiders, which are the constant, and frequently the sole companions of the unhappy inmates of such places, were almost the only living objects which Disjouval saw in the prison of Utrecht. Partly to beguile the tedious monotony of his life, and partly from a taste which

he had imbibed for natural history, he began to seek employment, and eventually found amusement, in watching the habits and movements of his tiny fellow-prisoners. He soon remarked that certain actions of the spiders were intimately connected with approaching changes in the weather. A violent pain on one side of his head, to which he was subject at such times, had first drawn his attention to the connexion between such changes and corresponding movements among the spiders. For instance, he remarked that those spiders which spun a large web in a wheel-like form, invariably withdrew from his cell when he had his bad headache; and that these two signs, namely, the pain in his head and the disappearance of the spiders, were as invariably followed by very severe weather. So often as his headache attacked him, so regularly did the spiders disappear, and then rain and north-east winds prevailed for several days. As the spiders began to show themselves again in their webs, and display their usual activity, so

did his pains gradually leave him until he got well and the fine weather returned.'

" ' Further observations confirmed him in believing these spiders to be in the highest degree sensitive of approaching changes in the atmosphere, and that their retirement and re-appearance, their weaving, and general habits, were so intimately connected with changes in the weather, that he concluded they were of all things best fitted to give accurate intimation when severe weather might be expected. In short, Disjouval pursued these inquiries and observations with so much industry and intelligence, that by remarking the habits of his spiders, he was at length enabled to prognosticate the approach of severe weather from ten to fourteen days before it set in, which is proved by the following fact, which led to his release :—

" ' When the troops of the French Republic overran Holland, in the winter of 1794, and kept pushing forward over the ice, a sudden and unexpected thaw in the early part of the month of

December threatened the destruction of the whole army, unless it was immediately withdrawn. The French generals were thinking seriously of accepting a sum offered by the Dutch, and withdrawing their troops, when Disjouval, who hoped that the success of the republican army might lead to his release, used every exertion, and at length succeeded in getting a letter conveyed to the French general, in January, 1795, in which he pledged himself, from the peculiar actions of the spiders, of whose movements he was now enabled to judge with perfect accuracy, that within fourteen days there would commence a most severe frost, which would make the French masters of all the rivers, and afford them sufficient time to complete and make sure of the conquest they had commenced, before it should be followed by a thaw.

"'The commander of the French forces believed his prognostications, and persevered. The cold weather which Disjouval had announced made its appearance in twelve days, and with such in-

tensity that the ice over the rivers and canals became capable of bearing the heaviest artillery. On the 28th January, 1795, the French army entered Utrecht in triumph, and Quatremer Disjouval, who had watched the habits of his spiders with so much intelligence and success, was, as a reward for his ingenuity, released from prison.'"

"A reward which was but just, I think," observed Miss Arlington, when Miss Carrington had ceased reading. "He must have been an intelligent man, and his headache seems to have assisted him; perhaps the only instance of bodily pain being a means of scientific discovery."

"Well, poor prisoner, I am glad he was released; his spiders should be embalmed by the side of those which encouraged Robert Bruce to persevere against the English," said Augusta.

"I fancy that in old times persons observed the habits of animals and insects, with relation to the state of the atmosphere, more closely than we do now," observed Charles.

"Probably so; they had not our barometers

and thermometers, which you now see in almost every tradesman's house; the world has really progressed, as the Americans say, in these points," replied Miss Carrington.

"Yes, madam, and our old sayings prove how accurate are the observations of our ancestors; they apply to the present day exactly," said Charles.

"Many of them do so; that is, those which are general; but I think they confirm the theory of the alteration in particular climates. It seems to me that of late years our seasons are much altered, especially in winter; and, as an instance, March is now usually dry; whereas, if we may judge from a saying of our ancestors, it used to be a wet month. We say, 'A bushel of March dust is worth a king's ransom;' the Germans also declare, 'March dust is like gold.' April also is now a warm month with us, and often dry, yet our hay harvest does not fail, though the old proverb says,—

A dry March, wet April, and a cool May,
Fill cellars and barns, and give plenty of hay.

These sayings are founded on truth, though they may vary in some degree. Cultivation has effect upon climate, not merely as respects drainage, but as to forests, which attract the clouds and vapours, increasing the quantity of rain. I have read, that at an estate in Mexico, or Guatemala, I forget which, the proprietor cut down a large forest, in order to clear the land, and, as he thought, to improve the climate, but the effect was disastrous to him; the stream which turned his mill was no longer sufficent for the purpose, the spring failed in a great degree, and so much dryness prevailed in the atmosphere, that his farming occupations were hindered; and he planted his grove again."

"I believe the same thing has been observed in Greece," replied Charles. "In that country the destroying of the forests which clothed the mountains has so much lessened the quantity of water, that rivers have become exhausted before they could reach the sea, and spreading into marshy lakes, they render the country unwhole-

some by their exhalations, which produce fevers and other diseases."

"Upon this supposition it would be well to plant the Pontine Marshes," said Reginald.

"If they cannot be drained; but from what I have witnessed myself, I believe that in time even our damp island will become dry and healthy; and could we transplant our industry to Italy, that country would be totally changed," observed Miss Carrington.

"Fancy a railroad across the Appenines, or a steam chimney in the plain of Pæstum," said Maitland, laughing.

"I think nothing impossible, however incongruous. I opened '*The Countess and Gertrude*' the other day, and was amused by reading an observation upon the absurdity of fancying that a carriage could ever be propelled by a steam-engine. The progress of steam power is one of the wonders of the present day; it is a mighty engine, providing us with the necessaries and comforts of life; but we must have learned

to need those comforts before we could discover the power and use of them, and I attribute much of the forward movement in Europe to that great moral earthquake, the French Revolution, which, by breaking up the stagnation of intellect, under the old system, gave an impetus to men's minds which, when *its* immediate work was done, led to activity of a more healthful kind. Such earthquakes and tempests are permitted for wise purposes, though, 'Woe to them by whom the offence cometh.' However, this is too difficult a question for us."

"Oh, that terrible revolution, Miss Carrington; do you remember poor Madame de Fleury?" asked Augusta.

"Miss Edgeworth's picture is touching indeed, my love; the most appalling description of the events of France, in a few words, is, I think, contained in the reply of the Abbé Sieyès, who was asked by a friend "what he had done during the reign of terror?" "What have I done?" he replied—"I have *lived*." He had retired into

the country, thus avoiding the fate which befel so many of his party and acquaintances, and died a tranquil death, after having witnessed the revolution of the Three Days in 1830. How few of the actors in that terrible drama met with a like happy fate!"

CHAPTER VI.

The pigeon-match passed off apparently to the satisfaction of Mr. Arlington and his friend; both were in high spirits, but not a word escaped upon the subject from either of them. Charles had promised Reginald that he would finish a sketch of a cottage in the park before he left Arlington Hall, and the following day being favourable, the two young friends provided themselves with drawing implements and some sandwiches and fruit, intending to remain in the neighbourhood of the Glen, where they were to sketch, till dinner time. Reginald had been very anxious that Miss Carrington and his sisters should go also, and he would not allow that any of the excuses which the lady made were

valid, but his expostulations were in vain, and at length, when he expressed his determination of asking Lady Sarah to second his request, Miss Carrington was obliged to give such an answer that the truth, or something approaching to it, glanced across the mind of Reginald.

"This is some mischief of Carter's," he cried. "My lady mother believes any thing that is told her in the drawing-room, however absurd it may be; but I will hear all about it this evening. Is it not so, Miss Carrington?"

"I cannot answer you, Reginald, especially when you speak disrespectfully of your mother. I hope Lady Sarah is right, and I must obey her directions. Go and enjoy your morning, and one day we will all go to the Glen."

Reginald murmured his displeasure, but a lovely sunshine and the singing of the birds soon dispelled his ill-humour. After the sketch was completed Charles amused himself in taking sketches of the gamekeeper's family, by whom

the cottage was inhabited. The little curly-headed children, half shy, half playful, were much interested in the process, while the elder ones seemed very much flattered by the stranger's thinking them worthy of being "taken," as they called it. Thus the morning was wearing away, when Reginald proposed taking a circuit by the bath-house, in order to enjoy the refreshment of bathing before they returned to the Hall to dinner. To this Charles gladly assented, and sending a boy from the cottage to the Hall for towels, they strolled on through the plantation towards the river. As they came within sight of the drive to the house, Reginald exclaimed, "See how fast my father is driving the little pony! it is too bad, this hot day. Robert will be so vexed, for the creature is too fat for any one but Lady Sarah to drive; and, in fact, my father ought not to take it to his farms, with the colonel's too."

"Sir William seldom drives quickly, and nei-

ther he nor Colonel Eversley are heavy. I dare say Robert thinks more of his own trouble than the welfare of the pony; it would be much handsomer were it less fat," replied Charles.

"Well, let us make haste and take our swim," said Reginald. "I hope the boy will not delay at the Hall; do you see him coming?"

"Yes," replied Charles; "he is running as fast as he can, silly fellow; there was no need for such haste. I will wait and take his burden before I undress."

In a few minutes the boy came up to the bath-house, heated and breathless.

"Why did you hurry so? you need not have done it," said Charles, as he received the parcel.

"Oh, sir—" began the boy.

"There—never mind—sit down, and rest yourself before you start off again," said Charles, giving him some pence.

"But, sir—Mr. Arlington, sir—you must go to the Hall directly," stammered the boy.

"Oh yes; we shall not be long," replied

Charles hastily, as he opened the door of the bath-house.

"Sir," cried the boy, jumping up from the grass upon which he had thrown himself.

"Well! what do you want?" asked Charles rather impatiently.

"Mr. Arlington is killed, sir," cried the boy.

"Killed! How?—but hush!—only tell me what you mean," cried Charles, now fully alarmed.

"Mr. Arlington has been thrown from his horse, and they say is almost killed, sir."

"When did this happen?" asked Charles, replacing his coat, which he had thrown off.

"An hour ago, sir. My lady is in fits, and Sir William is distracted; the butler told me to send you and master Reginald home directly."

Charles waited not to hear more, but bidding the boy be quiet, and leave him to tell Reginald, he called to the latter, saying that he had changed his mind about bathing, and wished to return to the Hall at once.

"How changeable you are to-day! but I must have one more swim," replied Reginald.

"No, no, Reginald; come and dress yourself directly."

Reginald turned towards the bath-house, and on the first glimpse of his friend's countenance, he exclaimed, "What is the matter, Charles? you look very ill? Are you so?"

"Yes—no. Now dry yourself, and dress as quickly as you can. There is something the matter at home, and I am anxious to hear what it is—an accident to your brother, I hear."

"Who told you so? Oh, pray let us run home," cried Reginald.

Charles told him the report which the boy had brought, adding that it was evident there was exaggeration, as his second account said only "almost killed;" still it was sufficiently alarming. They walked on as quickly as possible; and as they entered the grand drive a person on horseback passed them, whom Regi-

nald recognised, notwithstanding the rapid pace at which he was riding, as the family surgeon from R——. The poor boy was horror-struck at this confirmation of what he had heard, and Charles could scarcely keep up with him, he ran so fast. When they arrived at the Hall neither could speak, but they met a servant, who said, "Mr. Arlington is still alive, sir; Mr. Railton is just come."

This expression was any thing but consolatory, as it shewed how dangerous the case was, and Charles scarcely knew what to do with his friend, till he remembered Miss Carrington's good sense and self-command, and thinking that the school-room was the most likely place to learn the truth in, he led Reginald thither. He had judged rightly; they found only George with Miss Carrington, the Misses Arlington having gone to their mother on the first alarm of William's accident, and Miss Carrington was endeavouring to soothe the sobbing heart of little George by reasoning and endearment. From

her Reginald learned the true history of what had happened, and the extent of the danger.

Mr. Arlington had been persuaded by his friend Carter to engage in a steeple-chase, an amusement which he well knew Sir William extremely disapproved; but, assured that Lady Sarah would aid any scheme in which those whom she considered as her son's equals engaged, and that, should his father hear of it, his mother would palliate and excuse his disobedience, William Arlington had, not reluctantly, yielded to the persuasions of Carter and some other young men of the neighbourhood, and joined in the sport, if so it may be called, which to a rational mind would appear but mischief. His acquiescence gained, another difficulty arose; he dared not ride his own horse nor one of his father's; he would not ride a hired animal, even could a proper one have been easily found in the neighbourhood; and when Carter pressed upon him the loan of his fine steed, Arlington only attempted to refuse. Then came difficulties

of concealment and arrangement, which to a less obstinate disposition would have been warnings of discouragement; but William Arlington was not to be deterred by these when what he called "spirit" was concerned; and a very few days fully served to prove to him the truth of the lines,

> "Oh, what a tangled web we weave,
> Whene'er we labour to deceive!"

These concealments and difficulties were overcome, but they left behind them a feeling of insincerity, which unconsciously betrayed itself, and was alternately rallied by Carter as nervousness, or scorned as timidity.

The appointed day came. Unfortunately, at breakfast, Sir William asked his son to accompany him and Colonel Eversley to a gentleman's farm a few miles distant, to see the result of a draining experiment which had excited some attention in the neighbourhood. Mr. Arlington endeavoured to excuse himself, but Sir William urged his accompanying him, till at length the

son declaring that he could not break an engagement which he had made with some friends of Mr. Carter, the father left the room with words which seemed very like an affront to the latter gentleman.

It was not, however, Carter's interest to be affronted; and feeling for the first time that his position at the Hall was a somewhat doubtful one, he hastened to drive away unpleasing thoughts by preparing for the day's sport.

"You are certain I can manage that horse of your's; he is very fiery," said William Arlington to his friend, almost hoping that at the last moment Carter might withdraw his offer.

"Manage him? to be sure you can. True he is fiery, but so much the better; you will beat every one else hollow; even Dick Barry will not be able to come near you."

This argument was conclusive. Dick Barry was the most dashing rider in the county; and when the steeple-chase was arranged, this person had said he was certain young Arlington would

not have spirit enough to join it—a prediction which, being repeated to William, accompanied by several comments heightening its meaning, had produced its own falsification. William Arlington did join the sport, and upon his friend's high-mettled horse. The result we shall see.

The first start was safe, and the first few miles were passed over without any other disaster than destruction to crops and injury to fences. The same men who would have consigned a starving woman to prison for picking a stick to light her scanty fire, or for gathering a few ears of corn before the rake had completed the work of the reaper, rode recklessly on, through hedges which had cost the farmer the trouble and expense of years to obtain, and over fields which bore every promise of profit and advantage to deserving tenants.

Towards the end of the run a wide ditch had to be passed, of which late rains had broken the banks. Arlington knew the spot, and could have crossed with ease under any other circumstances,

William Arlington thrown from his horse.

but he was nervous to day, and besides, he was not aware of the present unsoundness of the ground. He prepared for the leap, but calculating upon the fiery temper of his horse, he checked him too sharply, and the animal losing his footing on the soft bank at the same moment, fell floundering in the ditch above his rider. It was a moment only before one of the party rode up, but that one moment had been sufficient, for in addition to a broken arm by his fall, Arlington had received a kick from the horse which rendered him insensible.

Terror was spread among those of the party who were aware of the accident. The winner, Dick Barry, did not hear of it for hours afterwards, and then only said it was a pity the young man had mounted a horse he could not manage. Carter was made aware of what had occurred by a man who had assisted to raise Arlington, and who confidently reported his immediate death. To do Carter justice, he was not devoid of feeling when neither ambition nor pride interfered,

and his first impulse was to go to Arlington directly; but he had engaged to dine with the winner of the race and some other acquaintances, who declared that they would not release him from his promise; and besides this, as soon as the first flush of kind feeling had passed away, he recollected that Sir William would very rightly blame him for aiding his son's disobedience, and that he had better not obtrude at present. The discussion of the circumstances of the race soon drove from the minds of others the remembrance of what had occurred, and Carter, becoming more composed before dinner was over, had settled the manner in which he should act as to returning to the Hall.

Meanwhile that house was the scene of the deepest misery. The surgeon had given an unfavorable report of his patient; at least he had declared recovery doubtful at best, and impossible without the most perfect quiet and attention. These it devolved on the old nurse to secure, for the parents were unfit for any thing but lamenta-

tions. Sir William gave way to temper in speaking of Carter, in a manner which the servants had never heard from him before, and Lady Sarah seemed to think the accident would not have happened had William's companion been a titled person. She shut herself up in her boudoir, whence she issued the most contradictory and absurd orders, tending neither to the benefit nor the comfort of the family.

The dinner hour was, however, an important one in such a house as Arlington Hall; and by the influence of the ceremony, which seemed to be second nature there, order was a little re-established. Lady Sarah yielded to her maid's persuasions to render herself presentable, and was in reality glad of the excuse for exertion. Sir William remembered that it would not accord with the rules of good breeding to neglect Colonel Eversley, who was, happily, the only visitor in the house except Charles and a lady who occasionally came to bear Lady Sarah company when there was no visiting in the neighbourhood.

Such was the party who met at the dinner-table on this unhappy day.

The meal passed in silence, interrupted only by sentences referring to the occupation of eating. After the servants had withdrawn, Colonel Eversley, in the tone of real feeling and friendship, told Sir William that he should remain only to hear the result of the ensuing night to the sufferer, and then take his departure.

"I have already made a longer visit than I intended, my good friend," he added, "and I know you will now be glad to be alone. Whenever you wish for my company, or I can be of the least service to you or Lady Sarah, you know you may command me. I shall hear frequently how poor William goes on."

Sir William Arlington expressed his regret at the intended departure of his guest, who had been his friend from youth.

Soon after dinner Colonel Eversley took an opportunity of speaking aside to Charles, and in a very kind manner asked him what he intended to do with himself.

"I think of returning home immediately, sir," replied Charles. "I shall write to my father this evening, and announce my return by the earliest conveyance."

"What say you to going with me to Fairfield for a few days till you can hear from home?"

"Indeed, sir, I am much obliged," said Charles.

"Do not speak of that; I like you, and I respected your uncle. I live quietly, but I flatter myself we shall suit each other well. Say, shall I announce it to Sir William?"

"If you please, sir," replied Charles; and after a few more words the affair was arranged. Reginald was vexed to lose his friend, but he consoled himself by thinking that they should soon meet again at Dr. Watson's; and he was so much shocked and so anxious about his brother, that he thought the less of Charles's intended departure.

In the evening Carter returned to Arlington Hall. The sufferer had mentioned him as soon

as he could speak, and seemed from time to time annoyed at the continued absence of his friend. On this account Sir William received Carter graciously, and, in reply to his protestations of sorrow at the mischief occasioned by his horse, assured him that he was quite aware no blame could be laid upon him. This re-assured Carter, who was admitted for a minute to his friend's bedside, the nurse declaring that nothing would pacify Mr. William till he had seen his companion.

On the following morning the surgeon declared that his patient had passed as good a night as could have been expected, and that he was in a much more favourable state than he anticipated: the anxiety of the family was thus a little relieved.

During breakfast the servant said that a man requested to speak with Sir William Arlington, having brought Mr. Arlington's watch.

"One of my father's men, I dare say; shall I save you the trouble, sir?" asked Carter.

"No, I thank you, sir," replied Sir William coldly, leaving the room.

Sir William found it was a tenant of Mr. Carter. The man's tale was, that having found the watch at the edge of the ditch where Mr. Arlington had been thrown, he thought it best to bring it himself to the Hall, not for any reward, but because he did not choose to trust it with any of the gentlemen who formed the steeple-chase: young Mr. Carter had wished to take it, but his wife persuaded him to bring it himself. Sir William expressed his thanks, offering the man a handsome present, which was respectfully refused, with the observation, "No, sir, I did not wish that; I was sorry for the young man, as he ought not to have ridden that horse, and I did not like to see him in such company; besides, it was not fit for the son of such a gentleman as you, sir."

"I do not understand you, friend; what do you mean by saying a steeple-chase?"

This question drew forth a long history, not only of the pursuits and events of the preceding

day, but of the last few weeks ; and Sir William found, with mortification and surprise, that his son had been led into those very amusements from which he had endeavoured, by precept and example, to deter him; and that these had brought him into habits of intimacy with a set of young men whose acquaintance could neither be creditable nor advantageous, but with whom Carter was the chosen leader. The man who revealed this seemed but little surprised at Sir William's ignorance, as he said he was certain that so good a landlord and kind a master could not encourage steeple-chases and pigeon-matches, to the injury of the property of others. He wished, he added, that Mr. Carter were as considerate, but he encouraged all the young squire's bad tricks, because he thought such things were gentlemanly.

Sir William thanked the farmer for the trouble he had taken, and having promised to call upon him shortly, with the secret resolve of some fitting recompense, he returned to the breakfast-

room with increased depression of spirits: the rest of the meal passed in silence, till, at the conclusion, Sir William requested a few words with Carter in the library. The latter turned pale and trembled at this, but catching Charles's eye upon him, he returned the look of pity with a most insolent stare of contempt and defiance, as he followed silently into the library. There Sir William in a few words told him that all acquaintance with Mr. Arlington must be at once and for ever discontinued; that Mr. Carter should be regularly informed of Mr. Arlington's state of health; and that any demand which Mr. Carter might be justified in making for the expenses of their late engagements would be immediately paid; but that his visits to Arlington Hall would no longer be allowed.

Carter could not answer this; he had been prepared for reproach and anger, and he thought he could meet them in such a manner as to retain his footing in the household; but there was a cool, business-like tone in Sir William, which he

knew not how to combat; he hesitated, shifted himself about, and at last the words burst forth, "I am to go, then, without seeing William?"

"I wish it. Good morning, sir; I shall be glad to hear of you in better society," said Sir William, leaving the room. Carter followed him, ordered his horse, and gallopped away from the Hall, with sundry vituperations of Sir William Arlington and Charles Maitland upon his lips.

It is needless to describe the conversation that ensued between Sir William and his son. The latter, who was not devoid of judgment, soon saw his errors, and beseeched pardon, which was readily granted upon certain conditions of renunciation and reformation. Lady Sarah was not so easily managed; she fully agreed in the propriety of Carter's dismissal, but she exclaimed against Mr. Portman being included in the anger of Sir William, as he was of good birth, and his pursuits could not be unsuitable to her son. However, Sir William was decided, and she was

obliged to acquiesce in word, if not in spirit. She bore Charles Maitland's grateful farewell with more philosophy; *he* was still associated in her mind with plebeian tastes and amusements, and with mercantile occupations; and she could not at all understand Miss Carrington's remark, that Reginald ought to be grateful for such a friend and adviser. Lady Sarah professed her inability to enter upon Mr. Maitland's merits at a moment when her feelings were so much agitated by the danger of her eldest son; and she returned an extremely indignant answer to poor Reginald, who could not restrain the wish that Charles could nurse William as he had nursed him. Various were the feelings which moved the family at the Hall when Colonel Eversley's carriage left the door; Lady Sarah was relieved from the presence of one who she felt was much superior to herself in mind, and who could not always disguise his contempt of her worldliness, as was the case with the colonel. Miss Carrington knew that she had

lost one inducement to undergo the weariness of the drawing-room, as Colonel Eversley always treated her as a well-informed and well-bred man should treat an intellectual gentlewoman. The young ladies parted with an entertaining old friend, and a pleasing young one; and Sir William found, when the farewell had been said, that he liked Charles Maitland better than he cared to acknowledge to her ladyship.

CHAPTER VII.

"I trust William Arlington will recover," said Charles, as the carriage passed the lodge gate.

"Yes; I have little fear, though it may be a long illness; but he has youth and a good constitution to aid him, and this accident may be of benefit to him mentally," replied Colonel Eversley.

"It is strange, but the groom told me he was so unwilling to ride that horse; he said that his young master had a presentiment of what was to happen, but I cannot believe that nonsense."

"We may term it nonsense, but I have some dependence upon the line,

"'Coming events cast their shadows before.'

"There is an incomprehensible feeling which forewarns us of danger, as the light flashes across the eyes in the dark, when we are approaching any hurtful object."

"Do you, then, believe in second-sight and such marvels, sir?" asked Charles, surprised.

"Certainly not, as we generally hear of such things. But I am as far from that mock humility which endeavours to think itself too insignificant for the care of the Creator, as I am from the presumption which imagines that the wheels of the universe are to revolve in a contrary direction, if his welfare require it. The question touches matters too high for us to solve, and I am content to listen, observe, and draw my own conclusions. At the same time, I must say I have seen strange things in my eventful life."

"The presentiment of death has been often alleged; I wonder whether truly?"

"Yes—truly. And the prophecy has brought its own fulfilment, which is no miracle. In my profession, especially, there have been strong

instances of this. Men get a notion that they are to be killed in a certain battle; they rush into danger *madly*, and are killed—what wonder? In most of these cases it is *felo de se*. I was prudent; I fancied, long years ago, that I should lose my right arm in battle, and I unconsciously acquired a habit of drawing it back when in danger, and you see I have it safe still, and sound enough to give master Carter a caning, if I might take that liberty. You heard a word or two of this subject at dinner a few days since?"

"Yes, sir; and observed your silence upon it."

"Some weak instances were brought forth—that of Dessaix for instance; who, after having escaped the campaign in Egypt, had a presentiment that he should fall at Marengo; remarking to his aide-de-camp, 'Something will happen; the bullets don't know me in Europe,' and he was shot. Such a speech suited a French *philosophe*, but not a Christian. I know one instance of the

same kind; an officer who had a presentiment that he should be killed in the forthcoming action, and it was so. I knew another, where a presentiment might have led a man to avoid death; which, remember, it can scarcely do in battle, except by neglect of duty."

"What was the instance, sir?" asked Charles.

"When I was at Messina, the French fort on the other side of the Straits used to be constantly firing at us; my house especially was a fair mark for them, being white; and I have sat in my balcony and had the dust under it thrown into my eyes by the French balls striking the ground. We used to give a reward to the men for picking up the balls, till we found it so hazardous, that we were obliged to forbid its being done. One day young B—— was lounging upon my sofa, and he asked me whether I was going down into the town, to see something that was going on. I answered that I was not, and recommended him to take care of the French balls. He answered jestingly, and a few words in that spirit passed

between us; he went. An hour or two afterwards I went out, when my servant came running to tell me that B—— was shot; they were then bringing his body to the fort. Poor fellow! he was a fine young man!"

"I reason upon these presentiments in the same manner that I reason upon ghosts—'Shew me a great purpose to be answered, one worthy of the special interference of the Almighty, and I will believe in such things.' Had Dessaix been ordained to compass some mighty good, I can imagine that he might have been inspired with a presentiment of danger."

"Which feeling would have been falsified—No, let the expectation work its own accomplishment. Besides, who is to decide upon the importance or non-importance of an unseen result. You remember the story of the French Revolution having been caused by a splashed stocking?"

"Oh yes; absurd enough; for Robespierre only awaited *a* circumstance, not that particular one."

"Certainly; we might trace any important event to a trifle, in that manner, and verify the poet's line, till we forget an over-ruling hand entirely.

'What dire events from trivial causes spring!'

may be, and is true, but 'with a difference,' as Shakspeare says."

"Yours must have been an unpleasant position at Messina, sir?" asked Charles.

"It was a warm one in every sense, I assure you; and I witnessed some strange and painful sights, both moral and physical. I resided among a people sunk in the lowest depths of ignorance and superstition; the monks scoffing at their religion, the common people slaves to the monks. I was in the habit of visiting a monastery near, and nowhere did I ever see such luxurious living, even upon fast days; meat was allowed to the *ailing* brothers, and never was I in company with such a healthy-looking set of *sick* men, for they were always ill enough to require meat. Of the people, I will only tell you of one old woman,

who used to drink herself ill; she would then hold in her hand a small figure of St. Francis, using to it the most extraordinary expressions, beseeching a return of health, and, when in suffering, almost scolding her patron saint. When I called upon her after a recovery, and asked where her saint was, she pointed behind her bed, with an expression which told the very little respect she felt for him, when she did not need his fancied aid. I have been in many countries, among many degrees of ignorance, but the population of Messina and Catania are the most ignorant of all."

"Did you ascend Mount Ætna, sir?" enquired Charles.

"Yes, and brought away some leaves of the celebrated chestnut tree, which I will shew you, as I fancy you are fond of botany. I likewise felt the shock of an earthquake, which I never wish to experience again. Altogether I liked my residence at Messina very well, notwithstanding cannon balls. I saw one horrible sight there, which I shall never forget."

"What was that, sir?"

"The magazine belonging to the French fort was struck by lightning and blown up. Upwards of thirty men were killed; we saw them blown into the air; it was awful indeed."

"At what distance were you, sir?"

"With a good glass we could distinguish objects plainly, and see what was going on at our enemy's station. I used to watch the guns pointed at English ships passing through the Straits, and see a sail rent, or a spar shivered."

"I do not much wonder at the ignorance of the Sicilians, they have had so little opportunity of becoming enlightened. No monarch has cared for their poor island; their kings have preferred the mainland part of their domain, and Sicily has merely been fought for."

"And what kind of kings have hers been in modern times? The Bourbon king, Ferdinand IV. whom Napoleon expelled, had no higher ambition than that of being able to swallow more yards of maccaroni without breaking, than

any of his subjects, and he was successful. The Italians have a particular knack of turning the maccaroni into their mouths, and in this noble achievement the king excelled. However, what you remark of Sicily is true; and one proof of its lying so much out of the march of modern civilisation is, that in no country may heathen institutions be so distinctly traced as in that island. I could give you many instances of this; some peculiar to Sicily, others common to Christendom."

"Pray do, sir," said Charles.

"The religious rites are almost literally the same as they were under heathen Rome; in many cases little more than the names are altered. Thus, in the festival of Saint Agatha, the patron saint of Catania, the rites very much resemble those formerly paid in the same town to Ceres. They commence, as in the time of Ovid, with a horse-race; on the third day are presented votive offerings of immense candles, as were formerly to Ceres, emblematical, it is thought, of the 'lofty pines,' which she lighted at

Ætna, when in search of Proserpine. But the fourth day exhibited still more agreement with the ancient mysteries, in the procession of the car of the saint and her relics, attended by the people leaping and shouting, the organs of the churches pealing as the car passed them, and a silver bell, carried by a man in front, ringing from time to time with great vehemence. The strangest part of the cerermony is, that ladies in masks parade the streets, seizing the hats, gloves, and sticks of the gentlemen, who obtain them again by the gift of confectionary. On this day all the officiating persons are clothed in white, thus resembling in dress, as well as in *performances*, the fourth day of the Eleusinian mysteries. On the fifth day, the relics of the saint are exhibited to the populace with great pomp, the bishop celebrating high mass in the cathedral; at the close of which ceremony the relics were offered to each person to be kissed, during which operation the merits of the saint were recited, and her virtues descanted on, by another priest, in Italian verse; the whole closing with

a general paternoster. All this refers to the Eleusinian mysteries. One part of the ceremony has been strangely retained; I mean the attendance of *fly-hunters*, two persons by the side of the bishop holding fans of peacocks' tai ls. The Pope, also, when he bestows his blessing upon the multitude from the great entrance of St. Peter's, has two white peacocks' tails raised, spread out behind his chair like a screen. This custom puzzled me; I have since seen it referred to the ancient *fly-hunters*, who were necessary to disperse the flies which collected round the meat offerings to the gods. This is shewn in a picture at Herculaneum."

"What you have described, sir, is very curious. The establishment of convents must contribute much to keep the people in ignorance; does it not, sir?"

"Perhaps so, but I doubt the necessity. If you suffer a river to overflow its banks at will or by chance, at best it but fertilizes a few yards of earth along its margin: confine this river in

stone walls, and you will have a body of water by which you may irrigate square miles, instead of yards."

"But you must cut canals for that purpose, sir," replied Charles, smiling.

"Yes, and there lies the fault of the Romish church; it is too proud of the uniformity of the stone walls, to break them for the sake of the good that canals might accomplish. I fear we Protestants cut so many canals that the main stream is in danger of being dried up. I think we owe so much to the monasteries during the miscalled *dark* ages, that I am inclined to respect institutions which we have merely passed by in our forward march; but I have met with some strange personages under the monkish gown, especially among the mendicant orders."

"Franciscans and Benedictines, I think, sir."

"Yes—so called, but much anterior to those saints. Egypt was the parent of Christian monachism, in consequence of the persecution of Decius, and probably the recluses became men-

dicants when they dared again appear abroad. The priests of Isis were mendicants—that is, they were supported by the charity and credulity of the public; and their habits of temperance and moderation were like those of the Christian brethren. The religious rites offered to Isis, Osiris, or Serapis, were tolerated by the Christians with more patience than those of any other deities; perhaps on account of the vows of temperance which I have mentioned, or for deeper reasons, which I cannot now explain. The costume of the mendicant monks accords in several respects with that of the Egyptian priests; in the Vatican there is a bas-relief of a priest of Isis clad singularly like a Franciscan, even to the shaven crown."

"Not a picturesque attire; but there is nothing poetical in Egyptian sculpture, nor indeed in anything belonging to that country."

"Perhaps not; it is difficult to account for the entire absence of poetical feeling in a nation, and I should be rather inclined to say that evi-

dences of Egyptian poetry have not come down to us, rather than to conclude against its having ever existed."

"But surely, sir—look at the outline of their figures; Hogarth or Burke would have been sadly puzzled for illustrations of their theory of beauty, every thing is so angular."

"True; but poetry is inherent in the human mind: what other country is without it? And why positively deny it to Egypt? We have not yet acquired half her hidden treasures, and we know not what remains behind."

"An Iliad or an Odyssey, sir?" asked Charles, smiling.

"It may be so, but I hope with a more respectable hero than Achilles. However, I do not imagine that poetry found in Egypt a climate so congenial as that of Sicily, which is above all countries the land of romance and legend. I must tell you of a curious ceremony at Messina on the day of the Assumption. The image of the Virgin is carried about in procession, sup-

posed to be seeking her son. As she enters the great piazza, a figure of our Saviour is suddenly brought forward from a side street to meet her; and, as a testimony of the joy she experiences at the sight, her drapery is suddenly loosened, and a number of birds fly out of it, which the crowd attack with guns, sticks, or any other weapon they may possess. I assure you the whole scene is more absurd than you can imagine."

"I should think so indeed, sir; to what can it allude?"

"I imagined it might be Isis seeking for Osiris, but I do not understand the birds, for which there is such an indecent scramble."

"You seem to connect Sicily with Egypt rather than with the east, sir?" asked Charles.

"As respects religious ceremonies; but the Romans borrowed so much from Egypt, that it is no wonder we find resemblances in Sicily, where, however, there are more lasting memorials of eastern habits."

"What are those, sir?"

"Rock habitations, or at least excavations, which can be attributed to no other purpose. There are many in the island, especially in the south-eastern part. Near Modica, between Noto and Spaccaforno, is a valley nearly eight miles long, lying between perpendicular rocks, which are excavated in an extraordinary manner. There are rows of caves (if we may so call them), having windows, passages, and raised benches, round the apartments."

"That is like Petra. Do you not suppose, sir, that the excavations at Petra might be dwellings, not tombs?"

"Yes; I account for such works by supposing them the habitations of men before they had learned to build houses. In Sicily there is reason to think that these caves have been inhabited at a more recent date."

"Probably, as the inhabitants of the south of France betake themselves to the rocks to avoid the heat of the towns in summer. I have been told

that at Tours there is a regular emigration to the caves in the rocks surrounding the town, and that the wine is always kept in cellars cut in the rock. The same custom might prevail in Sicily and in the east."

"Very possibly. The late travellers in the east give marvellous accounts of the caves of Asia Minor; and the strangest part of the matter is, that they are cut so high in the rock, like those of Petra, which appears extremely inconvenient. Hamilton describes some curious scenes; he explored some of these galleries, many of which were richly ornamented with carvings."

"Does he account for the height at which they are cut, sir?"

"No; but he unconsciously gives us a clue, though a slender one. He mentions a valley which he traversed, where he found what he considers to be the debris of a glacier, upon the theory of Agassiz and Forbes; and I immediately applied this to the rock caves, supposing that formerly these valleys might have been

visited by those wonderful natural agents, and that therefore the inhabitants placed their dwellings near the tops of the rocks. This is merely my own conjecture."

"Surely Sicily and Petra could not have glaciers, for it is said that the earth is gradually cooling?"

"An incongruity doubtless, but I quite agree with Agassiz nevertheless. Another scene of similar excavations is the little island of Ponza, lying off Gaeta, which is absolutely riddled with caves and subterranean galleries. The island is merely a rock, having a castle and fortifications upon it, and bearing no means of sustenance; the few native inhabitants living almost entirely upon fish. I was stationed there for some months, and was dependent upon the mainland for a supply of food, but we were well taken care of."

"Could those caves have ever been habitations, sir, if the island yielded no food?"

"At the early period of the world, when men

lived in caves, they might subsist upon fish, as upon the shores of the Red Sea and Persian Gulf we know they did in the time of Alexander, and in some measure to the present day; but I cannot understand what motive could lead them to choose such an island as Ponza for a residence. However, there are the caves, and curious enough they are. Here we are at a more commodious home; this is my little domain, young man, and if you had travelled and been beaten about east and west during the best years of your life, like myself, you would be glad of any quiet haven, even if it possessed fewer means of comfort than I flatter myself mine offers."

As Colonel Eversley said this, the carriage passed through a neat iron gate, which was held open by a young girl, whose countenance shewed her joy at the return of her master.

"Are all well, Susan?" asked the colonel, putting his head forward, with a smile.

"Yes, sir," replied the girl, dropping a curtsey.

A few yards of shrubbery opened upon a pretty

lawn of small extent, but beautifully arranged and attended to; one side was open to a flower garden, on another stood the house, and the rest of it was closed in with trees of the choicest kinds. Charles instantly detected the hand of science and taste; for a glance shewed him some of the most ornamental strangers from foreign countries, though at that time of the year their blossoms had fallen. The carriage stopped at the entrance to the house, a plain and somewhat old-fashioned building, which seemed to have been enlarged by its proprietors without much attention to architectural regularity. Still there was an air of comfort in its strange gables and variously-sized windows, which promised that internal convenience had been well regarded in all its additions and alterations; and Charles found that this was the case; for the well-furnished entrance hall, the broad old staircase with its shallow stairs, the deep windows filled with stands of plants in full beauty, and the nooks and corners in which stood many articles of taste, shewed

that the master of this quiet spot understood well the meaning of the English word *comfort.*

Charles followed his host into a noble dining-room, the windows of which, reaching from the ceiling to the floor, looked out upon a prettily-arranged flower-garden, which sloped from the house to a meadow, in which was a small piece of water of an irregular shape, and ornamented with trees and shrubs. A hedge of althea frutex was just putting forth its pink and purple buds under the windows of the room, from one of which a few steps led into the garden. Charles looked out with admiring delight, while Colonel Eversley was speaking to the servants who welcomed his return home, till turning to him, his friend said,—

"A less superb prospect than that of the lake and park at Arlington Hall, my friend, but although the domain is in comparative miniature, I assure you the happiness which it assists in bestowing is not so. I never come home to my own snug spot from the great houses at which I

visit, without a feeling of self-gratulation that my fortune and position in life are so humble. I have been tossed about on many rough waves; my children are happily established at some distance from me, and were I the lord of Arlington Hall, I fear that I should descend to the heartless, selfish, tiresome old man, counterbalancing the endurances of early life by the unreasonable whims and selfish enjoyments of later years. Here it cannot be so; I have many around me who personally depend upon me for happiness; my servants have lived with me ever since I set up my staff at Fairfield; the poor of the village look up to me for advice and assistance; my labourers work 'under his honour's own eye,' as they term it; and, in fact, I have not time to be selfish or exacting."

"I fancy, sir, you have improved this place much, have you not?" asked Charles.

"Yes; I had known the village when a boy, and always admired the old Hall, then standing in a mere field, with some fine old oaks about it.

When I returned to England at the peace, with a delicate ailing wife and two precious boys, I remembered this spot; I enquired, found it was upon sale, bought it, planted, built just enough for our own comfort, and settled here at last as a domestic man. Alas! how true is it that 'Man proposes, but God disposes.' My poor wife died, my boys were placed out in the world, and it seemed as if all my schemes of happiness were nipped in the bud. I was tempted to leave Fairfield entirely, but a good friend here gave me his assistance to overcome my despondency, and the first burst of misery over, I soon found a melancholy pleasure in pursuing the plans my wife had approved, and in watching the embellishments which she had begun. A niece whom I much loved came to reside with me, and my home was again cheerful; but she, too, left me, to become the wife of the friend I have mentioned, the clergyman of the village; they reside just across that meadow, preventing any loneliness I might feel by their daily presence and

the society which they bring around me. My sons are married, and their wives are daughters to me, though living far away. Once a year we have a family gathering at Fairfield; my lawn is adorned with grandchildren, and my niece's children, and I pass a great part of each winter with my sons. Thus, with occasional visits to old friends, my time passes cheerfully, nay, happily. So much for myself—now to my garden. When I came here all was desolate; I planted, and ornamented, and fancied the place perfect; till two years since, one of my little girls remarked that the pond in the meadow would be so pretty from the dining-room windows, if it were not for the ugly hedge. I took the hint, levelled the hedge, enlarged and improved the pond, planted shrubs round it, placed an invisible fence beyond it, and my little girl declared that it was quite 'romantic.' Then she persuaded me to clear out that rill, and place that bridge over it; next year she is to superintend the formation of an American bed on the opposite

bank, and afterwards I dare say she will point out other improvements quite as eligible. The grass terrace alone is sacred; it was my wife's favourite walk. Now I have given you a description of myself and my 'place;' after tea we will take a ramble about it."

That day and the next passed delightfully to Charles. Colonel Eversley regretted that Mr. and Mrs. Mortimer were from home, but he introduced Charles to the young family at the Rectory, and the time flew quickly between the two houses. A letter from Reginald conveyed the intelligence of William Arlington's improvement, and of his own longing to see Charles again.

CHAPTER VIII.

The third and last day that Charles Maitland remained at Fairfield was extremely wet; the rain pouring so determinedly, as to give no hope of out-door amusements. Colonel Eversley expressed his regret at this, as he had proposed taking his young guest to see some pictures at a nobleman's seat a few miles off. "We could see the pictures in the rain certainly," he said, but you would miss the gardens and conservatories, and it would be but a cheerless diversion at best."

"I am well content, sir, to remain in your library; I shall finish a book which I am reading, and touch up the sketches which I have taken," replied Charles.

"I think my grandson shewed you my minerals yesterday?" asked the colonel.

"Yes, sir, and your cabinet also."

"My dried plants also?"

"No, sir," replied Charles.

"Then we have two hours' work before us," answered his friend. If you will come into the library, we will look over my Sicilian *Hortus Siccus;* I want to do so myself, as I have not opened the drawer for several months."

Charles agreed with pleasure, only expressing a wish that his sister Mary could be present.

"You must bring her here next summer," said the colonel. "I mean to call upon Mr. Maitland when I go to Liverpool in the autumn, and get acquainted with your mother also; I am sure she would suit me, as I suspect she has none of the fashionable jargon about education; your training shews that she is a woman of sense, and I must make Mrs. Mortimer acquainted with her."

Charles expressed his gratitude, and followed

the colonel to the library, where he was delighted to be shewn a drawer full of dried plants, all from Sicily, beautifully arranged, and in excellent preservation.

Colonel Eversley then gave Charles a description of the various fruits growing around Mount Ætna, many of which have been celebrated by the ancient poets. The mountain is divided into three regions, the lower and most fertile is called *Regione Piedemontana,* or the *torrid zone,* from its climate. Here grow the peach, pomegranate, apricot, and a variety of other fruits, and the traveller is amazed at the succession of vineyards, orchards, and gardens, for at least ten miles, as he ascends the mountain. This district of beautiful vegetation is only interrupted here and there, where the later streams of lava have flowed and are not yet decomposed. The second, or middle region, *Regione Silvosa,* abounds in large woods of oak, fir, and other forest trees; this is the *temperate zone.* In the upper or snowy region, vegetation ceases, but the snow and ice

of this perpetual winter are sent to all parts of the island, and even to Italy, to aid in producing that drink which an ancient poet calls 'heavenly' —iced water.

"Does the date palm grow in Sicily, sir?"

"Yes; it was formerly very abundant there, and many of the antique Sicilian coins bear a representation of a palm tree; but it is said to have been destroyed by the barbarian nations who laid waste the island during the middle ages."

"You surely do not include Roger Guiscard among the barbarians, sir?"

"It would be an ill compliment to our boasted Norman ancestry to do so, but I fancy the army, with which Roger conquered Sicily, was composed of such a crowd of adventurers, that the word might be very properly applied. Those were extraordinary times, when a few pilgrims could raise an army and conquer a kingdom. If Roger Guiscard be a favourite of yours we will apply the term *barbarian* to him in its original sense

only,—as *stranger*, probably shepherd, in opposition to the merchants of Syria."

Thus passed three days at Fairfield, when Charles received a letter from his mother, telling him that an aunt, residing in the Isle of Man, was coming over to Liverpool, and that she wished him to return home in consequence without delay. Charles was sorry to leave Fairfield, but not sorry for this summons, and his regret was alleviated by Colonel Eversley's promise to call upon Mr. Maitland as he passed through Liverpool in the autumn.

Before Charles left Fairfield, he heard that Mr. Arlington was recovering, and Reginald wrote, that after a long debate between Sir William and Lady Sarah, the former had prevailed, and he was to return to Dr. Watson's; he wrote gratefully to Charles, whom he reckoned upon meeting again. A few lines from Miss Carrington, as a postscript, were precious to Charles, as containing the titles of some books which she

had recommended to him, and a promise of some rare seeds for Mary, in the autumn. Charles felt the gratification of having made friends for himself, and trusted that the kind feelings towards him would be extended to his sister, to whom he was deeply attached.

He found all well at Liverpool, and ready for the account of his *adventures* at Arlington Hall and Fairfield Lodge.

THE END

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