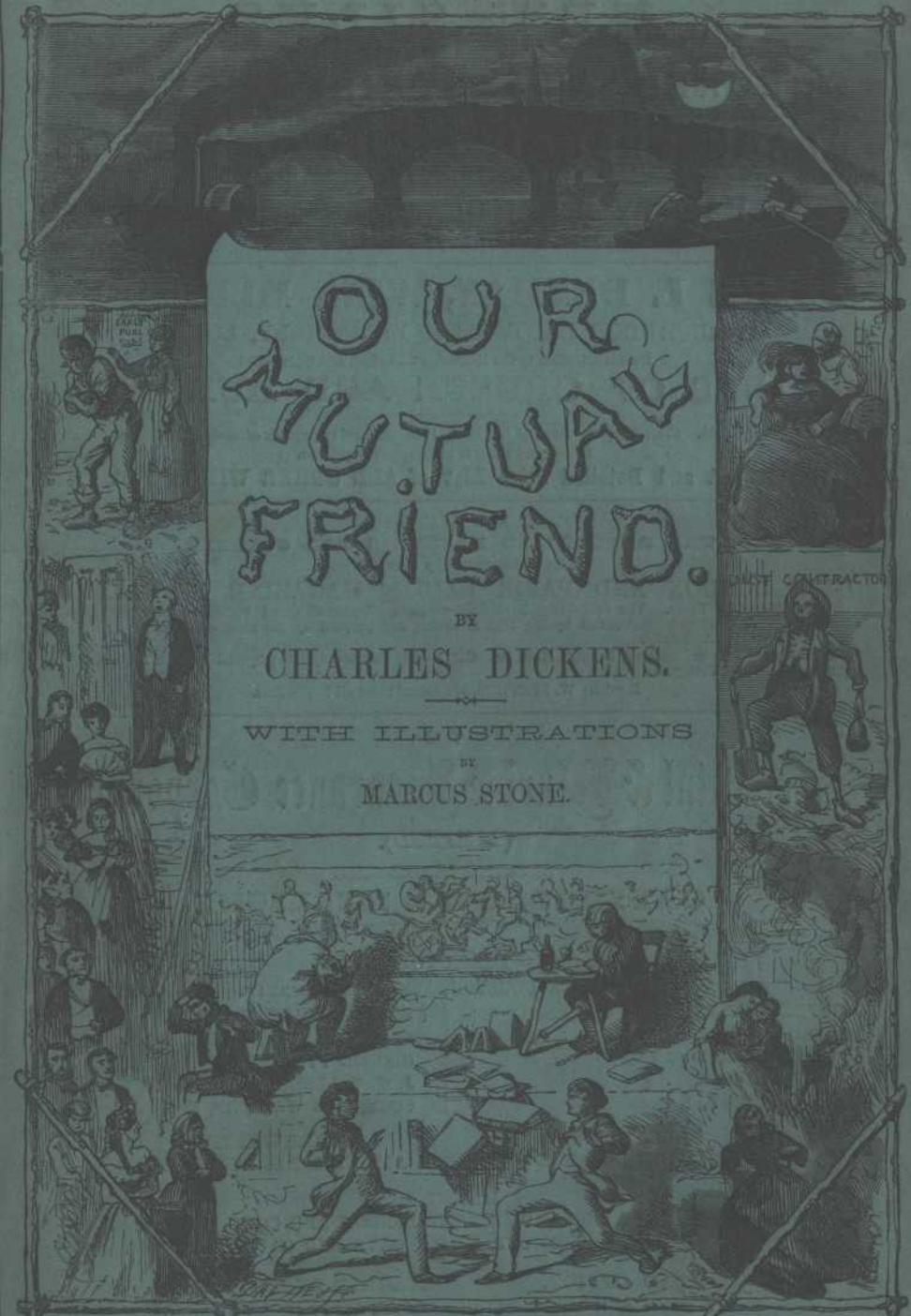


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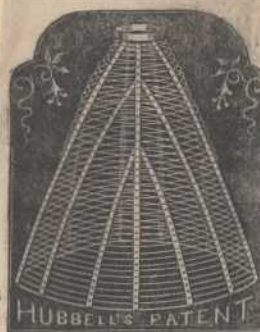
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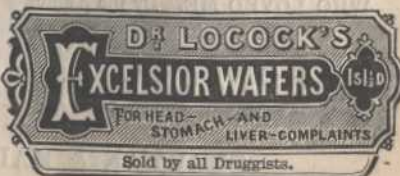


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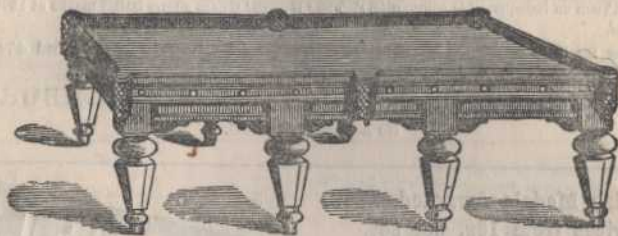
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12 Tea Spoons . . .	1 6 0	1 0 0	1 2 0	1 5 6
6 Egg Spoons, } gilt bowls . . .	10 0	12 0	12 0	13 6
2 Sauce Ladies . . .	6 0	8 0	8 0	9 6
1 Gravy Spoon . . .	6 6	9 0	10 0	11 6
2 Salt Spoons, } gilt bowls . . .	3 4	4 0	4 0	4 6
1 Mustard Spoon, } gilt bowl . . .	1 8	2 0	2 0	2 3
1 Pair Sugar Tongs . . .	2 6	3 6	3 6	4 0
1 Pair Fish Carvers . . .	1 4 0	1 10 0	10 0	10 0
1 Butter Knife . . .	2 6	4 0	5 0	6 0
1 Soup Ladle . . .	10 0	12 0	16 0	17 0
1 Sugar Sifter . . .	3 3	4 6	4 6	5 6
Total . . .	9 19	9 12	9 0	13 9 6

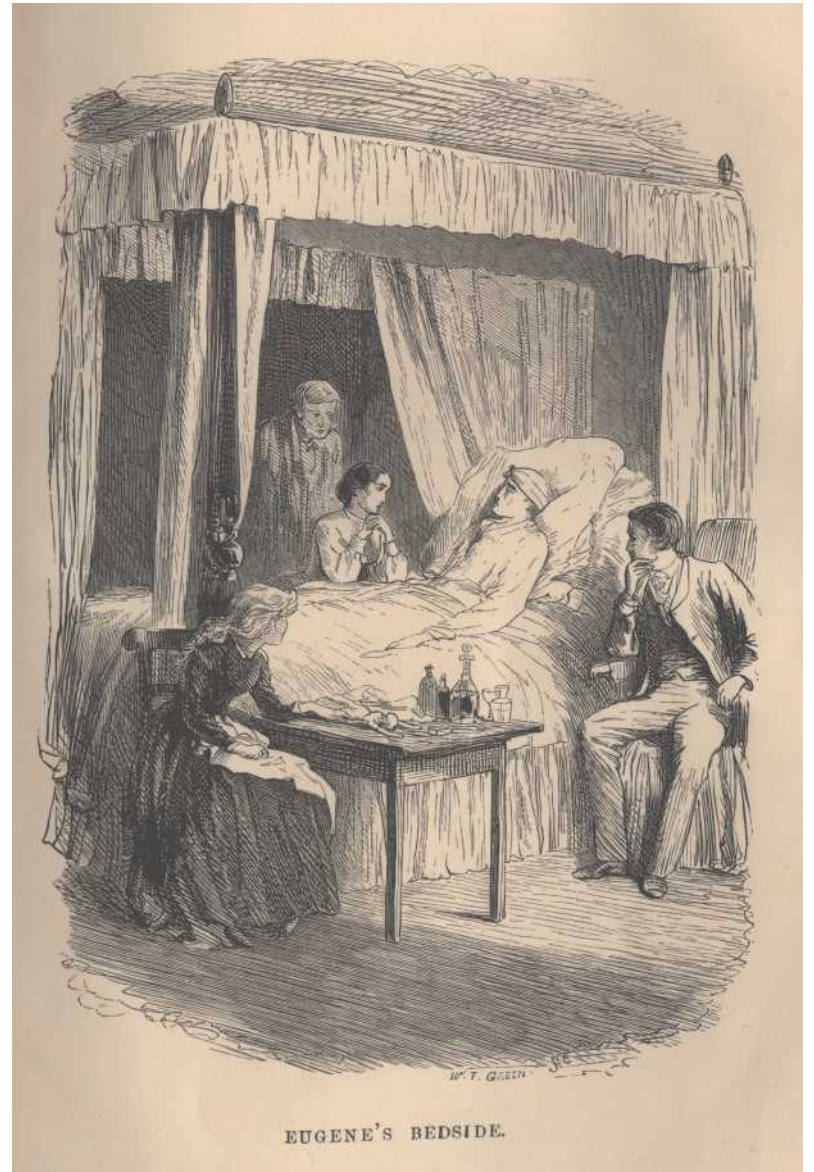
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CHAPTER VIII.

A FEW GRAINS OF PEPPER.

THE dolls' dressmaker went no more to the business-premises of Pubsey and Co. in St. Mary Axe, after chance had disclosed to her (as she supposed) the flinty and hypocritical character of Mr. Riah. She often moralized over her work on the tricks and the manners of that venerable cheat, but made her little purchases elsewhere, and lived a secluded life. After much consultation with herself, she decided not to put Lizzie Hexam on her guard against the old man, arguing that the disappointment of finding him out would come upon her quite soon enough. Therefore, in her communication with her friend by letter, she was silent on this theme, and principally dilated on the backslidings of her bad child, who every day grew worse and worse.

"You wicked old boy," Miss Wren would say to him, with a menacing forefinger, "you'll force me to run away from you, after all, you will; and then you'll shake to bits, and there'll be nobody to pick up the pieces!"

At this foreshadowing of a desolate decease, the wicked old boy would whine and whimper, and would sit shaking himself into the lowest of low spirits, until such time as he could shake himself out of the house and shake another threepennyworth into himself. But dead drunk or dead sober (he had come to such a pass that he was least alive in the latter state), it was always on the conscience of the paralytic scarecrow that he had betrayed his sharp parent for sixty threepennyworths of rum, which were all gone, and that her sharpness would infallibly detect his having done it, sooner or later. All things considered therefore, and addition made of the state of his body to the state of his mind, the bed on which Mr. Dolls reposed was a bed of roses from which the flowers and leaves had entirely faded, leaving him to lie upon the thorns and stalks.

On a certain day, Miss Wren was alone at her work, with the house-door set open for coolness, and was trolling in a small sweet voice a mournful little song which might have been the song of the doll she was dressing; bemoaning the brittleness and meltability of wax, when whom should she desery standing on the pavement, looking in at her, but Mr. Fledgeby.

"I thought it was you?" said Fledgeby, coming up the two steps.

"Did you?" Miss Wren retorted. "And I thought it was you, young man. Quite a coincidence. You're not mistaken, and I'm not mistaken. How clever we are!"

"Well, and how are you?" said Fledgeby.

"I am pretty much as usual, sir," replied Miss Wren. "A very unfortunate parent; worried out of my life and senses by a very bad child."

Fledgeby's small eyes opened so wide that they might have passed

for ordinary-sized eyes, as he stared about him for the very young person whom he supposed to be in question.

"But you're not a parent," said Miss Wren, "and consequently it's of no use talking to you upon a family subject.—To what am I to attribute the honor and favor?"

"To a wish to improve your acquaintance," Mr. Fledgeby replied.

Miss Wren, stopping to bite her thread, looked at him very knowingly.

"We never meet now," said Fledgeby; "do we?"

"No," said Miss Wren, chopping off the word.

"So I had a mind," pursued Fledgeby, "to come and have a talk with you about our dodging friend, the child of Israel."

"So he gave you my address; did he?" asked Miss Wren.

"I got it out of him," said Fledgeby, with a stammer.

"You seem to see a good deal of him," remarked Miss Wren, with shrewd distrust. "A good deal of him you seem to see, considering."

"Yes, I do," said Fledgeby. "Considering."

"Haven't you," inquired the dressmaker, bending over the doll on which her art was being exercised, "done interceding with him yet?"

"No," said Fledgeby, shaking his head.

"La! Been interceding with him all this time, and sticking to him still?" said Miss Wren, busy with her work.

"Sticking to him is the word," said Fledgeby.

Miss Wren pursued her occupation with a concentrated air, and asked, after an interval of silent industry:

"Are you in the army?"

"Not exactly," said Fledgeby, rather flattered by the question.

"Navy?" asked Miss Wren.

"N—no," said Fledgeby. He qualified these two negatives, as if he were not absolutely in either service, but was almost in both.

"What are you then?" demanded Miss Wren.

"I am a gentleman, I am," said Fledgeby.

"Oh!" assented Jenny, screwing up her mouth with an appearance of conviction. "Yes, to be sure! That accounts for your having so much time to give to interceding. But only to think how kind and friendly a gentleman you must be!"

Mr. Fledgeby found that he was skating round a board marked Dangerous, and had better cut out a fresh track. "Let's get back to the dodgerest of the dodgers," said he. "What's he up to in the case of your friend the handsome gal? He must have some object. What's his object?"

"Cannot undertake to say, sir, I am sure!" returned Miss Wren, composedly.

"He won't acknowledge where she's gone," said Fledgeby; "and I have a fancy that I should like to have another look at her. Now I know he knows where she is gone."

"Cannot undertake to say, sir, I am sure!" Miss Wren again rejoined.

"And you know where she is gone," hazarded Fledgeby.

"Cannot undertake to say, sir, really," replied Miss Wren.

The quaint little chin met Mr. Fledgeby's gaze with such a baffling hitch, that that agreeable gentleman was for some time at a loss how to resume his fascinating part in the dialogue. At length he said:

"Miss Jenny!—That's your name, if I don't mistake?"

"Probably you don't mistake, sir," was Miss Wren's cool answer; "because you had it on the best authority. Mine, you know."

"Miss Jenny! Instead of coming up and being dead, let's come out and look alive. It'll pay better, I assure you," said Fledgeby, bestowing an inveigling twinkle or two upon the dressmaker. "You'll find it pay better."

"Perhaps," said Miss Jenny, holding out her doll at arm's length, and critically contemplating the effect of her art with her scissors on her lips and her head thrown back, as if her interest lay there, and not in the conversation; "perhaps you'll explain your meaning, young man, which is Greek to me.—You must have another touch of blue in your trimming, my dear." Having addressed the last remark to her fair client, Miss Wren proceeded to snip at some blue fragments that lay before her, among fragments of all colours, and to thread a needle from a skein of blue silk.

"Look here," said Fledgeby.—"Are you attending?"

"I am attending, sir," replied Miss Wren, without the slightest appearance of so doing. "Another touch of blue in your trimming, my dear."

"Well, look here," said Fledgeby, rather discouraged by the circumstances under which he found himself pursuing the conversation. "If you're attending——"

"Light blue, my sweet young lady," remarked Miss Wren, in a sprightly tone, "being best suited to your fair complexion and your flaxen curls."

"I say, if you're attending," proceeded Fledgeby, "it'll pay better in this way. It'll lead in a roundabout manner to your buying damage and waste of Pubsey and Co. at a nominal price, or even getting it for nothing."

"Aha!" thought the dressmaker. "But you are not so roundabout, Little Eyes, that I don't notice your answering for Pubsey and Co. after all! Little Eyes, Little Eyes, you're too cunning by half."

"And I take it for granted," pursued Fledgeby, "that to get the most of your materials for nothing would be well worth your while, Miss Jenny?"

"You may take it for granted," returned the dressmaker with many knowing nods, "that it's always well worth my while to make money."

"Now," said Fledgeby approvingly, "you're answering to a sensible purpose. Now, you're coming out and looking alive! So I make so free, Miss Jenny, as to offer the remark, that you and Judah were too thick together to last. You can't come to be intimate with such a deep file as Judah without beginning to see a little way into him, you know," said Fledgeby with a wink.

"I must own," returned the dressmaker, with her eyes upon her work, "that we are not good friends at present."

"I know you're not good friends at present," said Fledgeby. "I know all about it. I should like to pay off Judah, by not letting him have his own deep way in everything. In most things he'll get it by hook or by crook, but—hang it all!—don't let him have his own deep way in everything. That's too much." Mr. Fledgeby said this with some display of indignant warmth, as if he was counsel in the cause for Virtue.

"How can I prevent his having his own way?" began the dressmaker.

"Deep way, I called it," said Fledgeby.

"—His own deep way, in anything?"

"I'll tell you," said Fledgeby. "I like to hear you ask it, because it's looking alive. It's what I should expect to find in one of your sagacious understandings. Now, candidly."

"Eh?" cried Miss Jenny.

"I said, now candidly," Mr. Fledgeby explained, a little put out.

"Oh-h!"

"I should be glad to countermine him, respecting the handsome gal, your friend. He means something there. You may depend upon it, Judah means something there. He has a motive, and of course his motive is a dark motive. Now, whatever his motive is, it's necessary to his motive"—Mr. Fledgeby's constructive powers were not equal to the avoidance of some tautology here—"that it should be kept from me, what he has done with her. So I put it to you, who know: What *has* he done with her? I ask no more. And is that asking much, when you understand that it will pay?"

Miss Jenny Wren, who had cast her eyes upon the bench again after her last interruption, sat looking at it, needle in hand but not working, for some moments. She then briskly resumed her work, and said with a sidelong glance of her eyes and chin at Mr. Fledgeby.

"Where d'ye live?"

"Albany, Piccadilly," replied Fledgeby.

"When are you at home?"

"When you like."

"Breakfast-time?" said Jenny, in her abruptest and shortest manner.

"No better time in the day," said Fledgeby.

"I'll look in upon you to-morrow, young man. Those two ladies," pointing to dolls, "have an appointment in Bond Street at ten precisely. When I've dropped 'em there, I'll drive round to you." With a weird little laugh, Miss Jenny pointed to her crutch-stick as her equipage.

"This is looking alive indeed!" cried Fledgeby, rising.

"Mark you! I promise you nothing," said the dolls' dressmaker, dabbing two dabs at him with her needle, as if she put out both his eyes.

"No no. I understand," returned Fledgeby. "The damage and waste question shall be settled first. It shall be made to pay; don't you be afraid. Good-day, Miss Jenny."

"Good-day, young man."

Mr. Fledgeby's prepossessing form withdrew itself; and the little dressmaker, clipping and snipping and stitching, and stitching and snipping and clipping, fell to work at a great rate; musing and muttering all the time.

"Misty, misty, misty. Can't make it out. Little Eyes and the wolf in a conspiracy? Or Little Eyes and the wolf against one another? Can't make it out. My poor Lizzie, have they both designs against you, either way? Can't make it out. Is Little Eyes Pubsey, and the wolf Co? Can't make it out. Pubsey true to Co, and Co to Pubsey? Pubsey false to Co, and Co to Pubsey? Can't make it out. What said Little Eyes? 'Now, candidly?' Ah! However the cat jumps, he's a liar. That's all I can make out at present; but you may go to bed in the Albany, Piccadilly, with *that* for your pillow, young man!" Thereupon, the little dressmaker again dabbed out his eyes separately, and making a loop in the air of her thread and deftly catching it into a knot with her needle, seemed to bowstring him into the bargain.

For the terrors undergone by Mr. Dolls that evening when his little parent sat profoundly meditating over her work, and when he imagined himself found out, as often as she changed her attitude, or turned her eyes towards him, there is no adequate name. Moreover it was her habit to shake her head at that wretched old boy when ever she caught his eye as he shivered and shook. What are popularly called "the trembles" being in full force upon him that evening, and likewise what are popularly called "the horrors," he had a very bad time of it; which was not made better by his being so remorseful as frequently to moan "Sixty threepennorths." This imperfect sentence not being at all intelligible as a confession, but sounding like a Gargantuan order for a dram, brought him into new difficulties by occasioning his parent to pounce at him in a more than usually snappish manner, and to overwhelm him with bitter reproaches.

What was a bad time for Mr. Dolls, could not fail to be a bad time for the dolls' dressmaker. However, she was on the alert next morning, and drove to Bond Street, and set down the two ladies punctually, and then directed her equipage to conduct her to the Albany. Arrived at the doorway of the house in which Mr. Fledgeby's chambers were, she found a lady standing there in a travelling dress, holding in her hand—of all things in the world—a gentleman's hat.

"You want some one?" said the lady in a stern manner.

"I am going up stairs to Mr. Fledgeby's."

"You cannot do that at this moment. There is a gentleman with him. I am waiting for the gentleman. His business with Mr. Fledgeby will very soon be transacted, and then you can go up. Until the gentleman comes down, you must wait here."

While speaking, and afterwards, the lady kept watchfully between her and the staircase, as if prepared to oppose her going up, by force. The lady being of a stature to stop her with a hand, and looking mightily determined, the dressmaker stood still.

"Well? Why do you listen?" asked the lady.

"I am not listening," said the dressmaker.

"What do you hear?" asked the lady, altering her phrase.

"Is it a kind of a spluttering somewhere?" said the dressmaker, with an inquiring look.

"Mr. Fledgeby in his shower-bath, perhaps," remarked the lady, smiling.

"And somebody's beating a carpet, I think?"

"Mr. Fledgeby's carpet, I dare say," replied the smiling lady.

Miss Wren had a reasonably good eye for smiles, being well accustomed to them on the part of her young friends, though their smiles mostly ran smaller than in nature. But she had never seen so singular a smile as that upon this lady's face. It twitched her nostrils open in a remarkable manner, and contracted her lips and eye-brows. It was a smile of enjoyment too, though of such a fierce kind that Miss Wren thought she would rather not enjoy herself than do it in that way.

"Well!" said the lady, watching her. "What now?"

"I hope there's nothing the matter!" said the dressmaker.

"Where?" inquired the lady.

"I don't know where," said Miss Wren, staring about her. "But I never heard such odd noises. Don't you think I had better call somebody?"

"I think you had better not," returned the lady with a significant frown, and drawing closer.

On this hint, the dressmaker relinquished the idea, and stood looking at the lady as hard as the lady looked at her. Meanwhile the dressmaker listened with amazement to the odd noises which still continued, and the lady listened too, but with a coolness in which there was no trace of amazement.

Soon afterwards, came a slamming and banging of doors; and then came running down stairs, a gentleman with whiskers, and out of breath, who seemed to be red-hot.

"Is your business done, Alfred?" inquired the lady.

"Very thoroughly done," replied the gentleman, as he took his hat from her.

"You can go up to Mr. Fledgeby as soon as you like," said the lady, moving haughtily away.

"Oh! And you can take these three pieces of stick with you," added the gentleman politely, "and say, if you please, that they come from Mr. Alfred Lammle, with his compliments on leaving England. Mr. Alfred Lammle. Be so good as not to forget the name."

The three pieces of stick were three broken and frayed fragments of a stout lithe cane. Miss Jenny taking them wonderingly, and the gentleman repeating with a grin, "Mr. Alfred Lammle, if you'll be so good. Compliments, on leaving England," the lady and gentleman walked away quite deliberately, and Miss Jenny and her crutch-stick went up stairs. "Lammle, Lammle, Lammle?" Miss Jenny repeated as she panted from stair to stair, "where have I heard that name? Lammle, Lammle? I know! Saint Mary Axe!"

With a gleam of new intelligence in her sharp face, the dolls' dressmaker pulled at Fledgeby's bell. No one answered; but, from

within the chambers, there proceeded a continuous spluttering sound of a highly singular and unintelligible nature.

"Good gracious! Is Little Eyes choking?" cried Miss Jenny.

Pulling at the bell again and getting no reply, she pushed the outer door, and found it standing ajar. No one being visible on her opening it wider, and the spluttering continuing, she took the liberty of opening an inner door, and then beheld the extraordinary spectacle of Mr. Fledgeby in a shirt, a pair of Turkish trousers, and a Turkish cap, rolling over and over on his own carpet, and spluttering wonderfully.

"Oh Lord!" gasped Mr. Fledgeby. "Oh my eye! Stop thief! I am strangling. Fire! Oh my eye! A glass of water. Give me a glass of water. Shut the door. Murder! Oh Lord!" And then rolled and spluttered more than ever.

Hurrying into another room, Miss Jenny got a glass of water, and brought it for Fledgeby's relief: who, gasping, spluttering, and rattling in his throat betweenwhiles, drank some water, and laid his head faintly on her arm.

"Oh my eye!" cried Fledgeby, struggling anew. "It's salt and snuff. It's up my nose, and down my throat, and in my wind-pipe. Ugh! Ow! Ow! Ow! Ah—h—h—h!" And here, crowing fearfully, with his eyes starting out of his head, appeared to be contending with every mortal disease incidental to poultry.

"And Oh my Eye, I'm so sore!" cried Fledgeby, starting over on his back, in a spasmodic way that caused the dressmaker to retreat to the wall. "Oh I smart so! Do put something to my back and arms, and legs and shoulders. Ugh! It's down my throat again and can't come up. Ow! Ow! Ow! Ah—h—h—h! Oh I smart so!" Here Mr. Fledgeby bounded up, and bounded down, and went rolling over and over again.

The dolls' dressmaker looked on until he rolled himself into a corner with his Turkish slippers uppermost, and then, resolving in the first place to address her ministrations to the salt and snuff, gave him more water and slapped his back. But, the latter application was by no means a success, causing Mr. Fledgeby to scream, and to cry out, "Oh my eye! don't slap me! I'm covered with weales and I smart so!"

However, he gradually ceased to choke and crow, saving at intervals, and Miss Jenny got him into an easy-chair: where, with his eyes red and watery, with his features swollen, and with some half-dozen livid bars across his face, he presented a most rueful sight.

"What ever possessed you to take salt and snuff, young man?" inquired Miss Jenny.

"I didn't take it," the dismal youth replied. "It was crammed into my mouth."

"Who crammed it?" asked Miss Jenny.

"He did," answered Fledgeby. "The assassin. Lammle. He rubbed it into my mouth and up my nose and down my throat—Ow! Ow! Ow! Ah—h—h—h! Ugh!—to prevent my crying out, and then cruelly assaulted me."

"With this?" asked Miss Jenny, showing the pieces of cane.

"That's the weapon," said Fledgeby, eyeing it with the air of

an acquaintance. "He broke it over me. Oh I smart so! How did you come by it?"

"When he ran down stairs and joined the lady he had left in the hall with his hat"—Miss Jenny began.

"Oh!" groaned Mr. Fledgeby, writhing, "she was holding his hat, was she? I might have known she was in it."

"When he came down stairs and joined the lady who wouldn't let me come up, he gave me the pieces for you, and I was to say, 'With Mr. Alfred Lammle's compliments on his leaving England.'" Miss Jenny said it with such spiteful satisfaction, and such a hitch of her chin and eyes as might have added to Mr. Fledgeby's miseries, if he could have noticed either, in his bodily pain with his hand to his head.

"Shall I go for the police?" inquired Miss Jenny, with a nimble start towards the door.

"Stop! No, don't!" cried Fledgeby. "Don't, please. We had better keep it quiet. Will you be so good as shut the door? Oh I do smart so!"

In testimony of the extent to which he smarted, Mr. Fledgeby came wallowing out of the easy-chair, and took another roll on the carpet.

"Now the door's shut," said Mr. Fledgeby, sitting up in anguish, with his Turkish cap half on and half off, and the bars on his face getting bluer, "do me the kindness to look at my back and shoulders. They must be in an awful state, for I hadn't got my dressing-gown on, when the brute came rushing in. Cut my shirt away from the collar; there's a pair of scissors on that table. Oh!" groaned Mr. Fledgeby, with his hand to his head again. "How I do smart, to be sure!"

"There?" inquired Miss Jenny, alluding to the back and shoulders.

"Oh Lord, yes!" moaned Fledgeby, rocking himself. "And all over! Everywhere!"

The busy little dressmaker quickly snipped the shirt away, and laid bare the results of as furious and sound a threshing as even Mr. Fledgeby merited. "You may well smart, young man!" exclaimed Miss Jenny. And stealthily rubbed her little hands behind him, and poked a few exultant pokes with her two forefingers over the crown of his head.

"What do you think of vinegar and brown paper?" inquired the suffering Fledgeby, still rocking and moaning. "Does it look as if vinegar and brown paper was the sort of application?"

"Yes," said Miss Jenny, with a silent chuckle. "It looks as if it ought to be Pickled."

Mr. Fledgeby collapsed under the word "Pickled," and groaned again. "My kitchen is on this floor," he said; "you'll find brown paper in a dresser-drawer there, and a bottle of vinegar on a shelf. Would you have the kindness to make a few plasters and put 'em on? It can't be kept too quiet."

"One, two—hum—five, six. You'll want six," said the dressmaker.

"There's smart enough," whimpered Mr. Fledgeby, groaning and writhing again, "for sixty."

Miss Jenny repaired to the kitchen, scissors in hand, found the brown paper and found the vinegar, and skilfully cut out and steeped six large plasters. When they were all lying ready on the dresser, an idea occurred to her as she was about to gather them up.

"I think," said Miss Jenny with a silent laugh, "he ought to have a little pepper? Just a few grains? I think the young man's tricks and manners make a claim upon his friends for a little pepper?"

Mr. Fledgeby's evil star showing her the pepper-box on the chimneypiece, she climbed upon a chair, and got it down, and sprinkled all the plasters with a judicious hand. She then went back to Mr. Fledgeby, and stuck them all on him: Mr. Fledgeby uttering a sharp howl as each was put in its place.

"There, young man!" said the dolls' dressmaker. "Now I hope you feel pretty comfortable?"

Apparently, Mr. Fledgeby did not, for he cried by way of answer, "Oh—h how I do smart!"

Miss Jenny got his Persian gown upon him, extinguished his eyes crookedly with his Persian cap, and helped him to his bed: upon which he climbed groaning. "Business between you and me being out of the question to-day, young man, and my time being precious," said Miss Jenny then, "I'll make myself scarce. Are you comfortable now?"

"Oh my eye!" cried Mr. Fledgeby. "No, I ain't. Oh—h—h! how I do smart!"

The last thing Miss Jenny saw, as she looked back before closing the room door, was Mr. Fledgeby in the act of plunging and gambolling all over his bed, like a porpoise or dolphin in its native element. She then shut the bedroom door, and all the other doors, and going down stairs and emerging from the Albany into the busy streets, took omnibus for Saint Mary Axe: pressing on the road all the gaily-dressed ladies whom she could see from the window, and making them unconscious lay-figures for dolls, while she mentally cut them out and basted them.

CHAPTER IX.

TWO PLACES VACATED.

SET down by the omnibus at the corner of Saint Mary Axe, and trusting to her feet and her crutch-stick within its precincts, the dolls' dressmaker proceeded to the place of business of Pubsey and Co. All there was sunny and quiet externally, and shady and quiet internally. Hiding herself in the entry outside the glass door, she could see from that post of observation the old man in his spectacles sitting writing at his desk.

"Boh!" cried the dressmaker, popping in her head at the glass-door. "Mr. Wolf at home?"

The old man took his glasses off, and mildly laid them down beside him. "Ah Jenny, is it you? I thought you had given me up."

"And so I had given up the treacherous wolf of the forest," she re-

plied; "but, godmother, it strikes me you have come back. I am not quite sure, because the wolf and you change forms. I want to ask you a question or two, to find out whether you are really godmother or really wolf. May I?"

"Yes, Jenny, yes." But Riah glanced towards the door, as if he thought his principal might appear there, unseasonably.

"If you're afraid of the fox," said Miss Jenny, "you may dismiss all present expectations of seeing that animal. He won't show himself abroad, for many a day."

"What do you mean, my child?"

"I mean, godmother," replied Miss Wren, sitting down beside the Jew, "that the fox has caught a famous flogging, and that if his skin and bones are not tingling, aching, and smarting at this present instant, no fox did ever tingle, ache, and smart." Therewith Miss Jenny related what had come to pass in the Albany, omitting the few grains of pepper.

"Now, godmother," she went on, "I particularly wish to ask you what has taken place here, since I left the wolf here? Because I have an idea about the size of a marble, rolling about in my little noddle. First and foremost, are you Pubsey and Co., or are you either? Upon your solemn word and honour."

The old man shook his head.

"Secondly, isn't Fledgeby both Pubsey and Co.?"

The old man answered with a reluctant nod.

"My idea," exclaimed Miss Wren, "is now about the size of an orange. But before it gets any bigger, welcome back, dear godmother!"

The little creature folded her arms about the old man's neck with great earnestness, and kissed him. "I humbly beg your forgiveness, godmother. I am truly sorry. I ought to have had more faith in you. But what could I suppose when you said nothing for yourself, you know? I don't mean to offer that as a justification, but what could I suppose, when you were a silent party to all he said? It did look bad; now didn't it?"

"It looked so bad, Jenny," responded the old man, with gravity, "that I will straightway tell you what an impression it wrought upon me. I was hateful in mine own eyes. I was hateful to myself, in being so hateful to the debtor and to you. But more than that, and worse than that, and to pass out far and broad beyond myself—I reflected that evening, sitting alone in my garden on the housetop, that I was doing dishonour to my ancient faith and race. I reflected—clearly reflected for the first time—that in bending my neck to the yoke I was willing to wear, I bent the unwilling necks of the whole Jewish people. For it is not, in Christian countries, with the Jews as with other peoples. Men say, 'This is a bad Greek, but there are good Greeks. This is a bad Turk, but there are good Turks.' Not so with the Jews. Men find the bad among us easily enough—among what peoples are the bad not easily found?—but they take the worst of us as samples of the best; they take the lowest of us as presentations of the highest; and they say 'All Jews are alike.' If, doing what I was content to do here, because I was grateful for the

past and have small need of money now, I had been a Christian, I could have done it, compromising no one but my individual self. But doing it as a Jew, I could not choose but compromise the Jews of all conditions and all countries. It is a little hard upon us, but it is the truth. I would that all our people remembered it! Though I have little right to say so, seeing that it came home so late to me."

The dolls' dressmaker sat holding the old man by the hand, and looking thoughtfully in his face.

"Thus I reflected, I say, sitting that evening in my garden on the housetop. And passing the painful scene of that day in review before me many times, I always saw that the poor gentleman believed the story readily, because I was one of the Jews—that you believed the story readily, my child, because I was one of the Jews—that the story itself first came into the invention of the originator thereof, because I was one of the Jews. This was the result of my having had you three before me, face to face, and seeing the thing visibly presented as upon a theatre. Wherefore I perceived that the obligation was upon me to leave this service. But Jenny, my dear," said Riah, breaking off, "I promised that you should pursue your questions, and I obstruct them."

"On the contrary, godmother; my idea is as large now as a pumpkin—and you know what a pumpkin is, don't you? So you gave notice that you were going? Does that come next?" asked Miss Jenny with a look of close attention.

"I indited a letter to my master. Yes. To that effect."

"And what said Tingling-Tossing-Aching-Screaming-Scratching-Smarter?" asked Miss Wren with an unspeakable enjoyment in the utterance of those honorable titles and in the recollection of the pepper.

"He held me to certain months of servitude, which were his lawful term of notice. They expire to-morrow. Upon their expiration—not before—I had meant to set myself right with my Cinderella."

"My idea is getting so immense now," cried Miss Wren, clasping her temples, "that my head won't hold it! Listen, godmother; I am going to expound. Little Eyes (that's Screaming-Scratching-Smarter) owes you a heavy grudge for going. Little Eyes casts about how best to pay you off. Little Eyes thinks of Lizzie. Little Eyes says to himself, 'I'll find out where he has placed that girl, and I'll betray his secret because it's dear to him.' Perhaps Little Eyes thinks, 'I'll make love to her myself too; but that I can't swear—all the rest I can. So, Little Eyes comes to me, and I go to Little Eyes. That's the way of it. And now the murder's all out, I'm sorry," added the dolls' dressmaker, rigid from head to foot with energy as she shook her little fist before her eyes, "that I didn't give him Cayenne pepper and chopped pickled Capsicum!"

This expression of regret being but partially intelligible to Mr. Riah, the old man reverted to the injuries Fledgeby had received, and hinted at the necessity of his at once going to tend that beaten cur.

"Godmother, godmother, godmother!" cried Miss Wren irritably, "I really lose all patience with you. One would think you believed in the Good Samaritan. How can you be so inconsistent?"

"Jenny dear," began the old man gently, "it is the custom of our people to help—"

"Oh! Bother your people!" interposed Miss Wren, with a toss of her head. "If your people don't know better than to go and help Little Eyes, it's a pity they ever got out of Egypt. Over and above that," she added, "he wouldn't take your help if you offered it. Too much ashamed. Wants to keep it close and quiet, and to keep you out of the way."

They were still debating this point when a shadow darkened the entry, and the glass door was opened by a messenger who brought a letter unceremoniously addressed, "Riah." To which he said there was an answer wanted.

The letter, which was scrawled in pencil uphill and downhill and round crooked corners, ran thus:

"OLD RIAH,

"Your accounts being all squared, go. Shut up the place, turn out directly, and send me the key by bearer. Go. You are an unthankful dog of a Jew. Get out.

"F."

The dolls' dressmaker found it delicious to trace the screaming and smarting of Little Eyes in the distorted writing of this epistle. She laughed over it and jeered at it in a convenient corner (to the great astonishment of the messenger) while the old man got his few goods together in a black bag. That done, the shutters of the upper windows closed, and the office blind pulled down, they issued forth upon the steps with the attendant messenger. There, while Miss Jenny held the bag, the old man locked the house door, and handed over the key to him; who at once retired with the same.

"Well, godmother," said Miss Wren, as they remained upon the steps together, looking at one another. "And so you're thrown upon the world!"

"It would appear so, Jenny, and somewhat suddenly."

"Where are you going to seek your fortune?" asked Miss Wren.

The old man smiled, but looked about him with a look of having lost his way in life, which did not escape the dolls' dressmaker.

"Verily, Jenny," said he, "the question is to the purpose, and more easily asked than answered. But as I have experience of the ready goodwill and good help of those who have given occupation to Lizzie, I think I will seek them out for myself."

"On foot?" asked Miss Wren, with a chop.

"Ay!" said the old man. "Have I not my staff?"

It was exactly because he had his staff, and presented so quaint an aspect, that she mistrusted his making the journey.

"The best thing you can do," said Jenny, "for the time being, at all events, is to come home with me, godmother. Nobody's there but my bad child, and Lizzie's lodging stands empty." The old man when satisfied that no inconvenience could be entailed on any one by his compliance, readily complied; and the singularly-assorted couple once more went through the streets together.

Now, the bad child having been strictly charged by his parent to remain at home in her absence, of course went out; and, being in the very last stage of mental decrepitude, went out with two objects; firstly, to establish a claim he conceived himself to have upon any licensed victualler living, to be supplied with threepennyworth of rum for nothing; and secondly, to bestow some maudlin remorse on Mr. Eugene Wrayburn, and see what profit came of it. Stumblingly pursuing these two designs—they both meant rum, the only meaning of which he was capable—the degraded creature staggered into Covent Garden Market and there bivouacked, to have an attack of the trembles succeeded by an attack of the horrors, in a doorway.

This market of Covent Garden was quite out of the creature's line of road, but it had the attraction for him which it has for the worst of the solitary members of the drunken tribe. It may be the companionship of the nightly stir, or it may be the companionship of the gin and beer that slop about among carters and hucksters, or it may be the companionship of the trodden vegetable refuse which is so like their own dress that perhaps they take the Market for a great wardrobe; but be it what it may, you shall see no such individual drunkards on doorsteps anywhere, as there. Of dozing women-drunkards especially, you shall come upon such specimens there, in the morning sunlight, as you might seek out of doors in vain through London. Such stale vapid rejected cabbage-leaf and cabbage-stalk dress, such damaged-orange countenance, such squashed pulp of humanity, are open to the day nowhere else. So, the attraction of the Market drew Mr. Dolls to it, and he had out his two fits of trembles and horrors in a doorway on which a woman had had out her sodden nap a few hours before.

There is a swarm of young savages always sitting about this same place, creeping off with fragments of orange-chests, and mouldy litter—Heaven knows into what holes they can convey them, having no home!—whose bare feet fall with a blunt dull softness on the pavement as the policeman hunts them, and who are (perhaps for that reason) little heard by the Powers that be, whereas in top-boots they would make a deafening clatter. These, delighting in the trembles and the horrors of Mr. Dolls, as in a gratuitous drama, flocked about him in his doorway, butted at him, leaped at him, and pelted him. Hence, when he came out of his invalid retirement and shook off that ragged train, he was much bespattered, and in worse case than ever. But, not yet at his worst; for, going into a public-house, and being supplied in stress of business with his rum, and seeking to vanish without payment, he was collared, searched, found penniless, and admonished not to try that again, by having a pail of dirty water cast over him. This application superinduced another fit of the trembles; after which Mr. Dolls, as finding himself in good cue for making a call on a professional friend, addressed himself to the Temple.

There was nobody at the chambers but Young Blight. That discreet youth, sensible of a certain incongruity in the association of such a client with the business that might be coming some day, with the best intentions temporized with Dolls, and offered a shilling for coach-hire home. Mr. Dolls, accepting the shilling, promptly laid it

out in two threepennyworths of conspiracy against his life, and two threepennyworths of raging repentance. Returning to the Chambers with which burden, he was descried coming round into the court, by the wary young Blight watching from the window: who instantly closed the outer door, and left the miserable object to expend his fury on the panels.

The more the door resisted him, the more dangerous and imminent became that bloody conspiracy against his life. Force of police arriving, he recognized in them the conspirators, and laid about him hoarsely, fiercely, staringly, convulsively, foamingly. A humble machine, familiar to the conspirators and called by the expressive name of Stretcher, being unavoidably sent for, he was rendered a harmless bundle of torn rags by being strapped down upon it, with voice and consciousness gone out of him, and life fast going. As this machine was borne out at the Temple gate by four men, the poor little dolls' dressmaker and her Jewish friend were coming up the street.

"Let us see what it is," cried the dressmaker. "Let us make haste and look, godmother."

The brisk little crutch-stick was but too brisk. "O gentlemen, gentlemen, he belongs to me!"

"Belongs to you?" said the head of the party, stopping it.

"O yes, dear gentlemen, he's my child, out without leave. My poor bad, bad boy! and he don't know me, he don't know me! O what shall I do," cried the little creature, wildly beating her hands together, "when my own child don't know me!"

The head of the party looked (as well he might) to the old man for explanation. He whispered, as the dolls' dressmaker bent over the exhausted form and vainly tried to extract some sign of recognition from it: "It's her drunken father."

As the load was put down in the street, Riah drew the head of the party aside, and whispered that he thought the man was dying. "No, surely not?" returned the other. But he became less confident, on looking, and directed the bearers to "bring him to the nearest doctor's shop."

Thither he was brought; the window becoming from within, a wall of faces, deformed into all kinds of shapes through the agency of globular red bottles, green bottles, blue bottles, and other coloured bottles. A ghastly light shining upon him that he didn't need, the beast so furious but a few minutes gone, was quiet enough now, with a strange mysterious writing on his face, reflected from one of the great bottles, as if Death had marked him: "Mine."

The medical testimony was more precise and more to the purpose than it sometimes is in a Court of Justice. "You had better send for something to cover it. All's over."

Therefore, the police sent for something to cover it, and it was covered and borne through the streets, the people falling away. After it, went the dolls' dressmaker, hiding her face in the Jewish skirts, and clinging to them with one hand, while with the other she plied her stick. It was carried home, and, by reason that the staircase was very narrow, it was put down in the parlour—the little working-bench being set aside to make room for it—and there, in the midst of

the dolls with no speculation in their eyes, lay Mr. Dolls with no speculation in his.

Many flaunting dolls had to be gaily dressed, before the money was in the dressmaker's pocket to get mourning for Mr. Dolls. As the old man, Riah, sat by, helping her in such small ways as he could, he found it difficult to make out whether she really did realize that the deceased had been her father.

"If my poor boy," she would say, "had been brought up better, he might have done better. Not that I reproach myself. I hope I have no cause for that."

"None indeed, Jenny, I am very certain."

"Thank you, godmother. It cheers me to hear you say so. But you see it is so hard to bring up a child well, when you work, work, work, all day. When he was out of employment, I couldn't always keep him near me. He got fractious and nervous, and I was obliged to let him go into the streets. And he never did well in the streets, he never did well out of sight. How often it happens with children!"

"Too often, even in this sad sense!" thought the old man.

"How can I say what I might have turned out myself, but for my back having been so bad and my legs so queer, when I was young!" the dressmaker would go on. "I had nothing to do but work, and so I worked. I couldn't play. But my poor unfortunate child could play, and it turned out the worse for him."

"And not for him alone, Jenny."

"Well! I don't know, godmother. He suffered heavily, did my unfortunate boy. He was very, very ill sometimes. And I called him a quantity of names;" shaking her head over her work, and dropping tears. "I don't know that his going wrong was much the worse for me. If it ever was, let us forget it."

"You are a good girl, you are a patient girl."

"As for patience," she would reply with a shrug, "not much of that, godmother. If I had been patient, I should never have called him names. But I hope I did it for his good. And besides, I felt my responsibility as a mother, so much. I tried reasoning, and reasoning failed. I tried coaxing, and coaxing failed. I tried scolding, and scolding failed. But I was bound to try everything, you know, with such a charge upon my hands. Where would have been my duty to my poor lost boy, if I had not tried everything!"

With such talk, mostly in a cheerful tone on the part of the industrious little creature, the day-work and the night-work were beguiled until enough of smart dolls had gone forth to bring into the kitchen, where the working-bench now stood, the sombre stuff that the occasion required, and to bring into the house the other sombre preparations. "And now," said Miss Jenny, "having knocked off my rosy-cheeked young friends, I'll knock off my white-cheeked self." This referred to her making her own dress, which at last was done. "The disadvantage of making for yourself," said Miss Jenny, as she stood upon a chair to look at the result in the glass, "is, that you can't charge anybody else for the job, and the advantage is, that you haven't to go out to try on. Humph! Very

fair indeed! If He could see me now (whoever he is) I hope he wouldn't repent of his bargain!"

The simple arrangements were of her own making, and were stated to Riah thus:

"I mean to go alone, godmother, in my usual carriage, and you'll be so kind as keep house while I am gone. It's not far off. And when I return, we'll have a cup of tea, and a chat over future arrangements. It's a very plain last house that I have been able to give my poor unfortunate boy; but he'll accept the will for the deed, if he knows anything about it; and if he doesn't know anything about it," with a sob, and wiping her eyes, "why, it won't matter to him. I see the service in the Prayer-book says, that we brought nothing into this world and it is certain we can take nothing out. It comforts me for not being able to hire a lot of stupid undertaker's things for my poor child, and seeming as if I was trying to smuggle 'em out of this world with him, when of course I must break down in the attempt, and bring 'em all back again. As it is, there'll be nothing to bring back but me, and that's quite consistent, for I shan't be brought back, some day!"

After that previous carrying of him in the streets, the wretched old fellow seemed to be twice buried. He was taken on the shoulders of half a dozen blossom-faced men, who shuffled with him to the churchyard, and who were preceded by another blossom-faced man, affecting a stately stalk, as if he were a Policeman of the D(eath) Division, and ceremoniously pretending not to know his intimate acquaintances, as he led the pageant. Yet, the spectacle of only one little mourner hobbling after, caused many people to turn their heads with a look of interest.

At last the troublesome deceased was got into the ground, to be buried no more, and the stately stalker stalked back before the solitary dressmaker, as if she were bound in honour to have no notion of the way home. Those Furies, the conventionalities, being thus appeased, he left her.

"I must have a very short cry, godmother, before I cheer up for good," said the little creature, coming in. "Because after all a child is a child, you know."

It was a longer cry than might have been expected. Howbeit, it wore itself out in a shadowy corner, and then the dressmaker came forth, and washed her face, and made the tea. "You wouldn't mind my cutting out something while we are at tea, would you?" she asked her Jewish friend, with a coaxing air.

"Cinderella, dear child," the old man expostulated, "will you never rest?"

"Oh! It's not work, cutting out a pattern isn't," said Miss Jenny, with her busy little scissors already snipping at some paper. "The truth is, godmother, I want to fix it while I have it correct in my mind."

"Have you seen it to-day then?" asked Riah.

"Yes, godmother. Saw it just now. It's a surplice, that's what it is. Thing our clergymen wear, you know," explained Miss Jenny, in consideration of his professing another faith.

"And what have you to do with that, Jenny?"

"Why, godmother," replied the dressmaker, "you must know that we Professors who live upon our taste and invention, are obliged to keep our eyes always open. And you know already that I have many extra expenses to meet just now. So, it came into my head while I was weeping at my poor boy's grave, that something in my way might be done with a clergyman."

"What can be done?" asked the old man.

"Not a funeral, never fear!" returned Miss Jenny, anticipating his objection with a nod. "The public don't like to be made melancholy, I know very well. I am seldom called upon to put my young friends into mourning; not into real mourning, that is; Court mourning they are rather proud of. But a doll clergyman, my dear, —glossy black curls and whiskers—uniting two of my young friends in matrimony," said Miss Jenny, shaking her forefinger, "is quite another affair. If you don't see those three at the altar in Bond Street, in a jiffy, my name's Jack Robinson!"

With her expert little ways in sharp action, she had got a doll into whitey-brown paper orders, before the meal was over, and was displaying it for the edification of the Jewish mind, when a knock was heard at the street-door. Riah went to open it, and presently came back, ushering in, with the grave and courteous air that sat so well upon him, a gentleman.

The gentleman was a stranger to the dressmaker; but even in the moment of his casting his eyes upon her, there was something in his manner which brought to her remembrance Mr. Eugene Wrayburn.

"Pardon me," said the gentleman. "You are the dolls' dressmaker?"

"I am the dolls' dressmaker, sir."

"Lizzie Hexam's friend?"

"Yes, sir," replied Miss Jenny, instantly on the defensive. "And Lizzie Hexam's friend."

"Here is a note from her, entreating you to accede to the request of Mr. Mortimer Lightwood, the bearer. Mr. Riah chances to know that I am Mr. Mortimer Lightwood, and will tell you so."

Riah bent his head in corroboration.

"Will you read the note?"

"It's very short," said Jenny, with a look of wonder, when she had read it.

"There was no time to make it longer. Time was so very precious. My dear friend Mr. Eugene Wrayburn is dying."

The dressmaker clasped her hands, and uttered a little piteous cry.

"Is dying," repeated Lightwood, with emotion, "at some distance from here. He is sinking under injuries received at the hands of a villain who attacked him in the dark. I come straight from his bedside. He is almost always insensible. In a short restless interval of sensibility, or partial sensibility, I made out that he asked for you to be brought to sit by him. Hardly relying on my own interpretation of the indistinct sounds he made, I caused Lizzie to hear them. We were both sure that he asked for you."

The dressmaker, with her hands still clasped, looked affrightedly from the one to the other of her two companions.

"If you delay, he may die with his request ungratified, with his last wish—intrusted to me—we have long been much more than brothers—unfulfilled. I shall break down, if I try to say more."

In a few moments the black bonnet and the crutch-stick were on duty, the good Jew was left in possession of the house, and the dolls' dressmaker, side by side in a chaise with Mortimer Lightwood, was posting out of town.

CHAPTER X.

THE DOLLS' DRESSMAKER DISCOVERS A WORD.

A DARKENED and hushed room; the river outside the windows flowing on to the vast ocean; a figure on the bed, swathed and bandaged and bound, lying helpless on its back, with its two useless arms in splints at its sides. Only two days of usage so familiarized the little dressmaker with this scene, that it held the place occupied two days ago by the recollections of years.

He had scarcely moved since her arrival. Sometimes his eyes were open, sometimes closed. When they were open, there was no meaning in their unwinking stare at one spot straight before them, unless for a moment the brow knitted into a faint expression of anger, or surprise. Then, Mortimer Lightwood would speak to him, and on occasions he would be so far roused as to make an attempt to pronounce his friend's name. But, in an instant consciousness was gone again, and no spirit of Eugene was in Eugene's crushed outer form.

They provided Jenny with materials for plying her work, and she had a little table placed at the foot of his bed. Sitting there, with her rich shower of hair falling over the chair-back, they hoped she might attract his notice. With the same object, she would sing, just above her breath, when he opened his eyes, or she saw his brow knit into that faint expression, so evanescent that it was like a shape made in water. But as yet he had not heeded. The "they" here mentioned, were the medical attendant; Lizzie, who was there in all her intervals of rest; and Lightwood, who never left him.

The two days became three, and the three days became four. At length, quite unexpectedly, he said something in a whisper.

"What was it, my dear Eugene?"

"Will you, Mortimer——"

"Will I——?"

"—Send for her?"

"My dear fellow, she is here."

Quite unconscious of the long blank, he supposed that they were still speaking together.

The little dressmaker stood up at the foot of the bed, humming her song, and nodded to him brightly. "I can't shake hands, Jenny," said Eugene, with something of his old look; "but I am very glad to see you."

Mortimer repeated this to her, for it could only be made out by bending over him and closely watching his attempts to say it. In a little while, he added:

"Ask her if she has seen the children."

Mortimer could not understand this, neither could Jenny herself, until he added:

"Ask her if she has smelt the flowers."

"Oh! I know!" cried Jenny. "I understand him now!" Then, Lightwood yielded his place to her quick approach, and she said, bending over the bed, with that better look: "You mean my long bright slanting rows of children, who used to bring me ease and rest? You mean the children who used to take me up, and make me light?"

Eugene smiled, "Yes."

"I have not seen them since I saw you. I never see them now, but I am hardly ever in pain now."

"It was a pretty fancy," said Eugene.

"But I have heard my birds sing," cried the little creature, "and I have smelt my flowers. Yes, indeed I have! And both were most beautiful and most Divine!"

"Stay and help to nurse me," said Eugene, quietly. "I should like you to have the fancy here, before I die."

She touched his lips with her hand, and shaded her eyes with that same hand as she went back to her work and her little low song. He heard the song with evident pleasure, until she allowed it gradually to sink away into silence.

"Mortimer."

"My dear Eugene."

"If you can give me anything to keep me here for only a few minutes——"

"To keep you here, Eugene?"

"To prevent my wandering away I don't know where—for I begin to be sensible that I have just come back, and that I shall lose myself again—do so, dear boy!"

Mortimer gave him such stimulants as could be given him with safety (they were always at hand, ready), and bending over him once more, was about to caution him, when he said:

"Don't tell me not to speak, for I must speak. If you knew the harassing anxiety that gnaws and wears me when I am wandering in those places—where are those endless places, Mortimer? They must be at an immense distance!"

He saw in his friend's face that he was losing himself; for he added after a moment: "Don't be afraid—I am not gone yet. What was it?"

"You wanted to tell me something, Eugene. My poor dear fellow, you wanted to say something to your old friend—to the friend who has always loved you, admired you, imitated you, founded himself upon you, been nothing without you, and who, God knows, would be here in your place if he could!"

"Tut, tut!" said Eugene with a tender glance as the other put his hand before his face. "I am not worth it. I acknowledge that I

like it, dear boy, but I am not worth it. This attack, my dear Mortimer; this murder——"

His friend leaned over him with renewed attention, saying: "You and I suspect some one."

"More than suspect. But, Mortimer, while I lie here, and when I lie here no longer, I trust to you that the perpetrator is never brought to justice."

"Eugene?"

"Her innocent reputation would be ruined, my friend. She would be punished, not he. I have wronged her enough in fact; I have wronged her still more in intention. You recollect what pavement is said to be made of good intentions. It is made of bad intentions too. Mortimer, I am lying on it, and I know!"

"Be comforted, my dear Eugene."

"I will, when you have promised me. Dear Mortimer, the man must never be pursued. If he should be accused, you must keep him silent and save him. Don't think of avenging me; think only of hushing the story and protecting her. You can confuse the case, and turn aside the circumstances. Listen to what I say to you. It was not the schoolmaster, Bradley Headstone. Do you hear me? Twice; it was not the schoolmaster, Bradley Headstone. Do you hear me? Three times; it was not the schoolmaster, Bradley Headstone."

He stopped, exhausted. His speech had been whispered, broken, and indistinct; but by a great effort he had made it plain enough to be unmistakeable.

"Dear fellow, I am wandering away. Stay me for another moment, if you can."

Lightwood lifted his head at the neck, and put a wine-glass to his lips. He rallied.

"I don't know how long ago it was done, whether weeks, days, or hours. No matter. There is inquiry on foot, and pursuit. Say! Is there not?"

"Yes."

"Check it; divert it! Don't let her be brought in question. Shield her. The guilty man, brought to justice, would poison her name. Let the guilty man go unpunished. Lizzie and my reparation before all! Promise me!"

"Eugene, I do. I promise you!"

In the act of turning his eyes gratefully towards his friend, he wandered away. His eyes stood still, and settled into that former intent unmeaning stare.

Hours and hours, days and nights, he remained in this same condition. There were times when he would calmly speak to his friend after a long period of unconsciousness, and would say he was better, and would ask for something. Before it could be given him, he would be gone again.

The dolls' dressmaker, all softened compassion now, watched him with an earnestness that never relaxed. She would regularly change the ice, or the cooling spirit, on his head, and would keep her ear at the pillow betweenwhiles, listening for any faint words that fell from him in his wanderings. It was amazing through how many hours at a

time she would remain beside him, in a crouching attitude, attentive to his slightest moan. As he could not move a hand, he could make no sign of distress; but, through this close watching (if through no secret sympathy or power) the little creature attained an understanding of him that Lightwood did not possess. Mortimer would often turn to her, as if she were an interpreter between this sentient world and the insensible man; and she would change the dressing of a wound, or ease a ligature, or turn his face, or alter the pressure of the bedclothes on him, with an absolute certainty of doing right. The natural lightness and delicacy of touch which had become very refined by practice in her miniature work, no doubt was involved in this; but her perception was at least as fine.

The one word, Lizzie, he muttered millions of times. In a certain phase of his distressful state, which was the worst to those who tended him, he would roll his head upon the pillow, incessantly repeating the name in a hurried and impatient manner, with the misery of a disturbed mind, and the monotony of a machine. Equally, when he lay still and staring, he would repeat it for hours without cessation, but then, always in a tone of subdued warning and horror. Her presence and her touch upon his breast or face would often stop this, and then they learned to expect that he would for some time remain still, with his eyes closed, and that he would be conscious on opening them. But, the heavy disappointment of their hope—revived by the welcome silence of the room—was, that his spirit would glide away again and be lost, in the moment of their joy that it was there.

This frequent rising of a drowning man from the deep, to sink again, was dreadful to the beholders. But, gradually the change stole upon him that it became dreadful to himself. His desire to impart something that was on his mind, his unspeakable yearning to have speech with his friend and make a communication to him, so troubled him when he recovered consciousness, that its term was thereby shortened. As the man rising from the deep would disappear the sooner for fighting with the water, so he in his desperate struggle went down again.

One afternoon when he had been lying still, and Lizzie, unrecognized, had just stolen out of the room to pursue her occupation, he uttered Lightwood's name.

"My dear Eugene, I am here."

"How long is this to last, Mortimer?"

Lightwood shook his head. "Still, Eugene, you are no worse than you were."

"But I know there's no hope. Yet I pray it may last long enough for you to do me one last service, and for me to do one last action. Keep me here a few moments, Mortimer. Try, try!"

His friend gave him what aid he could, and encouraged him to believe that he was more composed, though even then his eyes were losing the expression they so rarely recovered.

"Hold me here, dear fellow, if you can. Stop my wandering away. I am going!"

"Not yet, not yet. Tell me, dear Eugene, what is it I shall do?"

"Keep me here for only a single minute. I am going away again. Don't let me go. Hear me speak first. Stop me—stop me!"

"My poor Eugene, try to be calm."

"I do try. I try so hard. If you only knew how hard! Don't let me wander till I have spoken. Give me a little more wine."

Lightwood complied. Eugene, with a most pathetic struggle against the unconsciousness that was coming over him, and with a look of appeal that affected his friend profoundly, said:

"You can leave me with Jenny, while you speak to her and tell her what I beseech of her. You can leave me with Jenny, while you are gone. There's not much for you to do. You won't be long away."

"No, no, no. But tell me what it is that I shall do, Eugene!"

"I am going! You can't hold me."

"Tell me in a word, Eugene!"

His eyes were fixed again, and the only word that came from his lips was the word millions of times repeated. *Lizzie, Lizzie, Lizzie.*

But, the watchful little dressmaker had been vigilant as ever in her watch, and she now came up and touched Lightwood's arm as he looked down at his friend, despairingly.

"Hush!" she said, with her finger on her lips. "His eyes are closing. He'll be conscious when he next opens them. Shall I give you a leading word to say to him?"

"O Jenny, if you could only give me the right word!"

"I can. Stoop down."

He stooped, and she whispered in his ear. She whispered in his ear one short word of a single syllable. Lightwood started, and looked at her.

"Try it," said the little creature, with an excited and exultant face. She then bent over the unconscious man, and, for the first time, kissed him on the cheek, and kissed the poor maimed hand that was nearest to her. Then, she withdrew to the foot of the bed.

Some two hours afterwards, Mortimer Lightwood saw his consciousness come back, and instantly, but very tranquilly, bent over him.

"Don't speak, Eugene. Do no more than look at me, and listen to me. You follow what I say."

He moved his head in assent.

"I am going on from the point where we broke off. Is the word we should soon have come to—is it—Wife?"

"O God bless you, Mortimer!"

"Hush! Don't be agitated. Don't speak. Hear me, dear Eugene. Your mind will be more at peace, lying here, if you make Lizzie your wife. You wish me to speak to her, and tell her so, and entreat her to be your wife. You ask her to kneel at this bedside and be married to you, that your reparation may be complete. Is that so?"

"Yes. God bless you! Yes."

"It shall be done, Eugene. Trust it to me. I shall have to go away for some few hours, to give effect to your wishes. You see this is unavoidable?"

"Dear friend, I said so."

"True. But I had not the clue then. How do you think I got it?"

Glancing wistfully around, Eugene saw Miss Jenny at the foot of the bed, looking at him with her elbows on the bed, and her head upon her hands. There was a trace of his whimsical air upon him, as he tried to smile at her.

"Yes indeed," said Lightwood, "the discovery was hers. Observe, my dear Eugene; while I am away you will know that I have discharged my trust with Lizzie, by finding her here, in my present place at your bedside, to leave you no more. A final word before I go. This is the right course of a true man, Eugene. And I solemnly believe, with all my soul, that if Providence should mercifully restore you to us, you will be blessed with a noble wife in the preserver of your life, whom you will dearly love."

"Amen. I am sure of that. But I shall not come through it, Mortimer."

"You will not be the less hopeful or less strong, for this, Eugene."

"No. Touch my face with yours, in case I should not hold out till you come back. I love you, Mortimer. Don't be uneasy for me while you are gone. If my dear brave girl will take me, I feel persuaded that I shall live long enough to be married, dear fellow."

Miss Jenny gave up altogether on this parting taking place between the friends, and, sitting with her back towards the bed in the bower made by her bright hair, wept heartily, though noiselessly. Mortimer Lightwood was soon gone. As the evening light lengthened the heavy reflections of the trees in the river, another figure came with a soft step into the sick room.

"Is he conscious?" asked the little dressmaker, as the figure took its station by the pillow. For, Jenny had given place to it immediately, and could not see the sufferer's face, in the dark room, from her new and removed position.

"He is conscious, Jenny," murmured Eugene for himself. "He knows his wife."

CHAPTER XI.

EFFECT IS GIVEN TO THE DOLLS' DRESSMAKER'S DISCOVERY.

MRS. JOHN ROKESMITH sat at needlework in her neat little room, beside a basket of neat little articles of clothing, which presented so much of the appearance of being in the dolls' dressmaker's way of business, that one might have supposed she was going to set up in opposition to Miss Wren. Whether the Complete British Family Housewife had imparted sage counsel anent them, did not appear, but probably not, as that cloudy oracle was nowhere visible. For certain, however, Mrs. John Rokesmith stitched at them with so dexterous a hand, that she must have taken lessons of somebody. Love is in all things a most wonderful teacher, and perhaps love (from a pictorial

point of view, with nothing on but a thimble), had been teaching this branch of needlework to Mrs. John Rokesmith.

It was near John's time for coming home, but as Mrs. John was desirous to finish a special triumph of her skill before dinner, she did not go out to meet him. Placidly, though rather consequentially smiling, she sat stitching away with a regular sound, like a sort of dimpled little charming Dresden-china clock by the very best maker.

A knock at the door, and a ring at the bell. Not John; or Bella would have flown out to meet him. Then who, if not John? Bella was asking herself the question, when that fluttering little fool of a servant fluttered in, saying, "Mr. Lightwood!"

Oh good gracious!

Bella had but time to throw a handkerchief over the basket, when Mr. Lightwood made his bow. There was something amiss with Mr. Lightwood, for he was strangely grave and looked ill.

With a brief reference to the happy time when it had been his privilege to know Mrs. Rokesmith as Miss Wilfer, Mr. Lightwood explained what was amiss with him and why he came. He came bearing Lizzie Hexam's earnest hope that Mrs. John Rokesmith would see her married.

Bella was so fluttered by the request, and by the short narrative he had feelingly given her, that there never was a more timely smelling-bottle than John's knock. "My husband," said Bella; "I'll bring him in."

But, that turned out to be more easily said than done; for, the instant she mentioned Mr. Lightwood's name, John stopped, with his hand upon the lock of the room door.

"Come up stairs, my darling."

Bella was amazed by the flush in his face, and by his sudden turning away. "What can it mean?" she thought, as she accompanied him up stairs.

"Now, my life," said John, taking her on his knee, "tell me all about it."

All very well to say, "Tell me all about it;" but John was very much confused. His attention evidently trailed off, now and then, even while Bella told him all about it. Yet she knew that he took a great interest in Lizzie and her fortunes. What could it mean?

"You will come to this marriage with me, John dear?"

"N—no, my love; I can't do that."

"You can't do that, John?"

"No, my dear, it's quite out of the question. Not to be thought of."

"Am I to go alone, John?"

"No, my dear, you will go with Mr. Lightwood."

"Don't you think it's time we went down to Mr. Lightwood, John dear?" Bella insinuated.

"My darling, it's almost time you went, but I must ask you to excuse me to him altogether."

"You never mean, John dear, that you are not going to see him? Why, he knows you have come home. I told him so."

"That's a little unfortunate, but it can't be helped. Unfortunate or fortunate, I positively cannot see him, my love."

Bella cast about in her mind what could be his reason for this unaccountable behaviour, as she sat on his knee looking at him in astonishment and pouting a little. A weak reason presented itself.

"John dear, you never can be jealous of Mr. Lightwood?"

"Why, my precious child," returned her husband, laughing outright: "how could I be jealous of him? Why should I be jealous of him?"

"Because, you know, John," pursued Bella, pouting a little more, "though he did rather admire me once, it was not my fault."

"It was your fault that I admired you," returned her husband, with a look of pride in her, "and why not your fault that he admired you? But, I jealous on that account? Why, I must go distracted for life, if I turned jealous of every one who used to find my wife beautiful and winning!"

"I am half angry with you, John dear," said Bella, laughing a little, "and half pleased with you; because you are such a stupid old fellow, and yet you say nice things, as if you meant them. Don't be mysterious, sir. What harm do you know of Mr. Lightwood?"

"None, my love."

"What has he ever done to you, John?"

"He has never done anything to me, my dear. I know no more against him than I know against Mr. Wrayburn; he has never done anything to me; neither has Mr. Wrayburn. And yet I have exactly the same objection to both of them."

"Oh, John!" retorted Bella, as if she were giving him up for a bad job, as she used to give up herself. "You are nothing better than a sphinx! And a married sphinx isn't a— isn't a nice confidential husband," said Bella, in a tone of injury.

"Bella, my life," said John Rokesmith, touching her cheek, with a grave smile, as she cast down her eyes and pouted again; "look at me. I want to speak to you."

"In earnest, Blue Beard of the secret chamber?" asked Bella, clearing her pretty face.

"In earnest. And I confess to the secret chamber. Don't you remember that you asked me not to declare what I thought of your higher qualities until you had been tried?"

"Yes, John dear. And I fully meant it, and I fully mean it."

"The time will come, my darling—I am no prophet, but I say so, —when you *will* be tried. The time will come, I think, when you will undergo a trial through which you will never pass quite triumphantly for me, unless you can put perfect faith in me."

"Then you may be sure of me, John dear, for I can put perfect faith in you, and I do, and I always, always will. Don't judge me by a little thing like this, John. In little things, I am a little thing myself—I always was. But in great things, I hope not; I don't mean to boast, John dear, but I hope not!"

He was even better convinced of the truth of what she said than she was, as he felt her loving arms about him. If the Golden Dustman's riches had been his to stake, he would have staked them to the last farthing on the fidelity through good and evil of her affectionate and trusting heart.

"Now, I'll go down to, and go away with, Mr. Lightwood," said Bella, springing up. "You are the most creasing and tumbling Clumsy-Boots of a packer, John, that ever was; but if you're quite good, and will promise never to do so any more (though I don't know what you have done!) you may pack me a little bag for a night, while I get my bonnet on."

He gaily complied, and she tied her dimpled chin up, and shook her head into her bonnet, and pulled out the bows of her bonnet-strings, and got her gloves on, finger by finger, and finally got them on her little plump hands, and bade him good-bye and went down. Mr. Lightwood's impatience was much relieved when he found her dressed for departure.

"Mr. Rokesmith goes with us?" he said, hesitating, with a look towards the door.

"Oh, I forgot!" replied Bella. "His best compliments. His face is swollen to the size of two faces, and he is to go to bed directly, poor fellow, to wait for the doctor, who is coming to lance him."

"It is curious," observed Lightwood, "that I have never yet seen Mr. Rokesmith, though we have been engaged in the same affairs."

"Really?" said the unblushing Bella.

"I begin to think," observed Lightwood, "that I never shall see him."

"These things happen so oddly sometimes," said Bella with a steady countenance, "that there seems a kind of fatality in them. But I am quite ready, Mr. Lightwood."

They started directly, in a little carriage that Lightwood had brought with him from never-to-be-forgotten Greenwich; and from Greenwich they started directly for London; and in London they waited at a railway station until such time as the Reverend Frank Milvey, and Margaretta his wife, with whom Mortimer Lightwood had been already in conference, should come and join them.

That worthy couple were delayed by a portentous old parishioner of the female gender, who was one of the plagues of their lives, and with whom they bore with most exemplary sweetness and good-humour, notwithstanding her having an infection of absurdity about her, that communicated itself to everything with which, and everybody with whom, she came in contact. She was a member of the Reverend Frank's congregation, and made a point of distinguishing herself in that body, by conspicuously weeping at everything, however cheering, said by the Reverend Frank in his public ministrations; also by applying to herself the various lamentations of David, and complaining in a personally injured manner (much in arrears of the clerk and the rest of the respondents) that her enemies were digging pit-falls about her, and breaking her with rods of iron. Indeed, this old widow discharged herself of that portion of the Morning and Evening Service as if she were lodging a complaint on oath and applying for a warrant before a magistrate. But this was not her most inconvenient characteristic, for that took the form of an impression, usually recurring in inclement weather and at about daybreak, that she had something on her mind and stood in immediate need of the Reverend Frank to come and take it off. Many a time had that

kind creature got up, and gone out to Mrs. Sprogdgin (such was the disciple's name), suppressing a strong sense of her comicality by his strong sense of duty, and perfectly knowing that nothing but a cold would come of it. However, beyond themselves, the Reverend Frank Milvey and Mrs. Milvey seldom hinted that Mrs. Sprogdgin was hardly worth the trouble she gave; but both made the best of her, as they did of all their troubles.

This very exacting member of the fold appeared to be endowed with a sixth sense, in regard of knowing when the Reverend Frank Milvey least desired her company, and with promptitude appearing in his little hall. Consequently, when the Reverend Frank had willingly engaged that he and his wife would accompany Lightwood back, he said, as a matter of course: "We must make haste to get out, Margaretta, my dear, or we shall be descended on by Mrs. Sprogdgin." To which Mrs. Milvey replied, in her pleasantly emphatic way, "Oh yes, for she is such a marplot, Frank, and does worry so!" Words that were scarcely uttered when their theme was announced as in faithful attendance below, desiring counsel on a spiritual matter. The points on which Mrs. Sprogdgin sought elucidation being seldom of a pressing nature (as Who begat Whom, or some information concerning the Amorites), Mrs. Milvey on this special occasion resorted to the device of buying her off with a present of tea and sugar, and a loaf and butter. These gifts Mrs. Sprogdgin accepted, but still insisted on dutifully remaining in the hall, to curtsy to the Reverend Frank as he came forth. Who, incautiously saying in his genial manner, "Well, Sally, there you are!" involved himself in a discursive address from Mrs. Sprogdgin, revolving around the result that she regarded tea and sugar in the light of myrrh and frankincense, and considered bread and butter identical with locusts and wild honey. Having communicated this edifying piece of information, Mrs. Sprogdgin was left still unadjoined in the hall, and Mr. and Mrs. Milvey hurried in a heated condition to the railway station. All of which is here recorded to the honor of that good Christian pair, representatives of hundreds of other good Christian pairs as conscientious and as useful, who merge the smallness of their work in its greatness, and feel in no danger of losing dignity when they adapt themselves to incomprehensible humbugs.

"Detained at the last moment by one who had a claim upon me," was the Reverend Frank's apology to Lightwood, taking no thought of himself. To which Mrs. Milvey added, taking thought for him, like the championing little wife she was; "Oh yes, detained at the last moment. But as to the claim, Frank, I must say that I do think you are over-considerate sometimes, and allow that to be a little abused."

Bella felt conscious, in spite of her late pledge for herself, that her husband's absence would give disagreeable occasion for surprise to the Milveys. Nor could she appear quite at her ease when Mrs. Milvey asked:

"How is Mr. Rokesmith, and is he gone before us, or does he follow us?"

It becoming necessary, upon this, to send him to bed again and hold him in waiting to be lanced again, Bella did it. But not half

as well on the second occasion as on the first; for, a twice-told white one seems almost to become a black one, when you are not used to it.

"Oh dear!" said Mrs. Milvey, "I am so sorry! Mr. Rokesmith took *such* an interest in Lizzie Hexam, when we were there before. And if we had *only* known of his face, we *could* have given him something that would have kept it down long enough for so *short* a purpose."

By way of making the white one whiter, Bella hastened to stipulate that he was not in pain. Mrs. Milvey was so glad of it.

"I don't know *how* it is," said Mrs. Milvey, "and I am *sure* you don't, Frank, but the clergy and their wives seem to *cause* swelled faces. Whenever I take notice of a child in the school, it seems to me as if its face swelled *instantly*. Frank *never* makes acquaintance with a new old woman, but she gets the face-ache. And another thing is, we *do* make the poor children sniff so. I don't know *how* we do it, and I should be so glad not to; but the *more* we take notice of them, the *more* they sniff. Just as they do when the text is given out.—Frank, that's a schoolmaster. I have seen him somewhere."

The reference was to a young man of reserved appearance, in a coat and waistcoat of black, and pantaloons of pepper and salt. He had come into the office of the station, from its interior, in an unsettled way, immediately after Lightwood had gone out to the train; and he had been hurriedly reading the printed bills and notices on the wall. He had had a wandering interest in what was said among the people waiting there and passing to and fro. He had drawn nearer, at about the time when Mrs. Milvey mentioned Lizzie Hexam, and had remained near, since: though always glancing towards the door by which Lightwood had gone out. He stood with his back towards them, and his gloved hands clasped behind him. There was now so evident a faltering upon him, expressive of indecision whether or no he should express his having heard himself referred to, that Mr. Milvey spoke to him.

"I cannot recall your name," he said, "but I remember to have seen you in your school."

"My name is Bradley Headstone, sir," he replied, backing into a more retired place.

"I ought to have remembered it," said Mr. Milvey, giving him his hand. "I hope you are well? A little overworked, I am afraid?"

"Yes, I am overworked just at present, sir."

"Had no play in your last holiday time?"

"No, sir."

"All work and no play, Mr. Headstone, will not make dulness, in your case, I dare say; but it will make dyspepsia, if you don't take care."

"I will endeavour to take care, sir. Might I beg leave to speak to you, outside, a moment?"

"By all means."

It was evening, and the office was well lighted. The schoolmaster, who had never remitted his watch on Lightwood's door, now

moved by another door to a corner without, where there was more shadow than light; and said, plucking at his gloves:

"One of your ladies, sir, mentioned within my hearing a name that I am acquainted with; I may say, well acquainted with. The name of the sister of an old pupil of mine. He was my pupil for a long time, and has got on and gone upward rapidly. The name of Hexam. The name of Lizzie Hexam." He seemed to be a shy man, struggling against nervousness, and spoke in a very constrained way. The break he set between his two last sentences was quite embarrassing to his hearer.

"Yes," replied Mr. Milvey. "We are going down to see her."

"I gathered as much, sir. I hope there is nothing amiss with the sister of my old pupil? I hope no bereavement has befallen her. I hope she is in no affliction? Has lost no—relation?"

Mr. Milvey thought this a man with a very odd manner, and a dark downward look; but he answered in his usual open way.

"I am glad to tell you, Mr. Headstone, that the sister of your old pupil has not sustained any such loss. You thought I might be going down to bury some one?"

"That may have been the connexion of ideas, sir, with your clerical character, but I was not conscious of it.—Then you are not, sir?"

A man with a very odd manner indeed, and with a lurking look that was quite oppressive.

"No. In fact," said Mr. Milvey, "since you are so interested in the sister of your old pupil, I may as well tell you that I am going down to marry her."

The schoolmaster started back.

"Not to marry her, myself," said Mr. Milvey, with a smile, "because I have a wife already. To perform the marriage service at her wedding."

Bradley Headstone caught hold of a pillar behind him. If Mr. Milvey knew an ashy face when he saw it, he saw it then.

"You are quite ill, Mr. Headstone!"

"It is not much, sir. It will pass over very soon. I am accustomed to be seized with giddiness. Don't let me detain you, sir; I stand in need of no assistance, I thank you. Much obliged by your sparing me these minutes of your time."

As Mr. Milvey, who had no more minutes to spare, made a suitable reply and turned back into the office, he observed the schoolmaster to lean against the pillar with his hat in his hand, and to pull at his neckcloth as if he were trying to tear it off. The Reverend Frank accordingly directed the notice of one of the attendants to him, by saying: "There is a person outside who seems to be really ill, and to require some help, though he says he does not."

Lightwood had by this time secured their places, and the departure-bell was about to be rung. They took their seats, and were beginning to move out of the station, when the same attendant came running along the platform, looking into all the carriages.

"Oh! You are here, sir!" he said, springing on the step, and

holding the window-frame by his elbow, as the carriage moved. "That person you pointed out to me is in a fit."

"I infer from what he told me that he is subject to such attacks. He will come to, in the air, in a little while."

He was took very bad to be sure, and was biting and knocking about him (the man said) furiously. Would the gentleman give him his card, as he had seen him first? The gentleman did so, with the explanation that he knew no more of the man attacked than that he was a man of a very respectable occupation, who had said he was out of health, as his appearance would of itself have indicated. The attendant received the card, watched his opportunity for sliding down, slid down, and so it ended.

Then, the train rattled among the house-tops, and among the ragged sides of houses torn down to make way for it, and over the swarming streets, and under the fruitful earth, until it shot across the river: bursting over the quiet surface like a bomb-shell, and gone again as if it had exploded in the rush of smoke and steam and glare. A little more, and again it roared across the river, a great rocket: spurning the watery turnings and doublings with ineffable contempt, and going straight to its end, as Father Time goes to his. To whom it is no matter what living waters run high or low, reflect the heavenly lights and darknesses, produce their little growth of weeds and flowers, turn here, turn there, are noisy or still, are troubled or at rest, for their course has one sure termination, though their sources and devices are many.

Then, a carriage ride succeeded, near the solemn river, stealing away by night, as all things steal away, by night and by day, so quietly yielding to the attraction of the loadstone rock of Eternity; and the nearer they drew to the chamber where Eugene lay, the more they feared that they might find his wanderings done. At last they saw its dim light shining out, and it gave them hope: though Lightwood faltered as he thought: "If he were gone, she would still be sitting by him."

But he lay quiet, half in stupor, half in sleep. Bella, entering with a raised admonitory finger, kissed Lizzie softly, but said not a word. Neither did any of them speak, but all sat down at the foot of the bed, silently waiting. And now, in this night-watch, mingling with the flow of the river and with the rush of the train, came the questions into Bella's mind again: What could be in the depths of that mystery of John's? Why was it that he had never been seen by Mr. Lightwood, whom he still avoided? When would that trial come, through which her faith in, and her duty to, her dear husband, was to carry her, rendering him triumphant? For, that had been his term. Her passing through the trial was to make the man she loved with all her heart, triumphant. Term not to sink out of sight in Bella's breast.

Far on in the night, Eugene opened his eyes. He was sensible, and said at once: "How does the time go? Has our Mortimer come back?"

Lightwood was there immediately, to answer for himself. "Yes, Eugene, and all is ready."

"Dear boy!" returned Eugene with a smile, "we both thank you heartily. Lizzie, tell them how welcome they are, and that I would be eloquent if I could."

"There is no need," said Mr. Milvey. "We know it. Are you better, Mr. Wrayburn?"

"I am much happier," said Eugene.

"Much better too, I hope?"

Eugene turned his eyes towards Lizzie, as if to spare her, and answered nothing.

Then, they all stood around the bed, and Mr. Milvey, opening his book, began the service; so rarely associated with the shadow of death; so inseparable in the mind from a flush of life and gaiety and hope and health and joy. Bella thought how different from her own sunny little wedding, and wept. Mrs. Milvey overflowed with pity, and wept too. The dolls' dressmaker, with her hands before her face, wept in her golden bower. Reading in a low clear voice, and bending over Eugene, who kept his eyes upon him, Mr. Milvey did his office with suitable simplicity. As the bridegroom could not move his hand, they touched his fingers with the ring, and so put it on the bride. When the two plighted their troth, she laid her hand on his, and kept it there. When the ceremony was done, and all the rest departed from the room, she drew her arm under his head, and laid her own head down upon the pillow by his side.

"Undraw the curtains, my dear girl," said Eugene, after a while, "and let us see our wedding-day."

The sun was rising, and his first rays struck into the room, as she came back, and put her lips to his. "I bless the day!" said Eugene. "I bless the day!" said Lizzie.

"You have made a poor marriage of it, my sweet wife," said Eugene. "A shattered graceless fellow, stretched at his length here, and next to nothing for you when you are a young widow."

"I have made the marriage that I would have given all the world to dare to hope for," she replied.

"You have thrown yourself away," said Eugene, shaking his head. "But you have followed the treasure of your heart. My justification is, that you had thrown that away first, dear girl!"

"No. I had given it to you."

"The same thing, my poor Lizzie!"

"Hush, hush! A very different thing."

There were tears in his eyes, and she besought him to close them. "No," said Eugene, again shaking his head; "let me look at you, Lizzie, while I can. You brave devoted girl! You heroine!"

Her own eyes filled under his praises. And when he mustered strength to move his wounded head a very little way, and lay it on her bosom, the tears of both fell.

"Lizzie," said Eugene, after a silence: "when you see me wandering away from this refuge that I have so ill deserved, speak to me by my name, and I think I shall come back."

"Yes, dear Eugene."

"There!" he exclaimed, smiling. "I should have gone then, but for that!"

A little while afterwards, when he appeared to be sinking into insensibility, she said, in a calm loving voice: "Eugene, my dear husband!" He immediately answered: "There again! You see how you can recall me!" And afterwards, when he could not speak, he still answered by a slight movement of his head upon her bosom.

The sun was high in the sky, when she gently disengaged herself to give him the stimulants and nourishment he required. The utter helplessness of the wreck of him that lay cast ashore there, now alarmed her, but he himself appeared a little more hopeful.

"Ah, my beloved Lizzie!" he said, faintly. "How shall I ever pay all I owe you, if I recover!"

"Don't be ashamed of me," she replied, "and you will have more than paid all."

"It would require a life, Lizzie, to pay all; more than a life."

"Live for that, then; live for me, Eugene; live to see how hard I will try to improve myself, and never to discredit you."

"My darling girl," he replied, rallying more of his old manner than he had ever yet got together. "On the contrary, I have been thinking whether it is not the best thing I can do, to die."

"The best thing you can do, to leave me with a broken heart?"

"I don't mean that, my dear girl. I was not thinking of that. What I was thinking of was this. Out of your compassion for me, in this maimed and broken state, you make so much of me—you think so well of me—you love me so dearly."

"Heaven knows I love you dearly!"

"And Heaven knows I prize it! Well. If I live, you'll find me out."

"I shall find out that my husband has a mine of purpose and energy, and will turn it to the best account?"

"I hope so, dearest Lizzie," said Eugene, wistfully, and yet somewhat whimsically. "I hope so. But I can't summon the vanity to think so. How can I think so, looking back on such a trifling wasted youth as mine! I humbly hope it; but I daren't believe it. There is a sharp misgiving in my conscience that if I were to live, I should disappoint your good opinion and my own—and that I ought to die, my dear!"

IMPORTANT FAMILY MEDICINE.

NORTON'S

CAMOMILE PILLS,

THE MOST CERTAIN PRESERVER OF HEALTH,

A MILD, YET SPEEDY, SAFE, AND

EFFECTUAL AID IN CASES OF INDIGESTION,
AND ALL STOMACH COMPLAINTS,

AND, AS A NATURAL CONSEQUENCE, A

PURIFIER OF THE BLOOD, AND A SWEETENER OF THE WHOLE SYSTEM.

INDIGESTION is a weakness or want of power of the digestive juices in the stomach to convert what we eat and drink into healthy matter, for the proper nourishment of the whole system. It is caused by everything which weakens the system in general, or the stomach in particular. From it proceed nearly all the diseases to which we are liable; for it is very certain, that if we could always keep the stomach right we should rarely die by old age or accident. Indigestion produces a great variety of unpleasant sensations: amongst the most prominent of its miserable effects are a want of, or an indelicate appetite, sometimes attended with a constant craving for drink, a distension or swelling of enlargement of the stomach, flatulency, heartburn, pains in the stomach, acidity, unpleasant taste in the mouth, perhaps sickness, rumbling noise in the bowels: in some cases of depraved digestion there is nearly a complete disrelish for food, but still the appetite is not greatly impaired, as at the stated period of meals persons so afflicted can eat heartily, although without much gratification; a long train of nervous symptoms are also frequent attendants, general debility, great languidness, and incapacity for exertion. The minds of persons so afflicted frequently become irritable and desponding, and great anxiety is observable in the countenance; they appear thoughtful, melancholy, and dejected, under great apprehension of some imaginary danger, will start at any unexpected noise or occurrence, and become so agitated that they require some

time to calm and collect themselves: yet for all this the mind is exhilarated without much difficulty; pleasing events, society, will for a time dissipate all appearance of disease; but the excitement produced by an agreeable change vanishes soon after the cause has gone by. Other symptoms are, violent palpitations, restlessness, the sleep disturbed by frightful dreams and startings, and affording little or no refreshment; occasionally there is much moaning, with a sense of weight and oppression upon the chest, nightmare, &c.

It is almost impossible to enumerate all the symptoms of this first invader upon the constitution, as in a hundred cases of *Indigestion* there will probably be something peculiar to each; but, be they what they may, they are all occasioned by the food becoming a burden rather than a support to the stomach; and in all its stages the medicine most wanted is that which will afford speedy and effectual assistance to the digestive organs, and give energy to the nervous and muscular systems,—nothing can more speedily or with more certainty effect so desirable an object than *Norton's Extract of Camomile Flowers*. The herb has from time immemorial been highly esteemed in England as a grateful anodyne, imparting an aromatic bitter to the taste, and a pleasing degree of warmth and strength to the stomach; and in all cases of indigestion, gouts in the stomach, windy colic, and general weakness, it has for ages been strongly recommended by the most eminent practitioners as very useful and beneficial. The

great, indeed only, objection to its use has been the large quantity of water which it takes to dissolve a small part of the flowers, and which must be taken with it into the stomach. It requires a quarter of a pint of boiling water to dissolve the soluble portion of one drachm of Camomile Flowers; and, when one or even two ounces may be taken with advantage, it must at once be seen how impossible it is to take a proper dose of this wholesome herb in the form of tea; and the only reason why it has not long since been placed the very first in rank of all restorative medicines is, that in taking it the stomach has always been loaded with water, which tends in a great measure to counteract, and very frequently wholly to destroy the effect. It must be evident that loading a weak stomach with a large quantity of water, merely for the purpose of conveying into it a small quantity of medicine, must be injurious; and that the medicine must possess powerful renovating properties only to counteract the bad effects likely to be produced by the water. Generally speaking, this has been the case with Camomile Flowers, a herb possessing the highest restorative qualities, and when properly taken, decidedly the most speedy restorer, and the most certain preserver of health.

NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS are prepared by a peculiar process, accidentally discovered, and known only to the proprietor, and which he firmly believes to be one of the most valuable modern discoveries in medicine, by which all the essential and extractive matter of more than an ounce of the flowers is concentrated in four moderate-sized pills. Experience has afforded the most ample proof that they possess all the fine aromatic and stomachic properties for which the herb has been esteemed; and, as they are taken into the stomach unencumbered by any diluting or indigestible substance, in the same degree has their benefit been more immediate and decided. Mild in their operation and pleasant in their effect, they may be taken at any age, and under any circumstance, without danger or inconvenience. A person exposed to cold and wet a whole day or night could not possibly receive any injury from taking them, but, on the contrary, they would effectually prevent a cold being taken. After a long acquaintance with and strict observance of the medicinal properties of *Norton's Camomile Pills*, it is only doing

them justice to say, that they are really the most valuable of all TONIC MEDICINES. The word tonic is meant a medicine which gives strength to the stomach sufficient to digest in proper quantities all wholesome food, which increases the power of every nerve and muscle of the human body, or, in other words, invigorates the nervous and muscular systems. The solidity or firmness of the whole tissue of the body which so quickly follows the use of *Norton's Camomile Pills*, their certain and speedy effects in repairing the partial dilapidations from time or intemperance, and their lasting salutary influence on the whole frame, is most convincing; that in the smallest compass is contained the largest quantity of the tonic principle, of so peculiar a nature as to pervade the whole system, through which it diffuses health and strength sufficient to resist the formation of disease, and also to fortify the constitution against contagion; as such, their general use is strongly recommended as a preventative during the prevalence of malignant fever or other infectious diseases, and to persons attending sick rooms they are invaluable, as in no one instance have they ever failed in preventing the taking of illness, even under the most trying circumstances.

As *Norton's Camomile Pills* are particularly recommended for all stomach complaints or indigestion, it will probably be expected that some advice should be given respecting diet, though after all that has been written upon the subject, after the publication of volume upon volume, after the country has, as it were, been inundated with practical essays on diet, as a means of prolonging life, it would be unnecessary to say more, did we not feel it our duty to make the humble endeavour of inducing the public to regard them not, but to adopt that course which is dictated by nature, by reason, and by common sense. Those persons who study the wholesomes, and are governed by the opinions of writers on diet, are uniformly both unhealthy in body and weak in mind. There can be no doubt that the palate is designed to inform us what is proper for the stomach, and of course that must best instruct us what food to take and what to avoid; we want no other adviser. Nothing can be more clear than that those articles which are agreeable to the taste were by nature intended for our food and sustenance, whether liquid or solid, foreign or or native

production: if they are pure and unadulterated, no harm need be dreaded by their use, they will only injure by abuse. Consequently, whatever the palate approves, eat and drink always in moderation, but never in excess; keeping in mind that the first process of digestion is performed in the mouth, the second in the stomach; and that, in order that the stomach may be able to do its work properly, it is requisite the first process should be well performed; this consists in masticating or chewing the solid food, so as to break down and separate the large and small substances of meat and vegetable, mixing them well, and blending the whole together before they are swallowed; and it is particularly urged upon all to take plenty of time to their meals and never eat in haste. If you conform to this short and simple, but comprehensive advice, and find that there are various things which others eat and drink with pleasure and without inconvenience, and which would be pleasant to yourself only that they disagree, you may once conclude that the fault is in the stomach, that it does not possess the power which it ought to do, that it wants assistance, and the sooner that assistance is afforded the better. A very short trial of this medicine will best prove how soon it will set the stomach in a condition to perform with ease all the work which nature intended for it. By its use you will soon be able to enjoy, in moderation, whatever is agreeable to the taste, and unable to name one individual article of food which disagrees with its sits unpleasantly on the stomach. Never forget that a small meal well digested affords more nourishment to the system than a large one, even of the same food, when digested imperfectly. Let the dish be ever so delicious, ever so enticing a variety offered, the little ever so enchanting, never forget that intemperance tends to preserve health, and that health is the soul of enjoyment. But should an impropriety be at any time, or ever often committed, by which the stomach becomes overloaded or disordered, render it immediate aid by taking a dose of *Norton's*

Camomile Pills, which will so promptly assist in carrying off the burden thus imposed upon it that all will soon be right again.

It is most certainly true that every person in his lifetime consumes a quantity of noxious matter, which if taken at one meal would be fatal: it is these small quantities of noxious matter, which are introduced into our food, either by accident or wilful adulteration, which we find so often upset the stomach, and not unfrequently lay the foundation of illness, and perhaps final ruination to health. To preserve the constitution, it should be our constant care, if possible, to counteract the effect of these small quantities of unwholesome matter; and whenever, in that way, an enemy to the constitution finds its way into the stomach, a friend should be immediately sent after it, which would prevent its mischievous effects, and expel it altogether; no better friend can be found, nor one which will perform the task with greater certainty than **NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS**. And let it be observed that the longer this medicine is taken the less it will be wanted; it can in no case become habitual, as its entire action is to give energy and force to the stomach, which is the spring of life, the source from which the whole frame draws its succour and support. After an excess of eating or drinking, and upon every occasion of the general health being at all disturbed, these PILLS should be immediately taken, as they will stop and eradicate disease at its commencement. Indeed, it is most confidently asserted, that by the timely use of this medicine only, and a common degree of caution, any person may enjoy all the comforts within his reach, may pass through life without an illness, and with the certainty of attaining a healthy OLD AGE.

On account of their volatile properties, they must be kept in bottles; and if closely corked their qualities are neither impaired by time nor injured by any change of climate whatever. Price, 13^d. and 2s. 9^d. each, with full directions. The large bottle contains the quantity of three small ones, or PILLS equal to fourteen ounces of CAMOMILE FLOWERS.

Sold by nearly all respectable Medicine Vendors.

Be particular to ask for "**NORTON'S PILLS**," and do not be persuaded to purchase an imitation.

A CLEAR COMPLEXION!!!

GODFREY'S EXTRACT OF ELDER FLOWERS

Is strongly recommended for Softening, Improving, Beautifying and Preserving the SKIN, and giving it a blooming and charming appearance. It will completely remove Tan, Sunburn, Redness, &c., and by its Balsamic and Healing qualities render the skin soft, pliable, and free from dryness, &c., clear it from every humour, pimple, or eruption, and by continuing its use only a short time, the skin will become and continue soft and smooth, and the complexion perfectly clear and beautiful.

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FOR GOUT, RHEUMATISM, AND RHEUMATIC GOUT.

SIMCO'S GOUT AND RHEUMATIC PILLS

are a certain and safe remedy. They restore tranquillity to the nerves, give tone to the stomach, and strength to the whole system. No other medicine can be compared to these excellent Pills, as they prevent the disorder from attacking the stomach or head, and have restored thousands from pain and misery to health and comfort.

Sold by all Medicine Vendors, at 1s. 1½d., or 2s. 9d. per box.


INFLUENZA, COUGHS, AND COLDS.

SIMCO'S ESSENCE OF LINSEED

is the most efficacious remedy ever discovered for the relief of persons suffering from Influenza; the first two doses generally arrest the progress of this distressing complaint, and a little perseverance completely removes it. Children's Coughs, as well as recent ones in Adults, will be removed by a few doses (frequently by the first); and Asthmatic persons, who previously had not been able to lie down in bed, have received the utmost benefit from the use of

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INSURANCE COMPANY

ESTABLISHED 1836. EMPOWERED SPECIALLY BY PARLIAMENT.

FIRE. ANNUITIES. LIFE.

ANNUITIES PAYABLE, £36,732.

£742,670 FIRE PREMIUMS. 1864. LIFE PREMIUMS £236,240.

INVESTED FUNDS £3,212,300 STERLING.

At the Annual Meeting of the Company, held on the 23rd. of February, 1865, a report for the past year was read which showed,

That the Capital of the Company actually paid up and invested was	£391,752
That the Fire Premiums for the year were	742,674
Being an increase in two years of	290,000
That the Losses paid and provided for under Fire Policies were	523,460
That 1,690 Proposals had been received for Life Insurances in the aggregate sum of	904,809
That 1,394 Policies had been issued insuring	733,536
That 138 Proposals had been declined for	82,548
That 158 Proposals had not been completed for	88,725
That the Premiums on the new Life of £733,536 were	23,808
That the total Life Premiums of the year were	236,244
That the claims under Life Policies with their Bonuses were	143,197
That 90 Bonds for Annuities had been granted, amounting to	4,262
That the total Annuities now payable were	36,732
That the Special Reserve for the Life Department Engagements amounted to	1,656,222
That the Reserve Surplus Fund is increased to	971,410
That after payment of the Dividend of 40 per cent. there will remain a Balance of Undivided Profit of	192,960
That the invested Funds of the Company amounted to	3,212,300

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FIRE INSURANCE.

THE PREMIUMS received by the *Liverpool and London and Globe Company* in the year 1863, amounted to £580,000, and exceeded by not less than £200,000, those of any other Fire Office. In 1864 these Premiums were increased to £742,670, being an addition of £162,000 in that single year; in two years the increase was £290,000.

It is impossible to read these figures without being struck with the very gratifying extent of confidence the public repose in the Company, and the exceedingly rapid rate at which the Business is growing. There is no security so good as a well-earned name, and to be well earned it must be based on confidence. But confidence is very slow of growth. It requires time, it needs evidence, it is the consequence of trial. It is not improvised, and when once given, it should not on light grounds be withdrawn. "To err is human," and if any mistake of judgment, or appearance of failure in fulfilling an obligation be detected in a management, which by fidelity, well tested and allowed, has won such a confidence as that, it is safer to assume that in the particular instance knowledge was possessed which could not be used, or that misleading information had been given, the character of which was discovered too late, or that want of skill or care in developing the case had concealed or marred its strength, than to rush into arms wide open to receive you, with only loud professions of liberality, it may be, on which to base a claim of preference. The Losses of every year test the character of a Company's management, and when, as in the case of the *Liverpool and London and Globe Company* in 1864, they sum up to £520,000, adjusted and paid without complaint, the best security is given that the obligations under its policies have been satisfactorily discharged, and that the real ground of the confidence reposed in the Company is sufficiently revealed.

Insurances continue to be effected at *Home*, in the *British Colonies*, and in *Foreign Countries*, and all claims to be settled with liberality and promptitude. The Directors have never advocated high rates of Premium, except to meet some temporary emergency connected with a particular manufacture or locality, in order to induce improvements in the risks.

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LIFE INSURANCE.

THE AMPLE resources of the *Liverpool and London and Globe Company* present an amount of security to Insurers such as few if any office can give. The very large Funds actually invested, and the unlimited responsibility of the numerous and wealthy Proprietary are not surpassed. And accordingly it is found that the Business of each successive year is largely in excess of the one that preceded it. In 1863 the new business comprised the issue of 957 Policies, insuring £542,909, and producing in Premium £17,640. In 1864 the issue was 1394 Policies, insuring £733,536, and producing in Premium £23,808 *gs. 2d.*

But beyond the security, there is the element of certainty, the absence of mere promise in its engagements, which naturally influences insurers to prefer it. A contract of Life Insurance should not be a speculation. Its fulfilment should not depend on problematical success. A leading object aimed at in the practice of insurance is to render that certain which otherwise would be doubtful only; and that Company would seem to fulfil most entirely this purpose of its existence, which places all the inducements it holds out to the world, on the clear basis of distinct guarantee.

This certainty is the characteristic of The *Liverpool and London and Globe Company*. Its Policies are Bonds; its Bonuses are guaranteed when the policy is issued; its profits or its losses affect the proprietors alone; and its contracts entail upon those who hold them not the remotest liability of Partnership. To these recommendations have now been added, the indisputability of the Policy after five years existence, except on the ground of fraud or climate, and the claims being made payable in **THIRTY DAYS** after they have been admitted.

ANNUITIES. The *Liverpool and London and Globe Company* offers to any person desirous to increase his Income by the purchase of an Annuity, the most undoubted security and the greatest practicable facilities for the receipt of his annuity. The amount payable by the Company is now £36,700 per annum. The rates will be found on application liberal, and the preliminaries, and the requirements for the receipt of the payments, as simple, and free from unnecessary form as they can be made.

LIVERPOOL AND LONDON AND GLOBE INSURANCE COMPANY.

All Directors must be Proprietors in the Company.

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THE DIRECTORS desire to imbue the mind of the public with the great importance of having the Capital of a Company, on which the Dividend is paid, largely supported and strengthened by other Funds, on which no Dividend is payable. Such a state of things, in the first place, evidences the prudence with which the affairs have been managed; and in the next, supplies a guarantee against fluctuation in the Dividend to Proprietors, because so considerable a proportion of the annual payments becomes derivable from interest on the Investments. And when, as in the case of the *Liverpool and London and Globe Company*, no addition to the Capital can be made, without the premium upon it giving permanent increase to the Reserve Fund, it is obvious that any further issue of stock, by reason of the premium it commands, will nearly provide its own Dividend, and so form but a small charge on the business it contributes. This consideration will add to the significance of these Funds which for convenience are enumerated here, namely:—

Capital paid up	£392,000
Reserved Surplus Fund	971,000
Life Department Reserve	1,656,000
Balance of Undivided Profits	193,000
	£3,212,000

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Guaranteed Quality.	Plain Pattern.	Thread Pattern.	Ornamental Pattern.
Table spoons or forks, per doz.	£ 2. 6. d.	£ 2. 6. d.	£ 2. 6. d.
Dessert spoons or forks, per doz.	1 7 0	2 14 0	2 16 0
Tea spoons, per doz.	1 1 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
Side dishes and covers, per set	0 10 6	1 4 0	1 4 0
Dish covers, per set of four	8 10 0	10 0 0	10 0 0
Fish carvers & forks, in cases	10 0 0	12 0 0	16 0 0
12 pairs dessert knives & forks	0 13 6	1 5 0	2 5 0
12 fish eating knives, in cases	3 10 0	5 0 0	5 10 0
Tea & Coffee services, per set	1 18 0	2 10 0	3 0 0
Cruet frames, 4, 5 and 6 bottle	4 15 0	7 0 0	9 10 0
Bed-room candlesticks, each	1 15 0	2 15 0	3 12 6
Toast racks, each	0 10 0	0 14 0	0 13 6
Salvers in all sizes, each	0 11 0	0 14 0	1 2 0
Butter coolers, every variety.	£ 4 0	1 16 0	2 18 0
	1 0 0	1 12 0	2 10 0

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Blades secured to Handles. Best quality only.	Table Knives.	Cheese Knives.	Carvers.
3 in. balance ivory, per doz.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
3 in. " better ivory	11 0 0	9 0 0	3 6 0
3 in. " white	13 0 0	10 0 0	4 6 0
3 in. " strong	15 0 0	12 6 0	6 0 0
4 in. " full strength	20 0 0	15 0 0	7 0 0
4 in. " full strength	25 0 0	18 0 0	9 0 0
Round handles, silver ferrules	34 0 0	24 0 0	10 6 0
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